**From:** Hugh Pidgeon
**Sent:** 15 September 2016 23:31
**To:** Emily Shaw
**Subject:** Submission for Planning Application 16/01525/F

Dear Emily,

I understand from your recent e-mail to Richard Butt that comments can be made on this application unti the end of the day, today September 15th.  I’m just in time!

Thank you for all your efforts in keeping us so well informed of the Planning Department’s  responses to this long-running and complex planning dispute.  As you will see from the attached, as someone living right opposite the former Bishop Blaize, I and my family have been more directly affected than anyone.

With many thanks,

Hugh

**Hugh Pidgeon**

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Burdrop Green, Sibford Gower, Banbury, Oxon, OX15 RQ

Tel +44 1295 780 517
Email:hugh.pidgeon@collectiveintelligence.co.uk

**For the immediate attention of Emily Shaw**

**Ref Planning Application 16/01525/F**

**The Pheasant Pluckers Inn, Burdrop, Sibford Gower**

**From Hugh Pidgeon, ‘Burdrop Green’, Sibford Gower, Banbury, Oxon OX15 5RQ**

I write to you as one who lives directly opposite the site of the pub the owners are now calling the Pheasant Pluckers Inn, and who stand with my family to be directly affected by the decision the District Council make on this application. I wish to add my voice personally to the objections raised on my behalf by the Sibford Gower Parish Council, the Sibford Ferris Parish Council and the many members the Bishop Blaize Support Group to this application.

I am particularly struck by the observation in the Support Group’s submission that the application is “a very similar proposal” (to use the applicant’s own terms) to the original application made in 2009 for ‘Alterations and extension to barn to provide 4 nos. ensuite letting rooms’ Ref **09/01275/F.** It is not a very similar proposal. I share the view expressed in the Support Group’s objection that the application for the newbuild cottage element of the original application replicates it in almost every aspect. The submission made by Sibford Gower’s council makes the same point.

I can corroborate the observation that the very temporary “private garden” built out into the pub’s car-park now forms the footprint of what is very clearly the second part of the original application to enable the conversion of the now 2 bedroom holiday let into a 4 bedroom cottage. And I agree entirely that Mrs Jennifer Wyse for the Planning Inspectorate could not have been clearer in her summary of the June 2015 appeal **APP/C3105/W/15/3136680** submittedby Mr and Mrs Noquet **as**, “in effect to ‘remove’ the appealed conditions to enable the holiday let accommodation to be occupied as a separate dwelling.

In my view, the history is entirely pertinent to the present application and makes clear that the whole sequence of applications, re-applications and appeals is all part of an ongoing project to extend the property out into the car-park of the pub. The view expressed in the Support Group’s submission that were the application to be granted, It would then be only one step away from a further appeal to join the two properties as a single separate dwelling is exactly my own view.

Were that appeal to be made, it would be the 11th planning appeal Mr. and Mrs. Noquet have made in the history of their ownership of the pub. The current planning application is the 18th they have made. The history makes clear that no application is ever independent of those that precede it, and this application can only properly be understood in the context of that history.

The owners made clear for example, in their interview with Roseanne Edwards for the Banbury Guardian on the 1st August 2013 their ambitions of making “further development on the pub’s present car park” (to use their words) their next move. They have been relentless in their pursuit of this objective ever since.

My principal concern as a local resident were this application to be approved, is that it will bring all Council regulation finally into complete disrepute locally and continue to give encouragement to the owners that their ambitions for further speculative building both on the existing site and on the adjoining land – including the ‘withdrawn’ application submitted on their behalf earlier in the 2013 for two new detached houses in the grounds of the pub – can now proceed with little likelihood of any further enforcement action.

Two arguments have been put on the District Council’s planning website by the applicant as further argument in favour of their original proposal, having seen the level of local opposition the proposal has evoked, not least from both Parish Councils. I feel it is therefore appropriate to address both of these as well as their original application,

They can be summarized in a neatly conceived circular argument: the owners cannot afford to open the pub as a pub because Mrs. Noquet has another job. They cannot afford to pay anyone else to staff the pub because they don’t have enough letting income. The “ future of the pub is therefore at risk” if CDC don’t support their application that will enable them to increase their letting income.

As if it will now be the District Council’s fault that the pub fails – again just one more appeal step away from Mr.and Mrs. Noquet’s original determination which they have now returned to in 8 previous applications – that they be allowed a ‘change of use’ or a ‘certificate of lawful use existing’ to C3 residential use.

I share the belief of the Sibford Gower Parish Council that the truth is that the property is not in any case operating as a public house as required by the Court Decision of 29th September 2014. I can attest to the fact that it is hardly ever open for more than 3 hours a week, and then only for pre-booked ‘Sunday lunches’. As such the applicants have been living in breach of the enforcement order ever since they resumed occupation of the building in 2015 and began restoring it to a private dwelling – which it remains for the greater part of the week.

I share the view expressed in the Support Group’s submission entirely: it is hard in these circumstances to give any credence to the applicant’s concern for the viability of the pub. I find the applicants’ special pleading and circular arguments entirely specious, and I hope that the Council will see the manipulation now for what is.

While Mr. and Mrs. Noquet remain the landlords, if the pub is at risk it is because they have lost the support of the entire community, as other submissions to the Planning Department have clearly demonstrated.

It is perhaps not surprising. What the owners think of the villagers of Sibford Gower and Sibford Ferris is perfectly evident in the name they chose for the pub in place of the Bishop Blaize. The childhood playground tongue twister could hardly be more explicit.