

Thu 16/02/23 11:57

Brian Whitty

license application 055718 re Sandleigh Tea Rooms

Dear Noel,

I wish to formally object to the license application made by National Trust Enterprises for the premises at Sandleigh Tea Rooms.

First of all the application is factually incorrect to such an extent that any reader of the application would be misled as to the impact that the operation of the license would have. Specifically I wish to point out that:

- The opening times are stated as 11am to 11.30 pm on the application whereas the NT 2023 handbook received this week says 10.30 to 4 or 5pm, which are the hours they have operated since opening in 2010, with the exception of half a dozen temporary events over the last 10 years
- there are errors in the plan submitted with the licensed area not identified and the National Trust offices shown as covered seating
- there is nothing in the application regarding security of the alcohol or how they plan to operate with the license.

I understand that since the application was made, the applicant has verbally agreed to remove off sales from the license application and reduce the closing time for the license to be 9pm.

She has also told me that the licensed area would be within the grounds of Sandleigh, that alcohol would only be served with food and there would be no music, all of which obviously needs to be reflected in the application.

First of all there is a basic principle here that National Trust is planning to operate outside of the planning that it has approved.

When the Tea Rooms were approved in 2009 it was seen as an operation to attract lunchtime trade.

I quote from the National Trust 2009 application "A day-time café was considered an appropriate use of the site through the community consultation exercise." "Although suggested opening is from 9- 6 the likelihood is that the premises will close at 4pm, concentrating on lunchtime trade." "There will be no evening operation of the use when activity would be more likely to harm residential amenity."

So it was clear at that time that National Trust accepted that the siting of Sandleigh opposite domestic houses and the slipway on to the beach, along a narrow stretch of road and in the heart of an AONB is clearly a sensitive place for a commercial operation.

Therefore it restricted it's operation to lunchtime trade.

Whilst I understand that planning issues are not a consideration for the licensing committee, you must look behind why the planning restrictions are in place. National Trust said themselves that evening activity "would be more likely to harm residential amenity".

I live full time opposite Sandleigh which is sited at the top of the slipway on to the beach. This is a very busy area during the summer months and extending the operation into the evening will create a significant risk against all of the licensing objectives.

In the application made by National Trust, section M describes the steps National Trust intend to take to promote the four licensing objectives.

Firstly they say they plan to hold local music and group theatre events which to my knowledge has not happened within Sandleigh before, it has operated solely as a tea room, rather than routinely as stated.

All the other steps given for each of the licensing objectives are about logging incidents and putting up notices to be quiet as well as some staff training.

But there is nothing to say how they plan to keep the alcohol secure or how they will stop alcohol being taken down the slipway on to beach, a spot where many sit and collect during the warmer days and evenings.

The issue that Sandleigh have is that, following their refurb, they have lost most of their indoor seating to a service counter, and there is now no table service.

It is therefore going to be impossible to stop guests wandering off (especially if there are no tables left) with food and drink into the car park and more concerning onto the beach with their alcohol filled open glasses (National Trust is now plastic free I am told).

This will certainly be a public nuisance, not sure the noisy ones will read the signs, but will have an impact on public safety and harm to children if glasses are broken on the rocks at the bottom of the slipway.

The National Trust provide no plan on how to know when there are no tables available, and hence stop serving, or how to stop those customers wandering onto the beach. No CCTV or security is planned, just an incident log...too late!

I am meeting with the applicant on Monday together with Parish councillors and CARA committee members to see if it is possible to allay our concerns or preferably to convince the National Trust that this is not a good idea.

Kind regards

Brian Whitty

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