



NHS North of Tyne

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Paula Davis Licensing Authority Lead Officer

5th July 2012

Dear Ms Davis

I wish to OBJECT to the license being granted.

My main objection is that the applicant has not provided any indication of how, through the sale of alcohol from this premise, they intend to promote the four licensing objectives to prevent crime and disorder, promote public safety, prevent public nuisance and protect children from harm. This provides no reassurance or confidence that the applicant will seriously take on the social responsibility that comes with receiving a licence to sell alcohol.

I will briefly outline under each of the licensing objectives the issues for the local area to illustrate why I believe that the granting of this licence will be contrary to the promotion of the licensing objectives.

The prevention of crime and disorder

According to crime data for 2011, outside of the City Centre, Elswick Ward is ranked third highest for alcohol related crime against the person and fourth for alcohol related anti-social behaviour. It has therefore been identified as a hot-spot for alcohol related crime.

The areas around High Cross, North Benwell Terraces, St Johns Estate and South Benwell were identified as priority areas through the Safe Newcastle Strategic Assessment (2011); the principal reasons being relatively high levels of alcohol related disorder and noise related anti social behaviour.

Preventing Public Nuisance

Nearly a third of people from the Elswick and Benwell areas who recently completed the Safer Communities Survey (Police Survey) believe drunk and rowdy behaviour is a problem in their area.

Residents and Neighbourhood Wardens in this area have raised concerns about street drinking by underage drinkers and young adults which results in environmental damage and noise nuisance. Local people have highlighted that there are too many shops selling alcohol in their area. Just over a mile away in the Riverside Dene area, the community is experiencing high levels of youth-related anti-social behaviour caused by underage drinking. Additionally, the areas of Jubilee and Bentinck within a mile from the premises also have issues with people living or visiting local hostels and drinking in the streets which impacts on the feelings of safety for people living in the area.

Protecting Children

In addition to the concerns over underage drinking in the area outlined above, I also have

concerns over the alcohol consumption and behaviour of adults and its impact on children. Regional and local surveys in Newcastle indicate that the majority of alcohol is now consumed in the home or other domestic environment and is purchased from the off-trade.

In addition, our local Residents Survey shows that Elswick is ranked 6th highest for adult binge drinking (6ⁱⁿ) compared to the rest of the city. When looking at more extreme levels of binge drinking (7 or more drinks on a single occasion), it is ranked 2nd highest.

Research shows that the factors which increase alcohol consumption are: low cost alcohol, the proximity of premises selling alcohol, and the length of opening times. Together, these factors render alcohol more affordable, more available and therefore easier to consume. Research also shows that children are impacted by the drinking behaviour of their parents and other adults in their community, this can cause both immediate and long terms harms such as being exposed to domestic violence, (of which at least 50% are related to alcohol), neglect and child abuse. According to the Safe Newcastle Strategic Assessment, Elswick is ranked third in the City for levels of reported domestic violence and this is along with parental substance misuse are the leading causes for the Council having to take action to protect children from harm.

Finally, we know that the drinking behaviour of parents and adults impacts on the future drinking habits of a young person, which can go on to affect their future health life opportunities.

Public Safety

Alcohol is comprised of ethanol which is a poison and therefore in the interests of public safety it should be controlled and managed carefully. Elswick Ward is an area with one of the highest levels of Alcohol Related Hospital Admissions in Newcastle.

I hope I have outlined why I believe that Elswick does have particular issues relating to alcohol and why an off-licence in this area with extended opening hours will not serve to promote the Council's licensing objectives.

Yours sincerely

Dr Fu-Meng Khaw

Director of Public Health Newcastle Primary Care Trust and Newcastle City Council

