

Councillors put off a decision on the Picture House

✘ Edinburgh Central MSP Marco Biagi has welcomed the decision by councillors to some further investigation on a change of use for the Picture House from a music venue from into a superpub.

The decision comes following an outcry amongst music lovers in the city, following the shock sale of the venue to JD Wetherspoon. The Lothian Road building has since lain empty the sale, with music fans concerned about the loss of a much-loved venue.

The closure was opposed by a 13,000 strong [petition](#), and a Parliamentary motion opposing the change of use gained support from across the chamber.

Marco Biagi MSP commented:

“I share the concerns of many music fans that a unique and much-loved music venue might be replaced by a chain superpub, which would be a damaging blow to Edinburgh’s live music scene.

“I understand that councillors have challenged the evidence presented to them, especially in relation to the impact on alcohol use in the area. A superpub would have a detrimental impact on the amenity of the area, increasing alcohol consumption and fuelling antisocial behaviour.

“The council have made positive noises about supporting the local music scene after coming under criticism from those in the industry, including the award winning Young Fathers. But changing noise enforcement to encourage live music while allowing the loss of existing cultural gems would hardly be seen as a consistent or joined-up approach.

“I hope that the council now take seriously their commitment to the local music scene by listening to the community and rejecting this proposal after they have taken additional evidence. They should then do what they can to see the venue reopened with the capacity to host bands, as there is a clear desire to see. Culture in Edinburgh must be more than something that happens in August.”