

Supplementary Committee Agenda



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Licensing Sub Committee Tuesday 18th June 2024

Place: Council Chamber - Civic Offices

Time: 10.15 am

Democratic Services: Democratic Services (Direct Line 01992 564243)
Email: democraticservices@eppingforestdc.gov.uk

**5. APPLICATION FOR A NEW PREMISES LICENCE, DEBDEN HOUSE CENTRE,
DEBDEN GREEN, LOUGHTON, IG10 2NZ (Pages 2 - 8)**

Please see attached replies from two objectors to the Applicant's letter.

Agenda Item 5

Michael & Vanessa Houlding

[REDACTED]
Debden Road
Loughton
Essex
[REDACTED]

13th June 2024

Feedback to LB Newham

“Response to Neighbour Objections to License Application for Debden House – LB Newham”

Our most pertinent point in reply to LBN’s response is that it overlooks past indiscretions.

Our principal objection to the new license relates to the continued abuse of the site as a day event venue which has not been acknowledged or properly addressed.

We cannot accept the campsite continuing to be repurposed as a day-event festival venue.

I append to this feedback a drone photo taken 09/06/2024 by way of example of the day events the centre is hosting to which we object to in the strongest terms.

The campsite does not currently hold a license for live recorded music to our understanding, yet our weekends are regularly ruined by excessively loud music, traffic and anti-social behaviour including, not limited to, littering and using the forest as a WC.

The centre continues to advertise on its website the use of the site for day events including Stag and Hen do’s; BBQ’s; parties and bouncy castles.

The site is currently not run within its own rules stated on the website as evidenced by my drone image as one example.

It is a reasonable assumption on our part that, should any new license be granted, that it will be abused based on this behaviour.

If the centre cannot currently manage their site for unlicensed activities, we fail to understand why a new license is fair or reasonable.

Taking the responses in order:

1). Live or Recorded Music

We are very concerned regarding the contradictory nature of this first response item, particularly the third sentence:

*“The campsite is one of the largest in the UK and the potential to have hundreds of people here for festival type events, **regularly**, would be unfair & unsustainable.”*

Rather than simply stating ‘festival type events would be unfair & unsustainable’, the implication of the LBN bold text “*regularly*” is that festival type events may be held **irregularly**.

This is then contradicted by the statement that the license application is for the house area only.

We cannot accept this contradiction or grey area within the license application or indeed any potential license.

We reasonably believe that the centre plans to increase the volume of day events.

There were over 300 vehicles in attendance 09/06/2024 as evidenced by my drone photograph.

So between 300 and 1200 guests conservatively.

The advertised fees are £5 per car, £13 per adult and £7 per child. This indicates a conservative revenue of between £7,500 (assuming one adult and one child per car) and £13,500 (assuming two adults and two children per car).

Given the number of cars was greater than 300, and given many vehicles were 7 or 9-seaters – reasonably one could assume the revenue to be far higher.

By selling alcohol on site and encouraging further events we are concerned the Centre is seeking to expand the day event business model.

2). Number of days/times requested.

We have four young children. We moved to Debden Road in full knowledge of the presence of a campsite but did not expect a music venue playing live or recorded music until midnight or 1:00am on any day of the week.

Notwithstanding our other objections the revised times are preferable to the original times proposed.

3) Impact on Traffic / Local roads

Our concern has never been parking. It is apparent from my drone imagery that Debden House are content to use the camping fields as car parks.

It is reasonable to assume that some attendees of an event serving alcohol will not be driving.

There is no public transport available near the venue.

The nearest bus stops or tube stops involve walking along England’s Lane. This is a busy country road with no street lighting in the vicinity of the site.

There is no constant footpath from the campsite, along England’s Lane on to a public transport location. Indeed, to travel by foot to Debden or Loughton along England’s Lane you need to cross the road on a blind corner.

All these factors represent a danger to patrons and to traffic.

4). Road Signage & Lighting

This is noted and appreciated but even the new signage appears inadequate as on 09/06/2024 many the c.300 vehicles attending the site needed to turn around on our drive.

We have had instances of people driving up our private driveway in the past. The end of Debden Road / our driveway are not suitable turning sites for any more than one car at a time which causes issues.

We are grateful for the measures being taken in this regard.

5). Litter

There was extensive litter left around the site, particularly in the forest, after the event 09/06/2024.

6). Alcohol

We have no objection to campers bringing their own alcohol to a campsite, when camping.

You will see in my appended image c.300 cars parked in a field, hundreds of attending patrons and ZERO tents or other camping equipment.

If the campsite was still operated as was intended in 1949 then I do not expect there would be many objections to the license application.

The tone of this response is unhelpful in resolving the issues between the centre and residents.

8). Crime & anti-social behaviour

Please can we be issued a copy of the 6th June 2024 Essex Police statement?

This contradicts the fact that the police have been called to the site more than once since we moved to Debden Road in 2017.

e.g. Essex Police receipt code XXXXXXXXXX

7). Communication with Neighbours

We have attended the centre to address our issues in person and have been met with shrugged shoulders regarding inability to manage patrons of day events.

We note the polite nature of the management. Our issue is that when presented with an issue, criticism is deflected rather than constructively accepted and actioned.

Matters not addressed

The reply received 13/06/2024 does not address the following matters that we have raised.

Primarily as outlined above LBN have not addressed the day events that are damaging to the lives of those living in the immediate vicinity of the campsite. The reply only makes a limited reference to “*day visitor departure times*” in the penultimate paragraph.

LBN make the point that Debden House Centre is one of the UK’s largest campsites which has been in existence since the 1940’s. The condescension of this repeated point misses the mark by quite some distance. The campsite at Debden House Centre is for camping, not for festivals.

We fully appreciate the campsite was here before we were, but we do not appreciate the way it is being run and abused.

Furthermore:

- In the prevention of public nuisance, how does the Centre propose to ensure those leaving the site at 01:00 after drinking are respectful of the neighbours?
- In the protection of children from harm how does the Centre propose to ensure those leaving the site at 01:00 after drinking do not wake or frighten young children?
- In the interests of public safety how does the Centre propose to ensure those travelling by public transport can navigate the unlit country road with no consistent footpath?

New Matters raised by the LBN Reply

We have noticed the Debden House website advertising use of the venue for stag and hen do’s. This directly contradicts the tone of the ‘reassurances’ provided in the reply, not least the reassurance that the new license is for “*manageable family gatherings and celebrations*”. A stag or hen do is not a family gathering nor celebration.

Appendix - Drone Photo taken 09/06/2024:



From: [Barry Marks](#)
To: [Denise Bastick](#)
Cc: [Handan Ibrahim](#)
Subject: Re: Application for a New Premises Licence - Debden House, Debden Green, Loughton, IG10 2NZ
Date: 13 June 2024 15:16:36
Attachments: [Response to Objections re License Application.pdf](#)

CAUTION: This Message originated outside of Epping Forest District Council. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognise the sender and know the content is safe.

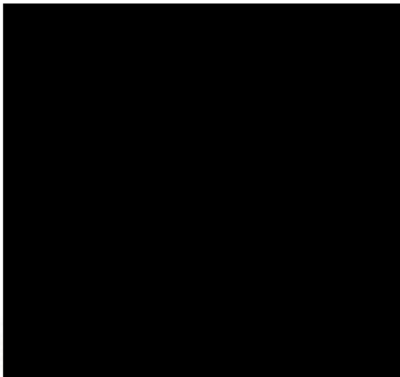
Dear Denise and Handan,

Just for the record, my personal understanding is that in the first instance we are objecting to the licence for the house. It is the renting out of the house and marque in the grounds of the house that has previously caused all of the issues we have mentioned previously, and the future issues, dangers, and threats to our local area that we described previously.

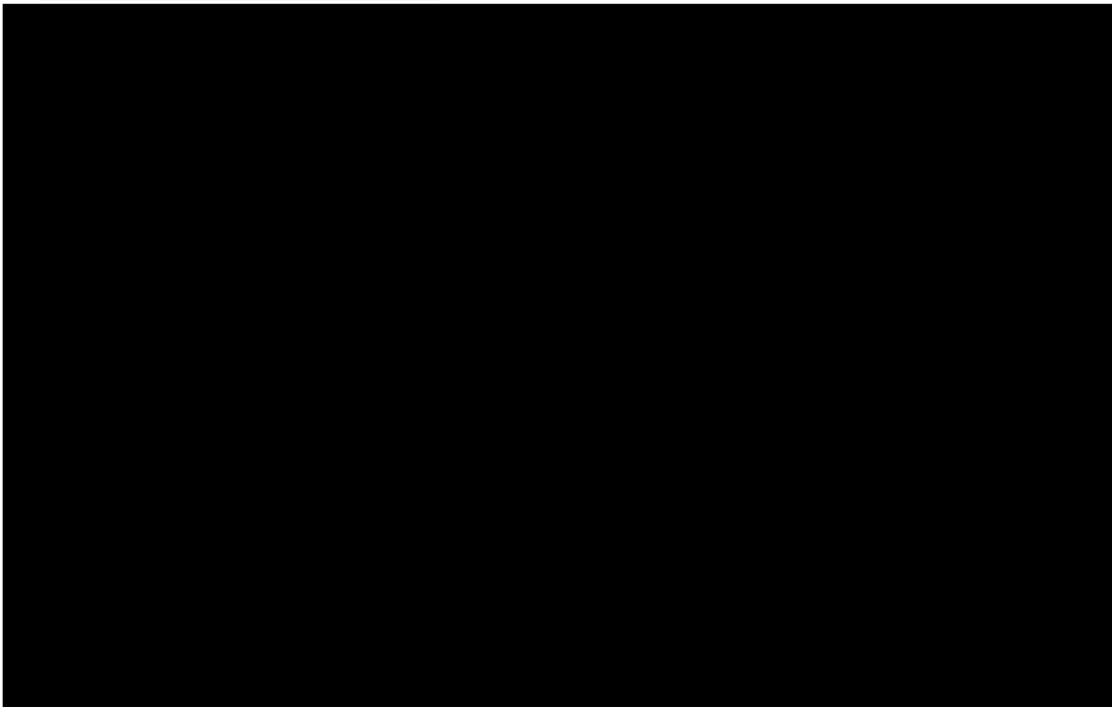
I would add that if they were that engaged and worried about those of us that are neighbours, they would have previously taken action following all of the local residents previous complaints.

Kind regards

Barry



BarryMarks
CEO



On 13 Jun 2024, at 06:54, Denise Bastick <dbastick@eppingforestdc.gov.uk> wrote:

Good afternoon

The applicant has asked us to circulate the attached response to objections received in relation to the above application, prior to the hearing to be held next week.

Kind regards.

Denise Bastick
Licensing Compliance Officer
Commercial and Regulatory Service Directorate
dbastick@eppingforestdc.gov.uk
Tel: 01992 564334

Working hours Wednesday – Friday

In my absence, please contact Mrs Handan Ibrahim, Licensing Compliance Officer
hibrahim@eppingforestdc.gov.uk Tel: 01992 564153

Monday – Wednesday

Denise Bastick
Licensing Compliance Officer
Commercial and Regulatory Service Directorate
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Monday – Wednesday

Safer spaces is a council-led programme to help kickstart the local economy and reopen high streets in the Epping Forest district [Click Here to have your say on social distancing and safer spaces](#)

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