



**CITY OF DURHAM
PARISH COUNCIL**

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22 October 2021

Dear Licensing team,

Re: Application for the grant of a premises licence by Lane 7, Unit 6B and 6C. Walkergate Durham. DH1 1SQ

With reference to the above licensing application, whilst the City of Durham Parish Council welcomes a more leisure activity focused venue in the City centre, the proposed license requires improvement and the Parish Council therefore wishes to object to this application under the objectives of protecting children from harm, public safety and preventing crime and disorder.

This application seeks permission for licensable activities – including films (indoors), indoor sporting events, live music (indoors), performance of dance, recorded music (indoors) and late night refreshment (indoors) – Monday to Sunday 09:00am to 02:00am and from end of permitted hours New Year's Eve to the end of permitted hours New Year's Day. The Parish Council understands that the premises already has an alcohol license (both on and off the premises) from its time operating as *Fat Buddha*.

In reaching its decision, the Parish Council Licensing Committee had regard to the Licensing Act 2003, the Section 182 Guidance and the County Council's Statement of Licensing Policy 2019 to 2024. The Parish Council Licensing Committee feels that, should this application be granted in its current form, it will fail to uphold three of the four licensing objectives. Each of which are addressed in turn.

Protection of children from harm

The Parish Council very much welcomes the applicant's commitment that *"No children under the age of 16 shall be permitted to remain on the premises after 1900 hours unless accompanied by an appropriate adult"* and *"No children under the age of 16 shall be permitted to remain on the premises after 2100 hours."* Not least because this type of premises will be very popular with young people.

The Parish Council believes that the application should include having a Challenge 25 Policy in place as well as a trained designated young persons / safeguarding supervisor(s) on the premises at all times, in order to further promote this key licensing objective.

Public safety

Public safety is an important licensing objective as it is about protecting the safety and even the lives of everyone. It is expected that anyone visiting a licensed venue in the County or making an order for delivery can do so in complete safety, as they will be visiting premises that have been constructed or adapted with safety in mind.

The Licensing Authority expects that the applicant will detail in their operating schedule the steps that will be taken to promote public safety.

In the schedule of proposed conditions, the applicant states at point 11: *“No customer who the Premises Licence Holder believes may have consumed alcohol shall be permitted to participate in go-karting without having first undertaken breathalyser test and recorded a reading of less than a limit prescribed by the Premises Licence Holder.”* Whilst the Parish Council very much welcomes this responsible attitude, it is unclear from the Plans submitted where exactly the go-karting is to take place within this premises and this activity does not form part of the application. As the application is for indoor sporting events, the Parish Council assumes this is intended to take place indoors. The premises is clearly nowhere large enough to accommodate such an activity and this should be removed from this application if this is intended to be a provided activity.

Preventing crime and disorder

Firstly, incidents of alcohol-fuelled, late-night crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour are increasing in Durham City (Durham Constabulary report on alcohol related ASB incidents in Durham City centre, Durham City section data at December 2019).

Firstly, the Parish Council notes the proposed condition 10 as part of this license: *“The Premises Licence Holder shall risk assess the need for the deployment of doorstaff and shall act accordingly.”* The Parish Council is unclear as to whether “deployment of doorstaff” refers to ensuring that doorstaff have a presence at the premises or whether this refers to managing an incident as the staff are present. Either way, this condition presupposes that the Premises Licence Holder is going to be on site every single day, every single hour of operations. This condition must be strengthened by having an agreed rota for doorstaff to cover peak periods and times, as agreed with the Licensing Authority.

Furthermore, the Parish Council is concerned to see that the plans for this premises also include the provision of Beer Pong tables.

There is a relationship between the consumption of alcoholic drinks and resultant issues associated with crime and disorder. Irresponsible drinks promotions and increased alcohol consumption can lead to adverse effects on all four licensing objectives. This can contribute significantly to antisocial behaviour, drunkenness, disorder and other criminal behaviours that can blight areas, damage communities and place people at risk of harm. Section 6.5 of the Council's adopted Statement of Licensing Policy 2019 to 2024 specifically prohibits the provision of the drinking games of this sort and is clear that *"we (DCC) remind licence holders (and all relevant personnel working at licensed premises) of the mandatory conditions relating to drinks promotions. These conditions prevent drinking games and the provision of unlimited or unspecified quantities of alcohol for free or for a fixed or discounted price."* This part of the proposal should also be removed entirely.

For the reasons set out above, this application should therefore be refused in its current form.

Yours sincerely,

Adam Shanley
Clerk to the City of Durham Parish Council