

KILLEARN COMMUNITY COUNCIL MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING HELD ON 16 AUGUST 2017

Members present	Andrew Donaldson, Robert Dunn, Margaret Harrison (Chair), Elizabeth Jones, Hilary McGregor, Jim Ptolomey, David Scott, Heather Wright
Apologies	Heidi Bryce, Janet Duncan
In attendance	54 members of the public, Christine Bauwens (Minutes Secretary)
How to contact us	Go to www.killearncc.org.uk and click on contact button

Margaret welcomed everyone to the meeting, explaining that she had called this special meeting to discuss the revised planning application for the Killearn Hotel and to comment on an application to develop the Bank building and site. Both of these could not wait for comment until the next regular KCC meeting in September.

CC538 – KILLEARN HOTEL REVISED PLANNING APPLICATION 17/00529/FUL

KCC Planning Correspondent, Jim Ptolomey, spoke to the meeting. He outlined the history of Killearn Hotel which has now been closed for some 20 months. Following the withdrawal of the previous planning application to convert the hotel into 17 flats, a revised application has now been lodged for 14 flats of which 6 would be two bedroom and 8 three bedroom. 25 parking spaces would be provided for residents. The floor was then opened to discuss the proposed change of use for the hotel.

An extensive discussion ensued and the following points were raised.

Comments in support of application for change of use to convert the building into flats:

- No alternative valid business plan has been forthcoming from local residents.
- The building is deteriorating all the time and becoming an eyesore.
- A succession of licensees has failed to make the hotel profitable.
- Huge costs would be involved in bringing the hotel up to standard.
- Punch Taverns have provided accounts to show the hotel is not viable and that their only option is to apply for change of use and convert the building.
- Recent drink/driving laws and changes in lifestyle are affecting the viability of rural hotels and pubs.
- Rural hotels are closing all over the country for a variety of reasons.
- Success of Village Hall for weddings could mean B&B would only be required for wedding guests, thus making hotel unprofitable. It was felt any future hotel would want the full wedding business for itself.

Comments against application for change of use to convert the building into flats:

- Feeling that Punch Taverns are maximizing their own interests to the detriment of the community and that the hotel has not been marketed properly.
- Lack of communication between Punch and the local community regarding their plans for the hotel. It was felt SC should put pressure on Punch to organise a meeting with local residents to discuss various options.
- Some felt that Punch's business model was flawed and that the hotel could have been sold to another business to make it a success.

- It was claimed the application is not in line with the local development plan and the rural development plan.
- Road safety issues were raised as a result of potentially 25 more cars in the area. A busy hotel would also generate traffic and the previous car parking for the hotel was 35 spaces.
- The revised application only retains the facade of the building. As the hotel is deemed an important building in the village, it was suggested that the building might be listed but it was noted that it would be impractical to convert without moving many of the internal walls.
- Some residents are keen to keep a hotel to attract wedding guests and tourists to the village.

KCC members voted on the following motions:

1. Do you approve change of use subject to Punch Taverns proving they have marketed the building for sale as well as for lease.
2 votes in favour.
2. Do you object to the proposal until it is proven that Punch Taverns have marketed the building for sale as well as for lease.
6 votes in favour.

CC539 – FORMER BANK BUILDING PLANNING APPLICATION 17/00604/FUL

A planning application has been received to convert the former bank building into five flats over three floors with the present building being extended right to the boundary of the site. 8 parking spaces would be provided for residents. As per the title deeds, the present building can only be a bank. The proposal is for change of use to domestic use.

KCC welcomed the proposed change of use so that the building does not remain derelict. However, after discussion, the following objections were raised:

- Sight lines will be obscured for drivers negotiating an already dangerous corner.
- The 8 parking spaces mean it will be difficult to access the 2 existing garages.
- The design of the proposed building is not in keeping with the conservation area.
- Environmental impact on the village.

KCC voted on the following:

1. Proposal for change of use:
6 votes in favour
2 votes against
2. Proposed design of the development
8 votes against.

CC540 – VOTE OF THANKS, DATE AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

A vote of thanks was expressed to Margaret for chairing the Special Meeting and to all the members of KCC for their work.

The next KCC meeting will take place on 20 September 2017 at 8.00 pm in Killearn Primary School.

The meeting ended at 10.15 pm.