

LicensingTeamB

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 22 December 2021 03:23
To: LicensingTeamB
Subject: Rendezvous External Area

Categories: FOR DRINK TEAM

Dear Licensing Team,

I would like to make representations against the grant of a license for the external area on Custom House Quay.

I believe that, were this license to be granted, the licensing aim of the prevention of public nuisance would not be upheld, both because of the prior acts of the prospective licensee, and the general nature of the license.

My concerns regarding the prospective licensee relate to an incident that occurred in April of this year - part of the prospective licenced area that would otherwise have been used as a car park was being used by the licensee to serve drinks and food outdoors. As part of this, a fence was erected around the area being used. Also on this site are two Sheffield stands (a bicycle stand, comprising a single metal 'n'-shaped hoop), which, whilst outside the fence, were abutting it in such a way as to make it impossible to use one of them without causing a hazard to road users.

I raised this matter with one of the staff on duty, who said she would pass the message on. A few minutes later, whilst I was getting ready to leave with my bike, two other members of staff came out to speak to me regarding the matter. I indicated where their fencing was obstructing the stand, and requested that adjustments be made to avoid blocking the facility. The staff were dismissive of the request, and refused to provide any other information regarding the outdoor seating area, stating only that the council had approved it. I enquired as to whether the approval was of a drawing or of the fencing as installed, but again was simply told that the council had approved it.

I did not note any change to the fencing until the whole area was reconfigured later in the summer, presumably for commercial reasons.

Whilst this is a minor incident, I do not believe that it is appropriate for a licensee to obstruct public facilities without providing good reason, and am concerned that the attitude demonstrated is indicative of the approach of the prospective licensee to members of the public who are not their customers - that is that they are to be dismissed by any means without considering their concerns.

I also have concerns regarding the closure of the road on a semi-regular basis for the activities of a private business that do not significantly benefit the town. Whilst some amount of inconvenience may be acceptable when a road is closed for a major event that draws people from around and outside of the county to Weymouth, that minor inconvenience can be accepted, as the town as a whole benefits from the publicity and spending of people travelling specially. This does not seem to me to be likely, especially for the football-related events, where every venue will be offering the opportunity to watch. Should the prospective licensee have data showing that this is not the case, and that the events bring substantial external spending to the town, I would be happy to review that data and consider amending this representation.

The proposed licenced area as shown on the map extends the full width of the road and pavements, so any diversion would also have to apply to pedestrians. This has impacts on personal safety - the shortest diversionary route is along St Edmund St and Lower St Edmund St, which is significantly less well-lit and less public - factors that increase the likelihood of crime and disorder.

Should the licence be issued I would propose conditions that ensure that members of the public are not unduly inconvenienced such as the following:

At all times during set up for events, the event itself, and the subsequent removal of event infrastructure the Licensee must maintain a step-free path, no less than 1.2m wide at all points, from the steps to the town bridge to the junction of Custom House Quay and St Mary St, and from that junction to the part of Custom House Quay under the town bridge. The path between the road under the bridge and the St Mary St junction shall be a shared use path, and be signed appropriately.

(The 1.2m distance is taken from the Sustrans Traffic-free routes design guidance for shared paths, and allows for use by everyone, regardless of disability)

At all times the Licensee must ensure that a clear zone is maintained around the two Sheffield stands positioned next to the town bridge abutment of 1m measured from the centre of each stand, with a 1.2m wide path from there to the road or temporary shared path.

(The 1m distance is from Sustrans cycle parking design guidance)

The Licensee must inspect these areas at least hourly for broken glass, accumulations of litter, or other hazards, and remove these within 15 minutes of their identification.

Whilst these may seem like large paths, to comply with the requirements would only require the use of part of the pavement, as the two routes can share for a substantial portion of the distance. Providing these paths gives pedestrians and cyclists an option to proceed along their usual well-lit route, reducing inconvenience and the likelihood of crime. Whilst drivers of motor vehicles will still be required to divert, they are much less likely to come to harm by taking the alternative route.

I am happy for all contact to be via email to 

Thanks,
