

Birmingham apartments approved despite concerns over night-time venues

A controversial new block of flats in Birmingham's Gay Village have been approved despite fears it could lead to problems in the area.

The development site in Kent Street is close to the Nightingale nightclub and other late-night venues.

The consented complex will comprise two buildings, of seven and 12 storeys respectively, containing 456 apartments and a private courtyard, [reports BirminghamLive](#).

It is estimated that around ten per cent of the apartments will have their windows sealed shut to block out noise from nearby venues.

The plans were approved in principle by Birmingham City Council's planning committee at its latest meeting but conversations continue between the Nightingale and developers.

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A total of £1.3 million has been earmarked for noise mitigation measures at the club, two of which involve the removal of the outdoor balconies and a new 'acoustically

treated' smoking area.

Cllr Lauren Rainbow said: "I am keen to understand what consultation has been done with the community in the Gay Village. This will involve building residential flats right next to a club that has been around for 40 years.

"Just last month we spoke about the importance of protecting the Gay Village and how members of the LGBTQ+ community don't necessarily feel safe at the moment.

"I have strong concerns about putting the development here, particularly when the onus seems to be on the club to put noise mitigation in.

"People outside will be smoking, chatting and being noisy. It will also have a knock-on effect on the Fox as well. In my opinion, it will increase tensions in the community and that is a real concern for me."

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Cllr Gareth Moore, Conservative councillor for Erdington and passionate supporter of the LGBTQ+ scene in Birmingham, also objected.

He said: “It’s very disappointing. Having residential accommodation right next to late-night entertainment venues like the Nightingale is a real risk, particularly from noise complaints.

“Existing businesses in the area get noise complaints already so it’s important we safeguard them for the future.

“It’s disappointing but there will at least hopefully be some mitigation in place that will enable the Nightingale to do the works and reduce the potential impact of noise in the future.”

This development is the second sprawling apartment complex in the Gay Village to be approved by Birmingham City Council in the last three weeks.

In June, plans for 628 apartments on Hurst Street were given the go-ahead despite concerns over noise coming from the Village Inn, another late-night venue directly opposite.

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Discussing whether these residential projects will start to chip away at Birmingham's LGBTQ+ scene, Cllr Moore said: "I do have a real concern that this is going to potentially be the case. The development is literally on the Nightingale's doorstep.

"And it's not unique to the Gay Village, this is happening around other late-night entertainment areas as well. I'm disappointed but I'm hopeful that the mitigation put in place will safeguard those businesses.

"I objected to the Timber Yard initially which is next to the Village Inn and they took me to go and view the mitigation now it's all been built. The windows they've put in seemed impressive but that was during the day so what it's like at night will be a different matter."