RESPONSE TO REPRESENTATION MADE BY EMERALD FINANCE-
Documents for reference AWDM/1370/22

Emerald Finance
77 Rowlands Road,
Worthing,
West Sussex
BN11 3JN

To Matt Sutton, Matt Piper and whom it may concern,

I would like to address the following concerns listed by Emerald Finance in response to our application appeal for The Signal Post.

"Increased Noise Pollution and Disturbance" I completely understand the point made by Emerald Finance regarding noise pollution if customers were to be seated out the front of their shop. It is a reasonable concern. However, our business hours don't start until 12pm and our busy periods are outside of Emerald Finance's business hours. We would also post signage around the seating asking customers to respect our neighbours along with our staff managing any antisocial behaviour. Our customers are discerning and in an age-bracket of 30-50. In the time we have been open we have had no antisocial or disorderly behaviour, so I'm confident this is manageable. Our lunchtime trade is majoritarily food based so most customers will be seated inside in the daytime as they will want a proper table and chairs to sit at to enjoy their food and drink.

"Potential for increased criminal damage or vandalism" As previously stated, this is highly unlikely to be an issue in our premises. We do not serve customers who demonstrate any potential for these activities.

"Smoking and Smell" It won't be a problem to ask any smokers to continue to use our current smoking area (Milton Road) during your opening hours to avoid any inconvenience to you. I apologise for the current smells you are receiving regarding food preparation in the early mornings. Unfortunately we are unable to move our extraction fan as it has been in that location since the previous tenants and we have now constructed our kitchen area around it. We also never imagined that the smell of fresh bread and sausage rolls could be considered so unpleasant!

"Social Issues" It is my understanding that the social issues you mentioned (drugs, vandalism and homelessness) have been vastly reduced since we have been operating. For example, drug use that used to be prolific in the back area of our building (Milton Road and Milton Street) has stopped entirely. This is largely due to our presence between 9am and 11pm and also due to the installation of CCTV, security lights and our active participation in the Worthing Pubwatch

Scheme. This is also something that has been frequently commented on by many neighbours and people who live in the local area. I think you'll agree that CCTV and security lights also diminish the likelihood of vandalism.

"Impact on Neighbours" This is something that we take very seriously, hence why we have taken the time to collect ninety-two signatures of support from locals and eleven letters of support from surrounding neighbours. There would only be a limited number of stools and they would mainly be used for customers to enjoy the afternoon sunshine or wait for a table to become available inside. We are also in discussions to impact a curfew on outdoor seating to ensure that the neighbours are not disturbed at antisocial hours.

"*Space"* The seating we have selected would leave ample space for wheelchairs and buggies, and if any customers would like to park a wheelchair or mobility scooter in this space there would also be room (not that this happens at all frequently as most use our ramp to enter the premises).

"Lack of Privacy" I'm unsure as to why this is an issue as our seating would not provide a direct or indirect view inside your premises (which has mostly frosted privacy glass on it anyway). We operate as more of a cafe in the daytime and do not have intoxicated customers anywhere on the premises. The majority of our daytime trade is mature customers enjoying lunch and coffee and anyone who exhibits any signs of intoxication is refused service on the basis of licensing laws. We also have a direct view from the inside of our premises of the seating area and would be policing any customers sitting outside. Any antisocial behaviour is not tolerated at our premises as a rule and this would include any customers who chose to make use of an outside seat.

Overall I would like to explain that we run a very strict establishment and our customer base is mature and respectful. We have had no issues of antisocial behaviour thus far and only intend to allow our customers the option of enjoying the sunshine and having a comfortable place to wait for access to an inside table. I really hope that our response to your comments helps ease your concerns and I do hope that if the application is successful you won't hesitate to let us know if any issues arise. We will be sure to change and adapt our practices to ensure nobody is put out or inconvenienced.

Yours Respectfully,

Fleur Penny
Company Director