

The Licensing Team.
North Devon District Council
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From:

Rock Barouh
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Date July 4th 2022

License Application - 054716

OBJECTION TO A LICENSE APPLICATION TO SERVE ALCOHOL AND TO THE PROVISION OF MUSIC FROM A HORSE TRAILER AT THE BACK OF BLUE GROOVE, CROYDE.

Dear Sir / Madam

I write to you in order to strongly object to the granting of this licence application - Ref 054716

The hospitality industry has suffered more hardship in the past two years than at any time in my forty year career. Now as we come out of the pandemic, we require help and support from our local council and government, you need to protect the established businesses in order for our communities to come back together.

All the licensees in this parish take their legal duties and obligations very seriously. Control of public order and delivering public safety is not only a duty by law, it is also a duty of care to our community of which we are all proudly part of.

It takes years of training and experience to get this balance right, working with dedicated teams of people who are very professional in their desire to offer top level service, care and hospitality. All our premises are tightly controlled to ensure the best adherence to the licensing objectives. It is not possible to deliver this from a pop up bar with service delivered an ad hoc manner.

Nor is it appropriate for a new operator to simply arrive now, for the summer season; to cream off the tourist trade and then leave as soon as it suits them. They pay no equivalent rates, nor sustain local employment through the long and unprofitable winter months. They add nothing to the local community and simply take from it - leaving only litter and debris in their wake.

Such applications do not drive up standards and improve service, they do the opposite - with everyone just racing to the bottom, to try and compete with someone who has no real overheads to face, and no involvement with the community.

Further - there is no requirement for any further licensed premises in this parish. Trading levels in all tourist sectors are currently well below that of the pre-pandemic period; and now we all face a very uncertain future. The existing operators have struggled to survive over the last two years, while facing huge levels of worry and stress. Social and employment issues caused by the pandemic have been unprecedented and the effects will be long lasting. Now is a time for stability and calmness, to be able to rebuild in a sustainable way. The council should support this objective.

In short - we do not want or need any more bars in Croyde

Moving on to the specific licensing objectives - the application is unsuitable for a number of reasons within the requirements that all licensees must adhere to.

The prevention of crime and disorder.

In this application there are inadequate controls for the safety of the public and for the local community.

Any persons buying drinks from street traders in this way can wander off into the village without anyone supervising or monitoring their behaviour. Drinking in the street has been prohibited in local bye-laws.

Alcohol consumption has been closely monitored for many years in the parish and with the help of the local licensed premises crime and disorder has been kept to a minimum.

Such an outlet as described in this application will have little responsibility to maintain public order in the way required of all other premises. It is not 'part of the community' and as such bears little concern for any behaviour caused by its customers.

The location is unsuitable, being away from the main road in a relatively secluded area, poorly lit area, away from the main thoroughfare, where as stated it will be hard to maintain order and control.

This location (previously rough ground) backs onto several established restaurants and shops who will find potential crowds of people at their back doors and works areas. This is an open invitation for people to try to access these properties from the wrong side, leading to a possible social problems and disorder, as well as increasing the possibility for theft from those premises.

Previously the only people in this area would be workers in the shops and restaurants - not members of the public.

To allow music and drinking in this previously unregulated area is effectively turning it into a permanent festival site / venue with no control of the numbers of people coming and going. Is it going to be for ten drinkers, a hundred, a thousand?

This will lead to higher rates of crime and disorder and will create a real safety issue for the centre of the village.

Public safety

Once alcohol has been dispensed from the suggested location - a horse box. How will public safety be ensured as customers then leave the venue?

Temporary bar operators frequently will close earlier than the established pubs in order to simply disperse their customers on towards those premises. This has on occasions caused issues with public safety through a lack of a controlled drinking environment at the original location. ie. Operators can sell uncontrolled amounts of alcohol to customers and then simply push the problem on to the local pubs and bars to sort out.

There is not enough police presence in the area to adequately patrol and to ensure public safety.

Prevention of Public Nuisance

This application has potential to cause public nuisance. The granting of this licence will effectively create a new venue in the heart of Croyde, with the provision of food trucks and a licensed bar with music.

Specific areas

- Excess rubbish and littering.
- Lack of toilet facilities leading to urination in public places.
- Lack of proper sanitation.
- Lack of adequate supervision and control.
- Nuisance caused by excess noise.
- Lack of effective lighting.
- Lack of crowd control.

The Protection of Children from Harm

The venue as described, will be the go to destination for underage drinkers to try their luck. Controls in selling alcohol and the ability to observe customers in the location are very important in being able to deter and stop underage drinking. This is something all the established licences in the area take very seriously.

The location described will not be able to do this, offering the ability for people to buy drinks and disappear round corners and be out of site.

There is a clear issue and risk with the protection of children from harm.

Summary:

This application should be refused on all the grounds above.

It represents an uncontrollable and unregulated environment where each of the main licensing objectives will be at risk.

Licensing for alcohol sales should be left with the established and trained operators who are accountable to their community and to the law.

Socially the application is not wanted or needed by the local community. The current provision of public houses, bars and restaurants in the parish is adequate for the needs of locals and for the tourism sector.

The council needs to support both the local community and its established license holders and reject this licence application.

Yours sincerely

Rock Barouh