

LICENSING ACT 2003

Representations

Details of the representee:

Name Michael Bloomfield

Address Crookham Common Road, Crookham Common,
Thatcham

Postcode RG19 8EJ.

Telephone Number

Email address

Please note the Council is required under the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005 to provide the applicant with copies of the relevant representations made.

Details of the application to make representation(s) on:

Application Reference Number 20/00133/LQN

Name of Premises Pinchington Hall

Premises Address Pinchington Hall, Crookham Hill, Crookham Common,
Thatcham

Postcode RG19 8DQ

Under the Licensing Act 2003, for a representation to be relevant it must be one that is about the likely effect of the application on the promotion of the four licensing objectives.

Please give details of your representation(s) and include information as to why the application would be unlikely to promote any of the following objective(s):

The Prevention of Crime and Disorder:

- 1. There is a clear link between the excessive consumption of alcohol & crime (breach of the peace, criminal damage, violence, drunk-driving etc). Given the long hours alcohol will be available & party atmosphere the risk of unruly behaviour & criminality is obvious.**
- 2. There is accommodation for only 12 people at Pinchington Hall (6 bedrooms) so most attendees at functions will have to drive home (there is no public transport here & no taxi ranks etc). Assuming 100 guests at a wedding reception, it is almost a given that some will be over the limit by the time they leave at midnight-3.00 am in the morning. Drunk-driving is inevitable & the local roads have no lighting & there are plenty of sharp unsighted bends.**
- 3. In 2003-04 an illegal party took place at this building when it contained Sovereign Housing tenants (the party started at 3.00pm one Saturday afternoon). Although West Berks Environmental Health recorded unacceptable noise levels (past midnight), Police were unable to attend to close the party down due to another incident in Newbury. The party prevailed to 4.00 am & our family had no sleep. Police resources are more stretched now than back in 2003-04 which suggests the ability of the Police to manage incidents out at Pinchington late at night must be in doubt.**
- 4. In urban centres (Newbury/Thatcham) late night revellers can be more easily policed as there are more officers available & exiting crowds can be more easily dispersed (people can walk home, catch taxis etc). The locality around Pinchington Hall is not conducive to such dispersal making it much harder for the Police to control.**
- 5. The proposed establishment of Pinchington Hall as a party venue takes no account of it's extremely close proximity to the medium secure psychiatric Hospital, Thornford Park (just 10m away). Although escapes by patients over the surrounding 5.2m fence are rare (last in 2016), escapes from the Psychiatric Intensive Care Unit (PICU) are more frequent (two so far this year). Erstwhile, escapees have tended to head to Thatcham or Newbury for transport to flee but it is not inconceivable that an escapee might be tempted to join a**

party "next door". This carries the risk of assault to either guests or patient.

6. Although Thornford Park is a secure hospital, some low secure patients are allowed out for periods of unescorted leave (they wait outside for bus transportation). Again if an event is in progress just the other side of the road there may be a risk that they would want to participate (ditto "5" above).

Public Safety:

1. The key issue here is traffic. If a 100-person event is held, cars will tend to arrive at the same time. Given that there is currently only one point of access to Pinchington Hall (on the brow of Crookham Hill), it is very likely that queues to enter will occur on Crookham Hill Road. Vehicles coming up the hill will encounter these round the bend with clear potential for accidents to road users.
2. This problem will be exacerbated by some vehicles approaching from Crookham Common Road & needing to cross the opposite lane of traffic to enter. These too have the potential to add to the danger.
3. Pinchington Hall do not own the current access point (according to the developer who built the side road to his intended 12 new build family houses adjacent to Pinchington Hall). If they are denied access here, they may elect to create an entry point further down the road by the old gatehouse. This potential point of access is even closer to the Hospital's single entrance/exit. Moving a traffic black-spot just outside a Hospital entrance would be thoroughly irresponsible.
4. But the situation is worse. According to the family house developer, Pinchington Hall only have car parking space for 16 vehicles. I've visited the site & can't find even these. It might be possible for cars to park on the gravel driveway or lawn in the grounds but this seems unlikely. An alternative therefore would be to park on Crookham Common Hill Road outside. In the event of 100 guests attending (plus staff, caterers, band, DJ, equipment etc), large numbers of vehicles will be left on the road outside making the Crookham Hill Road here even more dangerous & potentially causing gridlock outside the Hospital.
5. Alternatively, Pinchington Hall attendees may park illegally in the Hospital car park. As this car park is normally 90% full, it will simply cause displacement. Given the nature of the Hospital, shift staff,

1

clinicians & the emergency services need access at all times. If this is compromised the implications for public safety are negative.

6. Many staff who work at Thornford Park disembark at Thatcham railway station. The Hospital encourages these staff to use a mini-bus which they run but nevertheless one regularly encounters staff walking up Crookham Hill. As there are no verges or pathways, this is dangerous. Anything which serves to increase traffic on this route & anything which increases the chance of drunk-driving here, represents a clear risk to these people. Clearly any guests from Pinchington Hall who decide to walk "home" late at night will also be running the same risk.

The Prevention of Public Nuisance:

1. The key problem here is the effect of long periods of noise. Noise & sleep deprivation combined are used as a form of torture. If granted, this Licensing Application will cause stress & misery to a range of parties.
2. Pinchington Hall was never built or renovated to be a major party venue (we understand it only had Planning permission to be used as a residence with office & stabling). It is not a purpose built concert venue/nightclub/wedding reception centre. As such noise pollution from within the building will travel & pollute the countryside for several miles around. This will be even worse when the music is played outside. Residents of Crookham Common, South Thatcham, Brimpton & beyond will all be affected. Nightclubs in town centres like Newbury are properly sound-proofed. Outdoor wedding receptions like those at the Wasing estate (1,200 acres) are set in parkland where noise does not disrupt neighbouring communities. I estimate Pinchington Hall has no more than 3-4 acres of land so noise pollution from Pinchington is in no way contained or containable.
3. Within a radius of 400m of Pinchington Hall live approximately 300 people, including 120-130 mentally ill patients of Thornford Park Hospital (& PICU), 140 dwellings at Crookham Park (mostly elderly), plus residents such as the Ellison's, Cassam's, Bloomfield's, Williams's & many more. When the 12 family homes are completed (built right next to Pinchington Hall), another 30-40 people will be their immediate neighbours (including many children). Pinchington Hall offers late night party entertainment but it is smack bang in the middle of a peaceful, quiet rural residential community. The local community have chosen to live here precisely because of the peace

& quiet. This community does not deserve to be assaulted by a constant barrage of noise over which we have no control.

- 4. Everyone enjoys music but we all have individual tastes. As individuals we choose where, when & what to listen to. We choose duration & volume too. We also have the ability to turn music off if we need to make calls or concentrate whilst working. However, the Licensing Application removes this choice from the local community. If granted Pinchington Hall will be allowed to assault us with noise, for unbelievably long periods, throughout evenings & well into the hours of the following morning. If granted the application will allow Pinchington Hall to do this night-after-night making life for those afflicted unbearable.**
- 5. Within the population of local residents are those like ourselves (3 adults) who work from home. If we are to be assailed by endless parties & noise pollution at anti-social hours, we will not be able to relax properly, let-alone sleep. Local residents deserve an opportunity to recuperate & re-charge in the evenings & at weekends. How can we be expected to work productively if we're constantly sleep deprived? Local residents should not be expected to lock themselves away on Summer evenings to try & escape the noise. It can be anticipated that the peak usage of Pinchington Hall will be evening time, weekends (especially in the Summer) & at Christmas & New Year. These are precisely the times when local residents want to be relaxing in our homes with friends & family. We do this without disturbing our neighbours but Pinchington Hall will have no such qualms.**
- 6. Many local residents keep animals too. The Cassam's stable their show-jumping horses & are situated immediately next to Pinchington Hall. The Williams's breed Saluki's & we (like many others in the locality) have cats & dogs as pets. Bombarding these animals with noise, including presumably fireworks too, raises animal welfare issues.**
- 7. Finally, the presence of the nature reserve, Greenham & Crookham Commons, should be considered. These Commons were re-instituted by a special Act of Parliament in 2002 to rehabilitate the Commons as a place for conservation & the encouragement of bio-diversity. A huge effort has gone in the foster this & to educate the public about using the Commons responsibly. Furthermore, not only are the Commons a nature reserve but areas (including one just 250m from Pinchington Hall) have been assigned as areas of Special;**

Scientific Interest (SSI's). This locality is the only habitat suitable for certain visiting species of birds in the whole of West Berkshire. Where I live (adjacent) on Crookham Common a major initiative to create a habitat for Nightjars has taken place (tree clearance & gorse management). Nightjars visit for 6-8 weeks in the Summer & hunt/feed midnight-4.00am, precisely when noise will be emanating from Pinchington Hall. It is doubtful whether the establishment of a noisy entertainments venue next to our nature reserve is compatible with the Greenham & Crookham Commons Act (2002).

The Protection of Children from Harm:

- 1. Children need decent sleep to develop & flourish. Children living within the vicinity of Pinchington Hall will be denied this chance or at least they will experience many nights of interrupted sleep. Nowhere is this better illustrated than by the situation of the 12 family new builds right next door to Pinchington Hall. Any children living here will be guaranteed to have serious sleep issues as a result of "party central" next door.**
- 2. Children from this development may be expected to play outside or in their gardens. It is highly questionable whether the presence of regular party-goers at Pinchington Hall (some who will be inebriated) provides a safe or healthy environment for children.**

Signed:.....

Date:..... 23/3/20

Please send completed form to Licensing, Public Protection Partnership, Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury RG14 5LD