

Received 1/11/17

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To:
Development Officer,
Arun District Council,
Maltravers Road,
Littlehampton,
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Planning Reference: LU/307/17/PL

Demolition of Promenade Shelter & Construction of café & kite surfing school with roof terrace and associated works.

Dear Development Officer,

I strongly OBJECT to the proposed planning application for the building of a café and surf school on the beautiful Littlehampton promenade for the following reasons:

1. The promenade is the jewel in Littlehampton's tourist crown. Cluttering up the seafront with unwanted buildings would be bad for tourism and bad for residents. Setting a building precedent to other developers is the obvious consequence. What is to stop a swim school, fishing school, skateboard school or any other business from applying in future?
2. Disabled parking would need to be supplied together with adequate parking for the building. Most surfers have vans and like the disabled, need to park near the beach to unload their boards and equipment. For this reason, they cannot use the swimming centres parking. The café/school will attract more surfers so at least 25-50 extra car parking spaces will be required around the café directly on the seafront road. It would be naïve to think there will not be parking problems in on the seafront road. Given there is also a childrens skatepark opposite and a new swimming centre this could create a massive safety risk to children. Parking is a massive Health & Safety issue.
3. Unsuitability of the site. The site is unsuitable to build upon given its position. There are no services such as, drainage, electricity, communications or waste. The landscape is shingle making the estimation of foundation costs difficult. All these costs will be high and inherently inaccurate.
4. What if the works exceeds the applicants budget and the building works are not completed? Given the Councils experience during the river defences, does the council believe that a private individual will fair better? Are there guarantees from the applicant that "whatever the cost", the project will have to be completed? Does the applicant have the resources to make assurances? Is there a leadtime for the works to be completed? Will that will take into account disruption of the seafront road?

5. Disruption of seafront. While the works are taking place there will be disruption and closure of the promenade.
6. The café will compete with the new café at the swimming and sports centre and take away jobs from the swimming centre.
7. Can the business be viable? Given the massive cost to build, will a café ever make any money? Servicing a loan that large presents a massive risk. The café would need to be massive to be profitable which would mean a larger car park again. Would the council be left with a white elephant when the business fails?

DISCUSSION

I am surprised that the council is considering this application. Arun District Council does risk being the laughing stock of county planners.

Does the seafront need another café? NO

Does the town need a surf school? MAYBE

Could the café and surf school be better located elsewhere? DEFINITELY.

SOLUTION

If you are persuaded the town "needs" another cafe or that surfers will create new jobs somehow then the solution is simple. 300 meters west is a car park with ample parking next to the East Beach Café. There are also services such as drainage, electricity, waste and communications. Otherwise build a surfer school as part of the swimming centre perhaps.

I hope that my points are understood and discussed. I have much experience in business and dealt with many projects. I have never heard of such a ridiculous one as this however.

Best regards

Mark Lehmann