

19 & 20 Fort End, Haddenham, HP17 8EJ

20/01129/APP – HADDENHAM

The Parish Council OPPOSES the application for the following reasons:

1. **Contrary to Neighbourhood Plan.** The loss of this A3 use is contrary to Policy HWS2 “Protecting Community Assets” in the made Neighbourhood Plan, which is also part of AVDC’s approved development plan. This reason was upheld in the previous public inquiry. No sufficient justification has been submitted to change that decision or cause it to be reviewed.
2. **Contrary to spatial strategy in Draft VALP.** The draft VALP is at an advanced stage. Nothing in the Modifications stage will affect Haddenham’s designation as a “strategic settlement” due to take over 1000 homes. These will be provided principally on 3 large sites, 2 of which are already under construction, while the third has been approved at outline stage. The strategic settlement designation rested on the presence of existing services and facilities, including this restaurant (and former pub). Unlike the other strategic settlements, Haddenham lacks a core central business/retail/service centre typically found in a high street or market square. Given the quantum of growth proposed, Haddenham cannot afford to lose even part of a community amenity at this time. Within a short time, there will be a large population influx, not only in Haddenham but in the surrounding area, providing plenty of opportunity for an enterprising restaurant. Loss of this amenity would soon be regretted and should not be countenanced.
3. **Harm to the Conservation Area.** The site is within the Conservation Area with listed buildings nearby. Para 9.3.1 in the Neighbourhood Plan immediately preceding Policy HW2S refers to the importance of community amenities in the context of the Conservation Area and of conserving and enhancing the historic environment. Draft VALP contains similar policies. At one time Fort End was the lively centre of the village with a forge, shops, banks and coal yard. This proposal would see yet further erosion of community life, and its replacement by residential “monoculture”. There have been several appeals upheld in Conservation Areas nationally (the PC can provide examples) where proposals would have meant the loss of community life and its associated vibrancy along with its comings and goings.
4. **Highway safety.** Exit from the site onto the highway (a busy road and on a frequent bus route) is on a blind bend with very poor visibility splays when leaving or entering. For this reason alone, intensification of uses on this site should not be permitted.
5. **Inadequate parking.** On-site parking is insufficient for 5 flats and a restaurant, irrespective of whether spaces are “allocated” or “shared/unallocated” per Neighbourhood Plan Policy TGA1. Two spaces are created by “longitudinal” parking which is never satisfactory.
6. **Inadequate design standards for residential units.** Generally, the flats feel cramped and “packed in”. In particular:
 - Three of the proposed flats are potentially family accommodation with children likely to be present. Amenity space is poor quality, with no opportunity for planting, and a poor environment for families with children, or indeed any-one;
 - Headroom and useable floorspace in the three 2nd floor bedrooms will be limited, with clothes storage a particular likely problem;
 - Flat 6 places a living room over a bedroom in flat 2, with likely noise transmission problems, particularly in a building of traditional construction;

- Lateral separation between flat 2 and the restaurant is to be achieved by means of a partial wall within the existing restaurant fireplace;
- No flues, vents or air conditioning units are shown, but could clearly be a cause of future smells and/or noise problems to the residential units.

The Parish Council would want to be represented if this application goes to Committee or to Appeal.