

Licensing application, Woodies, St. Pancras, Chichester

I am extremely concerned at this application which asks for late hours (or to be precise early hours!) for drinking in a quite heavily residential area. The residences in this area are several storeys high, and likely to act as a funnel for sound. In the summer evenings people need to have their windows open, but noise from the bar and also during closing time is likely to keep people awake, especially on hot summer evenings. It is in a conservation area which is in great part residential.

Prevention of Crime and Disorder

In effect this looks as though it is likely to be a purely drinking establishment open until 1.30am, by the time that people have totally cleared away. At that time of night there is likely to be disorderly exodus from the premises, especially if people have been drinking for some time. It is stated that CCTV will be in use and that this will be capable of working in all lights inside the premises. What about on the patio? However, it would be totally unwelcome if there is to be lighting on the patio after a reasonable time of night, bearing in mind that the blue line on the plan denoting the active premises includes the patio.

Public Safety

This is a busy and fast road at the front of the premises, even late at night, and the pavement is narrow. Crowds of happy people may be unlikely to keep to the pavement and may well cause accidents. At the back of the premises there is a car park which is unlikely to be lit at that time of night.

Prevention of Public Nuisance

As already mentioned, the high residences at the back will act as a funnel to draw the noise, which will rattle round the relatively enclosed area of the car park. With open windows and at 1.30 in the morning the noise will be considerable with car doors slamming and motors starting up, as well as happy voices (or maybe not so happy!). At that time of night the background noise is much less, so that residents are likely to be disturbed, especially if they have their windows open for fresh air. It may also be that

During the evening the live or recorded music could encroach on the peace of the residents. While the applicant states that the music will be kept indoors, he also states that patrons can go outside to smoke or to get fresh air – so doors will be opening, allowing the music to encroach on the outside area. This until almost one o'clock is unreasonable for the local residents, most of whom will have retired to their beds before this time. Having stated that there will be no customers on the

patio after 22.00 he also states that they can smoke or go out for air – which is correct?

Protection of children from harm

Aside from the fact that the sleep of children too will be disturbed by late night noise, we must remember that at the age of 18 one becomes an adult. This means that while the applicant states that late at night children will not be admitted without being accompanied by an adult, sixteen year olds (or children much younger?), for example can enter with an eighteen year old and stay all evening – although those under age must leave earlier.

There will be no off-sales after 23.00.

I note that the application does not include requiring a licence for dancing. However, later in the application it does mention that discos may be held. Personally I have never attended a disco when there was no dancing!

A further requirement for the residents is some form of ruling regarding disposal of bottles. These are noisy things to dispose of, either after premises closure or before breakfast, and such noise is extremely disturbing for people wishing to sleep.

There are several other licensed premises nearby, all including meals. While I am aware that each application be decided on its merits, and that it should not set any precedent, if this licence is granted it may encourage other premises to decide they want to open until such unsocial hours as this is requesting.

While we all want businesses to thrive in the present climate, this is not the place for a drinking establishment – the food element having been mainly split from this premises. This is a residential area with eating establishments nearby. It is not the place for what seems to be a nightclub.

Yours faithfully,

Anne Scicluna (City Councillor – Chichester Central)

October 2020