

Subject: FW: 21/01077/LAPRE1 Woodies

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From: Sarah Hannafin [REDACTED]  
Sent: 28 August 2021 16:33  
To: Licensing <[Licensing@chichester.gov.uk](mailto:Licensing@chichester.gov.uk)>  
Subject: 21/01077/LAPRE1 Woodies

Reference 21/01077/LAPRE1

I am writing to object to the above application by Woodies to vary its licence which was granted on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

When that application was granted, I believe the licensing authority were clearly misled. It was said that Woodies was aiming to become a sophisticated cocktail lounge for diners and was aiming to attract an older clientele. Having seen every day what is happening there, I can assure you there are very few diners in Woodies, the annex is certainly not a sophisticated cocktail lounge as the volume of the music means you would not be able to have a conversation, the clientele clearly being targeted are younger (there is a student night actively promoted) and there is a dancefloor created to make what is basically a night club in a residential area. I would be very surprised if the noise levels currently being experienced by residents at the front of Woodies are acceptable according to licensing/environmental health and have seen on many occasions that they are not currently working to their agreed licenced hours for playing music.

In terms of the application for the variation, my opposition is for the following reasons, all of which go against the current obligations of Woodies and all of which will be exacerbated if the opening hours are extended:

- There are regular occurrences of disorder at the front of the venue and a number of incidents of criminal activity. Fights and arguments on the street in front of the venue and the surrounding road occur regularly. The police and ambulance were most recently called last night (28/8/21).
- There are significant issues with public safety caused by the way the premises is operating. As the back doors are now prevented from being used, all customers enter and exit at the front of the building. The pavement outside is narrow and sometimes 20-30 people might be standing outside (this is the area for smoking and queuing to get in). There is a danger to those customers, many of whom are intoxicated, who often either deliberately, or accidentally, end up standing in the road. As cars come around the bend onto St Pancras, they are faced with people in the road, causing them to swerve or brake; followed by beeping horns and shouting. There is also a safety risk to any members of the public who are trying to walk along the pavement – it

can be impossible to pass the numbers of people outside of Woodies, unless you walk in the road yourself, or attempt to cross the road to use the path on the other side of the road. Trying to pass the venue when there are large, noisy and drunk groups outside is intimidating.

- The noise nuisance from Woodies experienced by residents living on St Pancras is horrific. The DJ is set up at the front of the venue, with amplifiers and speakers which have no mechanisms to fix the maximum volume, so noise nuisance experienced by those living on St Pancras is worse than for those living behind the venue. The music is played so loudly that I can hear the lyrics (if there are any) and the house actually vibrates. The music currently continues until 12pm, sometimes 12.30 from Wednesday to Saturday. During the night, large groups are outside drinking, smoking, and shouting (the music is so loud you could not hear anything if you didn't shout). The constant traffic of people into and out of the venue means the door is usually open so any benefit of the doors reducing the noise is completely lost. When the venue closes, noise continues on St Pancras as people leave to go home, wait for taxis, etc. Being a residential area, the people that live here have work, children and other responsibilities. The noise nuisance caused by Woodies impacts negatively on our sleep; it can be impossible to get to sleep with the music and if you do manage it, a sudden increase in volume or altercation with a lot of shouting wakes you up again. Residents have the right to enjoyment of their property and to a decent night's sleep – neither of these is possible in the current circumstances, let alone if the licenced hours were increased.

The venue is clearly not meeting it's current obligations to prevent crime and disorder or public nuisance, and raises concerns over public safety. In these circumstances the licensing authority should not approve their application.

Kind regards

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