

CASE REF: H/6955/A/2160262

TYN-Y-CAPEL CHURCH ROAD MINERA WREXHAM LL11 3DA

SENDER : GALE TAYLOR CHAIRPERSON FOR THE SAVE THE TYN-Y-CAPEL CAMPAIGN

I have been campaigning since February 2011 when the pub/restaurant closed and represented the community at the Wrexham County Borough Council planning committee, Guildhall, Wrexham on 25th July.

After putting our case forward to the Planning Committee, a unanimous vote was made, on the refusal to permit a change of use from a pub to a daycare centre. The two crucial points were that the owner, Mr Keith Robert's had not complied with UDP Policy s9 as the pub had not been offered for lease/sale for 12 months and it could not be proved by the books that this business was not viable as he has run his daycare centre alongside the pub business.

A couple of days after Mr Robert's lost the case, he agreed to meet the campaign and we asked him if he would consider leasing the pub to the community. He advised he was not interested in a short term lease, but would look at a 3 and 5 year business plan at the end of August. He has also informed us he would lodge an appeal. However a few weeks later, Mr Robert's contacted the campaign to inform us that he would not be leasing the pub but be putting it up for sale on the open market, which he did at a very high price tag of £499,000. The pub/restaurant is not being marketed as a going concern as no books are available to any prospective purchaser. This has caused some concern, as we question whether he has put the pub up for sale just to say he is complying with the UDP S9 and with a high valuation and no books, this would deter purchasers. However, in our case, we know that the pub was well supported and used and we know it would be a viable business venture.

Our village pub is very important to our community spirit and social needs and as time passes, we all feel the loss more. There is no other social meeting point in Minera and it was the central core of our village as local residents would go for an afternoon out there, knowing you would see people you knew and in the idyllic setting, it was a great place to relax with family and friends.

The loss of local employment is still apparent, as many students relied on their first work experiences and many local teenagers have passed through the doors working in the kitchens or waiting on.

The question I have, is what does the daycare centre offer Minera Community? as the staff are not locally employed, they are agency

staff and the users are not locally based, they are transported here by mini-bus. The daycare centre does not have to be run from these particular premises but as it continues to operate, we have lost our pub as a consequence and once a pub is lost, it is very hard to get it back. Due to this over 900 homes in the area have no community facility and the daycare provides for under a dozen people.

I Refer to CLF1 policy, upon reading this, it is there to support multi-activity community and leisure facilities and any development which adversely affects this, will not be permitted.

The Local Council are helping to promote rural areas in the leisure and tourism areas, and a viable pub/restaurant would be a huge asset.

We held a public meeting in September and discussed our aim of buying the pub as a community, which was well supported and we received pledges to buy shares in the pub the same night. We are also meeting local businesses and have received some interest in our aim.

We have received support and recognition from the following:-

- 1) local community and local business support
- 2) Rural Development Economy programme- a match funded grant scheme run by the Wrexham Local Council. We have passed the first stage and receive business mentoring.
- 3) Wales Co-Operative social enterprise scheme
- 4) Yale College, Wrexham – I met the head of catering dept and he wants to work with us if we succeed with the project

The planning Officer received 50 objection letters against the change of use and Mr Robert's had 6 letters of support which were on a very weak basis. His agents stated that we can go to other remaining public houses, however the nearest pub, a mile away, has been closed for weeks at a time due to landlord issues. The service areas stated are up to 10 miles away and it is suggested that the economic climate was to blame. However, the pub was well supported locally but the owner did not advertise his business or market it, not even in the local paper which is essential when you are running a business. Last Christmas Day was fully booked, with a cancellation list full as well, which shows the demand.

The owner made no attempt to ask the local residents for help in sustaining his business and the management lacked in motivation, the general feeling was that the pub was being run down with inconsistent opening times which started from October last year, and caused a loss

of faith by the public. To close a business 4 days a week would affect trade.

I ask you to consider the needs of the community of Minera, as this was a much loved pub that met the social needs of the local community with its offering of a social meal or drink with family, friends or neighbours, in a safe environment, all within walking distance. To find any social interaction now involves the car or bus and this will lead to a decline in rural life. The Welsh Government policy , part 7, is there to protect rural and village life by maintaining facilities and community social contact.

As you are aware many pubs are closing, it would be sad to lose a pub that is much wanted by its community, can offer huge potential to the area both as an employer and on the leisure and tourism front, and bring the community back together again.