

# Fwd: Planning Objection - AWDM/1285/25

Reps and Consults



Planning -

Tue 21 Apr, 13:44 (19  
hours ago)

to me

Planning | Adur & Worthing Councils  
01903 221065 | <http://www.adur-worthing.gov.uk>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Stuart Underwood** Date: Tue, 21 Apr 2026 at 13:37  
Subject: Planning Objection - AWDM/1285/25  
To: <[planning@adur-worthing.gov.uk](mailto:planning@adur-worthing.gov.uk)>

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to object to the proposed change of use of The Gardeners Arms. Although the pub has now closed, its importance to the community has not faded, and its loss continues to be felt by many of us who relied on it as a place to meet, socialise, and feel part of village life. The Gardeners Arms was never just a building; it was a social anchor for Sompting, and removing it permanently would be a serious mistake.

For years, The Gardeners Arms was the only place in the village where people could gather naturally, without needing an event or a reason. It was where friendships were made, where regulars looked out for one another, and where you could walk in and always find someone to talk to. As someone who enjoys good company and live music, it was one of the few places where I could unwind, listen to local performers, and feel connected to the people around me. The live music nights in particular brought real energy to the village and gave local artists a rare chance to perform in front of a supportive crowd. There is nowhere else in Sompting that offers anything close to that.

It is also important to make clear that the narrative of “no demand” for the pub is simply not true. Offers were made on the freehold by people who wanted to keep it running as a pub. The fact that multiple offers were made—by people with genuine interest and realistic plans—shows that demand absolutely existed. This directly contradicts the applicant’s claim and should carry significant weight under Policy 33 of the Adur Local Plan.

Paragraph 98 of the National Planning Policy Framework is clear that councils must guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities, especially where it would reduce a community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs. That is exactly what has happened here. The alternatives suggested by the applicant are not realistic for many residents—they are too far to walk, especially in the evenings, and public transport is limited. For a village like Sompting, a local pub is not a luxury; it is part of the social infrastructure that keeps people connected.

The previous refusal notice already confirmed that the applicant had not demonstrated non-viability and had not shown a lack of demand. Nothing in the new application addresses these issues. If anything, the evidence of genuine buyer interest shows that the pub did have a future and that the community wanted it to continue.

For these reasons, I strongly object to the proposed change of use. The Gardeners Arms was a vital social hub, a cultural venue, and a place where people felt part of something. It should not be lost to residential conversion when there is clear evidence that it could have remained a thriving community asset.

Kind regards,

Stuart Underwood

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