

Planning Application- The Old Boot - Decision - REFUSAL

As pub supporters know, we have been awaiting a decision on the planning application P222734/F submitted by Choice Circle's agents (Synergy Architects) last year made to Herefordshire Council for a proposed new 3 bed house and partial change of use of the pub garden. Details of the application are at item P222734/F of the Planning Search website Planning Search – Herefordshire Council.

Herefordshire CC has refused the planning application for a new house in the pub garden; the full text of their decision is given on the Documents page of this website or on the Planning Office website under reference 222734 (look for 'Decisions' under the 'Relevant Documents' tab).

The grounds of the refusal are straightforward, and without qualification-

- Negative impact of the proposed house upon the pub's viability,
- Negative impact of the house upon the village conservation area and its local heritage,
- Impact upon the pub through conflicts in amenity, e.g. noise caused to the house etc,
- Negative impact on the river Lugg from the proposed new sewerage as well as insufficient mitigation for bats and surface water disposal.

There are comprehensive statements of reasons of refusal in the Officer Report also referenced on the website; these provide context, precedent and the basis for the grounds of refusal summarised above.

There were nearly 150 objections to the proposal, including from the Parish Council and CAMRA, and your substantial and valuable support for our arguments against the developer's plans left the Council in no doubt about the strength of community feeling. Your representations to the Council were strong evidence of the value of the pub to the whole community, and that the loss of the pub garden would seriously affect the ability of the pub to continue to trade in any meaningful way.

We are very grateful to all who voiced their concerns and supported us in this fight.

The decision also sends a clear message to the developers that we are not prepared to see this community asset stripped of its value, and that we will do what we can to preserve and enhance it.

What next?

It is now nearly 2½ years since we launched the share issue to raise funds to buy the Pub; a lot has happened since then which has affected us all. Any further action we take will depend on the level of collective support in the Village for it. We aim to test this with you before taking any new steps. Details of this will be posted on our website.

Finally, as a precautionary measure we have resubmitted an application to register the pub as an asset of community value (ACV), and this has been accepted by the Council. This will give us an amount of protection in the event of the pub coming on to the market again.