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Merton Council

Licensing Sub-Committee

12 July 2021

Supplementary Agenda

5 Additional Information

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Agenda Item 5

Apologies, Krishna: some further thoughts. I would be grateful if you could continue to send me the papers for the meeting when they become available. I would particularly like to see the plan of the premises in question.

It would also be helpful if the committee could be shown the map of the South Park Gardens Conservation Area which demonstrates the impact which the proposed licence may have if all the colonnade is in use as pub seating (it is now filled with ten pub-type tables with benches both sides). Houses in the conservation area are directly opposite the area proposed, and others are a few yards away. The domestic character of the conservation area is at odds with the activities in question.

I would be grateful if you would also draw to their attention a map of the Broadway Conservation Area which demonstrates the inclusion of Unit 114 within it. The Broadway CA was set up to preserve the civic heart of Wimbledon, characterised by the distinctive quality buildings at its heart, not just the Town Hall, but the Courts, the Fire Station and the Police Station. The Queens Road facade of Centre Court was skilfully designed to retain that townscape and introduced a long new facade which was in keeping. The Broadway shops are the commercial neighbours of that civic heart which still creates a harmonious and agreeable townscape in Queens Road. As suggested, I do not see the need for a pub abutting the transition to the domestic townscape of Queens Road. The Broadway is the place for such activities.

I would be grateful if these additional comments could be placed alongside those objections raised already.

Thank you.

Paula Burnett.

Queens Road Market, Centre Court, Wimbledon

I would be grateful if in support of my previous communications the committee's attention could be drawn to the issues evidenced by the photographs below, taken on 7 July 2021, in relation to the question of public nuisance arising from the unsatisfactory location of a pub potentially serving large numbers of customers outside, impacting on a quiet residential neighbourhood. There is a risk of disorderly behaviour and possibly criminal behaviour, with serious implications for the well-being of the young. Those who may be attracted to the colonnade seating at night pose a particular concern.

a) 7044. The colonnade with ten tables, directly opposite domestic buildings in South Park Gardens Conservation Area. The billboard advertises the Market opening from 11am to 11pm every day with Street Food / Live Sport / Outdoor Seating / In-house Bar / Cocktails. Upwards of forty customers drinking for long periods can be expected here, with the other twenty tables, many of which are outside, accommodating even more again. There is no provision for staff oversight of customers, and no control of the use of the tables by non-customers. At both ends the colonnade is next to access and egress points for Centre Court, that at the furthest end being currently a safety exit for the centre, though it used to be an open access to the department store and may be opened again.

Level access to the Centre Court mall by the door at the other end of the colonnade is now no longer available to the public, to the disadvantage of wheelchair users and those with pushchairs, and against council access policy.

b) 7043 The view from the corner of the colonnade down Queens Road shows the residential character of the Conservation Area abutting the pub seating. To the right is the entrance to Prince's Road with, on either side, the characteristic townscape of the Conservation Area's Victorian houses. These extend also on the left, past the first building which is the church built to replace the chapel reduced to a facade in the Centre Court development. More of the Victorian houses were demolished to make way for the new church. Queens Road is - or has been - a quiet, pleasant, leafy road with minimal traffic (through traffic is prohibited away from the Broadway) and therefore favoured by pedestrians. The abutting streets are similarly quiet and pleasant with residential buildings, and lead through to South Park Gardens themselves - a great asset to the borough. The location is not suitable for 11 till 11 drinking, or for a fanzone with all of the noisy excitement it is likely to generate. There will be nothing to stop off-sales being carried through to the Gardens and consumed there. In fact there has in the past been considerable nuisance from such activities generated further along the Broadway by theatre crowds and users of other leisure facilities. The council has worked hard to control such problems, as has the local community, with considerable success. Several initiatives have meant that antisocial behaviours such as drinking and drug-taking are thankfully no longer a problem. It is easy to see that the changes currently underway at Centre Court could well result in a new wave of such issues.

c) 7015 The number sticker on the last table in the colonnade shows there are 30 tables in all. While generally those tables may be regarded as seating four, they often in fact accommodate up to eight, and some of the tables and benches nearer the Broadway are larger in any case. There could easily be more than 200 drinkers at any one time.

There is no requirement to buy food. It is not a restaurant. In fact the provision of food from the stalls is completely separate from the bar service, and the stalls would be hard pressed to serve more than a very modest number. The coffee bike stops trading at five at the moment, and it is doubtful whether the two food stalls will find it feasible to trade from 11am to 11pm (they currently cease trading long before 11pm). Anyone who has ever lived near a popular pub knows how much noise it can generate - as well as other nuisances. Though customers have been minimal to date, decisions taken at this stage should take account of all potentialities.

The further corner of the colonnade is particularly at risk of attracting unwelcome activities, as it is easily accessed by scooters and other vehicles, is dimly lit, and completely unsupervised. There is already a resurgence of problem drinking on the seats outside the former Town Hall, although it is supposed to be policed as an alcohol-free zone. The new seating will seem attractive to some, particularly the tables and benches in the colonnade which are in place 24hrs a day. Once Centre Court is closed (usually early in the evening), and once Unit 114 closes at 11pm, there is a real risk of antisocial activity and in particular a risk to our young people's health and wellbeing. Rough sleepers too may find the colonnade a better option than a local shop doorway. The police station is not far away but as we know the police have many more significant matters to attend to.

Yours sincerely,

Paula Burnett



Queens Road Market, Centre Court, Wimbledon

I would be grateful if in support of my previous communications the committee's attention could be drawn to the issues evidenced by the photographs below as to the safety of the public. These concerns are additional to those already raised as a matter of public safety.

1. The food stalls can only be accessed by customers standing on steps. There is a risk they will fall when stepping backwards with purchases down another step.

Photos: 6547 steps to stalls; 6516 Asian food stall; 6515 / 6554 burger stall

2. There is inadequate pavement space for pedestrians between bicycles in the bike racks, the coffee bike and the bar boards

Photo: 7034 coffee bike being packed away at 5pm with billowing tarpaulin which continues to billow after stall closed. When the coffee bike has a customer there is inadequate room for pedestrians or wheelchairs to pass along the pavement, particularly if with a pushchair or bulky shopping, without asking the customer to step aside.

In addition, the extent of the loss of public pavement space outside Unit 114 is evident from photo 7021.

Photos: 7034 / 7021

The whole area, including the entire colonnade, have been available to the general public as pedestrian space since Centre Court opened more than 25 years ago. What the management is now putting in place, arguing that it can use the full extent of its freehold as it chooses, deprives the public of circulation space hitherto freely available to everyone, not just paying customers. I would like to suggest that this closing off of public space may be open to legal challenge on the basis of access enjoyed by the general public (not just clients) without challenge by the owners for more than twenty years.

Yours sincerely,

Paula Burnett









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