

Planning
Planning Dept.
Adur + Worthing Council

Ref. Planning Application

AW/DM/0423/026.

objection comment



27 APR 2026

Business Support

Ref Planning Application AWDM/0423/026

Comment. Member of the Public. Loss of Amenity. Objection.

Mrs Ann Jennings 22.04.2026

24 Cokeham Rod, Sompting, BN15 0AA Tel. 07984787435

I strongly object to the above planning application. This is the almost the same application made a few months ago, with a glossy brochure now supporting it. Then it was rejected. Main grounds for rejection were:

The Gardeners Arms is the only remaining pub serving Sompting (The Marquis was razed on the grounds that The Gardeners Arms be saved to serve the village and surrounding communities);

The village needs a community hub. The Gardeners Arms was this hub. It was a popular pub used by locals and visitors to the area. I, with other locals, submitted an application for the pub to be made an Asset Of Community Value (ACV) late last year. The application had 34 signatories. We were advised by AW Council to withdraw that application and make a new one with supporting written statements made by signatories. We have done this. There are a few omissions on this current ACV application which we, a group of locals who want our village pub to remain open, are correcting. I will submit this revised second ACV application within the next few days. This one is supported by 21 page length supporting statements. The pub was popular and well used and this support demonstrates that;

The new owners bought the building as a pub, at the cost of a pub. They should not be allowed to close the pub and change its use to a house that will be worth three times the amount paid. There is no need for such a house in the village. Most of those built to replace The Marquis remain unsold. There is a flat above the pub. A big house serves no one except the new owners who will have got a very nice large, very cheap house.

These grounds still stand.

The new application is based on a glossy submission made by someone who has no real knowledge of the pub or the area which it serves. The whole application is based on supposition and contains many errors.

Re: Planning and Design Statement DJA Planning, the basis of the new planning application

Paragraph

1.8 I have just stated the pub was well used. Why a Parish Council, which one would assume would hold the needs and interests of the community at heart, should erroneously state the pub struggled, is beyond belief. On at least two occasions I tried, within the last four years, to book Sunday lunch and was refused because the pub was fully booked. The pub was busy on the occasions I have visited, with my husband and with my family.

1.11 I have already stated that our recent ACV application was withdrawn on Council advice, and that another has been put forward. This, corrected, application will be submitted this week. Our application, and support for the pub, is very alive.

3.3 Changes to the exterior of the building will create an unsafe walkway for pedestrians.

3.4 The pub car park was before open for use by locals to alleviate traffic and parking pressure in the village. This has been withdrawn. The road is busier than ever. Where is The Grenadier Arms? Has this document been used for other pub submissions?

3.7 Teague claims to be a 'sector specialist'. The company is not a specialist regarding this pub or area. The pub was viable. Covid affected its performance, as did withdrawal of funds by its parent company. This was the case with many pubs after 2021. The Gardeners Arms was still supported and used by locals and had busy sessions. Staff who worked in the pub since then have reported that on some nights takings were over £2000 for the night. That one could not book a table for Sunday lunch shows its popularity. That various local people came forward to bid for the pub when it was up for sale show these people believed, based on their experience on running and using the pub, it was a viable establishment.

4.7 There have been many new homes built in Sompting over the last two years. There is not need for one more big house. The pub building already holds a flat. There is no gain to residential use if the pub is closed. As mentioned earlier, several of the new houses built on the land on which The Marquis pub stood remain unsold.

4.14 One more bit of grass will not enhance the already beautiful and green village of Sompting. A carpark offering parking to relieve pressure on the near road, and a safe place for drinkers to leave their vehicles, enhances the village much more.

4.17 The pub has not been 'marketed for a reasonable period of time'. The building was bought as an investment to make an expensive private residence.

There is no alternative provision available locally. There is no other community hub in the village, and neighbouring pubs are not within walking distance. The distance means people wanting to enjoy a meal and drinks have to use their car. Drinking and driving are not to be encouraged.

5.1 The Gardeners Arms was viable and was used. To say otherwise is wrong.

5.2 The buildings replacing The Marquis of Granby remain mainly empty

5.7 The Gardeners Arms did struggle, as did all pubs. Covid was the main reason. On Mothers' Day the owner was planning to provide many meals and people had booked in. Much was lost by pubs having to close just before the date.

5.8 The pub was sold as a pub, not a private residence. There were other interested bidders, wanting to keep the pub open, believing in its viability.

5.9 There is an existing Asset of Community Value application ready to be re-submitted. If this is successful the group will continue to push for the pub to be reopened and will, if need be, seek to work towards community ownership of the pub. We are not going away.

5.16 Sompting is not a small village. Google tells us that recent census show there are almost 9,000 people living in the growing village. Repairs to the building are cosmetic and manageable. The pub could have reopened safely immediately after its sale. A rotten windowsill does not mean the building should be sold off cheaply. The new owners have removed the commercial kitchen and other fittings SINCE the pub's sale, thereby reducing its worth. Figure produced are without any evidence and purely supposition. From the perspective of our Save The Gardeners Arms support group, the pub could easily be viable.

5.19 The new housing development, housing potential pub goers, is situated below the pub in the village. Developments to pavements and the road for that development have no bearing to the road and area surrounding the pub.

5.20 The pub should remain a social facility for the community. As already stated in earlier objections, it was used by pensioners, single people, couples, and families and provided a safe and welcoming environment for socialising.

5.26 There exists a live Asset of Community Value application. Yet one more erroneous statement is made in the planning application document.

5.28 The pub now provides the new owner a cheap building to be made into a valuable house worth three times more than the amount paid for it as a pub.

5.32 The existing car park proved beneficial for pub goers and for local car owners, providing off the road parking which made the road safer for all.

6.1 The pub is already an attractive building fitting in well with other village buildings. It appears less attractive at the moment as the new owners have crudely boarded up windows and fenced the car park, giving the place an abandoned look.

6.3 There is local support for the pub. It was viable until it was sold off cheaply.

Re: Viability Assessment T E Teague JJ Keane

1.1 There are no trading accounts. The assessment is entirely based on supposition.

1.4 A visit made in January 2026 will have shown a boarded up building with a fenced off car park with many internal assets missing, one main one being the commercial kitchen which has been taken out by the new owner.

2. Impressive background but the report shows little real knowledge of the pub and Sompting.

3.1 Google says there are almost 9,000 residents in Sompting.

3.2 Facilities mentioned are not within walking distance for many Sompting residents. The pub is the only real community hub.

5.5 The existing toilet accommodation is sufficient for a pub. The carriage is not required.

5.10 The 'awkward' layout has been well managed for over a century. I have sat at the rear of the pub, on the decking area, and found the area pleasant. Again, the pub served well for decades without a garden.

8.2 However the pub was trading it was well used and very popular. The pub suffered the withdrawal of support from a national pub company as did many managed pubs following covid.

9.3 A new premises licence can be obtained.

11.2 The Gardeners Arms is no more inaccessible as any other Victorian pub. I have mobility problems and easily accessed the ground floor public areas.

11.3 There is absolutely no need for an extra toilet.

12.1 The current owners have allowed the pub's maintenance to decline and have removed important fittings, including the commercial kitchen. The windows and doors were functional before it was closed and remain so. The cellar is as wet as are many pub cellars, nothing a pump cannot remedy. As someone who has owned old properties I envisage the proposed repair costs given as £100,000 to be rather ridiculous.

13.1 The pub has been devalued by the new owner through the removal of the commercial kitchen and other assets. If offered for sale the new price should reflect this.

16.2 Covid measures greatly affected Maggie Treacy's management, as already noted.

19.1 Again, Google stated census results show the figure given to be incorrect, and that Sompting's population is almost 9,000. As stated in Teague's reports, new housing developments within the village will increase the number of potential pub goers. The pub was indeed a destination pub, serving real ale and excellent meals. As stated earlier, I have been on more than one occasion unable to book Sunday lunch because the pub was full.

19.4 Pure conjecture to say visitors to local attractions would not use The Gardeners Arms. There are two hospitality businesses in the old village, both having visitors who also used the pub.

20.0 Distances given to other pubs are wrong. The Toby Carvery is nothing like a village pub, and, like the other establishments listed, is not within walking distance from the village.

21.2 Sompting does not have a post office or shop so an entrepreneurial owner could offer other facilities. Other community pubs have been very successful in offering other services. The Gardeners Arms could, too.

22.1 The pub's layout has not hindered service.

25.2 The fact other offers were made to purchase the pub proves these would-be owners considered the pub viable. Two are successful businesspeople.

25.5 Other people bid to buy the pub, not change its use.

26.1 In my opinion, some areas of the hospitality trade are growing stronger. Sompting is an affluent area with locals who can afford to eat and drink outside the home. The village is growing. There are new young families in the village.

26.3 The pub had no staffing problems. Most of the previous staff still live in the area. The good transport links mean staff have no transport problems.

26.3 ff Much depends on which economic forecaster one follows.

27.2 The Gardeners Arms may not remain a tenanted pub. The local group is interested in considering community ownership, hence the ACV applications.

27.3 Conjecture.

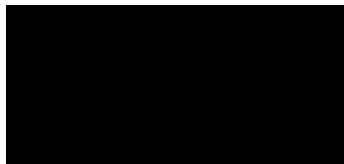
27.5 There is a live ACV application.

27.6 The flat has sufficed well for previous owners.

I have read both supporting documents to the Planning Application and consider statements therein to be erroneous and based on conjecture and supposition. I object to this and any other Planning

Application which means the closure and end of The Gardeners Arms. The pub was a lifeline for many, and locals are missing the welcome and support it offered.

Ann Jennings



22.4.2024