

Save Jock's Lodge campaign – meeting on Monday

The Save Jock's Lodge campaign which opposes a major student accommodation development at Jock's Lodge, is holding a public meeting on Monday at 7.30pm.

The meeting will be held at Northfield-Willowbrae Community Centre, and all local residents are encouraged to attend. A [Change.org](#) petition against the plan has more than 3000 signatures.

The proposal would involve demolishing a popular pub, The Willow, at the historic crossroads in the east of the city to make way for a seven storey block of student flats.

The pub, which was previously known as Jock's Lodge, is much loved in the area for its beer garden, food and family friendly atmosphere. The campaign group's research has discovered that there has been a pub on the site for at least 150 years.

The Jock's Lodge application would join eight other student accommodation blocks within a mile's radius which have already been built or which already have planning permission. This would tip the number of student bedrooms in the area to more than 2000, which the group says represents an over-concentration.

There are also fears this development would change the character of the neighbourhood even more due to the increasing

transient population.

The Save Jock's Lodge campaign is backed by Edinburgh East MP Tommy Sheppard and local Craigentenny-Duddingston councillor Danny Aston.



The Willow at Jock's Lodge

Tommy Sheppard said: "I've repeatedly spoken out against the dramatic increase of student accommodation developments which have grown like a rash in Abbeyhill and Meadowbank over the last few years. This one at Jock's Lodge would take the number of student bedrooms in the area to over 2000.

"Too many good potential housing sites have already been taken by student accommodation developers. This one would involve the loss of a popular local pub too.

"I held a surgery at the church opposite a few weeks ago where over 50 people turned up to express their concerns about this. That number is completely unprecedented. Local people are understandably really angry about this. Our message is clear: enough is enough."

Cllr Danny Aston said: "I've received so many emails about this and it's not hard to see why. As well as the loss of an excellent and historic pub, and the sheer number of student developments in the area, people are also very concerned about

a number of other issues.

“The seven storeys proposed by Alumno the developer will completed dominate the main approach to this crossroads from Willowbrae Road and from Portobello. The junction is currently composed of historic stone buildings, including the B-listed church and C-listed Piershill tenements. This huge, bland modern block will ruin the historic character of Jock’s Lodge. And a lot of folk are understandably worried that it will add to congestion at what is already a very busy junction.

“Alumno hasn’t submitted their detailed application so far so it isn’t yet possible to submit a formal comment. I’d urge local residents to come along on Monday, share their opinions and find out how to make their views known when the time comes.”