

Objector - EL

I wish to make an objection to this application. I have lived in North Brent for 30 years, and am a regular user of Barham Park. I am also a user of Barham Community Library. The library occupies the part of Barham Park buildings which occupies the space across the Jubilee Gardens and the long windows of the main part of the Library face the card room. I have been involved from the outset with the management of the Library. As a retired solicitor with expertise in commercial landlord & tenant matters, I was also involved in the grant of the Lease of the Library to Friends of Barham Library (FoBL). I am familiar with its provisions, and the requirements of the Council/Barham Trust as landlord when granting that Lease. I am familiar with the community activities which take place within the Library and how they are affected/could be affected by the activities which would be licensed, should this application be approved. The Library is one of various occupied buildings within the park, and I - and, I believe, other park users - value greatly the peaceful surroundings of the library and its community space within the park. To obtain the Library lease, under the Trust's tender provisions, FoBL had to demonstrate community use; the lease terms are stringent and do not allow for uses which cause potential nuisance to others. The applicant has a similar use restriction under its Lease as to the avoidance of nuisance to others. I have written separately to the Strategic Director of Property as to Lease issues. Recently, users of the Library have become aware of hirings for (a) a wake with (reportedly) approximately 200 participants spilling out into the Jubilee Gardens, and (b) a 50th anniversary party, which left confetti liberally scattered around the exterior of the premises. The licensing application provides potentially that, on every day of the week, and weekends, from noon up until 11 pm (or midnight on Bank Holidays) the card room directly opposite the library could be holding activities with music & dancing and alcohol served. Our activities include the quiet study found in a library - study space being at a premium for young people in the Borough. The library is well served by public transport, so that young people will be disadvantaged. In addition, when the Library opened, FoBL took over from the Trust the longstanding & regular hiring for a Muslim prayer group on a Friday from 12:30. Licensed activities going on across the gardens would be a completely inappropriate setting for such religious observances. Quite aside from the possibility that in those circumstances the group may cease its hiring, and leave the Library. Further, as to Library users currently and tably, there is a whole day study session every Thursday. In addition, the Library holds a dementia cafe, and yoga sessions, a book club, poetry sessions, and children's activities of a community nature. All these are in the context of the peaceful environs of the Park. The card room is also close to the children's playground, and an area for family recreation. As to the issue of alcohol in the park, the Council will be aware that a PSPO is coming into effect on 1st April 2019, under which alcohol will be prohibited in the Park. So will the cardroom be excepted from that prohibition? And the areas outside currently used? The PSPO also prohibits " Littering of cigarettes, bottles, cans, food etc" which will be more likely as a result of this licensing The Jubilee Gardens - onto which users of the Cardroom spill when hirings take place - were vandalised some time ago, following incidents of drinking in the gardens. Having extensive alcohol and music sessions will only attract more such activities. CIL money is to be expended on the repair and renewal of the gardens. The card room is an old wooden building; it does not have sound-proofing or noise-limiting devices. The Lease of the cardroom includes the use of space at the rear, abutting the Park. The tenant's use already spills out into the gardens. Even were that not the case, and licensing conditions required the activities only to be undertaken with the doors closed, the building was not designed to contain modern levels of sound and vibration, and the noise will inevitably escape from the premises and affect park users, and those using the Library The park as a whole and the Jubilee gardens are intended for the recreation and rest of all park users, including children and the vulnerable who come to the Park expecting that they are visiting a place of green space, a peaceful family retreat, not licensed premises. It may be that the application contains specific details of what the applicant intends to apply for and what measures they intend to take to minimise nuisance and other problems (which could be 'conditions', which can be attached to a licence granted). it may be that conditions have been proposed which would alleviate concerns. However, the licensing department suggests that there are data protection reasons for not supplying this, and so I cannot comment on any such mitigation provisions which may have been suggested in the application.. My life will be affected as a user of the library and an active volunteer and member of the management group which seeks to attract visitors and users of our community library and hub for many activities which will be disturbed by the planned activities. The Library building is also an

old building with limited soundproofing, and large picture windows enjoying a view of the Jubilee Gardens, enjoyed by the Library and community users. In summer time, the Library needs to have windows open which will involve exposure to noise & activities arising from such alcohol/music & dancing party events. The Library windows are not, however, soundproof even when shut so nuisance and interference will be caused. The whole Park ambience in that area will be ruined if these requested licensed activities take place. It will be less easy to encourage community group participation, and may affect children and family use.. It will be very difficult to have quiet study spaces with the potential for 11/12 hour 7 day a week music & dancing and alcohol serving spilling out into the gardens. which the short term hirings already do. I have experience of being in the Park when persons affected by alcohol are present even during the day and it is intimidatory. There is also the aspect of the requirement for parking which may well be generated in the area's parking. This is needed for Library activities - not to mention local residents.. Library's vulnerable users use their cars, and rely on the availability of some car parking. I am concerned that they will be deterred by the parties and dance and music and fear as to whether we will be able to have quiet and safe space. It will be outside the control of any of the rest of the Park users, and the Trust's tenants as to whether they will be able to have quiet community/library times. Will there be an increase in vandalism or lack of care for the Park? The confetti scattered at the 50th anniversary celebration may have been a small example but it is not reassuring. Are the premises - with one toilet and of wooden construction - even safe for the activities planned? The issue of car parking includes the Barham dedicated car park outside restricted hours, and the neighbouring streets. Local parking issues will be exacerbated by the closure of the Sudbury Town car park, if the Pocket development on the existing car park is approved. So, I object on the grounds of : a) prevention of public nuisance. This is a public park, and the activity will contravene the new PSPO, allow drinking in the Park, generate litter, change the park atmosphere and create noise and potentially inappropriate uses of public spaces, as well as nuisance to fellow tenants, which may even - in the case of the Library - lose the Library the use by existing community users (like the quiet prayer use, and the vulnerable dementia clients). It is already encroaching on general use just from the existing hirings. This is not a private licensed food, drink and entertainment outlet. It is part of a historic park & buildings left to the community in Wembley on a trust the custodianship of which is with the Council as Trustee. The use is unacceptable and not what the tenants proposed when they tendered for social value generating community use and got a very low rent as a result. This is exacerbated by the requested blanket hours application. It is totally unacceptable, and never mentioned to other tenants of the building, and originally little advertised on site. Noise and potential for anti-social - if not drunken - behaviour in the Park is also a public nuisance problem, as is the litter generated. Food provision may result in a public nuisance. The PSPO prohibits leaving of food items for birds, etc; what will happen to food waste from this extensive (quasi-) commercial intensive use? b) prevention of crime and disorder – e.g. licensed premises type activities may create public order problems - e.g., fighting, drug problems, disorder etc. The Park is not normally used at night so this will be a totally new "ball game" and it is necessary to consider the effect on the Park itself. If the Library opens late, this could have a detrimental effect, particularly on study, or evening activities in an affordable community space where the participants could be dissuaded from future attendance if this sort of party is going on. I can only speculate as nothing like this has previously been allowed under the custodianship of the Trust/Council. c) protection of children from harm – the premises are close to the children's playground. The library has a children's section; the library function encourages the attendance of families. Once children attain an age where it is safe for them to attend the library alone, they are encouraged to come. In the summer, the back doors onto the shared garden is open. I am concerned by the risks. d) public safety – judging from the random examples of recent hirings, I am unsure about the health & safety aspects of this user. There is also the risk/virtual certainty of spilling out into park areas like the Jubilee Gardens, especially in fine weather. The area on the opposite side of the Card Room to the Jubilee Gardens is licensed to the Card Room tenants to use and is used. The premises are old, wooden and contain only one toilet. There must be a question of the safety of this use to those attending events, and park users. Closing times of 11pm or midnight in the Park are totally inappropriate. The potential for amplified music is inappropriate within park boundaries. The noise will inevitably escape the premises and affect library users and the public. This "commercial" user will completely alter the "user profile" of the park, at all times of the day. I hope that this application will be rejected.