

Sevenoaks District Council

24th August 2021

Dear Susan,

Re: Ephesus application number 21/01465/LAPRE

We are writing to formally object to the application by the Ephesus bar/club and restaurant for a late license, with loud (recored/live) music.

We do not feel that this is the correct location for a 'club style' bar, with live DJ's and very loud music (with reverberant bass tones), in close proximity too many residential homes, including the Rockdale supported living and home for the elderly. This is an area of quiet residential character, within the Conservation Area.

The significant noise disturbance granting this application will cause falls under 'Public Nuisance'.

The Ephesus restaurant has developed an external terrace, enclosed by lightweight construction; plastic sheeting and a retractable fabric roof, as an extension of its club/bar operation. This construction offers very little sound reduction, enabling their current music, as well as the party goers, to be audible by local residents', disturbing the peace.

From our house on Six Bells Lane, approximately 80 metres from Ephesus, their current music can be heard with closed windows and wearing ear-plugs, which disturbs our sleep. The applicant is seeking music to be played until much later at night (Friday and Saturday until 2:30am, and Sunday 1am, Thursdays 11:30pm).

We fear that granting permission to the application will significantly increase the disturbance and anguish caused to the surrounding community.



Has an acoustic assessment of both the building fabric sound reduction, and secondly to assess the existing ambient sound levels been carried out? These assessments would need to be considered in reviewing the application. The applicant needs to demonstrate how they are protecting their surroundings from noise disturbance.

A traffic assessment should also be undertaken. Presumably taxis will drop-off/pick-up from the High Street or Rockdale Road, causing congestion and additional noise disturbance.

Public safety

The applicant is seeking much longer opening hours including alcohol sales (Friday and Saturday until 2:30am, Sundays until 12:30am, Monday to Thursday until 1am). The bar currently shows a focus on alcohol offering fixed price 'all you can drink' lunches.

This leaves us greatly concerned about the potential for anti-social behaviour, due to the long drinking hours, in addition to the noise of patrons gathering and departing the Ephesus until the early hours of the morning.

Have the police been consulted to assess against their Crime Prevention Plan?

We are also concerned by crowds; queuing to enter and smoking, blocking the narrow footway in front of the club. At present one often has to walk in the road to pass the club. These crowds can also be intimidating to residents and passers-by.

Sevenoaks Neighbourhood Plan (March 2021 Final Draft)

Please be aware of Section 2.3 'Issues for the Neighbourhood Plan' 'Movement and public realm', which sets-out the need to promote pedestrian movement in the town centre at this 'significant junction'.

The congestion on the footway that is likely to be caused goes against the sentiment of this strategy.

Conservation Area

Relevant extracts from: Sevenoaks High Street Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (Planning Guidance 2008):

1.3 Conservation areas can also play a key part in promoting economic prosperity by ensuring that an area offers attractive living and working conditions which encourage further investment.

We do not feel that the application fits with the sentiment of this statement.

5.13 Crime (page 48) - 'All new development should be carefully designed to provide a safe and secure environment'.

As expressed above our concerns about health and safety do not fit with the sentiment of this statement.

Managing a conservation area is as much about preserving character as it is historic building fabric.

Lastly we feel there should also be consideration to the rich diversity of birdlife in this area, including many nesting birds, at a time when so many bird species are in decline. Research has shown that loud music can impact bird behaviour and reproduction.

To conclude, we **strongly object** to this application and hope that Sevenoaks Council see sense in not granting this application for a late license/music, to protect the character of the area, and the health and safety of its residents, and not to set a precedent for out of character development in Sevenoaks town.

Yours sincerely,

Andrew Monk and Ly Truong