

**Assets of Community Value** 23 May 2022

**Application Number:** 22/001

**Nominated Asset:** Bullnose Morris Public House

**Site Address:** Watlington Road, Cowley, Oxford

**Ward:** Blackbird Leys

**Applicant:** The Leys Community Development Initiative  
(Leys CDI)

**Recommendation:** The Head of Planning Services is recommended to:

1. Agree that the Nominated Asset should be confirmed as an Asset of Community Value
2. Agree to include the asset on the City Council's Register of Local Assets of Community Value Register and place the asset on the Local Land Charge Register.

### **Background to Report.**

1. The Localism Act and the Assets of Community Value Regulations set out the opportunities and procedures to follow for communities wishing to identify assets of community value and have them listed.
2. The City Council is able to list a nominated asset if, in its, opinion:

*An actual current use of the building or other land that is not an ancillary use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community; AND*

*Is it realistic to think that there can continue to be non-ancillary use of the building or other land that will further (whether or not in the same way) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.*

**OR**

*There is a time in the recent past when an actual use of the building or other land that was not ancillary use furthered the social wellbeing or interests of the local community; AND*

*It is realistic to think that there is a time in the next five years when there could be non-ancillary use of the building or other land that would further (whether or not in the same way as before) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.*

3. These definitions have been taken from the Government's Regulations. There is no national guidance as to what the key terms in these definitions mean. It is for the nominating organisation in the first instance to argue why it considers the nominated asset meets the definition in the Regulations.
4. If the owner objects to their property being placed on the List, they have a right in the first instance to an internal review by the City Council of this decision.

## **Nomination**

5. The Leys Community Development Initiative (Leys CDI) submitted a nomination for The Bullnose Morris Public House for inclusion on the Council's register of Assets of Community Value. The nomination letter dated 15 March 2022 was received by Oxford City Council via email on 31 March 2022. A plan of the nominated area is attached to this report.
6. Leys CDI has argued that the pub is an asset of community value on the following grounds:
  - a. The Bullnose Morris was closed in September 2020 and has been unoccupied and out of use ever since. Prior to its closure it was used by a number of community groups as a venue for meetings and other events on a regular basis. Regular users are said to include:
    - Blackbird Leys Book Club
    - The Leys News
    - Blackbird Leys Community Action Group
    - Leys Matters Community Group
  - b. Leys CDI point out that Blackbird Leys will be losing its community centre during the regeneration and there is a need to find a new base from which current community projects can be run from and for new projects to be initiated. To that end Leys CDI intend to make use of the site as a community hub that will provide social support and cater to the mental wellbeing of the local community. The proposed activities include a youth project supporting young people between the ages of 9 to 25, running on weekday evenings, and holiday projects. It is also intended that the building will be available to other community projects, events and meetings on a regular basis.
  - c. Leys CDI have cited their experience in running a capital appeal project and a successful income generating programme from the hire of the current premises, as a demonstration of their capacity to raise funds, convert the premises and working to a viable operating model to make use of the nominated site as proposed.

## Response to consultation

7. Oxford City Council owns the freehold and have been consulted via its Community Services and Corporate Assets teams. No objections have been received to this nomination.
8. Greene King Ltd are listed as the leaseholders of the premises. No response has been received.

## Assessment

9. Leys CDI is eligible to make a nomination as a registered charity established for the benefit of the community of Blackbird Leys.
10. The Regulations require the City Council to consider whether the Bullnose Morris Public House meets the definition of an Asset of Community Value as set out in section 88 of the Localism Act, i.e. in this case that it is currently, or in the recent past has been, in a use that furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community, and also that it is realistic to think that there can continue to be non-ancillary use of the building or other land which will further the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community (whether or not in the same way).

*Whether the current use furthers the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community*

11. The nominator has listed a number of activities and events that have previously been hosted at the Bullnose Morris, for the purposes of catering to the needs and well-being of the local community. As described the buildings forming the pub were used in non-ancillary manner that provides facilities that can be used for specific activities, as well as the wider community for public and private events. These characteristics are considered to in and of themselves bring about benefits by fostering social interaction and wellbeing on an individual and community level, which are deemed to meet the criteria as set out in the Act.
12. The premises have been permanently closed and out of use for the past one and half years, which for current purposes can be considered to be in the relatively recent past.

*Whether it is realistic to think that there can continue to be non-ancillary use of the building or other land which will further (whether or not in the same way) the social wellbeing or social interests of the local community.*

13. Leys CDI is an active, established organisation with a number of ongoing community projects and partnership links with other organisations. They have indicated relevant experience in premises/facilities management as well as the capacity to raise funds for projects or day-to-day functioning. Whilst the nomination does not consist of a fundraising proposal or business plan, the

information provided in the submission and viewable elsewhere indicates some level of experience in this field and a reasonable likelihood that they will be able to adequately pursue their stated objectives if they have access and use of the premises. The proposed activities will be of benefit to the local community and will contribute to individual and social well-being. It will also provide amenity and facilities to other community groups with limited access to working spaces and can address a potential deficit in community amenity spaces locally.

## Decision

**I confirm that:**

**Nominated Asset:** The Bullnose Morris Public House  
**Site Address:** Watlington Road, Oxford OX4 6SS

**Should** be an Asset of Community Value and included on the City Council's Register of Local Assets of Community Value Register and placed on the Local Land Charge Register.

**Name:** Adrian Arnold  
**Title:** Head of Planning Services

**Signature:**

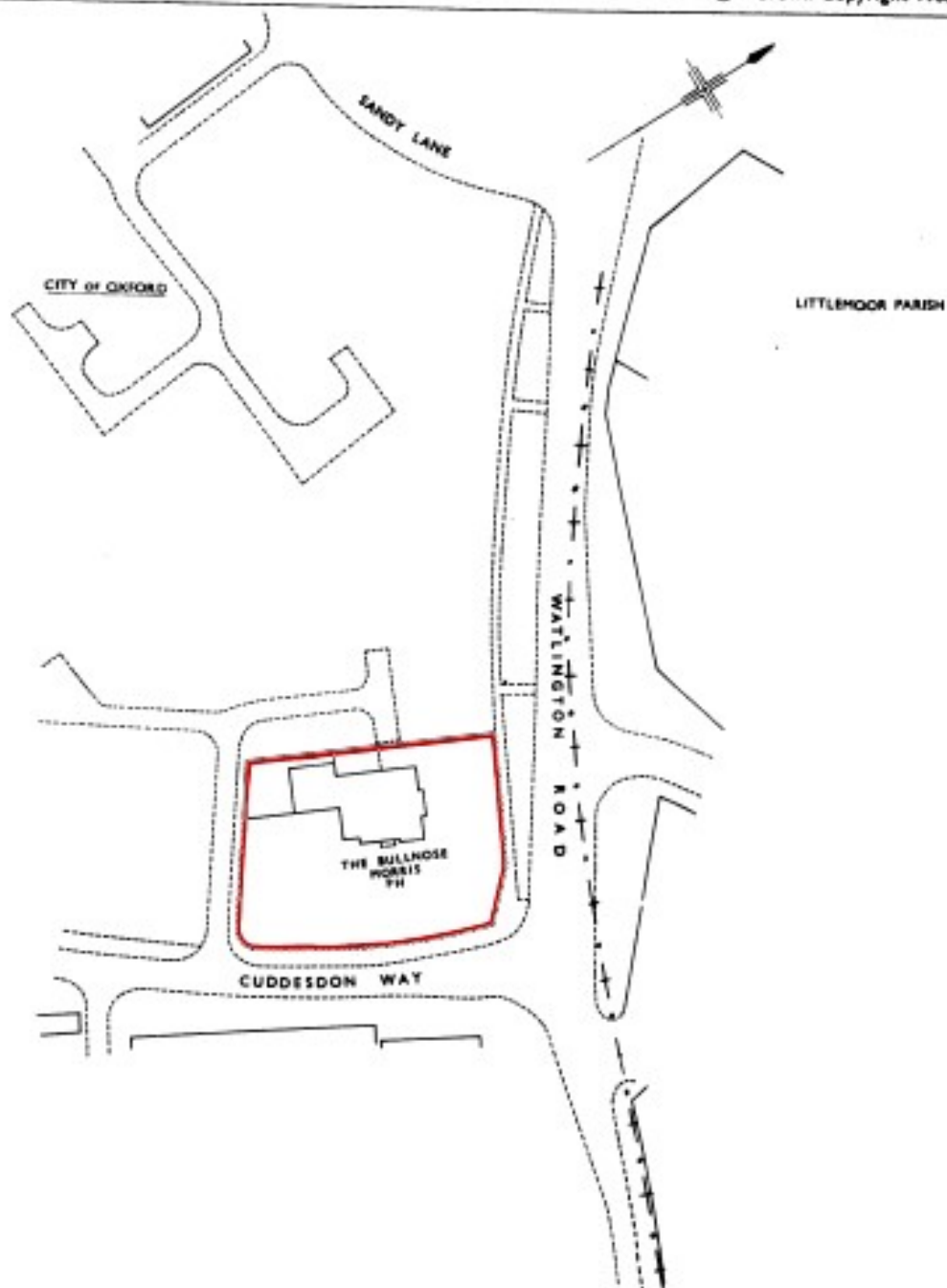


**Date:** 26 May 2022

**Background Papers:** Nomination letter, Articles of Association, Leasehold and Freehold Titles

**Contact Officer:** Arome Agamah  
**Extension:** 2360  
**Date:** 23 May 2022

H.M. LAND REGISTRY		TITLE NUMBER	
		ON 20217	
ORDNANCE SURVEY PLAN REFERENCE	COUNTY	SHEET	NATIONAL GRID
	OXFORDSHIRE		SP 5503 SE
Scale: 1/1250		© Crown Copyright 1968.	



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