Expiry Date - 02/12/2025
Extension of Time – 06/02/2026

Development Management – Delegated Officer Report

Application Number: AWDM/1188/25 **Recommendation: – APPROVE**

Site: **The Georgi Fin 54 Goring Road Worthing West Sussex**

Proposal: **Application to vary Condition 4: (Opening Hours) and Condition 9: (Outside Seating) of previously approved AWDM/1884/16 for change of use from Use Class A1 (shop) to Use Class A4 (drinking establishment) micro pub with installation of refrigeration unit to rear (north) elevation. PROPOSED CHANGES Opening Hours: 11:00 to 22:30 (Mon-Thurs), 11:00 to 23:30 (Fri & Sat), 11:00 to 22:00 (Sun). Outdoor Seating comprising 6 tables and 24 seats (11:00 to 22:00 hours each day) plus 4no planters.**

Date of Site Visit: 22.01.2026

Neighbours Checked: Y

Additional Neighbours Notified: N

Site and Surroundings

The application relates to a 'micro-pub' located with a terraced parade comprising ground-floor commercial units with maisonettes above on the north side of Goring Road within the Goring Road District Shopping Centre.

The planning permission for the 'micro-pub' granted in 2016 (AWDM/1884/16) is subject to various conditions which control the use, including:

04. The micro-pub hereby permitted shall only be open for trade and business between 11.00 hrs and 22:00 hours on Tuesdays to Sundays including Bank and Public Holidays.

Reason: To safeguard the amenities of the occupiers of neighbouring properties having regard to saved policy RES7 of the Worthing Local Plan.

09. There shall be no tables, chairs or benches in connection with the approved use of the building on the entrance foyer or front forecourt of the premises.

Reason: In the interest of amenity having regard to saved policies H18 and RES7 of the Worthing Local Plan.

The property is not listed, locally listed or within a Conservation Area.

Proposal

The current application seeks to vary the wording of Condition 4 to include opening on Mondays (11.00 to 22.30hrs), to extend the hours of opening hours on Tuesday to Thursday by 30 minutes to 22.30hrs and extend the hours of opening by 1 hour 30

minutes to 23.30hrs on Fridays and Saturdays. The opening hours would be unchanged for Sundays.

It is also proposed to vary Condition 9 to allow outdoor seating. A plan has been provided showing 6 tables and 24 chairs plus 4 planters to be placed on the public highway in front of the premises between the hours of 11.00 and 22.00hrs.

The current application has arisen in response to an application to vary the premises licence for the extended hours (which has since been granted).

A licence was previously issued for an external seating area in front of the premises despite this having been expressly prevented by a condition of the planning permission. However, it is understood there is no pavement licence currently in force.

A Supporting Statement from the Applicant explains:

"*These proposed variations in line with the approved premises licence would be implemented to support the long-term viability of the business as with a limited capacity, our ability to generate sufficient income especially on key trading nights is imperative for the business's sustainability.*

The original permission was granted in 2017 when the trading environment was very different. 'The Fynn' (previously Georgi Finn) was the first of such premises in the parade. There are now a number of other licensed premises within the same retail parade and we need to be able to meet our customer requirements for a similar service and accessibility.

The hospitality market is challenging, but it plays a vital role in the community, providing a safe social space whilst also supporting the local economy.

These modest proposed variations would make a meaningful difference to our operation and allow us to remain sustainable in an increasingly competitive environment.

There are currently five other licensed premises in the same parade and side of the road as my micro-pub, as well as one other in close proximity. To my knowledge I am not aware of their operating hours, or use of outdoor furniture in their designated forecourt areas having caused any disruption to the community.

We have a positive ongoing relationship with our neighbours, both residential and commercial. A high standard of sound proofing was installed in the premises in 2017 and as such 'The Fynn' has never received any noise complaints, which has been confirmed by Environmental Health. We are fully committed to operating responsibly and have a range of measures in place alongside the conditions of our licence to prevent anti-social behaviour, in turn minimising any disruption to the community.

Since taking over the premises in December 2024 I have installed a high-quality digital CCTV system covering all public areas both inside and outside of the premises, recording continuously 24 hours a day, with footage retained for 31 days and readily available to authorities on request.

We have an incident log readily available of any notable incidents, refusals and complaints available, however we have not had to make use of this since being in operation as a result of our business model attracting honourable and respectful patrons. Additionally I am an active member of the 'Pubwatch' group regularly liaising with other licensed premises as well as familiarising myself with individuals who have been known to previously cause issues in the wider community.

Staff receive induction and refresher training every six months on responsible sale, age restrictions and safety protocols. We operate a strict Challenge 25 policy with appropriate signage, whilst only accepting valid photo ID as proof of age. Equally there is also a zero tolerance drugs policy in place…..

……The vast majority of our customers are local residents within walking distance. As such we suggest that these variations would have no adverse impact on either traffic or parking in the area.

In regards to the removal of condition 9 AWDM/1884/16 to allow for outdoor furniture solely within our designated forecourt area, coinciding with the proposal of use being extended until 22:00 hours daily, any furniture would be cleared and made inaccessible after this time.

The use of furniture in the forecourt area was previously approved within the premises licence in 2017 to allow for 3 tables with benches providing seating for 24 people. I have attached a copy of this approved plan and premises licence for information. To allow for improved accessibility to and from the premises I propose using 6 small circular tables with 4 seats around each table. I have attached a copy of the plan for furniture in the forecourt area, which shows a pavement area of 3.4m in width beyond my forecourt area, demonstrating no disruption being caused by providing the public a generous area of use.

As shown in the attached outdoor plan, I propose the use of 4 wooden planters with 2 of the planters placed on either side of the outdoor area within our designated forecourt boundaries. Each planter contains an array of plants which not only improve the overall street scene but are also ecologically beneficial, attracting various forms of wildlife, most notably bees. The planters also create a clear barrier between the customers using the forecourt area and the public, providing required containment. Additionally the planters effectively keep any potential litter arising from the use of the forecourt area contained within that immediate area, which staff are then able to efficiently clear if required to prevent any disruption to the wider public.

Five other premises on the same parade as my premises currently have wooden planters present in their forecourt areas, which successfully evidences the positive effects of having them in place as outlined above.

Anti-wind ash trays are provided to smokers, with the contents disposed of on a daily basis in a safe manner. The forecourt area would also be swept on a daily basis, with the surrounding 10 meters of highway inspected by staff to ensure that there is no rubbish or detritus present…..

……We are determined and dedicated to continue to provide a safe, well- managed and community conscious venue. In the future we aim to consult with specialists regarding our shop front and plans to replace it with an improved design with additional sound proofing considerations. This would not only make our premises more environmentally friendly through improved insulation, utilising double glazing or similar, this alteration would also further minimise any potential noise pollution from the premises."

Relevant Planning History:

AWDM/1884/16 - Change of use from Use Class A1 (shop) to Use Class A4 (drinking establishment) micro-pub with installation of refrigeration unit to rear (north) elevation.
STATUS: Application Permitted 16th February 2017.

AWDM/1609/25 - Approval of details reserved by conditions 6 (sound insulation) and 10 (smoking management plan) of application AWDM/1884/16.
STATUS: Application Permitted 20th January 2026.

Other Nearby Bars

The Elephant in the Room, 40 Goring Road: Variation of condition granted under AWDM/0886/25 to allow outdoor tables and chairs on the pavement until 22.00hrs.

The Moon by Sea, 28 Goring Road: Planning permission granted for change of use of to a wine bar with food provision under AWDM/1274/23 with no restrictions on the provision of outdoor seating.

Consultations

WSCC: The Local Highway Authority (LHA) has raised no objection, commenting:

"WSCC as the County Highway Authority has been consulted on the above changes and no objection is raised. The proposals do not affect the current use of the footway and cycle path and as such would not create any highway safety issues. The applicant may need to check the current tables and chairs license they may have and if this change needs to be noted in the licence or not, or if this automatically updates as part of the planning permission."

Environmental Protection, Environmental Health & Licensing

There are no objections to this variation of planning conditions. The current planning permission required a high standard of sound insulation to be installed in the premises and since opening Environmental Health has have received no noise complaints against the premises.

The Council also permits table licences on public land for outside seating for use up to 10pm in such locations and what is requested here is consistent with this time.

Sussex Police

The National Planning Policy Framework demonstrates the government's aim to achieve healthy, inclusive, and safe places which are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of attractive, well-designed, clear, and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high-quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.

Although the level of crime and anti-social behaviour in Adur and Worthing is average (as indicated within Police.uk) additional measures to mitigate against any identified local crime trends and site-specific requirements should always be considered.
I have had the opportunity to examine the detail within the application and in an attempt to reduce the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime I offer the following comments.

The applicant and their partners are strongly advised to consult directly with the licensing team at Sussex Police with regards to these proposed changes. The Sussex Police Licensing Team may have some of their own requirements to be implemented into the premises before they are satisfied it meets licensing objectives on the day-to-day operation of the premises which is why it is extremely important that the applicant contacts them as soon as is practicable.

From a crime prevention perspective - my main concern with additional hours of trading is the amenity of the surrounding local community who may be adversely affected with longer opening times and the provision of outdoor seating which will allow for up to 24 guests to drink outside. Should this planning application be approved - a large degree of sensitivity will be required to make sure the surrounding local community is not unduly disturbed, and it will therefore be a matter for the applicant to ensure that this is managed in the most appropriate manner in order to accord with Policy DM5 and DM22 of the Worthing Local Plan.

Additionally - should external seating be permitted the Manual for Streets document recommends the minimum distance of 2 metres of pavement should be left clear and unobstructed, available for pedestrian use.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to offer comments in response. The Crime & Disorder Act 1998 heightens the importance of taking crime prevention into account when planning decisions are made. Section 17 of the Act places a clear duty on both police and local authorities to exercise their various functions with due regard to the likely effect on the prevention of crime and disorder. You are asked to accord due weight to the advice offered in this letter which would demonstrate your authority's commitment to work in partnership and comply with the spirit of The Crime & Disorder Act.

Neighbour Representations

One representation in support of the application has been received from a local resident commenting:

"This micro-pub is an asset to the community which has been responsibly owned and run since it opened. It is a locally owned independent business supporting local and national brewers who in turn are small businesses.

This application is just to extend opening hours and to allow for outside seating which is similar to that of other food and drink establishments in the same shopping parade. I support this application."

Relevant Planning Policies:

Worthing Local Plan policies (WBC 2023): SP1, SP3, DM5, DM13, DM22
National Planning Policy Framework (MHCLG 2024)
National Planning Practice Guidance

Planning Assessment:

There is no objection in principle to the proposal which is consistent with the objectives of policy DM13 to support the vitality and viability of the Town's District Centres whilst also maintaining their important retail function. The supporting text at paragraph 5.187 states:

"In general, the Council will be supportive of proposals that seek to expand operations beyond the usual daytime economy into evening / night-time economic opportunities. However, careful consideration will be given as to the appropriateness of certain types of activities and operational hours. The over-concentration of such uses in a centre can create significant problems. It will be important to ensure that such development cumulatively does not harm the character and function of a centre, undermine its vitality and viability, or lead to significant problems of crime, disorder and noise that would unacceptably impact on the amenity of those living and working in the area. A careful balance is required between the needs of (and impacts on) local residents with the economic benefits of promoting an enhanced evening and night-time economy."

The key considerations in this case are the effects on the amenities of nearby residential occupiers, visual amenity and accessibility on the public highway.

Visual Amenity

An area of external seating enclosed by planters is currently laid out on the pavement forecourt in front of this premises.

The submitted drawing shows an area 4.1m deep x 5m wide with 6no circular tables each with 4 chairs (24 covers). However, it should be noted that the current application is only to vary condition 9 which specifically prohibits external seating. The Licensing Team Leader has confirmed that a pavement license for the external tables and chairs (and associated paraphernalia) will be required under the Council's new pavement licensing scheme introduced on 1 Oct 2025.

There are numerous other examples of external seating areas in front of other premises in this parade, including Bay Leaf café (No.38A), Shafiques (No.42), The Elephant in the Room (No.44), the Moon by Sea (No.28), Spice I Am (No.26) and 'Johnny's Bar and Kitchen' (Nos 12-14) Goring Road. Several are enclosed by planters similar to those proposed here.

Only those premises East of No.26 (inclusive) have a private forecourt with the remainder utilising the public footway.

It is considered the external seating area adds to the vitality and visual interest of this part of the shopping street and the variation of condition 9 can therefore be supported.

[It was noted on a recent site visit that festoon lighting has been installed strung from posts fixed into the planters and attached to the shopfront, and 2no heaters added to the outside area. The Applicant has been advised that, unlike the heaters which are moveable, the timber 'structure' would reasonably fall within the definition of development, for which a separate application for full planning permission would be required.]

Residential Amenity

The EH Officer has raised no objection to proposed opening hours of the micro-pub extending later into the evening, commenting that a good standard of insulation has been installed at the premises.

At the time of the original permission in 2016 'micro-pubs' were a relatively new business concept and a cautious approach was taken in preventing outdoor tables and chairs in the interests of safeguarding the amenities of the flats above. During the Covid-19 pandemic (c.2020-2022) a more permissive approach in general was taken to the provision of outdoor seating at drinking establishments (to overcome Government-imposed restrictions on indoor gatherings of unrelated people).

Thus, despite the existing restrictive planning condition, it is apparent that an outdoor seating area has been provided at the premises, in accordance with an earlier premises license, without generating any complaint from residents.

Although the precise layout of the external area (including tables and chairs and associated paraphernalia) will be determined by a new premises license in accordance with the Council's pavement licensing scheme; the submitted plan indicates a larger external area than granted under the previous licence, but with the same number of covers overall (24no).

The inclusion of planters will help to prevent tables/chairs/customers spilling outside of the demarcated area ensuring that unobstructed access is maintained to the adjacent entrance door to the maisonette (54A).

The Applicant has confirmed that tables and chairs will be made inaccessible after 22.00hrs and stored inside the premises overnight.

Subject to the recommended control on hours of use of the outdoor area up to 22.00hrs it is considered the impact on the amenities of nearby residents will not be unacceptably harmful.

Accessibility

The shops/commercial units on this part of Goring Road directly front the public highway which consists of an unusually deep pavement with a narrow cycle lane marked out between the footway and the road carriageway.

The submitted plan shows that a footway depth of 3.4 metres would be retained between the proposed external seating area and the cycle path. It is not considered accessibility for pedestrians would be unacceptably impeded and the LHA has raised no objection.

Recommendation:

APPROVE subject to condition(s):-

1. Approved plans [As for AWDM/1884/16]*
2. Blank [Time Limit]
3. There shall be no preparation/cooking/heating-up of hot or cold food on the premises. No hot or cold food shall be served to customers on the premises (other than pre-packaged bar snacks).
4. The micro-pub hereby permitted shall only be open for trade and business between: 11.00 hrs and 22:30 hours on Monday to Thursday; 11.00 hrs and 23.30 hrs on Friday and Saturday, and between 11.00 hrs and 22.00 hrs on Sundays.
5. No live music or amplified music shall be played or TV broadcast at the micro-pub hereby permitted at any time.
6. Blank [Complied with]
7. All pipework fixings related to internal chiller unit shall be installed and retained with resilient (anti-vibration) mounts.
8. Notwithstanding the provisions of the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development Order 1995 as amended (or any order revoking and re-enacting that Order with or without modification), the premises shall be used only as a micro-pub (sui generis) as described in the supporting material submitted with the application and for no other purpose..
9. There shall be no use of any external seating area by customers except between the hours of 11.00 and 22.00 on any day. All external seating shall be made inaccessible to customers after 22.00hrs and stored inside the premises overnight.
10. The smoking management plan approved under AWDM/1609/25 shall be adhered to at all times the premises is open.
11. No gaming machines shall be installed on the micro-pub premises at any time.

***Note:** Approved plans list not to include the submitted pavement seating area plans as the precise layout will need to be the subject of a separate pavement licence application.

Informative

The Local Planning Authority has acted positively and proactively in determining this application by assessing the proposal against all material considerations, including planning policies and any representations that may have been received and subsequently determining to grant planning permission in accordance with the

presumption in favour of sustainable development, as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Advice to Applicant: re. application for pavement license and full planning permission required for festoon lighting structure.

Is recommendation contrary to letter(s) of representation? N

Case Officer: Jo Morin Date: 02.02.2026

Authorised by: Louise Prew Date: 02/02/2026