

From: **Carl Wenham**

Date: Thu, 23 Apr 2026 at 07:07

Subject: AWDM/0423/26 Gardener's Arms Sompting Planning Application Objection

To: planning@adur-worthing.gov.uk <planning@adur-worthing.gov.uk>

AWDM/0423/26 Gardener's Arms Sompting Planning Application Objection

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to register a formal objection to the proposed change of use of The Gardeners Arms from a public house to a residential dwelling. Having reviewed the available documentation, the previous refusal notice, and the relevant planning policy framework, the application fails to meet the requirements for the loss of a community facility and would result in significant harm to the social and economic fabric of Sompting village.

The Gardeners Arms has historically served as the last remaining public house within the core of Sompting. Its role as a community meeting place is well established, and its loss would remove the final accessible venue for social interaction within walking distance for many residents. Paragraph 98 of the National Planning Policy Framework requires local authorities to guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities, particularly where this would reduce a community's ability to meet its day to day needs. In this case, the impact would be substantial. The nearest comparable public houses are located at distances that are not realistically walkable for elderly, vulnerable, or mobility restricted residents, especially given the limited and non existent evening bus services. The removal of this facility would therefore increase social isolation and diminish the cohesion of the village.

Policy 33 of the Adur Local Plan sets out clear criteria that must be satisfied before a community facility can be lost. The previous refusal notice for this site confirmed that the applicant had not demonstrated non viability, had not shown a lack of demand. The current application does not provide new evidence capable of addressing these deficiencies. The viability assessment relies heavily on assumptions rather than verifiable trading data, with no financial accounts evidence to substantiate claims of long term unprofitability.

It is also relevant that there was demonstrable interest from potential purchasers seeking to retain the building as a public house. This directly contradicts the assertion that there is no demand for the facility. The presence of credible would be buyers is a material consideration under Policy 33, as it indicates that the building

had a realistic prospect of continued operation. The failure to acknowledge or reflect this interest undermines the credibility of the applicant's case.

The proposal must also be considered in the context of wider development in Sompting. Significant new housing is already being delivered through allocated sites such as Malthouse Meadows and the Church Farm development. Meanwhile, the conversion of the Marquis of Granby into residential units has resulted in properties that remain unoccupied, demonstrating that further residential conversion is neither necessary nor beneficial to the area. The loss of a community facility to create an additional dwelling offers no meaningful public benefit and conflicts with the strategic aim of maintaining balanced, sustainable communities.

In summary, the application fails to satisfy the requirements of Policy 33 of the Adur Local Plan and paragraph 98 of the NPPF. The harm to the community would be significant, long lasting, and entirely avoidable.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the application is refused.

Many thanks,

Carl Wenham-Young
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