

**Application Number:** 22/10546 Full Planning Permission

**Site:** 12 THE FURLONG, RINGWOOD BH24 1AT

**Development:** External Seating areas to be used in conjunction with Arboro Lounge (Retrospective)

**Applicant:** Loungers UK Limited

**Agent:** D2 Planning Limited

**Target Date:** 30/06/2022

**Case Officer:** Vivienne Baxter

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## 1 SUMMARY OF THE MAIN ISSUES

The key issues are:

- 1) Principle of the development including benefits
- 2) Impact on the character and appearance of the Conservation Area
- 3) Residential amenity
- 4) Access

This application is to be considered by Committee because of a contrary Town Council view.

## 2 SITE DESCRIPTION

The site lies within the built up area of Ringwood in the Town Centre and Ringwood Conservation Area. It is formed from part of the open pedestrian courtyard area of The Furlong which is privately owned and not part of the public highway.

It is surrounded by shops and cafes where there are external seating areas, identified as Primary Shopping Frontage by the Development Plan.

A bronze sculpture and street tree are adjacent to the site.

## 3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The proposal entails the retention of an external seating area (with approximately 36 covers) surrounded by timber planters measuring 950mm high. The planters either side of the entrance into the seating area are 1m high. Also included in the application is the retention of a smaller open seating area immediately adjacent to the premises to which the seating relates.

## 4 PLANNING HISTORY

Proposal	Decision Date	Decision Description	Status
21/11191 Display of 1 non-illuminated fascia sign; 1 non illuminated projecting sign; illuminated menu board (Application for Advertisement Consent) (AMENDED PLANS)	18/10/2021	Granted Subject to Conditions	Decided

21/10694 Installation of new fascia signage, projection sign and menu board (Application for Advertisement Consent)	11/08/2021	Refused	Decided
21/10350 Installation of new extract/supply equipment; shop front alterations	11/05/2021	Granted Subject to Conditions	Decided
NFDC/89/42972 Shopping development & cou mill bldg to shops & restaurant	05/11/1990	Granted Subject to Conditions	Decided
89/NFDC/43072/CAC Part demolition of extg buildings for shopping development	18/04/1990	Granted Subject to Conditions	Decided

## 5 **PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE**

### **Local Plan 2016-2036 Part 1: Planning Strategy**

Policy STR1: Achieving Sustainable Development  
 Policy STR3: The strategy for locating new development  
 Policy STR6: Sustainable economic growth  
 Policy ENV3: Design quality and local distinctiveness  
 Policy ECON5: Retail development and other main town centre uses  
 Policy ECON6: Primary, secondary and local shopping frontages

### **Local Plan Part 2: Sites and Development Management 2014**

DM1: Heritage and Conservation  
 DM14: Primary shopping frontages

### **Supplementary Planning Guidance And Documents**

SPG - Ringwood - A Conservation Area Appraisal  
 SPD - Ringwood Local Distinctiveness  
 SPD - Ringwood Town Access Plan

### **Relevant Legislation**

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004  
 Section 38 Development Plan

Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990

S.72 General duty as respects conservation areas in exercise of planning functions

### **Relevant Advice**

NPPF Chap 12: Achieving well designed places  
 NPPF Ch.16 - Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

### **Constraints**

NFSFRA Surface Water  
 Aerodrome Safeguarding Zone  
 Historic Land Use  
 Avon Catchment Area  
 Conservation Area: Ringwood Conservation Area

### **Plan Policy Designations**

Built-up Area  
 Town Centre Boundary  
 Primary Shopping Area  
 Local Shopping Frontage

## 6 PARISH / TOWN COUNCIL COMMENTS

### Ringwood Town Council

Refusal (4) Recommend refusal. The Committee felt the proposal is out of keeping, using up an area used as a public open space and were concerned about it's permanency. It also is inappropriately sited adjacent to the bronze sculpture and the colour scheme and materials are not appropriate in the Conservation Area.

## 7 COUNCILLOR COMMENTS

No comments received

## 8 CONSULTEE COMMENTS

Comments have been received from the following consultees:

### Conservation Officer (verbal)

No particular concerns from a Conservation point of view

## 9 REPRESENTATIONS RECEIVED

The following is a summary of the representations received.

For: 7

- looks nice
- enables people to sit outside
- would increase footfall in The Furlong
- adds life and vitality
- the business should be supported
- great addition to the community
- tastefully done
- Arboro is an asset to the town, friendly staff, good food

Against: 6

- finish of planters is not appropriate
- reduces space for markets and other events/activities
- too large for the area
- detracts from sculpture
- extra seating for Arboro Lounge is not needed
- garish and unsightly
- plenty of outside seating areas elsewhere
- blocks walkway
- planters are obtrusive and out of character
- area becomes noisy at night with anti-social behaviour
- public seating has been removed
- area is too distanced from restaurant for surveillance

## 10 PLANNING ASSESSMENT

### Principle of Development

The Furlong is a privately owned pedestrian area surrounded by shops and cafes/restaurants with access from the nearby public car parks through to the High Street/Market Place. This area contains trees with surrounding seating areas, a piece of public art, sign posts, A-boards relating to adjoining premises and other areas of seating associated with other cafe/restaurant uses in The Furlong. The nearby Waitrose supermarket has an area of trolley bays within this open area too.

The space is not Public Open Space as identified by the Development Plan, but is a space available for use by the public for social, recreational and commercial activities as deemed appropriate by the land owner.

Whilst some of the other seating areas could be removed when not in use, the nearby Boston Tea Party unit occupying the Framptons building has fixed seating outside its premises as well as more recently added moveable seating and large blue planters to partially enclose this additional area. Given the existing situation, there are no objections to the principle of providing of external seating and associated enclosures within this built up area.

The scheme has economic benefits by way of investment in the town centre and is likely to result in additional employment to cater for the increase in customers accommodated by the premises, and attracts further footfall in to one of the primary commercial areas in the district, it has environmental benefits of delivering appropriate development in the town centre enhancing linked trips and social benefits of employment and providing social and recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.

#### Impact on the character and appearance of the area and Heritage Assets.

The structures which have been provided are constructed in timber which is a traditional material. Planted within the enclosing structure are shrubs which add to the backdrop of trees within this area. Whilst this is a relatively solid structure at the lower level, it still allows visibility over the enclosed area and does not block views of the shops from any direction.

Their low stature preserves appreciation of the surrounding buildings, their historical significance and context as well as their contribution to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area, the significance of which would be preserved. They are relatively modern area publically accessible within the Conservation Area and are entirely reversible.

The former Furlong Mill building, occupied by the Boston Tea Party cafe, is identified in the Conservation appraisal as an un-listed building of local importance, as such would constitute a non-designated heritage asset. In accordance with para.203 of the NPPF the effect of development proposals on the significance of that heritage asset should be taken in to account. There is already a variety of street furniture, tables, chairs and canopies installed around that building. It is considered that the proposal would not have an impact on the historic and architectural significance of the former Mill building due to the extent of existing structures separating the proposal from it.

The colours which have been used on the timber structure are indicated as being Farrow and Ball paint colours and when seen against the back drop of the red brick buildings and other shop units, do not appear obtrusive. There is a wide palette of colours visible across The Furlong and no particular colour is considered synonymous with the immediate area, as such it would be possible to justify an objection to this application based on the colours used.

It is considered that providing open air seating for cafe and restaurant uses results in a more vibrant area which in turn could increase footfall within this shopping facility. The proposal does not impede significantly on the function of The Furlong as a relaxing circulation space and meeting point.

Comments received in respect of the impact of the proposal on the setting of the statue have been noted although it is not enclosed by the structure and can be enjoyed from other seating areas within The Furlong and whilst passing through the area.

The enclosing structures are located close to the street tree growing in the public realm. The root zone around the base of the tree, clear of pavers is retained unaffected by the structures, avoiding impact on the well being of the tree.

#### Residential amenity

There are residential properties in nearby Star Lane and concerns have been expressed due to the use of the seating area late at night and the associated anti-social behaviour this could attract. The unit to which the seating areas relate is a town centre use within 130m of two pubs. Given the existing presence of fixed seating in The Furlong, it is not considered that the proposal would give rise to additional unacceptable impact in terms of noise and disturbance, over that likely to occur in such a town centre location, where nighttime activity is expected and has benefits to the success of the centre.

#### Access

The Furlong is a privately maintained pedestrianised area. It is understood that the applicant has permission from the land owner to operate the seating areas provided. The siting of the planters is in excess of 3m from the nearest building (entrance to Joules to the south) and greater than this elsewhere. Observation at the time of the site visit showed that to the north of the enclosed area, deliveries with parcel trolleys was still possible from the service bay to the north west into The Furlong when pedestrians were standing outside the units to the north of the site. The spacing here is 3.5m, a wider gap than the situation prior to the installation of the planter enclosure when a fixed seat was in situ around the adjacent tree.

### **11 CONCLUSION**

The proposal provides additional outside seating in The Furlong shopping area increasing the vitality and vibrancy of the shopping and dining experience of this part of the Town Centre. Whilst it reduces the open area utilised by markets and other events, it is understood that the management of the site is content with this situation as adequate space remains for these events. Pedestrian and delivery access would not be materially compromised and appreciation of the bronze statue would still be possible. The character and appearance of the Conservation Area would be preserved and no harm would occur to the significance of other heritage assets close to the site. The scheme has economic, environmental and social benefits.

### **12 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS**

N/A

### **13 RECOMMENDATION**

**Grant Subject to Conditions**

**Proposed Conditions:**

1. The development permitted shall be carried out in accordance with the following approved plans:

Site location plan

LNG4347.101K - external seating

LNG4347.BPES- - block plan - external seating

Reason: To ensure satisfactory provision of the development.

**Further Information:**

Vivienne Baxter

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# New Forest DISTRICT COUNCIL

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## PLANNING COMMITTEE

July 2022

12 THE FURLONG  
RINGWOOD  
BH24 1AT  
22/10546

Scale 1:1250

N.B. If printing this plan from  
the internet, it will not be to  
scale.

