

The Old Cottage
East Kingston Farm
Kingston Lane
Kingston Gorse
West Sussex
BN16 1RS

Mrs Anita Gardener
Arun District Council
1 Maltravers Road
Littlehampton
West Sussex
BN17 SLF

6th November 2018

Dear Mrs Gardener,

Two - storey extension to the existing Cafe in order to provide increased internal seating, multi-purpose space, with improved service & food preparation area, disabled access & bike storage at The Bluebird Cafe, South Drive, Ferring, BN12 SQU
Council Ref: FG/159/18/PL

I am writing to raise objections with regard to the above planning application. I live approximately half a mile away (see above) from The Bluebird Café but keep my ponies in the paddock adjoining the property, 'Neptune', which is just 15 metres away (see below). Before living at my current address, I lived at 3 The Strand, Ferring, seen in the picture below, three houses to the east of the Bluebird Café. One of the reasons I moved, from that address, was because of the changes in the café's licensing laws, some years ago, which led to more noise and disruption from cars and increased clientele. This will rise further if the Bluebird increases in size.



Countryside

My first reason for objecting is that the planning application appears to go against policies in the local Development Plan regarding protecting the countryside:

The area directly behind The Bluebird Café, was once part of East Kingston Farm, owned by My Candy. He sold a strip of land for 'limited' development. The surrounding area is still farmland, owned by Mr Chris and Mr Tim Walters, but farmed by Mr Langmead. As such it is deemed 'countryside' and should be protected as stated in The Arun Local Plan, "the Council will 'protect the natural environment by strictly controlling development in the countryside'."

There is still livestock kept in the area; sheep at Kingston Manor, horses at several locations from mine, at 'Neptune', some at East Kingston Farm and along Kingston Lane in various fields. There is also much livestock at Ferring Country Centre.

My further reasons will clarify why it is important to protect the countryside in this area.

Vehicles, parking and access

I walk from my house to the paddock, by Neptune, twice a day to care for my ponies and my route takes me along the west bank of the Rife, through the Bluebird Café car park and along the Kingston Gorse 'greensward'. The number of vehicles using the car park has risen expedientially over recent years as the Bluebird café has grown and become more popular. It is always busy and often quite dangerous to walk through as car parking spaces aren't designated and vehicles move randomly, often without care for pedestrians. Originally, at peak times (Bank Holidays, school summer holidays, warm weekends) but now much more frequently, the car park overflows onto the narrow Ferring lanes, often parking on both sides of the roads, basically blocking the thoroughfare. Ferring is a haven for the elderly but, as such, has a high percentage of people needing medical (often emergency) attention. With the parking as it is, emergency vehicles would not be able to reach these people, (or anyone having an accident on the water/beach) let alone buses that so many of them rely on. The locals are often trapped within their properties by thoughtless parking. This is happening NOW so, with extra development, this could be happening on a far greater scale and more frequently! It must also be remembered that the café does not own the car park, nor does it have sole use. There are beach hut owners, house owners from The Strand and dog walkers all competing for parking space – often dangerously. Deliveries to the café and refuse collection (sporadic) are often in big lorries and these add to the dangerous mêlée which will increase if the café is bigger and catering for more customers.

Disabilities

Recently, disabled access has been put in the gateways leading to the Kingston Gorse 'greensward' and the Rife, enabling people in wheelchairs (as well as babies in buggies) to access the lovely walks along the beach top and river. They will be taking their life in their hands to get to the gateways across the car park, if they can actually get into the car park in the first place! This is a backward step and is actually, enabling discrimination, not the original, noble intention of allowing accessibility into our countryside.

Litter

The Bluebird Café, in its current state, cannot cope with their litter situation. Bin bags sit outside the kitchen area over the weekend and holiday periods and are often ripped apart by sea gulls, foxes etc, spreading their revolting contents all over the car park

and blowing into gardens, the river and fields. The area, just to the west of the café, on the Kingston Gorse greensward, is often covered with empty fast food cartons, amongst other rubbish, as the bins are full (or visitors can't be bothered to walk to them!) Every morning, when I clear my horses 'poo' up from the field, I pick up litter that's been thrown over the fence by lazy visitors, attracted to the area because of the café's facilities, often sourced from the café. The beach is covered in litter too. This litter problem is only going to get worse if this planning goes through – more people, more litter. With the recent upsurge in feeling about protecting our environment from human interference, particularly plastic litter, shouldn't we be taking more care of controlling the amount of litter pervading our beaches and countryside, not encouraging more? And let's not even start on dog poo!!

People

As illustrated above, the Bluebird Café, and its surrounds, has already reached (and at many times exceeded) maximum capacity in people - parking, rubbish bins etc. It is wrong to presume parking spaces match tables in the café as people come to Ferring Beach so that they can buy an ice cream to supplement their picnic on the beach! So not all of this can be a direct consequence of 'eating in at the café' but a huge amount is as an indirect consequence – the café offers a base. The number of people visiting this car park has rocketed! We even have camper vans camping there illegally because of the facilities on tap! How on earth can this area cope with more – we've already reached saturation point! If this planning application goes through, the number of people trying to use the up-sized café, car park etc will be colossal.

Fireworks

Already, with the café being hired out for venues, we're seeing a rise in the use of fireworks. Is this legal in a public place? I think not! With my ponies a stone's throw away from the café, they are terrified by the loud bangs and explosions of colour. I believe a law has recently been passed making it illegal to have fireworks near livestock (see Countryside paragraph). But, the clients of the café often have fireworks at their parties. I've asked the café to let me know about this but they don't. If this planning is given consent, there will be a much greater number of events. How will people feel about not being allowed fireworks to celebrate their wedding or other such function? If it's allowed, they will be breaking the law.

Is this what should be happening in the countryside? How does this sit with your policies to protect it?

This planning application must be refused!

Yours sincerely

Gillian McLean

From: Anita Gardner
Sent: 08 November 2018 10:40
To: Planning.Responses
Subject: FW: Bluebird Cafe

Please treat as a rep

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Save the environment - think before you print.

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 November 2018 22:19
To: Anita Gardner
Subject: Fwd: Bluebird Cafe

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

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Wed, Nov 7, 2018 at 10:17 PM
Subject: Bluebird Cafe
To: [REDACTED]
Cc: [REDACTED]

Dear Mrs. Gardener, Cllr Elkins, Cllr Oliver-Redgate,

Please find attached my objection to the Bluebird Cafe planning application FG/159/18/PL

Yours sincerely

Gillian McLean