



## Shoulder of Mutton Working with FJG's Planning Consultancy

# Planning Case Study: Shoulder of Mutton

## Executive Summary

Following the sale of my company in 2016, I needed a project to keep me busy, after a break of around two years, we stumbled across an unloved property just outside Colchester on the Essex way. The project was to purchase the Shoulder of Mutton in Fordham, Colchester and then convert it from a public house to a Vintage Tea Room with Antiques Centre. The building is listed and was in a poor state of repair with flooded cellar, leaking roof and overgrown. This was a project we had never undertaken before and had no experience in, so we needed to seek expert help...

## Challenges

One of the main challenges for the project was the fact the property was a listed building, we had no experience in change of use or listed building consent. It was a big risk for us if permission was refused we would have been left with a pub that we didn't require, so we needed to have confidence in FJG and Sharon Smith's abilities to obtain approval.

**Fun fact:** Since taking over the property, a professional ghost hunter has been called in amid rumours that the spirit of an old barmaid is haunting the pub, believed to be triggered by the discovery of a hidden staircase.



## How did FJG'S Planning Consultancy help?

Ellen Petersen, head of the Commercial Property team at FJG completed the purchase and she recommended Sharon for the planning application. Sharon was hands on and visited the site to get a good understanding of what we were trying to achieve. She came up with ideas with regards to production of drawings and liaised with a design company on our behalf and met them on site. The design company and Sharon worked very well together and this made the project run seamlessly. Sharon is honest around setting your expectations, frank and will not just tell you what you want to hear. She also comes up with solutions in a positive way.

## Did COVID-19 affect your project?

It did slow down the process but again Sharon set expectations and as the customer sometimes that is all you need.

## Conclusion and Future Plans

Without the planning permission, we would have not been able to complete the project, so we had a lot depending on the success of the application, because of Sharon's attention to details we received a positive outcome with no conditions to the planning permission and listed building consent which means we can do exactly as we planned with the property. We are well underway with the project with an opening planned for October, so from start to finish around seven months to completion, even with a pandemic.

*Sharon is **efficient, organised and very well prepared**, fun to work with and always had a smile and cheerful nature...even when I was getting stressed.*

