

## **Charlie Bridger – Parish Councillor speaking in a personal capacity only**

I was dismayed that at our meeting on 17 July we were informed by our clerk that we should not vote or make any comment on the Planning appeal for The Queens as it could be deemed to be considered predetermination and affect previous Parish Council comments regarding the planning applications that have already taken place. I don't understand how previous objections submitted by the Parish Council cannot be considered to be predetermined as councillors on the Council at the time had put comments on the Planning portal prior to the council submitting those comments (Parish Council comments on 24 November 2020, 7 September 2021 and 16 May 2022). Surely those comments by the Parish Council should be disregarded?

I have lived in Selborne for 5 years and have been coming to Selborne since 1998, when my sister & brother in law moved into the village. I visited them regularly and went to The Queens on many occasions. I did not see Rye and Associates in the Queens on any of my visits.

I am not sure that Rye and Associates have 150 people supporting them, but even if they do it is not the majority of the village (number of residents in the village currently I believe is around 500) and they certainly do not speak for the whole village. It is my understanding that people who previously supported keeping the Queens exactly as it was many years ago no longer believe this to be the best course of action.

The Tap Room has limited opening hours which I understand was done to ensure that there would not be an adverse effect on The Selborne Arms and to enable both venues to have enough business to stay open. Since Covid, there has been a large change in people's habit of going to the pub and I am not sure that 2 pubs being open 7 days a week would survive in Selborne.

With regards to the point raised about not having a community run retail, the Village Community Store has been offered a space in The Queens but declined the offer.

The point raised by Richard Buxton Solicitors about the Village Design statement is a little puzzling as there is nothing in The Queens redevelopment that is contradictory to the Village Design Statement. Also they mention 150 objections on the Planning portal. I have gone through

these and some people have entered numerous objections, with 1 person having submitted 8 objections. There are 73 people that have objected in total on the planning portal.

A few years ago I did some research on Derek Warwick Developments, to see what work they had done previously. All developments were of a high standard and sympathetic to their surroundings. What I have seen so far of the work at The Queens is of a very high standard and there is nothing I can see that is detrimental to the look of the village.

I really do not think that having a planning inquiry instead of a written representation is beneficial, it will simply prolong the process, waste taxpayers money and allow a small group of people to say whatever they like and claim to be saying what the village wants. They do not represent the majority in the village and I am not even sure if they have as many people wanting what they want as they say they have.

Most of the village are fed up with the ongoing saga and the never ending fight over The Queens has completely divided the village and I fear the village will not recover from this.

I do wonder what Rye and Associates end game is, they do not visit The Selborne Arms, so having a pub obviously isn't that important for them. There has been talk in the village that they are planning to open a Michelin starred restaurant, by employing a Michelin starred chef, which is very different to the original Queens.

It has been so good to see the renovations being done and have the building looking smart and used - it was such waste of a lovely building being tied up with the numerous appeals by Rye and Associates.

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