

## **CAMRA PUB PROTECTION SEMINAR**

### **31 MAY 2104**

#### **CASE STUDY - THE SWAN AND EDGAR, WESTMINSTER**

##### Summary of what has happened to date

Pub dates back at least to 1899, at the time of its closure was most likely the smallest pub in London. After a number of owners, including Whitbread, ended up in the ownership of Enterprise, who sold it in Oct 2013. Enterprise own another pub quite nearby.

Pub closed soon thereafter and application submitted to convert to single occupancy house.

Save The Linhope St Action Group set up.

CAMRA offers practical and technical support including writing to North London members to urge them to lodge objections. This included sending a link to Westminster's planning portal with the number of the planning app. to make it easier for people to object.

Contacts made with local Councillors, MP and press.

Planning application rejected by Westminster Council. Appeal lodged by developers.

Save The Linhope St Action Group submit ACV application and request Council to issue an Art 4 Direction. decision on both still pending.

Second planning application submitted, containing a (non) viability assessment.

Objections lodged including a counter viability assessment by Save The Linhope St Action Group.

##### Lessons learned.

Need to keep an eye open for pub sales and planning apps which increasingly will not feature the pub's name, just the postal address.

Use all the helpful material on the CAMRA national website. <http://www.camra.org.uk/pubs>

Share this with all campaigners.

Developers have a long time frame and deep pockets and will use expensive legal experts.

They also have an in-built advantage in being able to have meetings with the Planning Dept before submitting an app. and being able to appeal against decisions which go against them.

A large volume of objections is needed, some need to be "technical", citing the legal reasons for denying the app. but it is equally important to get lots of "personal" objections, from people who used the pub and who will suffer from its loss.

Petitions are a tool and in current electronic world far easier to get signatures BUT are unlikely to count as more than one objection in the Council's viewpoint. So they have strengths but limitations.

The pub's location in a Conservation Area was very important as this provides considerable additional planning constraints upon change of use. History and heritage can play a key part.

The use of social media, writing to Councillors etc was crucial and will be covered later in the day.

CAMRA's role has been supportive, to help assist and enable the campaign and provide access to precedent and experience learned elsewhere.

##### Conclusion

It can be a long haul, there will be many battles before the war is won. It can be easy to get disheartened but important to remember no individual campaign is on its own.