

13/00231/LA PRE



1
1

Forstal Farm Oast
Wilden Park Road
Staplehurst
Kent TN12 0HR
01622 832064
8th February 2013

Licensing Application (Ref. MBC 13/00231/LA PRE)

To the Chief Licensing Officer,

It has come to our notice that an application for the sale of alcohol has been made from Hush Heath Winery, Five Oak Lane, Staplehurst TN12 0HX.

On further investigation it appears there is more to this application than meets the eye, in fact, we find it misleading under Section 158 of the Licensing Act as the requirement to advertise is mandatory and there is no mention of a music licence either pinned to the farm gate or in the press advertisement in the Wealden Advertiser. This application has masqueraded as solely a licence to sell wine, when really it embraces plans for an all-singing, all dancing wedding venue. We suggest that this application has already contravened regulations.

We would therefore ask you to veto and postpone for the time-being this application, until it can be advertised properly and discussed by all affected parties.

My wife and I have lived opposite the winery for over thirty years and it has always been an agricultural concern therefore paying no rates, unlike ourselves and the dozens of local residents who are opposed to this application and pay high community charges for the *privilege* of living in the country.

Over the years there have been various parties/functions held in this area (which by the way is not isolated) and the sound carries far and wide. This of course is acceptable on a sporadic basis as we are not killjoys, but the fact remains it is very intrusive. For many years (prior to Mr Balfour-Lynn owning the land) cubs and scouts were allowed to camp in Snoad Wood (which is even further from our house) during the summer holidays. Of course we never complained, but during the evening one could clearly hear individual voices and shouts echoing around what is a natural bowl, which amplifies all sound.

The thought of a music licence being granted between 10am-midnight, 7-days a week is horrific. The buildings proposed for the site are agricultural by design and not properly sound-proofed. Add to this the fact that marquees may be used and the whole concept is totally unacceptable.

It would mean having to sleep with windows closed on hot summer nights, with revellers calling and car horns hooting until the early hours. People leaving the site would be travelling on C roads in total darkness in an area unfamiliar to them and as there is a very limited taxi service and no hotels here, it is likely some of them would risk drinking and driving.

Add to this the impact on the wildlife here. Over the years in this beautiful part of the unspoilt Kent countryside we have enjoyed watching many birds building their nests, owls, bats and buzzards overhead, hares, badgers and deer in the fields and wood – all would be disturbed, by this unnatural intrusion.

I would like to submit this opposition confident in the knowledge that every resident in the vicinity is united and opposed to Mr Balfour-Lynn's application. A petition is being organised.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K F Humphrey'.

Mr & Mrs K F Humphrey
E: humphrey224@btinternet.com

PS. It has come to our attention that Mr Balfour-Lynn was involved with Chapel Down Winery, Tenterden, where a music licence was turned down, surely this would have set a precedent?