COC090
Appendix 16
REDACTED statement of JT 19.05.22

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

I work as a mental health nurse, but you don't have to work within the field of mental health to know or understand the impact that stress can have on someone. I have seen this in my work with patients and now over recent years in my family, as we witness the impact the ongoing situation is having on my brother David - and as a result and without a doubt has changed him. Anyone who really knows David will tell you this.

We have noticed this steady deterioration over the past few years. David has become unwell. He is depressed and is prescribed medication from his GP. He has become physically and mentally exhausted from sleepless nights and anxiety.

Behind closed doors in family life we have watched David implode. We have also witnessed him explode, as he has become angry and short tempered out of sheer frustration of what he has to put up with so often right outside his home - and also how unsupported and let down he has felt by relevant parties. Losing his composure with people is completely out of character for my brother not how he would usually behave. Saying that, I challenge anybody to maintain theirs if continually faced with all the disturbances coming from The Barn right outside their own home – as well as continually not being listened to or having their concerns considered over such a lengthy period.

Naturally, this whole sorry continuing saga has spilled in to our family life as we do our best to support David and try to keep him well. I am not enjoying the effect that it's having on us and in particular our Mom – of which the stress is simply progressing her dementia. This is clear so see. David's usual ability to care for her as well as he had been is now compromised. His performance at work due to the stress and exhaustion caused is also affected.

My family have loved living in Ledbury for a very long time. My Dad was deputy headmaster of Ledbury Junior School for 30 plus years. This does not give us grounds to expect anything, of course not. However, what I would expect or at least hope for – for David and others affected is respect and fairness. I haven't seen either. The whole experience has certainly marred our love of living in Ledbury and when I think of all the complexities of the situation and its impact on David and my family, then I'm actually glad that my Dad is no longer here to witness it.

It has been said by some, 'If it's that bad then why not move'? This is easier said than done considering finances required and a lack of rental properties in the area. Besides, why should he move? He chose to live in the property because of its quiet location, 17 years ago.

When I prepared this statement, I was reminded of the alarming conversation **REDACTED** had with **REDACTED**, following his complaint against The Barn as he was concerned that he could potentially lose a tenant. **REDACTED** reassured him that he could quite happily fill **REDACTED** with another tenant from people he knows. This response further demonstrates a lack of care, consideration and responsibility.

Is The Barn really an asset to the community?

When I think about their actions and behaviour already mentioned such as not being responsible as business owners or people, not adhering to licencing conditions, bullying and intimidating my brother, having no consideration for people living in the area with full knowledge of the impact they are having on them - and just generally 'ploughing' on and doing what ever they see fit, then in my opinion they are a so called 'asset' that the people of Ledbury could do without.

Where is David's right to a private and peaceful home life?

A simple thing like watching and being able to hear the tv in our homes is something that we would all expect to be able to do. More importantly, what about just being able to concentrate and simply relax in our homes - and just BE? This normal way of living has been taken away from David causing nothing but misery - and this has been the case since The Barn came about. I've lost count of how many times David's had to leave his flat to escape the noise. How can this be acceptable? How can this be right?

Simply put, and as documented, The Barn is not in the right location to do the things it wants to do and how often it wants to do them.

I typed David's statement for him which emotionally I found very difficult to do, as it just reminded me of how many challenges he has had to endure. Yes, his statement is long, but it is as I would expect from him - 100 percent truth.

It is absolutely beyond me why The Barn are still able to operate with more or less free reign, for twelve hours plus each day, seven days a week – in the way that they have been doing so for too long. The impact its had over recent years on David's time, his health (mental and physical), his finances, his home and family life should in my opinion be compensated for.

I would say it is the council's responsibility to ensure that businesses are operating fairly, within the law and without breaching licencing conditions.

In closing, I just can't find the words to express how much we feel that David is continually being let down by relevant parties and so as a family, along with his friends and people who know him, we will continue to support him protect his home life and health and well-being.

It is just not acceptable that someone should be exposed to all the issues that have been documented and mentioned. The comment from Ledbury Council stating that they have 'bigger fish to fry' I find outrageous and insulting especially considering the impact on David, my family and others affected by this ongoing situation.

This is the bigger fish – the health and well-being of the people of Ledbury.

Enough is enough.

Jonathan Thomas
19.05.22