

Name: Mr Charles Cohen

Email:

Address: 16 Avon Close Sompting West Sussex

Comments Details

Commenter
Type: Member of the Public

Stance: Customer objects to the Planning Application

Reasons for
comment:

- Design
- Loss of General Amenity
- Other

Comments: Dear Planning Officer,
I submit this objection to the proposed change of use of The Gardeners Arms to a residential dwelling. The application does not address the Council's previous refusal and remains non compliant with Policy 33 of the Adur Local Plan, Paragraph 98 of the NPPF, and emerging Policy HC6.

1. Absence of Mandatory Viability Evidence
The Viability Assessment acknowledges that "there are no accounts available". In the absence of trading accounts, turnover data, barrellage, operating costs, or supplier invoices, no robust assessment of viability can be undertaken. Policy 33 requires verifiable financial evidence; the applicant has provided none. The submission therefore fails the evidential threshold for demonstrating non viability.

2. Operational History Confirms Continuing Demand
The Planning Statement confirms the premises were reopened and trading on multiple occasions between 2022 and 2025. Three separate operators took on the pub during this period. This operational pattern is inconsistent with the assertion of insufficient demand and instead indicates an ongoing market for the facility.

6. Loss of the Last Pub in Sompting - High Policy Weight
The applicant confirms The Gardeners Arms is the last public house in the village. Under NPPF 98 and emerging HC6, the loss of the final remaining community facility is only permissible in exceptional circumstances supported by robust evidence. The applicant has not met this standard. The loss would materially reduce community provision and undermine the settlement's social infrastructure.

8. Community Value Not Addressed
The application does not engage with the pub's established community function, despite acknowledging activities such as quizzes, darts, live music, and community gatherings. These are recognised indicators of community value under NPPF 98 and should have been assessed. Their omission is a material deficiency.

9. Previous Reason for Refusal Remains Unresolved
The Council previously refused the application on the basis that non viability had

not been demonstrated. The resubmission provides no new substantive evidence to address this. Only the dormer issue has been amended; the principal policy conflict remains.

Conclusion

The application fails to demonstrate non viability, fails to show lack of demand, and fails to identify alternative provision. It remains contrary to:

- Policy 33 - Adur Local Plan
- Policies 15 and 17 - Heritage and Character
- Paragraph 98 - NPPF
- Emerging Policy HC6 - Retention of Key Community Facilities

The Gardeners Arms is a key community asset and the last pub in Sompting. Its loss would result in significant and irreversible harm to the village's social infrastructure.

I therefore request that the Council refuse the application.

Yours faithfully,

Charles Cohen
