# Councillors advocate for historic name of Royal Oak Hotel



Councillors in Kent are advocating for the reinstatement of the name of the Royal Oak Hotel as work progresses to convert the property into six flats. The Sevenoaks Town Council has expressed that renaming the development to Flats 1-6, Hanover House, would erase over 300 years of historical significance linked to the original hotel.

Located on High Street in Sevenoaks, the Royal Oak Hotel has served as an important landmark since its establishment in 1775. The council highlights that the hotel is a vital “reminder of the town's heritage” and has been described as a "prominent and historic feature". The building, which was a coaching inn built in the 18th century, has a rich history, including a visit from Queen Victoria who notably stayed there during her time at Knole, which is situated nearby. According to accounts from former staff, the hotel was a bustling establishment in the 1980s, with a busy bar and popular restaurant.

The hotel has a Grade II-listed status, and despite its current vacant state, its website remains operational, claiming it had 41 rooms and was a mere 250 metres from the Church of Saint Nicholas. The property was sold for £2.65 million in 2015 but fell into disrepair, eventually necessitating the conversion plans that have now prompted the council’s intervention.

In a formal response to Sevenoaks District Council, the local planning authority, the Sevenoaks Town Council articulated its discontent regarding the removal of the historic name. The district council had justified the decision by citing concerns that the use of “Royal Oak” might lead to confusion with nearby properties named “Royal Oak Mews” and “Royal Oak House, 5 High Street”. They referred to section 11.4 of local policy, which states that proposed names must not duplicate those of other local properties, as this could hinder emergency services and delivery routes.

The town councillors challenged this justification, arguing that “Royal Oak” was historically significant and that neighbouring properties obtained their names in homage to it. They remain determined to contest the decision and pursue the reinstatement of the name, wishing to preserve the historical legacy of the Royal Oak Hotel.

KentLive is reporting that the town council's letter calls for a reconsideration of the new name, underlining the importance of maintaining the heritage of Sevenoaks through its historic landmarks. The district council and developer Mopdev Ltd have been approached for further comments on the matter, with the discourse highlighting the tension between modern development and historical preservation.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## References

* <http://www.dover-kent.com/2014-project/Royal-Oak-Hotel-Sevenoaks.html> - This URL supports the claim about the Royal Oak Hotel being built in the 18th century as a coaching inn and highlights its rich history, including visits from notable figures.
* <https://www.instagram.com/sevenoakstowncouncil/p/DIXMqBCNpmv/?api=%E9%A9%AC%E6%9D%A5%E8%A5%BF%E4%BA%9A%E4%B8%9C%E7%94%B2%E5%90%8C%E5%9F%8E%E7%BA%A6%E7%82%AEWhatsApp%EF%BC%9A601167898268%E5%8F%AF%E4%B8%8A%E9%97%A8%E6%9C%8D%E5%8A%A1.tnzo> - This URL corroborates the historical significance of the Royal Oak Hotel, noting it as a prominent feature recorded as far back as 1775.
* <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1086018> - This URL confirms the Royal Oak Hotel's Grade II-listed status, reinforcing its heritage importance.
* <https://theweald.org/P5.asp?PID=PK.S.Oaks> - This URL references the Royal Oak Hotel's location on High Street, Sevenoaks, and highlights its inclusion in local historical contexts.
* <https://www.kentlive.news> - KentLive often reports on local Kent news, which might include updates onSevenoaks Town Council's efforts to preserve historical names and heritage landmarks.