

PLANNING STATEMENT

APPLICATION FOR ADDITIONAL USE OF FARM SHOP & CAFÉ TO BREWERY TAP ROOM, FRESH COFFEE BAR & CAFÉ AND RETAIL SALES CROSSBUSH FARM SHOP, LYMINSTER ROAD, ARUNDEL

INTRODUCTION

This statement supports this planning application to extend the use of the existing farm shop and café to a brewery tap room, coffee bar & café and retail sales. It follows a pre-application enquiry (Ref: PAA/137/17/) to the District Council in July this year. In a response dated 07 September 2017, the planning officer concludes that an application of this nature will be likely to be recommended for approval. It is on this basis that this application is presented for consideration.

BACKGROUND

We are a family owned and run local business, Arundel Brewery Ltd, who have formed a partnership together with our friends, Edgcumbes Coffee Roasters & Tea Blenders, also a family owned and run local business.

Our family purchased Arundel Brewery in January 2013 with the dream of re-energising the business and bringing its beers to a wider local audience. In the summer of 2014, we opened our shop in the centre of Arundel, which has been of huge benefit to the business and has enabled us to re-invest and employ more local staff and purchase new equipment to help us brew better beers.

Our business has now reached a point where, in order to grow, employ more staff and produce even better beers, we need to invest more. As a small family business we do not wish to incur debt in order to do this but we do feel that we could achieve this by being able to sell more beer direct to the customer, rather than only supplying pubs. This increased revenue will enable us to grow, therefore employing more local staff and ultimately attract more visitors to Arundel with the concept we have in mind. The fact that there are only two Freehouses in Arundel also limits opportunities to sell our beer locally, which is another factor in our hope to open our own Tap Room.

Edgcumbes Coffee Roasters & Tea Blenders are very similar in ethos to ourselves, being a small, well established, local family business. We have worked together for many years and together we believe that we can provide something truly special to local people and visitors travelling through Sussex.

As stated in our pre-planning application, we envisage a new business on this site, offering fresh, locally brewed beer & coffee, in a family friendly environment, modelled on the lines of the Craft Beer Taprooms in the US. The concept of fresh brewed beer and coffee being offered together is something that is already popular in the US.

APPLICATION PROPOSAL

Our proposal for the site is outlined below:

We see the site as offering two distinct services:

- 1) We would envisage the site becoming a “local, artisanal” alternative to the current, very corporate offerings available to commuters along the A27, particularly on the other side of the Lyminster Road. Rather than having to make do with a mass-produced food and drink offering, what could be more enticing than a cup of freshly brewed, locally roasted, indeed roasted “on site” coffee and locally sourced & made sandwiches. And at the appropriate time of day, a locally brewed beer and perhaps a plate of local charcuterie, served by people who have a knowledge of how the product is produced.
- 2) We would also like to see the site become a hub for locals to come together in a different environment to that which is currently available, families and friends being able to meet together to enjoy local beer & coffee in the same place, as opposed to enjoying these things separately at a dedicated coffee shop or a pub/bar. We would also like to make use of the Mezzanine level, to host various workshops, bread making classes, home brew seminars, chocolate making, coffee workshops – all through the network of local, artisanal suppliers that both our businesses use.

We envisage the business will operate as a fresh coffee bar in the mornings, serving coffee, tea, pastries & sandwiches. From lunchtime onwards, fresh local beer will be served, perhaps with a plate of local charcuterie? We would also hope to be able to offer some form of hot food offering Friday through Sunday. We would also envisage making use of the outside seating area, as the previous two businesses have done, including a small seating area at the front of the building under the existing awnings.

We anticipate normal opening hours to be 7am-10pm, but would assume that normal closing in the evening will be 9pm. We would anticipate employing three new members of staff initially as well as offering further hours of work to our existing staff, in both the businesses. The staffing capacity will increase as footfall grows.

The main fresh coffee and fresh beer bar and a retail offering will mainly be focussed in the existing shop floor area at the front of the building. The existing café area will be utilised as the same, with tables and seating throughout.

We have included both a computer generated graphic of how the layout might look, together with a 1:100 plan drawing.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Planning History

Planning permission was granted under application LY/14/11 for the change of use of part of the existing agricultural building to farm shop and alterations to existing access.

Although the farm shop was the subject of a number of planning conditions relating to the goods to be sold, it is relevant that the Government has subsequently introduced permitted development rights under Class R of the GPDO for a number of flexible uses including A1 (shops) and A3 (restaurants and cafes). This demonstrates the Government's intentions with regards to such buildings in rural areas. In fact, the café was introduced into the building under these permitted development rights.

Planning Policy

National planning policy comprises the National Planning Policy Framework. This states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and defines three dimensions in meeting this: the economic role; the social role and the environmental role. These roles are not expected to be undertaken in isolation because they are mutually dependent.

Environmental role

We confirm the expectation that many visitors will walk to the venue, according to our unofficial surveying of our shop customers. Good use will also be made of the local bus and train services. We have also been led to believe that a good number of local cyclists are already planning scenic routes to the site.

It should be noted that due to its location, immediately next to a junction of the A27, we also expect that there will be reasonable numbers of visits by passing vehicles resulting in combined trips.

There will be no change to the external appearance of the building save an amendment to the wording on the outside and therefore no impact on the visual character of the area.

Social role

We feel that there will actually be a significant social benefit from the establishment of this business, which will grow over time.

In addition to providing a warm and friendly, family orientated environment for local people and our many existing customers to meet, we anticipate the mezzanine level becoming a meeting/event space for the use of local groups. We also hope to run workshops with our local, artisanal suppliers and like-minded businesses, for example, Home Brewing workshops, Chocolate Making workshops, Bread Making and Cookery classes, even yoga classes! We also very much see this venture as a vehicle for raising the profile of what Sussex food and drink has to offer.

Economic role

We will not only be employing local painters/plumbers/electricians/carpenters and sign writers in the development phase but once the venture is up and running we would hope to be employing at least three new employees and hopefully increasing the hours of some of our existing employees who have already expressed an interest in working on this new project.

It goes without saying that, with good local support, this project will grow over time and therefore enable us to grow our business further, employ more staff and therefore have an incremental benefit to the network of local suppliers that we currently work with, as our need for raw materials and ingredient grows.

It will also enable the owner of the building and site to find a sustainable use for his building in the longer term which supports his agricultural business.

The NPPF also sets out the Government's commitment to economic growth and in particular states "The Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. Therefore significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system."

Neighbourhood Amenity

It is relevant to consider how the proposed change of use is going to differ from the farm shop operation in terms of impact on the nearest neighbours.

The operating hours will be 7am-10pm. The original approved use of the building was not restricted by an hours of use condition or traffic movements and we do not anticipate an intensification of use over and above what was previously permitted.

The provision of on-site alcohol consumption will be a difference but our customers will be reminded verbally and by appropriate signage, to respect our neighbours and conduct themselves in an appropriate manner.

We will also endeavour to have all deliveries to the business during reasonable business hours, the exception being waste collections from Biffa, which will be decided by their depot and will be subject to change.

The vast majority of any music at the site will be of a recorded nature and inside the building. We anticipate there being occasional live, acoustic performances but these would also be within the building and will always be finished well within the proposed licensed hours.

Noise and extraction

The hours of trading are currently expected to be 7am-10pm.

We will ensure that any noise generated by our operation and customers will be kept within reasonable limits. The use will be managed by staff to ensure that customers leave the premises in a neighbourly fashion.

We will install suitable signage reminding our patrons to respect our neighbours when arriving and leaving the premises and staff will be instructed to not only conduct themselves in a considerate manner but also to encourage and ensure our customers do likewise.

Vehicle movements will be limited to the improved access point onto the Lyminster Road. It is not anticipated that these movements will cause any additional disturbance to the occupiers of the two nearby cottages, particularly as they are located so close to the main road. Access improvements were agreed by WSCC in connection with Planning Permission LY/14/11.

We will be playing recorded background music inside the premises during hours of operation but will keep this within reasonable volume levels. There will be occasional live acoustic sessions but we anticipate these would take place on the north side of the building to minimise any disturbance to neighbours who are situated on the south side.

We plan to install a small brewing kit and coffee roaster in the building to enable us to serve product that has been produced on site but also to give our customers an insight into the processes involved in what they are eating and drinking.

There are external chilling units to north and south side of the building which were installed prior to the operation of the Farm Shop so we would envisage there be no more increase in noise levels above the previous.

Lighting

We consider that the following will be sources of light during the hours of darkness:

Trading hours are currently expected to be 7am – 10pm, which during the winter months will necessitate internal and external lighting to be in use.

The front of the building has a large glass frontage comprising windows and integral door.

The north facing side of the building has glass bi-fold doors. Whilst the internal lighting will be visible from the road, in the context of its surroundings with the petrol filling station, Premier Inn Hotel etc. and being located at a very busy junction, it is not considered this will be harmful to the character of the area.

We expect to install a motion sensor activated external light to the front of the building to provide additional lighting to customers entering and exiting the building, we would envisage this being on a timer to minimise any disturbance to neighbours.

Bin storage & collection provision

We will be engaging the services of Biffa for the removal of waste generated by the business and there will be weekly collections of Mixed Recycling, General Waste, Food Waste and Glass. We do not have control over the timings of these collections but trust that they will not be too much more than the collections that were required when the building was operating as a Farm Shop & Café.

We have indicated on the proposed 1:100 site plan where the bin storage will be.

Landscaping strategy

In proposing the additional/extension of use from the existing Farm Shop use to that of a Brewery Tap Room, Fresh Coffee Bar & Café and Retail Space, we do not envisage making any significant changes to the existing landscape and layout.

We will be making use of the existing outside layout in terms of the public seating/consumption area to the north side of the building and the existing parking scheme to the front entrance of the building.

We will also be installing bicycle racks in that area and are hoping also to install an electric car charging point at some point in the future.

Additionally, we would propose installing some outside seating to the front entrance, to be positioned under the existing (green) awnings. This will be separated from the parking area by use of significant, heavy duty planters (already on site) filled with planting to provide an obvious demarcation line between the parking area and the seating area. We attach a computer generated image of how we would envisage this area looking.

We intend to improve the visual appearance of the site and have already had discussions with the landlord about re-instating the fencing and gating at the front of the property, to not only improve the look of the premises but also to provide more security and visual indication of when the property is open for business.

Highways.

Access improvements were agreed by WSCC in connection with Planning Permission LY/14/11 and partly implemented. The remaining outstanding works which formed this agreement will shortly be implemented by the owner and it will be a condition of our lease agreement that these final access works will be completed before we commence trading.

Conclusion

It is therefore concluded that the proposed additional uses applied for are an appropriate use for this building given the planning history, the intentions of the Government regarding the re-use of buildings in the countryside and the sustainability of the proposal in terms of its economic and social benefits.

We submit that the proposal in all respects complies with the Development Plan and overarching Government guidance and hope that the Local Planning Authority will support our application.