

**Louise Faulkner**

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**From:** Simon Hegarty [simon.hegarty@live.com]  
**Sent:** 13 June 2011 16:16  
**To:** Philip Bayliss; Licensing; Mike Hallam (Cllr)  
**Subject:** Representations - new premises licence application 022111  
**Attachments:** PRA Representations - licence application 022111.docx

Dear Sirs,

Please find attached representations for consideration by the licencing committee in relation to new licence application 022111. I would be grateful if you you confirm safe receipt of this correspondence, and which meeting of the committee will hear this application.

If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very best regards

Simon Hegarty, for and on behalf of the Parkland Residents' Association

14/06/2011

# Parklands Residents' Association

Licensing Office  
The Guildhall  
St Giles Square  
Northampton  
NN1 1DE

12 June 2011

Dear Sirs,

## Nisa Local - 022111 New Application for a Premises Licence

Parklands Residents' Association are a recognised body representing persons who live in the vicinity of the application premises. The Association is registered with the Borough Council, and has received funding from the council in the past. In addition, the council Area Partnership meetings are now held as part of the regular meetings of the Residents' Association.

We would ask the committee to be mindful that Parklands accommodates a higher than average proportion of older people. Older residents are far more vulnerable to the problems that the sale of alcohol, particularly from low priced outlets, is known to cause. Many residents, particularly those living in the vicinity of the shops on Coppice Drive, have reported being scared to leave their homes for fear of confrontation and intimidation.

As a Residents' Association, we have a great deal of experience of the problems that can be caused by the sale of alcohol, in particular with regard to the Tesco store located on Coppice Drive (less than half a mile from the site of this application). As such, we write to make representations that local residents are of the opinion that the granting of this application would be contrary to the Licensing Objectives as described in Section 4(2) of Licensing Act 2003 for the following reasons

### Prevention of crime and disorder

This is a new application (as opposed to a renewal) – in such circumstances it is clearly not possible to provide evidence of crime and disorder. However, we believe it is valid to consider the evidence of crime and disorder associated with the issuing of a licence in an almost identical set of circumstances.

Over the last three years there has been significant crime and disorder associated with the sale of alcohol from Tesco on Coppice Drive (located a short distance from the application premises). There has been a long history of problems with children and teenagers being involved in anti-social behaviour in the vicinity of this store over a sustained period. Problems have included theft, vandalism and criminal damage, intimidation and violence, most of which have been attributed to the effects of alcohol (in most cases by underage drinkers).

Addressing these issues has required a massive and prolonged effort on the part of the Residents' Association, Police, the Local Authorities, local residents, Tesco, and others. It has also benefitted from funding and support from the Northampton Service Six Youth Advisory Service.

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The seriousness of the problems faced by local residents is perhaps best illustrated by the fact that the Courts saw fit to issue a Dispersal Order covering the area around Tesco. We would ask the committee to note that this draconian legislation alone was not sufficient to stop the unacceptable and anti-social behaviour.

Additional measures were needed to tackle the problems (please note that the problems have not gone away, they are currently only managed down to an acceptable level) including temporary citing of CCTV cameras by the local authority (in addition to those provided by Tesco), and the employment of private security guards.

What with all of the budgetary cuts and funding restrictions, the manpower and resources that were needed to tackle the problems at Tesco are no longer available.

In summary, we would ask the committee to be cognisant of the problems that the issuing of this licence would inflict on local residents, and the absence of the resources needed to deal with the associated crime and disorder. For these reasons, this application should be refused.

## Public safety

The committee will be aware that it is illegal to sell alcohol to minors, and so in theory there should never be any problems in this regard. In practice however, there are a great many examples of underage drinking by local children and young people.

Many residents have reported frequent requests by teenagers to buy alcohol on their behalf, and anyone who refuses typically receives threats and verbal abuse. There is a long history of customers being spat at, physically assaulted, and having things thrown at them.

This problem is recognised by both the Police and Tesco in Coppice Drive, to the extent that it has been necessary to employ private security guards to protect both shoppers and staff.

To protect the public and customers, we would ask that the committee refuse this licence application. If any licence is issued, based on the evidence of Tesco in Coppice Drive, it should include a condition that security guards are employed during evenings and weekends.

## Prevention of public nuisance

As mentioned previously, Parklands accommodates a higher than average number of older residents, with bungalows in the vicinity. As has been seen at Coppice Drive, this vulnerable group report feeling scared and intimidated by the often large groups of children and young people that stores offering alcohol tend to attract.

In addition, the shop is situated less than a mile from the main road in a dead end road. The local population size would not be sufficient to support a retail outlet of this size, the last grocery outlet in that location closed many years ago due to lack of trade. There is no passing trade, therefore to support a retail outlet of this size would depend on advertising and attracting customers from outside the Parklands area.

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This would bring in additional traffic and pedestrians from neighbouring areas, bringing an unavoidable increase in noise nuisance.

In addition, the application states that "The premises will only accept trade deliveries or rubbish collections during normal working hours". Normal working hours are not defined, and presumably refer to the store opening hours of 6 am to 11 pm. This is not acceptable, and appropriate limits should be put on the times that these activities may be undertaken.

We would ask the committee to take into account the fact that all of the above is made worse by the fact that the elderly tend to retire early, and would be unduly disturbed by any noise and nuisance late in the evening. To protect both this vulnerable group, and the local community, we would ask the committee to refuse this application.

## Protection of children from harm

The application premises are only yards away from Northampton School for Girls, which has a roll of around 2000 pupils between the ages of 11 and 18. Being a girls' school, it attracts large groups of boys who hang around outside— this effect is recognised by both the schools and the Police. This occurs both during the school day, and during the evening at events that are frequently held by the school.

The NISA brand is well known for offering low cost alcohol – an example of this strategy is the current 'we love cider' campaign offering half price drinks. Children do not typically have large amounts of disposable income, and many studies show that underage drinkers actively seek out cheaper brands and promotional offers.

The committee are no doubt aware that there are shops who will sell to underage customers, and adults who are prepared to buy alcohol for teenagers. It is self evident that putting children and young people, and a supplier of alcohol regularly offering low prices, in such close proximity, will clearly increase the risk to children.

In summary, it is far better and cheaper to prevent problems that do not yet exist, rather than to address problems that occur. We therefore ask that the committee act responsibly and with foresight, and not to create a set of circumstance which will increase the risk of harm to children by approving this application.

If you have any question, or require clarification on any points raised, please contact me in the first instance using the details below

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Yours Faithfully

Simon Hegarty (committee member)  
for and on behalf of Parklands Residents' Association