

REPRESENTATIONS to Wiltshire Council by Brokenborough Parish Council

1. For about 3 years as Brokenborough Parish Council (BPC) we have negotiated with the owners seeking to find a solution whereby if the pub and existing community use could not be continued then whether it could be legally restricted to converting the existing building to 1 dwelling.
2. We have negotiated with Mr Mervyn Dobson who with his partner Mr Andrew Cook effectively act as agents for Mrs Carol Dobson and Mrs Manjula Cook who are the owners and Applicants. Mr Dobson and Mr. Cook are Planning Consultants now retired from Pegasus Planning whom they have now instructed to put in the present Application.
3. The Applicants paid for the defibrillator machine to be relocated from the pub to our old red telephone box.
4. The Applicants paid for our legal costs advising on the proposed Agreement as at 1. Above.
5. Initially the Applicants informally enquired whether we would be interested in having the old Methodist Chapel bought for the parish as a village hall. The BPC carefully considered that prospect but it was not thought to be viable for us in terms of conversion and running costs plus it would merely provide a small meeting place. The title of the Chapel was registered in recent years at a value at £50,000. It was not for sale at the time, but this spring 2026 sold at auction for just over £70,000 with a reserve price of £50,000.
6. There have been no other offers of community use from the owners since, although throughout their ownership informal use of the car park at the pub has continued by the Parish on occasions when necessary. In December 2025 when the property was to be marketed as a pub the owners placed a security fence against the property which in turn restricted car parking to the frontage.

7, We have asked the owners if they would consider granting us a car park on one side of the property or the other for the use of the village under the control of the BPC- not for individual properties but to cater for celebrations such as larger church services, festivals and concerts, national and local occasions and the like which are now held in the only space remaining in the village namely the church and churchyard of St. John's, Brokenborough. Hitherto the village has always had the facility of using the pub and its car park for such purposes. It was noticeable at a recent large funeral in the church that there is a need for such car park to avoid the lane becoming clogged by parked cars competing with large tractor and farm vehicles seeking also to use the same and for example Church Lane proving impassable to residents trying to access or leave their houses.

8. We asked for 20 car parking spaces (even 10 to 15 spaces would make a difference) but this has now been refused notwithstanding the stated desire of the owners to possibly retain pieces of land from the site when sold.

9. Our negotiations as at 1. above reached a draft agreement which the owners have refused to sign off. This would potentially have given protection to the village by way of an Overage Agreement. A restrictive covenant was not possible as the BPC did not own any adjoining land.

10 The alternative solution of a ransom strip to enforce an agreement was not possible as the owners do not own the frontage of that land. It is not on their registered title. The Applicants' plan is wrong and the red line needs amending before any decision is made on this Application.

11. Highways have made the same point and say the frontage is highways verge.

12. We could consider applying to Highways to use the verge for parking which would look a muddle in front of the proposed converted property and it would be difficult to control. It would be far better to have a bespoke small area set out for 10 to 20 vehicles on one side of the property or the other, much of which is already gravelled.

13. We have pointed out to the owners that their marketing of the property has not been attractive: because of fencing, the muddy proposal to retain land (which was said to be negotiable but on the face of the particulars excludes the very necessary and large car parking and garden facilities potentially attractive to anyone wanting to run the place as a pub or restaurant) and the fact that they have allowed this very attractive country property to become overgrown and neglected covered in long grass and brambles.

We further noted that the purported covenant to prohibit residential development was unrealistic in today's economic climate thereby blocking a potential escape route for any potential pub buyer who subsequently encountered financial difficulties.

14. On now seeing the Application, we note that the viability report submitted by the Applicants was written in January 2023 and so not only is out of date but does not appear to reflect the recent considerable local housing growth including Filands and Backbridge Farm or now permitted further housing growth along Park Road and Park Lane all of which will increase the pub's local catchment area.

15. All that said, it is a matter for the Wiltshire Council and not us to decide whether the applicants have actually complied with the necessary planning requirements in terms of showing in effect that the continued present use is not practicable but we do say that insufficient regard has been given to ancillary community use e.g. car parking.

16. This property has been a public house serving the community of Brokenborough and around since at least 1731, initially as the Crown, changing its name in 1740 to the Rose and Crown and then in the early 21st century to the Horse Guards (Victoria County History).

17. Much as the Parish would prefer to see a continuing and thriving pub with community uses, we can see that ultimately this is not likely to happen in the foreseeable future and that sooner or later permission will be obtained to convert the property to purely residential use.

18. In that event we support the proposal to convert the existing property and restrict the application to 1 dwelling only on the site which is all that is sought.

19. The design of any conversion or extension or building on the site will be all important. Originally the Applicants were indicating they would apply for detailed planning permission at the same time as outline for change of use which would have been far better as a proposition for the BPC as we would have known what we were getting. The owners changed their minds and have opted to apply for PIP for change of use only. So that will be a matter for another time.

Dated 12 August 2026

Mrs Susannah Sterry,

Clerk to Brokenborough Parish Council
