

Arun District Council
Civic Centre
Maltravers Road
Littlehampton
BN17 5LF
Attention Mr S Davis



12 Laurel Drive
Pagham
Bognor Regis
PO21 3ND

25th February 2020

Dear Sir

Inglenook Hotel Application P/58/19/PL - **OBJECTION**

The dubious option of a pedestrian access 'round the back of the Hotel' is a desperate and questionable move. Visitors and pedestrians will be expected to take an unnatural route, under a canopy of large dense trees, creating wet leaves under foot, past the car park, past a log store and which will pass the Hotel rubbish bins, commercial kitchen extractor fans and be in close proximity to two thatched roofed buildings where Hotel staff currently sit to take a cigarette break, creating a potential fire hazard! The keypad exit gate will open onto a small parking area where regular brewery deliveries to the Hotel are made and refuse collections take place. It is surely, human nature to choose the quickest, shortest route to the shops, which would be the original shared path. *Would this new access be any more safe, secure and hygienic for all users?*

People with mobility difficulties, such as the elderly and wheelchair users should be foremost when considering accessibility issues. However, it is also important not to overlook the needs of people with sensory or cognitive impairment. Design features which make it easier for people to work out where they are and where they are going, are especially helpful to disabled people. The shared drive is not wide enough or straight enough for cars and pedestrians to use safely and the inclusion of a delineated space will only create a false sense of protected space for pedestrians.

The RSA report also says 'drivers would expect the vehicle designated section to be free of pedestrians' so it should be a uniformed finish. *So which is it to be?*

The RSA also recommends pedestrian signage, which Highways originally said was not necessary but have now agreed to. Perhaps we could have a sign to indicate a blind bend!

The increase in online shopping means this access will need to cope with UPS, Amazon, Department Stores and white van deliveries, all in a hurry and mostly wider than a car. *I would question if the access will be wide enough for these and the construction traffic and delivery lorries needed to build these houses?*

A trellis extension has been fitted plus a screening hedge in the front garden to the south of the access entrance and is approx. 4ft high. The screening will in time thicken and obscure the view to the south for vehicles exiting into the Pagham Road. The RSA report says that any remodelling of the access should aim to improve intervisibility. *Has the emerging visibility problem to the south been looked at by anyone?*

It is proposed to remove the lighting columns in order to try to create a wider access and to move the low level lighting higher onto the fence. This fence is privately owned by the resident of Spinnaker View and the Inglenook owner has already crossed the ransom strip to fix the existing

lights to their wall, without seeking anyone's permission. There is also a fire exit entering the narrowest part of the access road with steps at its base which presumably cannot be moved and will cause a trip hazard for pedestrians. If the fire doesn't get you the fire engine will! *How will pedestrians be made aware of the fire escape and its steps?*

The Wilbar Review has raised several issues of safety with regard to the access and these must be addressed, in particular the swept path analysis not taking account of parked cars and buses opposite the access. The WSCC Fire and Rescue Service have proposed a fire hydrant be installed on site but have relied on a desk top study and have offered to make a site visit if required. Building Regulations 2004 state that adequate access for fire fighting vehicles and equipment from the public highway must be available. *Will an actual visit be arranged to confirm that a fire engine and a refuse vehicle will be able to access the site?*

Wilbar also highlights a serious issue with the layby if it can't be reduced and if oncoming drivers are over the centre line there would be a higher risk of collision, plus high sided vehicles parking in the lay by would result in zero visibility. Parking restrictions would slightly reduce the risk but the layby is still of high concern. The development already falls short of parking requirements by 2 spaces which in addition to a loss of any parking on the east side would be detrimental to residents and visitors in the village and would also increase speed on the Pagham Road. Wilbar also state that the location is less accessible for larger goods and services and for work opportunities which will result in a higher reliance on car use and add additional traffic on the highway network. *If Highways is WSCC Highways only area of responsibility, why have they not raised these issues?*

There has been no traffic count for the existing use of the access which would have helped to gauge the impact of additional users more accurately. Although it is an established access route for the car park it is widely acknowledged by locals that because of the narrow width constraints, potholes and previous lack of lighting, it was always underused by customers and visitors. If the car park is used the customers will enter by the back of the Hotel and will not walk to the front. A survey on busy days i.e. funeral wakes, wedding parties or carvery Sundays would have certainly shown that customers prefer and continue to park on the street, on yellow lines, in Mill Farm Estate and now in the visitor bays of Spinnaker View. **The four photos below** show one instance of chaos on a December Sunday lunchtime with one car backing out of the car park, a pedestrian, another car driving out into two way traffic, which included a van and an approaching bus. In addition, a car was illegally parked in the layby on yellow lines. This was one incident, in one hour, on one day, and one wonders what will happen when Church Farm Caravan Park opens for the season. The Transport Statement states that there have been zero accidents occurring at the site access but I can categorically say there have been many, many, near misses, which unfortunately, are not reported!

The RSA report would have more insight into the problem if it had visited on a busy day, Sunday perhaps, instead of at 8 – 8.45am, the quietest part of the day when everyone has gone to work or school. Section 1.8 refers to the existing access road which connects to a 'static caravan park'. These 4 caravans are used by 'seasonal workers' who live in, sometimes for 12 months of the year. Although an application was made on the 9th September 1961 (P/10/59/C) to site 4 seasonal worker caravans it was refused by ADC. Records show that no further applications have ever been made. The RSA report appears to imply that the access is also for their use, which is incorrect. *I would ask if planning permission for these caravans has ever been obtained?*

Mr Crowther commented at the last meeting on the 6th November that this access 'is not ideal' and that 'if it were a new junction and access it would not be passed'. *Why does the Officer support a 'not ideal' access by increasing its vehicle use, adding pedestrians to the mix and risk the inevitable consequence of a serious accident?*

My e mail dated 17th November 2019 highlighted an application in February 2019, the Borough of Poole v. Ashdrew Limited. This application for 5 dwelling was refused both by Council and at appeal on the grounds of access, which was narrow, had a lack of passing places, failed to promote suitable access for all users and would have resulted residential intensification of the access and increased highway and pedestrian safety dangers. This access did not exit onto a highway but into a cul de sac and was still refused.

The above access issues could also apply to this proposal. An e mail from Richard Dollamore of Whaleback on the 24th January to yourself asking you to ensure that Committee Members were 'briefed on the benefits of the proposal and the risks of refusal on highways grounds' appears to me as slightly intimidating but does link into Mr Crowther's standard comment that you **could** refuse on highways grounds but you **shouldn't** as it may be taken to appeal and lost. How can he take this coercive stance? The above case proves that no one should assume or predetermine what will happen in the future. If the Officers and Committee's main objective is to save money (public money) and to meet government housing targets regardless of placement or health and safety then unfortunately the Officers and Development Control Committee could be in danger of losing integrity.

I consider these statements to be material considerations and request that this letter is placed on the portal file for P/58/19/PL prior to the 4th March Development Control Meeting.

Yours faithfully



Jane Collins
Chair
Mill Farm Residents Association

Attached 5 photos

Sunday lunchtime 11th December 2019, 3.01pm at the Inglenook Hotel



Sunday lunchtime 11th December 2019, 3.01pm at the Inglenook Hotel

