

From: <planning@adur-worthing.gov.uk>
Date: Sun, 2 Nov 2025 at 14:36
Subject: Comments for Planning Application AWDM/1285/25
To: <planning@adur-worthing.gov.uk>

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 02/11/2025 2:36 PM from Mr gavin mcpherson.

Application Summary

Address:	Gardeners Arms West Street Sompting West Sussex BN15 0AR
Proposal:	Change of use from Public House with flat over into full residential dwelling including relevant internal and external changes and loft conversion with dormer, half-gable end and roof windows.
Case Officer:	Peter Barnett

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Name:	Mr gavin mcpherson
Email:	
Address:	15 Cokeham Gardens Sompting West Sussex

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Design- Highway Access and Parking- Loss of General Amenity- Other- Overdevelopment- Privacy Light and Noise- Trees and Landscaping
Comments:	I wish to formally object to planning application seeking permission for the change of use of The Gardeners Arms, Sompting, from a public

house with ancillary flat to a residential dwelling.

1. Loss of the last pub in the village

The Gardeners Arms is the only remaining pub in Sompting. Its closure and conversion would permanently deprive the village of a vital social, cultural, and historic facility. Pubs are recognised nationally as playing an essential role in the life of communities, providing not just a place to drink, but a safe, welcoming space for residents to meet, celebrate, and support one another.

The pub has historically served as a gathering point for families, community groups, and local societies, offering live music, charity fundraisers, quiz nights, and other social events. Removing this facility would leave Sompting without any such venue, increasing social isolation and undermining community cohesion.

2. Conflict with planning policy

The proposed loss of this community facility directly conflicts with planning policy at both the local and national level:

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, para. 93): requires that decisions "guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs."

Worthing Local Plan (Policy 11 - Protecting and Enhancing Community Facilities): states that development leading to the loss of community facilities will normally be resisted unless there is an alternative of equal accessibility and quality. None exists in Sompting.

Adur Local Plan 2017 (Strategic Objectives): emphasises sustainable communities and protecting local services. Though it does not list pubs explicitly, Adur District Council itself has acknowledged that pubs can be regarded as community facilities.

3. Viability not demonstrated

No clear evidence has been provided that the pub is unviable. For a loss of this nature to be justified, the owner must demonstrate that the pub has been properly marketed at a fair price for continued pub use over a reasonable period, and that no operators or community groups were interested. This has not been shown.

Across the UK, more than 180 pubs are now community-owned and thriving. The possibility of a community ownership or partnership model has not been explored, despite the Localism Act 2011 allowing for nomination as an Asset of Community Value (ACV). Listing as an ACV would give the community the right to bid to save this vital asset.

4. Harm to community wellbeing and identity

The Gardeners Arms is not just a building; it is part of Sompting's identity and heritage. Its loss would:

Increase isolation for elderly residents who rely on it as a safe and accessible social space.

Remove a venue for community events, music, and fundraising.

Erode the village's sense of place and history.

Such a change would be contrary to the Council's duty to support strong, healthy, and sustainable communities.

Conclusion

The Gardeners Arms is the last remaining pub in Sompting and a valued community facility. Its proposed conversion to residential use would:

Contravene both the NPPF and local planning policy,

Result in the permanent and unnecessary loss of a unique village asset,

Remove a key social hub with no equivalent replacement, and

Undermine the long-term sustainability and wellbeing of the village.

I therefore urge the Council to refuse this application.

Kind regards