

Patricia Newman

Support Statement to SODC planning committee - 1st July 2020

P19/S2005/FUL

EXTENSION TO CLUBROOM, MEETING and FAMILY ROOMS, with IMPROVED TOILET PROVISION and PORCH ENTRANCE FOR FIRST FLOOR ACCOMMODATION

I represent the applicants in this matter, and thank members in advance for their time in considering this statement in support of the application before them.

The Morning Star/Fairmile Sports and Social Club has been a long standing facility in the village, and is considered one of Cholsey community buildings, that helps to bring villagers together for a variety of reasons, including social occasions, celebratory proceedings and sporting achievement events. The club took over the Morning Star premises some 9 years ago, and it runs as a members club to the rear, with open public house to the front of the property. The use is therefore very well established.

The success of the both the public house and the sports and social club relies upon a committee of volunteers, generating both interest and income to sustain the facility, for their members. The reason for the proposal, in this application, is to increase the club room space for more flexible and comfortable use by members. It is not to enable it to be hired as a separate facility.

It should be noted that there was no substantive objection to the proposal from the statutory consultees, and both the council's Environmental Health and the County Highways sections have no objections to the application. However in discussions with the planning officer, and in assessment of the neighbours concerns, changes to the proposal were made, and a noise assessment report commissioned, to set a benchmark for the proposal going forward.

The social club already holds (when not in pandemic crisis) monthly live music functions and quizzes, race nights, karaoke and, as well as screening sports events, have 3 darts teams, Aunt Sally teams, and pool matches. They also hold annual events, open to the village, as well as members, including Easter events, with egg jarping and bouncy castle, August Bank Holiday BBQ, Halloween party, and New Years celebrations. Their premises license already includes for all the above events, and they have particular management procedures in place, which will be supplemented by the recommendations made under the noise

assessment/management plan, conditioned as part of the planning officer's recommendation for approval.

The new facilities will also allow for much improved sound insulation, with particular reference to the quality of the roof structure, and by the provision of appropriate detailing of the new windows and doors, to provide additional soundproofing with double glazed windows, using noise reduction glass, and secondary units proposed, as necessary. These are all to be included as part of the Building Regulation detailing.

The necessity of this increased space for the members use is now considered even more critical, since it is expected that, even with recently reduced social distancing requirements, more additional space per member than previously will be required over the longer term to make the club sustainable.

The adopted Cholsey Neighbourhood Plan clearly states, at CNP STRAT 1, in one of its bullet points, that its overall strategy is to: (quoted verbatim)

- recognise the importance of community networks in Cholsey. To protect and enhance the social and economic facilities, and activity hubs of the village, with new and expanded community and leisure facilities, which are important to the social fabric of the Parish.

This proposal clearly meets this criteria, and should be actively encouraged.

The concerns raised by nearby residents, and the parish council, have been carefully considered by the applicants, incorporating changes from their original proposals, and this has produced the significantly amended proposals now before you, to try to accommodate any such issues. It is deemed that the proposed amended scheme is no more detrimental to the amenity of nearby properties or the surrounding area, given that the businesses (PH & FMSSC) are already established and that the proposals are merely an extension and rationalisation of that already existing. The noise management plan will be implemented as part of the conditions on any approval, and will be rigorously reviewed by the management committee, going forward. This proposal therefore will not have any additional detrimental impact upon the quality of life of adjacent residents and their properties, and will not compromise the nature and character of the settlement.

I therefore requested your consideration, to accept the planning officer's recommendation, for approval of this application.

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