

Representation

New Licence Application for ROKKA, 64 Harbour Parade, Ramsgate, Kent

I have read through your client's application with regard to their proposed conditions and in respect of increased hours of late-night refreshments and alcohol consumption, both on and off the premises.

In relation to the new conditions proposed I welcome them and agree that they are appropriate, fair and in keeping with the licensing objectives. We appreciate that Mr Pantelli has been working with us (Police) in respect of those conditions.

However, I am objecting to the extension in opening hours until 04:00 am and the all-night opening on New Year's Eve. The premises already has a licence with standard opening times until 03:00 which in my opinion is fit for purpose as it stands.

Please find below the grounds on which we object to the extended opening hours:

PREVENTION OF CRIME AND DISORDER

Rokka is located within the Central Harbour Ward and this area experiences one of the largest concentrations of anti-social behaviour across the Thanet district. The demand on police resources is already significant during the night-time economy (excluding the lockdown period with the Covid pandemic). If Rokka were to be granted an extension until 04:00, with customers leaving at 04:30 this will put further pressure on the Police in terms of proactive patrolling times and call demand for alcohol related ASB and violence.

If the extended hours were to be granted Rokka would be the only venue in that location open that late. This generates a two-fold concern. Firstly, it would encourage already intoxicated people to attend the venue and continue to drink for longer. This opens a larger window for ASB and violence stemming from that premises. Secondly, it would set a precedence to other venues encouraging them to apply for later opening hours. An extension to the night-time economy of that scale should be discouraged because it increases the risk of disorder and places greater demand on already stretched Police resources.

The application states that you would like to stay open all night on New Year's Eve. I re-iterate my concerns outlined above but also wish to highlight the fact New year's eve is already one of the busiest nights of the year in terms of alcohol related offences, not only for Police but for NHS resources (ambulance and hospital admissions). The longer people drink the more opportunity they have to get intoxicated which raises potential for fights and injury. On those grounds I object.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND PREVENTION OF PUBLIC NUISANCE

As a location Harbour parade is composed of both commercial premises and residential dwellings (flats above). There are also various hotels popular with families and tourists alike, especially during the summer months. There is an obligation to consider the needs of all those staying and living in the area, not just individuals wishing to make use of the licensed premises. Many venues, including Rokka, are already open until 03:00 hours which permeates noise and often rowdy behaviour. For the benefit of one venue, it is not fair on the residents to further extend that period of noise/nuisance.

Rokka's application covets a 4.30 am finish for music. I understand the doors will be shut after a certain time, but that does not stop people coming in and out for cigarettes/vaping, or entry into the premises. This means music will be heard outside into the early hours of the morning.

Customers leaving the premises at 04:30 filtering out into the streets also bring about noise, and intoxicated people also generate the potential for disorder, neither of which should be put upon the community.

I am aware that one other venue in the location currently has a licence which enables opening until 04:00 hours. This was granted many years ago before licensing came under the local authority. That particular venue does not make use of that extended opening time. In fact, their latest close is 02:45 am. That same premises is currently working with the authority to reduce its opening hours back to the standard time of 03:00.

We have previously presented statistics to Rokka that show how many incidents have been recorded for the premises from August 2019-March 2020 (before lockdown). Here is a summary of those incidents but I am happy for the details of those calls to be scrutinised:

Cad: 23-0125 - 23/08/19 – 03:20hr - Vulnerable female

Cad 25-0183 – 30/08.19 - Fight

25/08/19 02:20 hrs Fight

30-2148 – 30/08/19 00.01 – Drugs

07-0122 – 07/09/19 03:00 – Dispute

05-0148 – 05/10/19 – 02:55 Assault

13-0138 – 13/10/19 – 02:15 – Assault

16-0156 – 16/11/19 – 03:10 – Assault

Police came across - 16/11/19 – 00:31 – Drunkenness

17-0209 - 17/11/19 – Drunkenness

Crime report – 07/12/19 – Assault

22-0220 – 22/12/19 – 03:42 – Spiked drink

01-0833 – 01/01/20 – Underage drinking

12-0192 – 12/02/20 : 03:13 – Disturbance

18-0129 – 18/01/20 – Assault

Crime report – 19/01/20 – Underage drinking

Crime report – 26/01/20 – Assault

08-0134 – 08/02/20 – Assault

If this application were to be granted, we would ask that some stringent conditions are put in place in respect of the extended hours (until 04:00 hrs) as follows:

- No entry after 01:00 hours and no re-entry after 02:00 hours

This would prevent people leaving other pubs in the area at their closing times of 03:00 and then going onto Rokka where they can carry on drinking/becoming intoxicated.

- To bring tables and chairs inside after 02:00 hours

To prevent people from sitting outside the premises causing noise nuisance and ASB

- Conditions proposed by the Environmental Health officers.

Kind Regards

Michelle Greig