# Demolition of historic Dewdrop Inn sparks fierce local opposition in Peacehaven



A planning application has been submitted that proposes the demolition of The Dewdrop Inn on Steyning Avenue in Peacehaven, igniting significant local dissent. Blue Skies Brighton Ltd, the current owner, filed the application with Lewes District Council on April 14, 2023, and it was validated by the council on May 6. This proposed redevelopment would replace the historic pub with a structure comprising 14 flats, alongside flexible community and office space at ground level, off-street vehicle parking, bike storage, and enhanced landscaping.

The design, developed by Mackellar Schwerdt Architects, aims to provide a mix of dwelling types, including seven one-bedroom, six two-bedroom, and one three-bedroom flat. In an effort to contribute to the community, the ground floor is intended for shared use, featuring offices, meeting rooms, and storage facilities. However, the architects noted that the pub "cannot sustain full-day opening hours every day of the week" due to a steady decline in patronage, compounded by rising operational costs that have rendered its future “untenable.”

The Dewdrop Inn, a notable establishment in the local community, has had a tumultuous operational history. Following the departure of its long-term tenant, who managed the pub for over 50 years until early February 2023, the premises were managed by a series of temporary tenants until early February 2024. Since the end of the pandemic, the pub has operated on a limited schedule, indicating a shift in its viability as a business.

Nevertheless, the planning application has faced vehement opposition from the local community. At the time of drafting, eight comments from local residents had been logged, each voicing their objection to the pub's demolition. Lewis Mackay, a resident, highlighted the pub's historical significance as the oldest building in Peacehaven, arguing for its preservation or respectful repurposing rather than its demolition. Nick Proud echoed this sentiment, expressing concern over the potential for overlooking neighbouring properties and insufficient parking provisions linked to the proposed development.

Paul Fogarty, another local resident, articulated his dismay, stating that the destruction of the pub would lead to significant stress among those living nearby, particularly regarding the potential overshadowing of homes and gardens by the new structure. Fogarty emphasised the pub's 100-year history, imploring that it should be restored instead of being replaced by what he described as an "ugly building."

The sentiments expressed by these residents reflect a broader concern regarding the balance between development and the preservation of local heritage, a tension that has been evident in recent planning decisions within Peacehaven. In November 2020, plans to demolish the Sussex Coaster pub and replace it with a 17-unit apartment building were approved, despite local pushback regarding the impact on community character and infrastructure. Such developments are often met with mixed reactions, as communities grapple with the pressing need for housing alongside the desire to maintain their distinctive local features.

Meanwhile, the council has been under increasing pressure to address the housing shortage in the area, with recent approvals for various developments, including a scheme in Portslade for 28 affordable flats and a community centre. This highlights the dual challenge of meeting housing needs while also respecting and preserving community identity, a balancing act that local councils must navigate carefully.

As the Dewdrop Inn planning application moves through the evaluation process, it remains to be seen whether the voices of concerned residents will significantly influence the outcome, or if the pressing demands for housing will ultimately prevail over the calls for preservation. The situation continues to unfold, with many eyes on the council as it assesses the merits of this controversial proposal.

### Reference Map

1. Paragraphs 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
2. Paragraph 6
3. Paragraph 7
4. Paragraph 8

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

## Bibliography

* <https://www.theargus.co.uk/news/25156495.dewdrop-inn-pub-peacehaven-turn-14-flats/?ref=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
* <https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/news/politics/demolition-of-peacehaven-pub-and-replacement-with-apartments-approved-3026250> - In November 2020, Lewes District Council approved plans to demolish the Sussex Coaster pub in Peacehaven and replace it with a 17-unit apartment building. The revised scheme addressed previous concerns by proposing a smaller-scale building with access directly onto South Coast Road. Despite approval, the development remained controversial among local residents, with concerns about its impact on the area's character and infrastructure.
* <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/news/2024/new-affordable-homes-and-community-centre-portslade-approved> - In June 2024, Brighton and Hove City Council approved a planning application to create 28 affordable flats and a new community centre in Portslade. The development involves demolishing existing structures and replacing them with two three-storey blocks containing flats, a community centre, and an outdoor play court. The project aims to address the acute housing shortage and provide quality community facilities.
* <https://www.sussexexpress.co.uk/news/politics/peacehaven-housing-development-approved-3839761> - In September 2022, Lewes District Council approved a small-scale housing development in Peacehaven, consisting of two four-bedroom houses and six two-bedroom bungalows. The development faced objections from local residents and the town council due to its location outside Peacehaven’s development boundary and concerns about its impact on the semi-rural character of the area.
* <https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/news/2024/hove-seafront-apartment-block-refused-planning-permission> - In August 2024, a planning application to demolish two pairs of semi-detached houses at 145 - 151 Kingsway, Hove, and replace them with a nine-storey building of 42 apartments was refused by council officers. The proposed development was deemed out of place in the conservation area, with concerns about its size, impact on neighbours, and living conditions for future residents.
* <https://www.peacehaventowncouncil.gov.uk/planning-applications-under-consideration-2/> - The Peacehaven Town Council regularly reviews planning applications under consideration. For instance, in April 2020, the council reviewed applications for the demolition of The Sussex Coaster pub and the erection of new residential houses. The council's recommendations and comments on these applications are available on their official website.
* <https://www.felbridge-pc.org.uk/community/felbridge-parish-council-10116/planning-comments/> - Felbridge Parish Council provides planning comments on various applications. For example, they considered a proposal for nine flats in the Green Belt, expressing concerns about its impact on the countryside and the openness of the Green Belt. The council emphasized that the development did not align with local planning policies and the National Planning Policy Framework.