

Hare & Hounds



Potters Corner, Ashford, Kent TN25 4NR
Telephone: 01233 621760
e-mail: hare.andhounds@live.co.uk

27-Apr-09

Dear Sirs,

Re: Notice of Hearing - 30th April 2009

We refer to your letter WK/200909188 dated 15 April 2009 together with copies of documents from residence opposing our application to vary our existing licence.

Please find attached our response to many points of the objections and the concerns expressed, which we feel need addressing to enable a clearer representation of the situation to our application.

We have sent a copy as requested in form 1 - Response to Notice of Licensing Act 2003 Hearing - as requested to all interested parties.

Yours sincerely,



John Ralph
Company Secretary

Copies to:

Mr. & Mrs. L. Sayer
Mr. S. & Mrs. L. Rusbridge
Mr. M. Simon
Mr. & Mrs. P. Finn
Mr. T. Davis

Ashford Borough Council, (Member Services)
Civic Centre,
Tannery Lane,
Ashford, Kent
TN23 1PL

Introduction

The Hare & Hounds (Ashford) Ltd. took over the public house on the 19th December 2008 from Marie and Alan Stack. The business is a family concern, which forms the company being made up with John Ralph and his two sons Julian and Darren. The family have lived nearby in Westwell Lane since 1962, have known Mr & Mrs Stack since they took the Hare & Hounds in 1996 and have been friends since then. They were renowned for their high standards within the pub and we've aimed to maintain the same and have recently been awarded '5 Stars on the Door' and the Clean Food Award for 2009/10 by Ashford Borough Council. We are the only public house in the Borough to achieve this award, so with a customer base of people living locally and customers from out of the area who require pleasant surroundings with quality meals, our objective is to aim for the very high standards that's expected, and in addition include evenings suggested by many of our customers. Our first theme night being a St. Valentines Dinner, we then organised two quiz nights - with proceeds going to The Kent Air Ambulance, and recently a karaoke evening. We have another quiz night on the 3rd May and the next karaoke is not planned until July.

Objections to application to vary premises licence - Response

Page 28: See no reason for any concern over safety and our customer base is not of a criminal nature or likely to cause disorder.

The entrance to the pub goes back to the 1700's, so it is possible that some voices would be heard, but this has probably been the same for hundreds of years!

Until recent years a street light was situated beside Tollgate Cottage and with the lack of a footpath in Sandyhurst Lane, this doesn't deter many locals to still walk to the pub

With the decline in smoking the outside sitting and smoking area use is limited - normally if the weather is not favourable, is a quick smoke and return indoors!

It is inevitable when doors are opened people talking and laughing etc. , noise will be heard - a pub is a meeting place.

Object to the assumption that we would attract a more boisterous clientele

Page 31: Mr. Rusbridge has spent time stating objections which have no bearing on the application and inappropriate points regarding the value of property .We find the comments regarding undesirables and the increase in crime an insult to a family, who have been respected in the area for over forty years, and for us not to have the ability to operate a business and maintain a code of behaviour which is fitting to ourselves and neighbours quite pompous.

Page 33: Taxis I doubt would cause much problem to where this property is situated.

To infer the Hare & Hounds would become a night club is ridiculous. As stated previous, our aim is to provide a service of a pub with a restaurant of very high standards.

The parking of lorries in the lay-by is as much a concern to us and its activities, the road junction and traffic using the A20 and Sandyhurst Lane, we are not responsible for.

Page 36: Another assuming every night is a 'NOISE NIGHT'

Page 39: In over forty years I haven't heard of car tyres being 'Burned'

The residential flat had its own private garden and was not accountable to the pub for their activities.

As responsible adults we would ensure the safety of all people in, or within, the bounds of the pub and even nearby, however, we are not responsible for the lorry drivers.

Seven 'Blue' notices were posted in windows which were visible from the A20 and Sandyhurst Lane, with a further two displayed inside the pub, as requested by Ashford Borough Council.

Conclusion

The Hare & Hounds has been a public house since the mid 1700's which before was owned by The Lord of the Manor (Rt. Hon. Earl of Thanet), and from then to now experienced many changes in life and culture, gone are the days when customers would arrive with horse and cart have a drink, see/chat with the wheelwright, whose workshop was in the 'old stables' in Sandyhurst Lane. To-day, the pub has to cater for the demands expected in a rural area, which would be different to a town location, we attract an older generation and not youngsters as seems to be the impression.

To enable us to plan and go forward our application was submitted - like an insurance - to cover us for the future in the event of a function, like a anniversary celebration etc., and not late nights every night, this has never been our intention and furthermore would not be practicable.

Regrettably, those who oppose our application seem to believe we will increase crime and disorder, be a threat to women and children and encourage people who will cause a nuisance and disturbance, these comments are completely unfair, and reflect the NIMBY culture that has developed in the Sandyhurst Lane area over the last twenty years.

Finally, we are grateful and appreciate the help and guidance given to us by many departments of Ashford Borough Council, the local Police and Fire Service who's advice as to the requirements and practices needed in this type of business have been most welcome, to which the Company will endeavour to follow and act upon.