

Annex 60

FROM: Ken Ford
18, Hurricane Drive
Rownhams
Southampton SO16 8LH

Dear Mr White,

I should like to register my objection to the granting of a Premises Licence to Rownhams House for the reasons outlined below.

The Prevention of Crime and Disorder

Having moved three years ago from an area in Rownhams where three premises did have appropriate licences, I have personal knowledge that such premises within residential housing areas do indeed lead to increases in crime and disorder. Rowdyism, broken and burnt fences, burglary and litter were all common experiences of mine when I lived opposite the Balmoral Inn in Rownhams. Virtually all of these offences were perpetrated by people living outside the village.

It is axiomatic that an increase in alcohol intake leads to higher spirits and a lessening of inhibitions which can in turn lead to antisocial behaviour. Licensed premises have a duty to protect neighbouring people and properties from the actions of their customers. Existing premises are usually in well lit, open environments where policing and public awareness helps to moderate behaviour. Rownhams House is situated away from any main highway or street lighting in the centre of a quiet residential estate. Without the steady hand and accessibility of any moderating influences, those who choose to commit public nuisances or crime will be able to do so free from the view of the wider public and law enforcement officers. For example, the rear of my garden, and those of many of my neighbours, backs onto the unlit grounds of Rownhams House allowing unhindered and unseen access to any person who would choose to come over the wall.

Prevention of Public Nuisance.

The proposed licensing application will, I believe, allow after hours drinking and open air entertainment at Rownhams House. With the premises totally surrounded by residential housing, such activities cannot fail to create some sort of public nuisance, whether it be from noise, light pollution or public disorder. None of the activities proposed to take place there could possibly be screened from nearby residents. Virtually all the people attending these events will be from outside the village. The surrounding area is already well suited with venues for open air entertainment with two such places – Broadlands and Mottisfont Abbey – within Test Valley no more than five miles from Rownhams House and two others exist within seven miles of the house in Southampton and Eastleigh local government areas – Rose Bowl and St Mary's. All of these venues were chosen because they have no residential housing actually surrounding the sites and all are geared up for increases in traffic and policing to moderate the likelihood of public nuisance.

Promotion of Public Safety

When Rownhams House changed its use from transport depot to office/domestic dwelling some sixteen or so years ago, the surrounding land was sold by the present incumbent, at no doubt a handsome profit, for housing. It was always envisaged that the two could live harmoniously along side each other, and so they have. Rownhams House housing estate is a well kept, tidy, law abiding estate, with little evidence of any antisocial activity. It is a safe area of regulated streets and calm, extremely local, traffic. The increase of people and vehicles from outside the village, both by day or by night or whenever Rownhams House is used for entertainment, will change in character of these safe quiet streets for the worse. There is no doubt that public safety will be compromised if the licence is granted, whether it be from traffic or antisocial behaviour, and the quality of life for the local residents will be compromised.

May I add that I am also making these representations against the granting of this licence on behalf of my elderly neighbour Mrs Pat Arthur of 16 Hurricane Drive, Rownhams whose property also backs on to the grounds of Rownhams House. She is unable to make these representations herself as she is in hospital recovering from a broken hip and wrist suffered after a fall in her home. She is in total agreement with the matters outlined above.

Ken Ford