

From: SPP Kent Residential [REDACTED] **On Behalf Of** SPP (Kent Residential)
Sent: 30 March 2015 11:55
To: Licensing
Subject: Premises Licence No.14/04034/LAPRE - The Bell, The Street, Bredhurst ME7 3JY

Dear Sir /Madam

Please find attached my comments regarding the above application.

Regards

Stephen P Page LL.B
Director

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



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Green Court
The Street
Bredhurst
Gillingham
Kent
ME7 3JY

25th March 2015

Licensing Partnership
P O Box 182
Sevenoaks
Kent
TN13 1GP

Dear Sir / Madam

The Bell Public House Bredhurst
Premises Licence No.14/04034/LAPRE

We live at Green Court the Street Bredhurst which is immediately adjacent to The Bell. All vehicles going into or exiting the pub car park do so on our side of The Bell. We have lived at Green Court for ten years and, during that time, the pub hours for serving alcohol have been extended on Fridays and Saturdays to 12 midnight.

We appreciate the importance of a pub to a village provided that the pub is well run and maintained and used in a manner that will not cause disturbance to local residents. We also appreciate that a pub has to be commercially viable which is why we did not originally object to the hours being extended to 12 midnight on Fridays and Saturdays, despite some apprehension. With the benefit of hindsight, we wish we had objected as the extension has had the following effects on Fridays and Saturdays;

1. Customers leave The Bell in a more inebriated state and are, therefore, more rowdy;
 - (a) If customers are in the garden, they are more raucous and loud.
 - (b) As customers leave The Bell to go to the car park, they will often be yelling at each other.
 - (c) Car doors are slammed in the car park, car horns are used, engines are revved and sometimes cars are doing skids on the loose gravel car park surface.

- (d) Customers gather outside our house waiting for taxis and there are often long waits on Friday and Saturday nights. This means that the customers will be talking to each other in loud voices and sometimes yelling at each other for a long period. A number of them will also still be consuming drinks which they have taken with them out of the pub. As this noise is taking place, generally, between 12 midnight and 1 am, this is a considerable disturbance to us, to our neighbours in the Old Post Office, alongside us, and our neighbours opposite and the other side of The Bell.
 - (e) Smokers will be outside The Bell at all hours and will often be talking in loud voices, laughing and raising their voices.
2. All the above matters are a nuisance and disturbance to the local residents living near The Bell which means that we are either woken up or cannot get to sleep until after 1 am.
 3. The road going through the village, which is immediately in front of The Bell, is a shortcut to and from Maidstone, so even late at night will have some cars passing through. We have sometimes heard these vehicles using their horns at customers from The Bell, who are waiting to be picked up, as they will be wandering into the road creating the very real possibility of a serious accident.
 4. The incidence of glasses and bottles thrown over the wall into our garden has increased and has almost totally been limited to Friday and Saturday nights when there are extended hours.
 5. We have often been so alarmed by the volume and nature of the noise created by customers late on Fridays and Saturdays that we have considered calling the Police to avoid fights occurring. Instead, we have telephoned The Bell, but it is very difficult for staff to deal with this type of situation and, obviously, by the time we have called them the disturbance has already been caused to ourselves and our neighbours.

The Bell is an asset to the village, but it is only a part of the village and must be used in a way that is fair to local residents and does not cause them disturbance. We do not object to the opening hours suggested for the morning as we assume that this is to attract a breakfast clientele and most local residents will be up by the time The Bell opens. However, we strongly object to The Bell extending its hours for serving alcohol and being open at night time for the following reasons;

1. Customers will have drunk more and are likely to be louder and more raucous when leaving The Bell or using the pub garden.
2. Even if customers have not drunk more, there will be inevitable noise connected with their departures, e.g. car doors slamming, engines starting (some car and motorbike engines are very loud starting up), shouting good-bye etc., which is not acceptable in the small hours of the morning.
3. The disturbances will be;
 - (a) Noise coming from the customers using the pub garden in good weather.
 - (b) Noise from customers using the outside smoking area all year round.
 - (c) Noise from customers leaving The Bell;
 - i. Saying and shouting their farewells.

- ii. Slamming car doors.
 - iii. Car horns being used, often as a way of saying good-bye.
 - iv. Car and motorbike engines being started and revved up.
 - v. Cars being skidded on the loose gravel in the pub car park.
 - vi. Glasses and bottles being smashed.
 - vii. Bottles being tipped into the re-cycling bin.
4. There will be increased vandalism, e.g. glasses and bottles thrown over our wall.
5. Customers will gather outside our house (there is in a pull in area/car park) waiting to be picked up, usually by taxis. They will often be waiting for a considerable period and shouting and still drinking and, obviously, disturbing us and our neighbours. There is no public transport at this time of night.
6. There will be an increased risk of an accident if customers have drunk more and lurch into or wander down the main road. Most of the village is unlit at this time of night.

The level of disturbances will be hugely increased by the proposed extended hours and it is unreasonable to expect local residents to have their peace and quiet shattered in the early hours of the morning when they have to go to work or school the next day. The proposed extended hours are far more suited to an urban setting rather than a rural village location. As we have indicated, the already extended hours on Friday and Saturday have caused unreasonable disturbance and any further extension would be unfair and intolerable.

Yours faithfully

Stephen and Jane Page

From: Ian Bowen [REDACTED]
Sent: 31 March 2015 11:52
To: Licensing
Subject: "The Bell", Bredhurst: Application for extended opening hours

Thatched Cottage,
The Street,
Bredhurst,
Gillingham,
Kent, ME7 3JY.

31st March, 2015.

Licensing Partnership,
P O Box 182,
Sevenoaks,
Kent, TN13 1GP.

Dear Sir,

Re: "The Bell", Bredhurst: Application for extended opening hours.

We live at "Thatched Cottage", Bredhurst, diagonally opposite to "The Bell" and we wish to object to the proposed extended evening opening hours.

Bredhurst is a residential, semi-rural village and "The Bell" is at a central location, sited at the crossroads of "The Street" and "Hurstwood Road". Vehicles leaving the pub are required to stop at the junction outside the pub before proceeding either up or down "The Street". When these vehicles pull away from the junction their engines make more noise than a vehicle travelling normally down the road and their headlamps shine directly towards us if they are heading up the road. Under the former licensing hours such noise and light, although undesirable, had little impact upon our sleep but under the proposed opening hours this disturbance would happen in the small hours of the morning. In addition, many customers of "The Bell" came and went by taxi; we feel that this will probably continue to be the case and that the customary pick-up point outside "The Bell", with its attendant noise, sounding of horns and loud voices would be very disruptive at these early hours.

Whilst we are glad that "The Bell" would seem to be safe from closure, the fate of so many public houses these days, and that it will continue to have an important part to play in village life, we feel that the proposed extension of opening hours, particularly the late closure, would be extremely detrimental to both us and the village in general.

Yours sincerely,

Ian & Sue Bowen

From: RICHARD COLLINS [REDACTED]
Sent: 01 April 2015 17:01
To: Licensing
Subject: The Bell Public House Bredhurst - premises license no: 14/04034/LAPRE

Dear Sir / Madam,

We live at Horseshoes, The Street, Bredhurst, which is situated in the same row of buildings some 60 or so metres from the entrance of the pub on The Street

Whilst we appreciate and would encourage anyone wishing to run the pub for the benefit of the village we are concerned to hear that the opening hours of the pub, when refurbished, are likely to be extended. The reason for this concern is based on our experience of having on occasion to have to clear up bottles and glasses left when customers at the pub have vacated the premises, not to mention some rowdy behaviour as they walk past our house which is situated on the edge of the footpath leading to and from the pub.

The Bell is an asset to the village, but it is only part of the village and must be used in a way that is fair to local residents and does not cause them disturbance. We do not object to the opening hours suggested for morning as we assume that this is to attract a breakfast clientele and most local residents will be up by the time The Bell opens. However, we strongly object to The Bell extending its hours as it will be inevitable that some customers will be in a highly inebriated state causing excessive noise and disruption to this living in close proximity to the pub. The proposed extended hours are far more suited to an urban setting rather than a rural village location.

The level of disturbance will be hugely increased by the proposed extended hours and it is unreasonable to expect local residents to have their peace and quiet shattered in the early hours of the morning when they have to go to work or school the next day.

The already extended opening hours have caused some considerable disturbance to those residents living adjacent to the pub so any additional extension would be unfair and intolerable.

Yours faithfully

Richard & Sarah Collins

From: John Loomes [REDACTED]
Sent: 02 April 2015 14:49
To: Licensing
Subject: Application for The Bell at Bredhurst

I am writing to object to the application for a licence to The Bell in the strongest terms. I am a resident living within 100 yards of the pub. The pub is in a rural location, closely surrounded by houses and with a primary/ junior school directly opposite. The application is to extend the time of the licence to 9 am until 12.30am which is excessive for a village pub in a quiet location. A few years ago the hours of opening were extended and this led to a dramatic increase in noise at closing time, anti social behaviour, taxis arriving to pick up late night drinkers. The garden area to the rear of the pub is directly adjacent to a row of cottages. Any extension to the hours can only result in even greater nuisance to residents. The application is of great concern to residents and therefore hope you will consider refusing this extension in hours.

Mr J Loomes
6 Fir Tree Grove
Bredhurst.

Sent from my iPad

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 03 April 2015 10:39
To: Licensing
Subject: Objection to Greene King's changes at the Bell, Bredhurst

Dear Sirs, We wish to register our strong objections to the much extended licensing hours proposed by Greene King. These opening hours, together with the extension will inevitably increase the number of pub goers resulting in increased noise and disturbance. The increased hours, plus the certainty that the large majority of late hour pub goers will be young, and who tend to be noisier, will likely result in very late night noise at an unacceptable level. As a relevant comparison the opening hours for the very similar Greene King pub, The Spyglass and Kettle, which is only 2 miles away, are 11.30 am to 11 pm

We have been residents in Bredhurst for 47 years as below.

John and Valerie Sanders
14 Fir Tree Grove.
Bredhurst, Kent
ME7 3LB
[REDACTED]

From: Steve Thornton [REDACTED]
Sent: 06 April 2015 12:35
To: Licensing
Subject: 15/00762/LAPRE - The Bell, The Street, Bredhurst

Dear Sir/Madam

15/00762/LAPRE - The Bell, The Street, Bredhurst

Please find attached a letter explaining our objections to the extended opening hours proposed in the above application.

In case you have any difficulty opening the attached file, the text from the letter is reproduced below.

Kind regards,

Steve & Penny Thornton

*The Old Post Office
The Street
Bredhurst
Kent ME7 3JY*

6 April 2015

Licensing Partnership
PO Box 182
Sevenoaks
Kent
TN13 1GP

Dear Sir/Madam,

15/00762/LAPRE - The Bell, The Street, Bredhurst

We should declare an interest both as near neighbours and regular visitors to the pub. Whilst we applaud the decision for the pub to be taken over by someone who cares about it and believe it should be a vital part of the village, we wish to formally object to the planned extension of licensing hours.

We do not believe any consideration has been given to the likely impact on those living near the pub and we believe the application is complacent in stating that "no further risks have been identified which need to be addressed" with regard to the prevention of public nuisance and the prevention of crime and disorder. If no further risks have been identified, it can only be that no attempt has been made to identify any, as they would have become apparent very quickly. Indeed the new licensee appears to be taking a cavalier attitude towards this application as, as far as we are aware, no attempt has been made to liaise with the community or assess the impact on it.

The move to late night opening two days a week has already had a considerable impact on our life. The patrons the pub kicks out mull around in the area to the right of the pub, while waiting for taxis, lifts home or just to carry on drinking and this regularly cause a public nuisance and disorder and occasional criminal behaviour.

For example, screaming and shouting at one another, often with a threatening overtone, is a regular weekend occurrence, as are smashed glasses and discarded litter. We also have to contend with cars revving their engines and accelerating down The Street as if involved in a drag race. It also never ceases to amaze us how drunks

who have given up on a cab and decided to walk home think it is funny to knock on the door or ring the bell in the early hours. More gravely, there have also been occasions when fights have taken place outside and we personally have experience criminal damage to a parked car resulting in a significant repair bill.

(This was a few years ago and the side front wing panel was damaged by being kicked, thumped or hit with something. When we went to the pub to see if they had seen or heard anything we were told they couldn't help and it was nothing to do with them as it had happened when the pub was closed. The police were made aware of this vandalism, so there should be a record of it.)

This behaviour tends to happen on a Friday or Saturday night when the pub is open later. We would suggest that this is because the later opening hours attract visitors from further afield, many of whom are younger than the typical patron and just interested in 'getting hammered'. The problem is that having taken full advantage of the additional drinking time they are then ejected into the street and have no way of getting home. At that time of night getting a taxi from Bredhurst to Walderslade/ Rainham /Maidstone/Chatham etc can take some time and this is then when anti social behaviour occurs.

We are not claiming that all of the aforementioned happens every single weekend but when it does it can be intimidating and frightening, particularly to the females within the family. We have realised how bad things had become by its absence in the period in which the pub has been shut.

We have tolerated this at the weekends as the price of having a village pub. However, extending the late opening hours to week nights is a step too far. As well as putting up with generally anti social behaviour for potentially seven nights a week, it would affect those who have to get up for work the next morning. For example, Mr Thornton has to leave for work before 6:00 each morning and if he is regularly kept awake until 12:30-1:00 by noisy and rowdy pub patrons, it is likely to be detrimental to his wellbeing.

As long time supporters of the pub, we really do wish it well and have no objection to any of the other proposals. However, it is a village pub in a small quiet village and not a city centre establishment and, therefore, we feel there is no justification for the extended late night opening hours, especially given the likely affect on those that live close to the pub.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Yours faithfully,


Stephen Thornton


Penny Thornton

From: Jim Chalmers [REDACTED]
Sent: 07 April 2015 11:18
To: Licensing
Subject: The Bell. Public House, Bredhurst

Dear Sirs,

I object to the application for a change of opening hours at The Bell Public House, Bredhurst.

Opening until midnight on a Friday and Saturday night is more than adequate for a quiet village public house, the noise of patrons arriving and leaving is bad enough now without any increases.

I live diagonally opposite the pub and patrons park outside my home as well as using the car park behind the pub and we currently suffer late night revellers noisily leaving The Bell premises, to increase the hours would be unacceptable.

Glasses and bottles are frequently left on my patio and the hedge in the school opposite, and directly under our bedroom window, is often used as a public urinal in the late hours. This behaviour for even longer hours cannot be allowed.

I remain,
Yours faithfully,
James Chalmers,
21 Fir Tree Grove,
Bredhurst,
ME7 3LB

From: June Stacey [REDACTED]
Sent: 08 April 2015 19:18
To: Licensing
Subject: The Bell Pub Bredhurst

Dear Sir/Madam

We live just over a hundred and thirty yards from The Bell Pub at Bredhurst. Looking at the plans for renovation we have no objections, recognising the need for improvements . We do however object to the application for hours of extension to the license.

The extension of hours in place on a Friday and Saturday night already cause a noticeable difference to the noise late at night. We feel further extensions on the remaining days of the week is unfair to the residents.

Yours faithfully
Mr and Mrs Stacey
Brandenburg
Dunn Street Road
Bredhurst

From: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Sent: 10 April 2015 11:32

To: Lorraine Neale

Subject: Licensing objection - The Bell

Attachments: The Bell Licensing Objection by BPC 9.4.15.doc

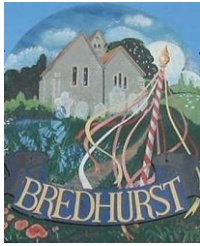
Dear Ms Neale

I have looked at the website to send in a letter of objection from Bredhurst Parish Council to application 15/00762 The Bell, Bredhurst, but cannot find a way to upload the letter, so I am sending this to you with the request that this is added to the comments received regarding this licensing application.

Kind regards

Wendy Kemp (Mrs)

Clerk to Bredhurst Parish Council
[REDACTED]



Bredhurst **PARISH COUNCIL**

Wendy Kemp
Bridfel, The Street, Bredhurst, Kent ME7 3LJ

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

*in Maidstone
Borough*

9 April 2015

Licensing Partnership
PO Box 162
SEVENOAKS
Kent
TN13 1GP

Dear Sirs

15/00762/LAPRE - THE BELL, (GREENE KING), THE STREET, BREDHURST

Bredhurst Parish Council held their meeting on 1 April 2015. Councillors were **UNANIMOUS in their OPPOSITION** to the above application for an extension to the existing licensing hours.

The Bell, in the rural village of Bredhurst which is in the Kent Downs AONB, is a focal point for residents and is located in the centre of the village. It is surrounded by houses which are in close proximity to the pub. Many of the residents who live in these houses were present at the meeting on 1 April and were extremely vocal in their opposition to the extension of the licensing hours for the following reasons:

NOISE

The noise generated by patrons of the pub was grudgingly accepted by residents when the previous licensee was in occupation. Although their licence permitted the late night opening of the premises, the previous licensee only made use of the late opening hours on Fridays, Saturdays and Bank Holidays. During the week and on Sunday evenings the pub closed at 11pm. Residents accept that by living close to a pub one can expect a certain level of noise and this can be tolerated when it occurs around 11pm. However, the proposed extension of 00.30 with half an hour clearing up time moves the noise disturbance over **7 days a week to 1am or later**. This is totally unacceptable and will have a detrimental impact on the lives of residents in adjacent properties to The Bell and many residents throughout the village as rowdy drinkers try to make their way home through the village.

The noise which causes the most disturbances is generated from the garden area and patrons departing the pub late at night. The noise from the garden, which is immediately adjacent to houses in which residents are trying to sleep at midnight, is from general socialising and loud voices. The prolonged noise of patrons leaving the pub, under the current licensing hours, can go on for an hour

or more once the pub has closed. This noise is in the form of car movements, car doors slamming, revving engines and loud conversations (including swearing and shouting) whilst patrons wait for taxis and lifts home.

A further extension to the opening hours is not something which residents are prepared to accept. This is a quiet rural area and noise generated in the early hours of the morning, **7 days a week**, caused by patrons leaving the premises will be alien to the area. This is not an URBAN location. There is currently little noise in the village at 1am, other than the occasional car passing through. It also has to be considered that the closing time of the pub is not the end of the noise disturbance. Once the pub has shut there is the noise associated with clearing the garden area of bottles and glasses. The bottle store is at the rear of the building and is immediately adjacent to Green Court, a residential dwelling. Under the previous licensee, the clattering of bottles being placed in the store was disruptive and, should the licensing hours be extended, this will extend into the early hours of the morning.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Much of the village has no street lighting and some roads do not have pavements. It is not safe for patrons of the pub to be exiting The Bell, possibly in an inebriated state, to try to walk home in pitch darkness along unlit country lanes. There is no public transport available at all in the village in the evening, except for taxis. Patrons of the pub frequently stand outside The Bell and/or Green Court, The Old Post Office or Thatched Cottage waiting for a taxi to arrive. This can be an extended period of time at weekends which, not only causes a noise nuisance, it can be dangerous when patrons stagger out into the road by accident.

There have been lots of complaints from residents in relation to litter in the form of beer bottles and glasses being strewn through the village. Residents work very hard to keep the street scene of a rural nature and it is disappointing that the issues of glass could increase with any further licence extension.

It is also worth noting that the front entrance to The Bell exits directly onto the main road which runs through the village. Patrons would either walk straight out onto the pavement parallel to the road or leave via the rear entrance in a vehicle. Both methods of leaving the pub would cause disturbance to residents and this would be exacerbated by the later licencing hours.

CRIME

There has been lots of anti-social behaviour by drinkers leaving The Bell late at night due to the lack of transport available at the current closing times. Residents have noticed the increase of this behaviour in direct relation to the previous extension of licencing hours. Residents are adamant that they do not support any further extension. Residents have stated that they would be extremely disappointed if the new owners of the pub did not appreciate that this is a rural area and, as such, a quiet a peaceful environment should be respected and maintained.

Bredhurst Parish Council and many residents support the planning application for the proposed building works to the pub to ensure it opens again as a valuable amenity for the village. However, Bredhurst Parish Council and many residents are strongly against the extension of the licencing hours. The proposed extended licensing hours are more in keeping with an urban area, not a rural

location. Bredhurst Parish Council believes any further extension of the licensing hours would be detrimental to the village and may alienate the local community.

Yours faithfully

W Kemp (Mrs)

Clerk to Bredhurst Parish Council

From: Hilary Butler [REDACTED]
Sent: 10 April 2015 16:02
To: Licensing
Subject: Premises Licence NO 14/04034/LAPRE

Dear Sir or Madam

I am writing to register my concerns for extended licensing hours at

The Bell, The Street, Bredhurst, ME7 3JY.

My husband and I have lived in Colindean, Dunn Street Road, Bredhurst, ME7 3LX for 25 years. We have occasionally been customers at The Bell and are aware of its popularity especially with customers who travel from other destinations, although it is also frequented by customers who live within our village.

We are concerned that extended opening hours until 12.30 am every night will mean we will have to endure noise into the early hours of the morning which we do not find acceptable.

We have often been awakened by rowdy people making their way home by car and on foot, drivers often seem to say goodnight to other drinkers by hooting their horns loudly and repeatedly as they drive along Dunn Street towards Maidstone or Forge Lane towards Hempstead.

Our property is opposite Pickwick Motors forecourt where some customers from The Bell have either parked their cars or if on foot congregate to continue their conversations, usually in loud raucous voices which frequently include a lot of swearing, this we find unpleasant and extremely disturbing, obviously this behaviour is driven by alcohol.

If the licensing hours are extended, more alcohol will be consumed, resulting in even more anti-social behaviour.

I draw your attention to the fact that whilst The Bell has been closed for refurbishment there has been no late night noise within the vicinity and furthermore far less litter thrown into our drive and on the pavements.

We appreciate that a well-run pub run by staff and frequented by considerate customers can be an asset to our village but extended opening hours will attract a different kind of behaviour and therefore we strongly oppose granting extended opening hours.

Yours faithfully

Hilary and Christopher Butler.