

## Statement A22 to Development Control Committee B – 24th November 2021

### Application No. 20/02864/F- Windmill Pub, Windmill Hill BS3 4LU

#### Councillor Ed Plowden, Windmill Hill Ward

There are two concerns I would like to focus on – viability and the number of other pubs in the area.

##### 1) Viability

- a. I note that “very substantial” owner’s dividends have been taken from the pub in the last two years, which coincide with the period during which the owner has been trying to sell the pub (and a pandemic which closed all pubs for 8 months). This would appear indeed to be professionally reflected by the accountancy report, but may indicate that the small losses each year may not accurately reflect the viability of the pub
- b. A number of planning applications have been agreed in the very near vicinity of the pub, these with the proposed developments will number approx. 2500 dwelling units – or a 45% growth compared with the current number of households in the whole of Southville. In each of these developments we are trying to negotiate planning conditions to ensure there are spaces for community use. Does it not seem strange to be negotiating these with developers to create new spaces, whilst at the same time allowing old, established and loved ones to close? And does that not also demonstrate the need to protect the existing social and cultural infrastructure of the area?

##### 2) Number of alternative pubs – an assessment of this sort needs some local knowledge.

- a. The Planning officer has done a desk-based exercise to determine how many pubs there are in the local area, listing 14.  
Seven of these are thought to be 643m from the pub. Six of these are in Bedminster/Southville to the North. However, the Windmill Pub is on the periphery of the area it serves, already to the North of the vast majority of people objecting to this application who might consider this a local pub. Moving the centre of the assessment area to the top of Windmill Hill, much closer to the centre of the community adds at least 160m to all the distances. This places 6 pubs on the list outside of the acceptable radius, and no additional pubs enter into the 800m radius as a result of this.
- b. Several of the other remaining pubs listed are of very different character to this pub – a mix of pubs is absolutely required and many of the other remaining pubs are ones in which children may not be welcome (quite rightly in order to maintain a mix of pubs)
- c. The Officer report relies on Google Maps walking routes to determine the distance. I selected and tested the most direct Google Maps walking routes for two pubs. One of the pubs is in the same vicinity as the 5 other pubs which are now more than 800m away. I found that they both involved chicanes or bollards that do not meet the Government’s standards, and quiet, dark alleyways. The one to the North involved crossing a busy A road with no dropped kerbs or pedestrian provision, diverting to the signalised crossing added to the journey.
- d. I therefore believe the representation of the number of local alternative pubs is misleading as the Windmill Pub is not at the geographic centre of the community so the wrong measure has been used, and the walking routes are of very poor quality.