

From: planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Sent: 31 December 2024 17:00:19 UTC+00:00
To: "planninginfo" <planninginfo@midsussex.gov.uk>
Subject: Mid Sussex DC - Online Register - Comments for Planning Application
DM/24/2957

Comments summary

Dear Sir/Madam,

Planning Application comments have been made. A summary of the comments is provided below.

Comments were submitted at 31/12/2024 5:00 PM.

Application Summary

Address:	The Prince Albert Copthorne Bank Copthorne Crawley West Sussex RH10 3QX
Proposal:	Sever existing land to retain existing public house use and area of pub garden and erect a convenience store and 4 no. apartments with associated works, including alterations to the existing vehicular access and car park.
Case Officer:	Andrew Watt

[Click for further information](#)

Customer Details

Address: 4 Abergavenny Gardens Copthorne

Comments Details

Commenter Type:	Neighbour or general public
Stance:	Customer objects to the Planning Application
Reasons for comment:	
Comments:	-- Summary -- Having reviewed them in detail I have serious concerns about the plans submitted for the Prince Albert plot in Copthorne. As a local resident and patron of the pub I am acutely aware of the need for investment on the site and the significant issues with the pub as it is currently. The dilapidated state of the pub, both

internally and externally, are all too obvious.

In principle, therefore, I support the approach to utilise some of the land to generate the investment needed to rejuvenate the pub.

On this basis the plans for the flats appear to be sensible to me and I see no real grounds to dispute that element.

I do, however, have serious concerns about the convenience store in relation to its impact to the pub and other local businesses. Not only this I believe it will draw further traffic to the village and, in particular, the Brook Hill Road / Copthorne Bank junction which I fear will not cope.

Beyond these specific plans, I am also frustrated, that again we are seeing additional pressure put on the core of the historical village in lieu of any investment in infrastructure within Heathy Wood. As Heathy Wood grows it continues to fail to deliver what was promised to support that community.

-- Convenience Store Objections --

As stated in the summary my objections centre around the convenience store aspect of the plan as follows:

- Impact on the Prince Albert
- Impact on Existing Village Shops
- Increased Draw From Outlying Area
- Brook Hill Road / Copthorne Bank Junction
- Parking

-- Impact on the Prince Albert --

The Prince Albert pub has been a cornerstone of village life for decades but over the number of years has fallen into an increasingly dilapidated state. This is the case both internally and externally and needs to be resolved for the good of the community. That is clear.

The beer Garden, however, remains a true asset to the village and allows the pub to still attract families despite the current state of the site. For some-time it has been the pub's saving grace and could and should be a cornerstone of family life in the village.

The convenience store aspect of the plan, however, removes the garden almost entirely and I find it difficult to see how, without it, the pub will continue to function. Not only that, the pub will be lost to a large percentage of the community where it is a family orientated centre of village life.

Based on this I feel the plans are too aggressive on the site and will severely damage the pub and community as a result. In short the beer garden is a key community asset and should be

protected, at least in part.

-- Impact on Existing Village Shops --

The village is currently serviced by three convenience stores, of which two are on Copthorne Bank within a literal stones throw of this site. One is literally next door!

All three are small 'corner shop' style convenience stores which do not have the stock ranges or pricing power that a Tesco Express has. It is, therefore, clear that adding a Tesco Express in this location will cause a significant issue to those existing businesses.

In a village such as Copthorne I simply cannot support plans that would introduce a Tesco into this community at the detriment to, and likely loss of, local businesses which already serve the community well. It is also a significant risk that the Post Office would be lost.

We should be protecting these businesses, not jeopardising their existence for one of the world's leading supermarket corporations.

-- Increased Draw From Outlying Area --

As stated above it is clear that a Tesco Express will have a much larger product range than the communities existing corner shops.

We know from experience living within such a community that at times you need to drive further afield to find a larger convenience store such as a Tesco Express or Co-Op depending on what you need.

I am not convinced, therefore, by the statement in 5.2.5 of the Travel Assessment that 'it is unlikely that anyone would be making a specific car trip to the area for their "daily items" or a "top up" shop'.

In fact, I am in full disagreement with it as I, along with many I have spoken to in the village, often do exactly that to Worth, Pound Hill or Crawley Down.

I am therefore concerned about a significant number of additional trips from the outlying area into the heart of the village.

In particular, I am concerned about the Brook Hill Road / Copthorne Bank junction.

-- Brook Hill Road / Copthorne Bank Junction --

This junction is critical within the village and important in the wider network.

Both of these roads have significant traffic loads which, in the case of Brook Hill Road, has been increased greatly by the Heathy Wood development. This is exasperated by the fact that

Heathy Wood does not allow through traffic making Brook Hill Road a major rat run.

As a result of this the junction is already problematic and is often the source of delays along both Copthorne Bank and Brook Hill Road. This is only set to increase as Heathy Wood continues to grow.

This is yet further exasperated as these two roads serve as key diversion routes in the case of road closures around much of the local area. Issues on the M23, or closures on Effingham lane, for example, force a huge amount of traffic through the village which becomes very difficult to navigate, largely because of the pressure on that junction.

Beyond the traffic levels of the junction there are other concerns in that immediate vicinity that I don't feel have been considered.

Firstly, is the in/out bound traffic from the store which will undoubtedly be hugely increased from the current pub car park. Given its proximity to the junction I believe it poses a risk to the viability of the junction.

Secondly, is the poorly laid out lay-bys outside of the existing amenities directly to the east of the site on Copthorne Bank. These lay-bys already make that junction complex as cars attempt to manoeuvre in and out of the limited spaces. When the junction is busy this can feel quite dangerous.

Based on all of the above I was very surprised not to see any attempt in the Transport Statement to simulate or model the junction and the immediate vicinity.

-- Parking --

Whilst the pub car park is currently underutilised by patrons of the pub itself, it is used throughout the day as an overflow car park to the other services along Copthorne Bank.

In particular the post office, take away and estate agent customers right next to the pub rely on it as there are only a few poorly laid out lay by spaces available to them as outlined above.

There is also a Pre-School across the road at the Delma Morgan Centre which again utilises that car park as it offers a safer alternative to parking on Copthorne Bank.

Whilst the parking assessment looks robust in terms of the combined needs of the pub and convenience store, I believe there is a risk that it omits existing users of that car park which will ultimately be displaced. In turn, I fear that this will lead to increased parking on Copthorne Bank which will further exasperate all of the above issues.

-- Conclusion --

In conclusion, whilst I support the planning permission for the flats being put on site I object to the building of the convenience store.

I feel strongly that the community will suffer from losing the Pub Garden, which for years has been a cornerstone of family life in the village.

Beyond that I also feel that the community will suffer from gaining a Tesco Express in that location. It will impact local businesses and the Transport Assessment does not alleviate fears around its impact to the network.

Finally I cannot understand why this facility should be approved in the heart of the village, at such detriment, instead of being mandated in Heathy Wood where it is needed and would add real value.

Kind regards