

As a Responsible Authority under the Licensing Act 2003 we have been consulted about the above premises licence application for Woody Express of 103 The Parade, Watford.

Having reviewed the application and taking into consideration the Council's Statement of Licensing Policy (November 2013) LP2 and LP3, we wish to make the following representation.

The premises are located in the Town Centre for the purposes of policy LP2, which states that any take-away outlets in the town centre will generally be allowed until 1 am only unless the exception to policy LP3 can be shown. The policy is designed to prevent late-night crime and anti social behaviour and to improve safe dispersal at night.

Having taken into consideration the Council's licensing policy LP3 which is aimed at providing a family friendly environment, we would object to this application as by granting a licence for the requested hours would be against the general principles of the Council's policy and specifically the prevention of crime and disorder, and public nuisance.

Taxi marshals are considered valuable in tackling the complex issues surrounding queue jumping, crime and disorderly behaviour and increasing people's feeling of safety. There is no taxi marshal service after 4am and with the exception of Oceana other alcohol-licensed premises in The Parade close by 3am at the latest. If these premises remained open until 4am and without a dispersal policy, there is the potential to become a focus point for large groups of customers to congregate and hinder rapid and safe dispersal. Therefore we do not want to increase the options for people to stay in town after 3am preventing safe dispersal and potentially increasing anti-social behaviour.

Although as the applicant has mentioned that there will be no provision of alcohol at the premises, the Council has concerns about the likelihood of crime and disorder that can occur outside fast food premises late at night due to alcohol fuelled behaviour and the opportunities for crime by the gathering of patrons, nearly all of whom would have been consuming alcohol during the preceding hours. The consumption of food outside the premises is likely to result in litter on the pavements not only in the immediate vicinity but also as the patrons pass through nearby residential areas and alleyways.

In addition to the above, this premises is in close proximity and opposite to JSA House which has been granted planning permission for change of use and is currently being converted to 65 bedsits. It will be quite a large residential development in the area and if the proposed hours are granted this premises will have a big impact on the community in terms of public nuisance and crime and disorder. There are no other 'takeaways' in the area which have these hours. Under such circumstances I am seriously concerned that granting the application would result in:

- Increased and unacceptable levels of noise from customers.
- Increased anti social behaviour, congregation of clientele which would disturb nearby residents especially those living above the premises.
- The premises will generate a great deal of litter from its clientele.
- The premises will attract people under the influence of alcohol at this time of night
- Potential risks of crime and disorder where people congregate under the influence of alcohol during the early hours.

In other words will generally reduce the quality of life of those living nearby. Neighbourhood Groups, trade, Councillors, Police and working groups have worked hard to rebuild the area and make it a safer environment.

Taking into account the Council's Licensing Policy and sharing the residents' concerns I would object to the late night refreshment hours as this would have a detrimental impact on the licensing objectives and the Council's ambition of creating a family friendly town centre.

Kind Regards

P Seyan
Licensing Officer
Community and Customer Services
Watford Borough Council
WD17 3EX
01923 278476
licensing@watford.gov.uk