

From: Katie Simpson <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 04 August 2026 21:09
To: Licensing
Subject: Representation re: ref no 37590 app30014

Categories: LA03 Premises

This email was delivered from an External Source. Please use caution before clicking any links or opening attachments.

Dear Licensing Team,

Re: Application for a Variation to a Premises Licence – The Croft Hall, The Croft, Hungerford, RG17 0HY

Ref 37590 app30014

I am writing as a close residential neighbour to comment on the proposed licence variation for The Croft Hall. My property [REDACTED] RG17 0[REDACTED] is less than 100m from The Croft Hall.

We have lived at our address since 2011 and I wish to state clearly at the outset that **I fully accept, value, and support The Croft Hall as a venue for community events and performances.** I also value the Hungerford Club, a licensed premises that operates with the utmost respect for its neighbours.

Regrettably, over recent years/months, live and recorded entertainment has become progressively louder, culminating in severe disruption during an event on **10th July 2026, that included the use of the outdoor space.**

I am objecting to the inclusion of the **rear outdoor space**, but I am willing to support the licensing of the **side hall only** if strict, legally binding conditions regarding on-site management are attached to the licence.

I submit this representation under the objectives of **The Prevention of Public Nuisance** and **Public Safety** based on the following grounds:

1. Total Objection to the Rear Outdoor Space (Public Nuisance & Safeguarding)

I explicitly request that the variation to include the rear outdoor space be **refused entirely.**

- **Sound levels/Escape:** The event on 10th July 2026 demonstrated that when patrons utilize the rear outdoor space, the hall's doors are left wide open. This allowed very loud music from the indoor PA system to spill out uncontrollably into the neighbourhood. The variation would also allow recorded music, live plays and live music to be played in the outdoor space, with direct transfer of any sound plus noise generated by patrons. The sound levels would therefore be even louder than experienced on the 10th July. Effectively this would become a pub garden with a PA system and live or recorded music. The Croft is home to many families with young children - including my own - and we should not have to suffer noise pollution reasonably envisaged/contemplated by this application on any given night of the week running right through the year.
- **Proximity to Youth Spaces:** Permanently licensing this outdoor area for crowd gathering and alcohol consumption directly adjacent to a residential garden, a nursery school, and a scout hut creates a public nuisance and introduces unacceptable safeguarding and overlooking concerns for local children. The outdoor space would inevitably become a smoking/vaping area as well as an area to purchase and consume alcohol. Both activities with open view of the youth spaces. The hours permitted are 11am - 9.30pm/Curfew at 10pm ... this "window"

would cover all the opening hours of the Nursery and Scout group and a potential 11-hour time period for disruption of our use of our garden.

- **Anti-Social Behaviour/ Public Nuisance**

The rear outside space was previously a Play Group playground, which is totally acceptable. But it is not suitable to be licensed, which will allow consumption of alcohol and inevitably smoking/vaping, especially given the direct proximity to the Scouts Hut and Nursery School. It is far too intrusive and there is no effective way to control the sound and potential anti-social rowdy behaviour from attendees drinking alcohol, which is permitted from 11am – 9.30/10pm. The Scout group meets in the evening and sometimes at the weekend. Nursery open from 8.30 am.

2. Conditional Acceptance of the Side Hall (Subject to On-Site Supervision)

While I understand the desire to utilize the side hall, operating three concurrent zones (Main Hall, Side Hall, and Outdoor Space) without active management is a recipe for operational failure.

Currently, there is **no on-site supervision** provided by the venue during private hires. This forces us, as near neighbours, into the unacceptable position of becoming the default 'policing force' to notify noise and disruption to The Croft Hall team.

The venue's booking conditions state a maximum sound limit of 90dB, but because there is nobody on-site to monitor or enforce this, it is all too easily breached. Furthermore, the event on 10th July 2026 saw widespread illegal parking on double yellow lines surrounding the site, causing bottlenecks that would obstruct emergency service vehicles trying to access properties on Parsonage Lane, The Croft Hall, the nursery, or the scout hut.

Requested Conditions for the licensing of the Side Hall

To balance the success of the hall with public safety and the prevention of public nuisance, I ask the Licensing Sub-Committee to implement the following mandatory conditions if the side hall variation is approved:

1. **Mandatory On-Site Supervisor:** A designated representative or marshal from The Croft Hall must be physically present on-site for the duration of any licensed event involving live/recorded music or alcohol.
2. **Active Parking Management:** The on-site supervisor must actively marshal parking at the start and end of events to completely prevent illegal parking on the surrounding double yellow lines, ensuring emergency vehicle access to the area remains clear.
3. **Active Noise Monitoring:** The on-site supervisor must be equipped with a decibel meter to actively enforce the 90dB limit, or a fixed db unit installed with auto cut off, if the 90 db level is exceeded for a set period of time.
4. **No Open Doors:** A strict condition that all external doors and windows facing the rear garden, nursery, and scout hut must remain closed during any regulated entertainment (except for emergency egress). The Croft Hall does have AC installed.

By implementing these conditions, the council can support the charity's indoor expansion while protecting the community, the children, and the immediate neighbours from harm and nuisance. Additional points for consideration -

1. The increased capacity for events generated by the licensing of the Croft Hall side hall and outdoor space would need to be accommodated within an area already providing facilities and entertainment which are intensely grouped together within The Croft area ...

- Hungerford Club/Pub
- Annual Hungerford Club Beer Festival, which includes 3 days of loud live music
- Doctors' Surgery
- Croft Field and halls/kitchen
- Croft Field Events – Monthly Food Market etc.
- Hungerford Nursery School
- St Lawrence's Church and community rooms
- The Croft Hall – Main Hall
- The Croft Hall - Physio and Chiropractor practice located above the Croft Hall
- The Old Vicarage Residential Care Home

Parking is already very difficult in the Croft, especially at peak times with dangerous parking evident in areas that are clearly marked with double yellow lines. Access for emergency and delivery vehicles is already challenging. We live at the Parsonage Lane of the Croft which is a “dead-end” requiring cars to either complete complex 360 degree turns or reversing back up the lane. The lane is used by dog walkers, mums pushing pushchairs/young children plus residents from the care home at the Old Vicarage.

2. What is the total projected capacity of all three locations at The Croft Hall ?

3. 9.30pm or 10pm ? ...Section M, clause D states the curfew starts at 10pm, but section A states licensed until 9.30pm ?

4. Acoustic or amplified music makes no difference as acoustic could include a whole brass band etc. Variation also requests for recorded music to be permitted which can be just as loud if not louder than amplified live music. Example - Recorded music would allow ... DJ, Drum & Bass etc. club type music.

5. Current booking conditions make no mention of parking, or obeying legal requirements not to park on double yellow lines

I would also add that there is an ideal alternative outdoor location with a kitchen and indoor facilities available in the same area at The Croft Field. This an established venue for outdoor events which has recently been refurbished, which is currently used for events, plays and live music and does so on a regular basis. The Croft Field is owned by West Berkshire Council and run by the Hungerford Town Council. The outdoor space at The Croft Hall would effectively be duplicating/competing for the same business as The Croft Field.

In addition, there are many local licensed businesses that rely on hosting just the kind of events envisaged by this application that will suffer as a result of any approval. In this economic climate when hospitality, why would we put these valued businesses under such pressure with a completely unmonitored license such as this?

Further, I note that this application has been made during the summer months when valued neighbours such as the Hungerford Nursery School and the Scout Group may well be closed for the holidays, may not be aware of this application and will not in a position to give their own opinion on this licensing application. I would ask that they be given the opportunity to contribute their representations given the significance of this proposal. Finally, I note that there has been no attempt by the Trustees of The Croft Hall to engage with local residents about this proposal which does not suggest that they value our opinion on the matter or seek to act as ‘good neighbours’. This does not bode well.

I appreciate your review of my representations in regard to this proposed License Variation and await your response.

Yours faithfully,
Mrs Katie Monk.