

19 October 2018

Alan Morcombe
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Head of Planning
Arun District Council
Littlehampton
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Dear Sir

Ref: Planning Application: FG/159/18/PL Bluebird Cafe

I make the following comments on the planning application relating to the Bluebird Café. Please accept this communication as an objection to the planning application.

Impact on local amenities:

The business plan submitted by the applicant openly admits that the development is predicated on the following core business drivers. Each of these aspirations will cause a detrimental impact on local amenities, especially on the Kingston Gorse Estate.

The development will create a multi-purpose first floor event space with cutting-edge, audio visual facilities. This will increase the noise and disturbance to local residents adjacent to the Café and, due to the intended longer opening hours, for a greater period of time.

The development will include a first-floor seating area that provides uninterrupted views across the Rife. This will also provide uninterrupted views of private gardens of adjacent properties causing a severe loss of privacy to the residents.

The Café already creates noise and disturbance to adjacent properties on Kingston Gorse and Ferring, especially towards the end of the trading day and after late night functions, although this is mitigated by the reduced number of hours the Café is currently open and the low number of functions held. It is stated by the applicant that the development will allow Café hours to be extended as part of the business case to improve profitability and, in addition, the new development will allow more "out of hour" private functions to take place. This will mean that the noise and disturbance created will also increase to the detriment of adjacent property owners.

The development intends to provide bike racks with repair facilities. This is an unexpected statement as it is likely to encourage the use of bicycles in the immediate area to the Café. Arun District Planning will know that the public footpath and private grounds adjacent to the Bluebird Café prohibit the use of cycles. Cyclist already create a nuisance to those using the footpath on the Greensward adjacent to the Bluebird Café and this development will increase the nuisance caused. Whilst I support the increased use of cycles for recreational purposes, I believe that facilities already created by local Government for their use provides sufficient opportunity for those who want to cycle, and this new proposed development should not encourage the prohibited use of cycles on footpaths or across private property.

Access:

Access to the Bluebird Café is already chaotic. The approach road is single file and the car parking facilities inadequate for the existing facility. The applicant admits that they have no plans to improve either access to the café or parking facilities. For this reason alone, the application should be refused. Planning Officers will know that with the advent of the Internet several mobile phone applications have been developed for the public to identify the location of desirable places to eat and socialise. Whilst this in itself is not a bad thing, it is inevitable that once the poor access and parking inadequacies of the new development are known, visitors will be encouraged to park at other locations where access and parking is easier but not permitted. I am concerned this will encourage visitors to the Bluebird Café to trespass on the Kingston Gorse Estate private roads and park to gain access, first onto the greensward and then the Bluebird Café. This will create an intolerable situation and could lead to major disorder. It is my contention that unless access and parking facilities are improved the development is untenable.

Design:

The Applicant suggest that the proposed two-storey development is “to meet the need of the local people”. However, this does not seem to be the driver behind the development as the existing Café already meets the needs of local residents. Kingston and Ferring is a beautiful serene area and it would be wrong to allow it to be converted into a busy area that attracts too many visitors for the local infrastructure to support. Because of the nature of the surroundings I consider that the development is over bearing and completely out of proportion with the requirements of local people.

Should the development go ahead, it will inevitably attract significantly more custom from a wider area and this will not be in the interests of local people who will suffer the consequences of increased traffic, increased footfall and negative impact on the local community.

Yours faithfully

Alan Morcombe