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**From:** Anthony Ward [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 11 March 2026 11:20  
**To:** Licensing <licensing@westberks.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** IC App 29442/Benham Park Estate

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Public Protection Partnership (Licensing)  
Theale Library  
Church Street  
Theale  
Berkshire  
RG7 5BZ  
IC App 29442  
BENHAM PARK ESTATE  
BENHAM PARK ENTERPRISES LIMITED  
Application under Section 17 Licensing Act 2002  
Dear Sirs

BENHAM PARK ENTERPRISES LIMITED (“BPE”) has applied for a premises licence under Section 17 of the Licensing Act 2003 in relation to the Benham Park Estate (the “Application”).

The Application states that it is the intention to operate the Estate for “*private events and curated retreats including weddings, private receptions, corporate off sites, leadership retreats, product launches, cultural or charitable gatherings and bespoke wellness-led experiences*”.

My wife and I own and live in a property which adjoins the Benham Park Estate. Our address is [REDACTED], Marsh Benham, Newbury, RG20 8[REDACTED].

Our property is located approximately 75 metres from the area of the Benham Park Estate where BPE intends to organise the planned events (as outlined in red on the plan attached to the Application). Benham Valence House is Grade II\* listed and the park is separately Grade II listed. Our property is within the park and is attached to the [REDACTED] – a residential property - which is part of the Benham Park Estate (shown coloured green on the plan attached to the Application). Benham Valence House is visible from our property. The lake which is a major feature of the park is approximately 40 feet from our bedroom window. We are therefore directly affected by the proposed licensing.

We have attended a meeting hosted by BPE to discuss the proposed use of the Benham Park Estate at which BPE outlined their plans for the property. As long-term residents in the area affected by the proposed licence we have the following concerns and object to the proposed licence:

1. As indicated in the Application it is the intention to accompany plays, films and “*private events such as weddings, receptions and corporate events*” with live music and amplified sound both inside and outside the property. This is likely to result in significant disturbance to our and neighbouring properties. While acceptance of such disturbance might be considered reasonable for a residential property on an occasional basis (eg once a year), it is clearly the intention of BPE to hold events on a regular basis which will result in constant disturbance to

neighbouring properties. Past experience (in October 2024) when the previous tenants of Benham Valence had an event was that this was the case both during the event and during testing in the period leading up to the event.

2. Reference is made in the Application to a Noise Management Plan which BPE stated they are discussing with the Environmental Health Officer. A copy of this has since been provided. This provides very little by way of protection for neighbouring properties either in terms of sound limits or limitations on the number of events to be held.
3. At the meeting with BPE they referred to a potential noise limit of 95 decibels but no testing has been done to determine whether at this level there will be disturbance at neighbouring properties nor did BPE seem to know whether there would be any such disturbance if noise were limited to these levels. Clearly, for all residents whose properties adjoin the Benham Park Estate the level of noise is critical given that it is their intention to have frequent events.
4. The Application and marketing materials indicate that the number of people hosted for events at the Benham Park Estate may be up to 500 guests. The noise generated by such large gatherings if in the open air - in the grounds of the estate - is likely to be substantial and disturb neighbouring properties. Past experience has also been that the noise from gatherings on the roof terrace of the property is clearly audible across the park. The Application also includes the playing of music (Live and Recorded) outside until 11pm. Regardless of the volume of the music, such a performance to hundreds of people outside cannot avoid causing a noise nuisance to local residents at that time of night.
5. The marketing materials which have been circulated in relation to the proposed activities of BPE reference the intention to allow helicopters to fly into the Benham Park Estate. This will cause significant disturbance for local residents. Any use of helicopters should be limited.
6. The application contemplates up to 500 guests for planned events. Large numbers of guests will result in significant increased traffic exiting the Benham Park Estate and turning onto what is already a dangerous section of the A4. This is likely to result in a greater risk of accidents on this section of road. By way of example, a significant accident occurred on this section of road on 5<sup>th</sup> March, 2026 forcing the closure of the A4.
7. We are concerned that the arrangements for parking at the Benham Park Estate are not extensive enough to accommodate the number of vehicles that the proposed use is likely to generate. This in turn may lead to private roads around the estate (including the road leading to our property) being used for parking. BPE stated that they would not allow this but it was not clear how they would prevent it or what alternatives would be available. It was suggested that people would be obliged to use coaches to arrive at the property but this does not seem likely given the type of guests being targeted.
8. A central feature of the park is its lake. This lake occupies an area of approximately 10 acres and is shown on the plans submitted with the Application. Although the lake falls outside the licensed area, it seems unlikely that guests will be effectively prevented from approaching the lake even if they are not supposed to do so. The lake contains very large amounts of silt. It is highly dangerous for anyone to fall into or swim in the lake as the silt holds anyone who attempts to stand in it in place making it very difficult to get out.

9. The proposed activities also give rise to security concerns for properties adjacent to the Benham Park Estate. Not only will large numbers of people be on the estate and able to access neighbouring properties but also past experience has shown that such activities attract undesirable attention and intruders. By way of example, when the previous tenants of Benham Valence House held a large event, this brought intruders onto the estate who when challenged escaped across our property damaging our driveway.
10. Benham Valence House, the [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] form part of a listed Capability Brown park and are within a Conservation Area. It is a tranquil and protected area. The proposed activities will cause significant disturbance to wildlife which includes many species of birds such as herons, egrets and the like. The proposed activities are not consistent with the environment of the park or its status as a listed park and Conservation Area.

We would like these issues to be taken into account before any licence is granted.

Regards

Anthony Ward