

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 25 May 2021 21:39
To: LICENSING (Cheshire East)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Objection to Wilmslow Rugby Club - Premises Licence Application WIL876/1

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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To whom it may concern,

This is in reference to the application for a Premises Licence submitted by the Wilmslow Rugby Club, Memorial Ground, Kings, Road, Wilmslow, SK9 5PZ.

The Wilmslow Rugby Club currently have a Club Premises Certificate and have thrived with this for many years. The club has also confirmed that they do not have any finance issues. The club stated that they wanted to "bring the licence up to date". The new Premises Licence is not needed or required.

According to the Cheshire East website for Premises Licence applications, only essential applications should be submitted. Is this really essential?

We live at [REDACTED] and as a family, we have been members of the Wilmslow Rugby Club for the last [REDACTED] with our children playing for the club. We have supported the club through these years, helping with organising the Junior Rugby Festivals, allowing club members to park on our lands when asked/needed, reporting anti-social behaviour from non-club members that have occurred on the rugby grounds (which have resulted in arrests) and attempted to protect the club when travellers camped on the pitches.

We have lived in Wilmslow for the last [REDACTED] years, and when we moved to [REDACTED], we knew of the events and usage of the club and accepted a certain amount of noise, traffic and general disruption such as loud music from events held inside at the club such as parties and including the dispersing of the premises by the people that attended these events. There would be several of these events where these people would be shouting, banging car doors and revving car engines as they left the premises up to 11:30pm. Whilst these times were a nuisance, we accepted this disruption as it was only very occasional and never went past 11:30pm.

We were approached by members of the Wilmslow Rugby Club whilst they were conducting an initial letter drop regarding the licence application. They stated that it is purely to update the current licence and that there were no changes to the current operating times or usage.

Reading the letter and following further discussions, they later told us that they were seeking to hold up to 8 larger (5000+ attendees) events which would also be included in the application. Once they made the application, they put up notices around the rugby club grounds which indicated that the licensing times were being extended beyond current. The new Premises Licence that they have submitted is now "To permit the sale of alcohol and provision of regulated entertainment 11:00 to 23:00 Monday and Wednesday; 11:00 to 00:00 Tuesday and Thursday; 11:00 to 01:00 Friday and Saturday; and 12:00 to 22:30 Sunday, all plus 30 minutes dispersal. Licensable activities shall not be permitted to take place externally beyond 23:00 on any day". Also, they have reduced the number of large events (5000+) to 3, but the number of smaller events (500+) is unlimited.

From my understanding, the Licensing Act 2003 is based on four licensing objectives:

1. Prevention of Crime and Disorder

The extended licensing hours will attract non-local people to the current quiet residential area. The late night opening (well past current pub hours) will attract people, leaving the closed pubs in the local vicinity, to the Rugby Club to carry on drinking. This will result in an increase of intoxicated non-locals who will have no regard to the surrounding residents or their property. The possibility of damage/vandalism to the resident's property, by the leaving/dispersing customers of the Rugby Club bar, will massively increase, as will the noise of the said customers. Our children, have already been awoken and scared by people leaving the Rugby Club, and this will increase the frequency of this happening. We have already this year called the police to report anti-social behaviour occurring at the Rugby Club on at least 4 separate occasions; with an arrest made on one of these occasions. These were caused by young adults drinking and playing loud music from a portable speaker, which was enough to awaken and scare my children - That was only between 20-30 people outside. The Rugby Club are asking for an unlimited number of events up to 500 and 3 events for up to 5000, with sound stages playing loud music.

With such an increase in non-local attendees, the possibility of theft is also greatly increased. The Rugby Club have stated that they will have CCTV installed and maintained. This will only cover the Rugby Club and not the surrounding residential properties. If any theft or vandalism occurs, then it is the surrounding residents that will have to deal with it. We will have to negotiate with our insurers, pay excesses and have the general painful task of sorting any repairs or replacements.

The large events will attract an extremely large amount of non-locals to the area, who will not respect the surrounding residents - They will only be there for one night, why would they care? These events will also be organised by an external events organiser who will again not respect the surrounding residents. This has been observed previously with filming crews using the Rugby Club car park. These film crews have numerous large trucks that bring the trailers and equipment into the Rugby Club car park. They arrive and depart generally late at night (10:00pm onwards) and they drive over and damage the grass verges and our trees. Any requests for repairs have gone without action. The noise of the large trucks attempting to get into and out of the Rugby Club late at night is very disruptive and wakes our children.

I expect if any complaints are made to the Rugby Club, they will not accept any responsibility and state that it is the events organiser that is responsible.

The Rugby Club perimeter is not secure. There are currently huge areas where people can access the club grounds. Even with fencing up, it would be near impossible to prevent people from entering or leaving from anywhere around the perimeter. This would give rise to people, including those underage, from entering the premises. Also, the Rugby Club backs onto public footpaths and areas of dense trees - This would make it virtually impossible for the police to locate and apprehend anyone that was of interest. The police currently have an issue with people riding motorbikes illegally from Styal Road, over Twinnies Bridge, and up the public footpaths on to Kings Road (just outside the Rugby Club entrance). They have many a time chased these same motorbikes back down Kings Road and lost them down the footpath to Styal Road.

Four times this year we have contacted the police due to the anti-social behaviour at the Rugby Club by non-club members. On the first occasion, where there were 20-30 people gathered during the Covid lockdown, we observed the police make an arrest, however, the remaining people ran out of the Rugby Club in different directions. We ourselves saw 10-15 leave from the Fitness entrance, another 5-10 leave through the Rugby Club hedges and down the path to Styal Road. On the other 3 occasions, we saw the attendees run out in similar places and could also hear the police shouting across the rugby grounds at people running away.

If they can't prevent this, then how is there any hope of policing the Rugby Club premises and the surrounding area.

2. Public Safety

Kings Road terminates at the Wilmslow Rugby Club, with a footpath to the Carrs park at the end. The current speed limit on Kings Road is 20mph with a weight limit of 7.5tonnes (except for access). The increase in traffic on Kings Road due to the increase in events and their attendees will put local residents, families and their children, as well as

the attendees to these events at a massively increased risk. Current Rugby Club members and Fitism members regularly exceed the 20mph limit and we have been met with hostility from the drivers when they are reminded of the speed limit. And now the Rugby Club want to increase the traffic flow further. Even with their suggested usage of the Waters car park with coaches bringing in event attendees, this would require at least 100 coach trips each way, at the start and end of the events. That's 400 coach loads, each approximately 15 plus tonnes each, down a road without road markings and parked cars along both sides. This all leads to an increased risk of accidents, road surface damage, damage to properties due to the vibrations from coaches and event equipment trucks and also a massive increase in the local air pollution which would affect the residents of Kings Road and local schools. Considering the Rugby Club backs onto the Carrs park and a National Trust area, pollution should not be ignored and neither should the impact on the wildlife in these areas due to the increased usage of the land.



Here are some example images of parking along Kings Road. The majority of these cars are owned by Fitism members. As you can see, the Rugby Club car park is empty and the gates are open. There has been no attempt by these owners to use the Rugby Club car park:





3. Prevention of Public Nuisance

The events will also include outdoor music events such as the “Party on the Pitch” event that the Rugby Club are also planning for 3rd July. Between the Rugby Club and the surrounding residents, there is no protection from the sound emanating from the Rugby Club. This means that the loud music will be a huge annoyance, especially those with properties directly adjacent to, and facing the Rugby Club, such as ourselves. According to the License application, these events can continue late into the night and into the morning. This would be a ridiculous condition to propose - expecting the surrounding residents to put up with nuisance noise for such long periods and late into the night for an unlimited number of occasions. Our house boundary is 15m from the rugby club and we are currently working from home, and in the future will still be working from home. Our children go to school. It would not be fair or acceptable for us to be prevented from sleeping at the weekend after working significant hours during the week.

4. Protection of Children from Harm

Kings Road is largely a quiet cul-de-sac road where children can ride their bikes and feel safe. This can be seen in the Cycling Proficiency training that is given at the local Gorsey Bank Primary School. They use Gorsey Road, Broadwalk, Priory Road and Kings Road to teach the children. The increased traffic down Kings Road will increase the risk of children being hurt or killed.

The late bar opening times and also the large events, will bring an increase of non-locals into the area, which will increase the risk from strangers around the local children.

An additional aspect is overprovision. From the findings on the East Cheshire licence website, there are 536 licensed premises in SK9 on the Cheshire East public register. There are already facilities nearby, such as The Colony on Altrincham Road, which is within half a mile, that already have a Premises Licence. There are many more places with similar licensing, so there is no need for another.

The Wilmslow Rugby Club site itself is not appropriate for late night bar opening, nor for large scale events. There is only one suitable access road to the Rugby Club (Kings Road). This road has parked cars and the events would cause considerable traffic, which would also restrict the access for emergency services. The site cannot be fully secured as the majority of the perimeter is open.

The Operating Schedule that has been put forward by the Wilmslow Rugby Club is completely inadequate. It has no provisions to any of the points or concerns listed above.

The point of nuisance noise is mentioned, but only in that "Noise from amplified music or voices shall not be such as to cause a noise nuisance to occupants of nearby premises". This is quite an arbitrary statement. Who defines whether the noise is a nuisance? Would we have to endure the nuisance noise for that event? What is the suggested process for the corrective measures? How would this be corrected for the next event and enforced? What is the process if no agreed corrective measures are adhered to?

There is no mention in the Operating Schedule of tackling vandalism/nuisance behaviour and the increase in noise of the dispersing late night bar or event attendees, other than a "notice". Again, what is the process for reporting and correcting consistent incidents of vandalism/nuisance behaviour and increased noise? Who will enforce it?

The Wilmslow Rugby Club, from the start of this application, have repeatedly either lied, or not stated their true wishes or changed their statements without updating the surrounding residents. The Wilmslow Rugby Club have also repeatedly referred to themselves as a "Community Sports Facility" and told us of their desire to create a community with the surrounding resident's, but have yet to show any action of being a community member.

This can be seen in the way that they have handled this Premises License application within the community and from the lack of any responsibility relating to Fitism.

There have been many complaints from local residents regarding the members of Fitism; using resident's driveways to turn around, parking on Kings Road (a specific from the Fitism planning permission is that Fitism members WILL NOT park on Kings Road), loud music being played outside at anti-social times of the day (early morning), training sessions with members during the Covid lockdown, contravening covid regulations, and speeding cars up and down Kings Road. When these points have been raised with the Wilmslow Rugby Club, they have stated that they have no responsibility with regards to the actions of Fitism and its members. This is not a community behaviour.

With all this in mind, as it stands, we object to the Premises Licence application in its entirety.

Please will you kindly acknowledge safe receipt of our objection.

Best regards,

