

**From:** Sandra Clark  
**Sent:** Tuesday, October 31, 2023 6:18 PM  
**To:** Licensing <[licensing@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:licensing@westberks.gov.uk)>  
**Subject:** Licence Application No. 22873

Dear Sir/Madam

**Re: Licence Application No 22873 - Awberry Farm - Mr. Nigel Hopes**

As a resident of Beenham, I am objecting yet again to the grant of an alcohol licence to Mr. Nigel Hopes of Awberry Farm, Beenham RG7 5NX, the previous two licence applications being withdrawn. I live in the centre of the village across the village green from the farm, which is itself surrounded by houses, many no more than 150 metres distant from the barn where the proposed activities will take place.

I object to the application on the basis of the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm together with some public safety concerns.

**1) Public Nuisance** - this is covered under Public Safety in the Revised Guidance issued under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003, particularly in Clauses 2.1 and 2.25.

Mr. Hopes has submitted a Noise Management Plan (NMP) with his application and while some of the measures will mitigate noise emanating from the buildings he proposes to use for his wedding venue, I do not believe that they will be sufficient to prevent the escape of loud music noise, either live or recorded. Caterers will be using an adjacent barn for the preparation of food and drink and will be going to and fro from that area to the main party venue - the Listed 19th century barn. Guests are also likely to be going in and out so doors will be constantly opened and closed.

At no point in the NMP has thought been given to the significant noise likely to be created at the end of a party by departing guests who have had access to alcohol from noon until 11.00 pm. Loud voices raised in farewells, car doors slamming and concentrated engine noise from 70+ cars will impact severely on what is a quiet, tranquil, country village. Sleep for both children and adults alike will be significantly affected with departure from the site scheduled for 11.45 pm. This will be particularly true during the spring and summer months when, it is presumed that the bulk of the 28 events, for which planning permission has been given, will take place when residents will be in their gardens or, at the very least, have their windows open.

Traffic noise from 60-70 vehicles will be felt throughout the village, not just in the area of Awberry Farm, as the single road through the village is very narrow and with a number of pinch points.

Clause 2.15 of the Revised Guidance states the need for adequate security lighting to be put in place as a public safety measure. Low level lighting may not be sufficient to avoid accidents. If Mr. Hopes is to comply with this requirement, lighting will have to be installed in areas adjacent to the Listed barn - the car park, the courtyard and the walkway between the catering area and the Listed barn. Even if

the lighting is triggered automatically, substantial light pollution will be generated in a village which is part of the AONB's environmentally friendly "dark skies" initiative. Again this would be a public nuisance directly attributable to the Awberry Farm site. Clause 2.25 of the Guidance covers this aspect.

## **2) The Protection of Children from harm**

The Awberry Farm site is directly opposite the village green where there is a children's playground, gym equipment and goalposts for football games. Weddings and events are timed to start from 12 noon on Saturdays. Saturdays are when the children are home from school and are free to utilise the facilities on the Green and to ride their bikes, scooters and their horses through the village. More cars and vans are parked outside houses as parking in the village is an issue, particularly in the vicinity of the entrance to Awberry Farm, thereby making an already narrow road even narrower. Children are not always as safety aware as one would hope and, with few pavements in the village, the influx of 60 or 70 extra vehicles, possibly unfamiliar with the area, poses a significant threat to their safety.

As mentioned in Clause 1) above, both light pollution and noise nuisance are going to have a knock-on effect on children's sleep and, therefore, their well-being.

## **3) Public Safety**

The Listed barn - the main party venue - is a timber building. It burnt down in 2005 and was re-built. The Planning consents granted on July 5th this year stipulated that the two sets of large doors in the barn should always be kept shut for noise reasons. If a fire were to start during a wedding or other party, a large number of guests, plus staff on duty, could be put at risk during an emergency evacuation, particularly if chairs and tables are placed at intervals around the available floor space, hindering quick exits.

The Licence regulations suggest the need for two people to be appointed as responsible persons but personal details are only available for Mr. Hopes. Will others be appointed at some future date?

I would urge the Licensing authorities to reject this application for the reasons stated above

Yours faithfully

Sandra Clark  
Beenham