

Dear Sir/Madam,

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

Comments were submitted at 05/05/2026 5:41 PM from Mr Jamie Hooper.

Application Summary

Address:	Gardeners Arms West Street Sompting West Sussex BN15 0AR
Proposal:	Change of use from Public House with flat over to residential dwelling including relevant internal and external changes, parking and landscaping
Case Officer:	Peter Barnett

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Name:	Mr Jamie Hooper
Email:	
Address:	13 St Michaels Road Worthing West Sussex

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Requested to Speak in Contributor Letter
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	- Loss of General Amenity
Comments:	I have submitted my response on Tuesday 5th May, having earlier had problems submitting it on the Planning Portal, and ask that this email be acknowledged. I add my comments, as before retirement, I had been earlier a publican who had owned his own pub in London. I therefore have knowledge of the type of costs to run this type of business.

It would appear that this Planning Application for the property is basically the same as that previously submitted to Adur DC last October and rejected by the Council, except for two major points.

The first is the removal of the proposal for a dormer window in the top floor of the building, to which the Council objected.

The second is a Viability Assessment, which other objectors have challenged in both its assumptions and accuracy. Unfortunately, neither the proposers of the planning application nor the objectors have access to trading figures, and the figures submitted can reasonably be termed speculative.

In the licensed trade, there are good operators who are able to make a success of a pub's facilities and position, and there are poor operators who don't.

There have been a number of occasions over recent years where lack of viability has been advanced as in this Application.

I note that in the Viability Assessment produced by submitted by Thomas E Teague on behalf of the applicants that a number of the items submitted to be necessary to reopen have in fact been disposed by the purchasers of the pub before this planning application was submitted. This includes the commercial kitchen, and interior bar furniture. These costs have been included to support their case.

The fact is that the pub was sold as a pub, and the valuations for this type of commercial building are always substantially less than if it was already zoned for exclusive use as residential. The owners should have had applied for, and obtained that consent to conversion before disposing of assets that enabled the pub to be reopened if the necessary residential conversion was not obtained.

Making a building possibly difficult to reopen could be seen as "gaming the system", and many Local Authority planning departments take a dim view of that.

I draw the Planning Committee to a selection of cases where Planning Applications for conversion of existing pubs have been turned down on Appeal by planning inspectors.

For brevity it is impossible to go through each case, so I will just list them a sample. The reasons for these decisions can be read online by entering the 7 digit number on acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk

VIABILITY

Black Hart, Thorney Toll, Cambs 3135445

New Plough, Lincs 3139947

Duke's Head, Coddensham, Suffolk 3143123

Cross Keys, Ipswich 3143228

<https://henley.onesuffolk.net/assets/Uploads/3143228-Appeal-Decision.pdf>

Fox & Hounds, Barley, Herts 3154356

Old House at Home, Newnham, Berkshire 3169774

Three Horseshoes, Sidlow, Surrey 3244966

PUB REGISTERED AS ACV

Black Horse, Amberley, West Sussex 2186992

(This pub has since been purchased by pub operators and operating successfully).

Chesham Arms, London E9 2209018 (Operating successfully)

White Lion, Goring Heath, Oxon 2224457

ONLY PUB IN SETTLEMENT

Holywell Inn, Holywell Green, Yorks 3157837

Oak, Charing, Kent 3156139

RUNNING DOWN OF PUB

Red Lion, Sheringham, Norfolk 2116106

SCOPE FOR COMMUNITY BUY OUT

Plough Inn, Longparish, Andover 3221040 (Reopened successfully through community buyout).

I have met the villagers in Sompting that wish to retain their last remaining pub, and believe they have the focus and ability to raise the funds to purchase the pub if it is put back on the market at the value it was sold at last year, rather than at a hypothetical value as if it had been permitted conversion to residential.

Jamie Hooper
13, St Michael's Rd, Worthing BN11 4SD
