PLANNING STATEMENT

Retrospective Planning Application 'Garden Cover'

Rose & Crown

440 New Street

Biddulph Moor

ST8 7HZ

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Rose & Crown Public House is the only pub in Biddulph Moor, a large village with a population of some 1700 people. The pub is central, opposite the main shop and has been the very heart of this community for over 200 years. It is a stone built small and cosy 'classic' moors pub.

Since 2010 the pub has been a part of Joules brewery, a small independent brewery. In this time the brewery has refurbished it twice and shown its commitment to investing in the community and in a village pub which are, and remain, under threat.

The pub, as the sole pub in the village enclave is a very important community asset and offers a place for the community to meet and socialise. In the last few years, the viability threshold of pubs, and especially small pubs, has risen first due to Covid and the resultant change in customer behaviours, and second due to a dramatic increase in the fixed costs of running a pub.

Joule's as an independent brewery has been able to compensate the increase in fixed costs by holding its beer prices flat for the last 3 years, despite severe inflationary pressures. Joules have a small number of village pubs all of which are now marginal businesses. The brewery is committed to supporting and sustaining all of it's community assets.

Small independent village pubs, like this one, are under great threat.

Joules is based in Market Drayton, a Shropshire brewery operating 40 pubs covering Shropshire, Staffordshire, Cheshire and has a detailed understanding of the leisure sector.

In 2020 Joule's was recognised by English Heritage, The Victorian society and Camra by winning its 6th national pub design award for Crown Wharf in Stone.

Joules has won this national pub design award on five occasions, the most of any brewery or pub business by size of its estate.

2. LOCATION

The Rose & Crown is located at 440 New Street Biddulph Moor in the centre of the village.

3. DEMAND CHANGE

COVID 19

The pandemic of 2020-2022 has lead to a fundamental change in our customers' demands and expectations. Customers now demand an external good quality external space. Demand has been established by central government policy during the pandemic which introduced times of external trading only and the promotion of the good practice of socialising in well ventilated, and ideally, external areas.

The effect of this has been two-fold. The first group remain nervous of Covid and other respiratory infections. The second group are less anxious but still have a very strong preference to socialise outside, even in marginal weather. Since the pandemic we have also seen a trend of trade shifting to earlier times and a stronger response to temperate weather.

This appears to be a permanent change as the community learns to live with Covid, most specifically this is a pre-requisite from the older customer base. As a traditional brewery the over 50's are a key part of our customer base.

4. PROPOSAL

The reasons for the beer garden cover can be summarised as follows:

- To assist with post covid 19 trading where customers demand more external premium space.
- To anticipate a consumer trend where more space for external use will be highly desirable in the longer term.
- To create a tailored space with increased air ventilation, a requirement for the more anxious customers.

Design

The external space has been designed with a cover. The cover was designed with our partners Minshall's [A steel fabricator] to be modular and meet the requirements outlined in the new permitted development rights, issued by central government. During the project it was determined that the space would be better with sound directed towards the pub. For this reason the modular sections were infilled with brick as shown on the submitted drawings. This was designed to reduce noise outbreak from the garden area which has become much more widely used since 2020.

As a result of the infill, the structure would not now be deemed as moveable and hence planning consent is required. This was brought to our attention by the council and is the reason for this retrospective application.

5. NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES

The franchisee's are mindful of close neighbours and any potential disturbance from the chatter of pub customers, especially at busy times and on sunny days. As a village pub, then community harmony is of the upmost importance to our business. Every accommodation is met in order to ensure goodwill within the village. The licensees are local, their family live in the village and they are very invested to ensure goodwill with all residents, their customers.

External Numbers

The space allocated to external socialising is the same as prior the creation of a permanent cover. Temporary 'moveable covers' are allowable in any event [as above] this change due to permanence now requires planning. The permanent design is of higher quality, is more aesthetically pleasing and offers better and improved sound protection for our close neighbours.

The numbers using the garden are anticipated to be the same, we do however expect our customers to enjoy enhanced comfort.

6. PLANNING POLICY

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF guidance is that long established businesses, such as the Rose & Crown, should be supported as they need to change and adapt in order that community amenities are protected. '***Ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise***'.

Special mention has been made specifically of pubs which offer a focal point for community engagement, this is so important for customers in a village and where the pub is under threat, pub culture embraces and facilitates participation in community life.

Paragraph 80

Part 6 - **Building a strong, competitive economy**: *the planning system should place significant weight on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.*

Paragraph 83 *requires planning decisions to enable the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities to include* ***public houses****.*

Paragraph 92 states:

To provide the social, recreational, and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:

a) plan positively for the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.

b) take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community.

c) guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day-to-day needs.

d) ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise, and are retained for the benefit of the community; and

e) ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

The proposal would protect a Public House by providing good outdoor space which is now demanded by our customers. In a marginal business like this one, a very small village pub, then it is essential that facilities attract trade, this proposal assist the public house to become sustainable.

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan [Adopted 2020]

Supports the guidance of the NPPF

SO7. To protect, provide and enhance the tourism, cultural, sport and recreation and leisure opportunities for the District's residents and visitors.

SS8 Protecting and enhancing the setting and historic character of the village, including heritage assets.

7. CONCLUSION

Small businesses are under intense pressure, the council is aware of the pressures in town centres and 'empty space'. These problems are only magnified in the small outlying village's where the threshold of trade has increased due to the dramatic increase in fixed costs and we now face reduced demand as our customers are squeezed.

No business is more important than another, however pubs have a secondary important community role, and again explicitly in the small isolated villages and in this case, this is the only pub in the village.

The Moorlands plan emphasises the importance of economic activity and the key role of tourism and leisure. Pubs like this one are a key part of the leisure landscape for walkers and visitors to our area. This is especially prevalent where housing values now exceed public house values.

It is estimated that approximately 30 public houses per day are closing down. To invest in the future of a traditional public house should be encouraged to protect the community amenity, support economic growth and sustain employment.