

What is the point of a “Planning” “system” which is neither *systematic* nor adheres to its own *plans*? Over the past three years I have submitted thousands of words about the undesirability of introducing another restaurant (in addition to the high density of existing ones within a five-minute walking radius) into a predominantly residential area which has historically been free of them, and for which it is highly debatable that there would be significant demand (several of them having already failed due to lack of returning customers) for pretty bog-standard Italian catering, at comparatively high prices.

You cannot fail to be aware, from numerous complaints made by me and my neighbours, that the operator totally ignores the absence of Class A 3 for his former furniture showroom, and exhibits a very defiant attitude to the refusals – notably through the local press. His actions speak louder than his words, and therefore I seriously doubt that imposing working time conditions would be little more than pointless paper shuffling (such that you and your colleagues could then retreat to the staff canteen and gobble doughnuts, having “done their job”), but leaving local residents to stew in the juice of noise and disturbance arising from the change of use.

Furthermore, whoever wrote the letter in support of the present application has clearly chosen to be blind to the notion that a Class A1 (takeaway) sandwich bar is a very different creature from a Class A 3/4 bistro or wine bar, and simply lies, to bamboozle the Committee about the “harmlessness” of the existing illegitimate use.

Also, please note that obtaining an alcohol licence is not the *equivalent* of planning permission, it is simply a regulatory requirement in parallel, and was cunningly obtained before the intention to change the Planning use had been revealed, leaving objectors in the dark at that stage. The fact that a licence was granted has no evidential value in the present circumstances.

However, the persistent sale of alcohol without meals (with no embarrassment, the operator explained in front of me that he serves token amounts of bread to such customers) does not augur well for events at this property, should PP be granted – it will turn into a genteel boozier, and you already know from other residents’ comments that police have had to be called to limit misbehaviour in recent times.

The current application is in substance no different from the ones previously refused, at first instance and at appeal. There has been no change of physical circumstances, in that a significant number of people do and will continue to live above and behind the application site, and already suffer from the alcohol-fuelled effects of the current illegal trading. Your colleagues in the "Enforcement" division may indeed have diligently "opened files" and "visited the site", but to no effect whatsoever – alcohol (alone, without food) continues to be consumed at outdoor tables on the public pavement, according to the varying ambient weather conditions.

One can only conclude that the applicant believes (like I and many of my neighbours now do) that CBC is idle and stupid, and that persistence will eventually wear it down, to arrive at a situation where the LPA is no longer bothered by people objecting to mad or unnecessary decisions. It was his choice to spend a silly amount of money on extravagantly fitting out the premises before he even got to committee with the first CoU application (regarding a furniture showroom which had already traded for many years, but was flagging due to the aesthetic tastes of its customers not matching his own). Any kind of "sympathy vote" is entirely unjustified – it was a commercial decision, which happens to have flopped. The premises can readily be returned to shop use.

Finally, things I observed as a publicity meeting last autumn suggest that the present application will have a petition in support. Please view this very sceptically, in particular about the genuine addresses of those signing it, as I got a very strong impression that those in favour live some distance away, far out of earshot, and would not be in the least affected by disturbance, nor by the pressure on parking which will arise.

Therefore I entreat you to take this application to DCC (not using delegated powers), and let it refuse it. If you can be bothered, please read my various past representations to committee and to the Inspector. There is little point in my repeating them, but you will get the flavour from my comments above.

Regards, Stephen Garford. 26 Fairfax Place, NW6 4EH. 