

Dear Sirs

Which Wine When Ltd., Standard House, Standard Road, Wells-next-the-Sea, NR23 1JY - New variation application: WK/240003187

We are full-time residents of Wells who live immediately next door to Standard House on the east side of Standard Road, Wells and we wish to object to Premises Licence Application No. WK/240003187 on the following grounds:

Planning:

So far as we are aware no application has been made for a change of use from shop (A1) to licensed premises (A4), something that we and our neighbours in Standard Cottages would have been officially notified about. We understand that any such planning application is usually made before or at the same time as the licence application so that the Planning Authority and the Licensing Authority can confer and other authorities, such as Wells Town Council and the Police, can be consulted. In this particular case the planning application would be in respect of a building that is both listed and situated within a Conservation Area, which complicates matters.

Licence application:

Licence application:

At the time of writing the premises licence application (No. WK/240003187) currently on the NNDC website includes a floor plan which is completely cock-eyed. It shows the wine bar at the east end of Standard Road not the west end; multiple entrances and exits on the north side of the building not the south side; and four two seater tables on East End, the public highway between Standard House and Tug Boat Yard. In other words it is upside down and back to front. This is extremely confusing and misleading and in our view can only be rectified by the applicant submitting a fresh application.

Access:

Standard House is a Grade II listed building which is situated on a busy corner at the junction of Standard Road, East End and The Quay. It is on one of the main entry routes into town and to the beach, and on a main bus route. These roads are also extensively used by local fishermen travelling to and from the quay and their whelk sheds at the East End. None of this is conducive to having outdoor seating at the west end of the building, nor would it make sitting there an attractive - or even a safe - proposition.

Access from the road to Standard House is difficult for several reasons. Firstly it is on a busy corner/road junction with blind bends and there is no pedestrian crossing. Secondly the pedestrian and vehicular access to the site is narrow with no splay and limited visibility and, on the revised floor plan that we have seen, it would be obstructed by outdoor tables and chairs. And thirdly Standard House is a listed building with a curtilage that contains one other substantial building with development potential and a building plot for which planning permission for the erection of one dwelling has already been obtained (Ref. PF/12/1199), a permission which - according to the owner of the property - will be exercised sooner rather than later.

Development of these properties within the property will involve significant and sometimes heavy construction traffic entering the site from Standard Road via the narrow access route described above. Vehicles would pass close to the south side of Standard House which would make it impossible to have outdoor seating on that side of the building and also make access to the proposed wine bar difficult at times.

Public Safety:

The issues of traffic and outdoor seating are covered above. Another matter of concern would be the adoption of Tug Boat Yard, the registered and protected Village Green immediately to the north of Standard House, as an informal 'pub garden'. Customers of the wine bar would be tempted to take their drinks across the road to sit on the benches by the creek. This could create a problem with noisy drinkers disturbing other users of Tug Boat Yard and spoiling their quiet enjoyment of the green space.

If a premises licence is granted it should (a) insist on the use of plastic glasses in any outdoor areas and (b) specifically prohibit customers of the wine bar from taking their drinks across the road to Tug Boat Yard (we understand that a similar prohibition prevents customers of the Golden Fleece taking their drinks across the road to Wells Quay).

Public Nuisance:

Living so close to Standard House (which is less than 20 metres away on the other side of a small private car park and faces us) our main concern is noise. Drinking establishments are by their nature noisy and if there are people drinking at tables on the south side of Standard House it will be very noticeable and will impact on our, and our guests', quiet enjoyment of the front courtyard we share with our holiday cottage 'Goosey'. According to the blue application notices being displayed on Standard House - but not mentioned in the application form posted on the NNDC website - this could be from midday until 9:30 at night seven days a week, which would cause considerable nuisance with or without the sound of music coming through open doors and windows.

Other:

In conclusion we should point out that there is already a wine bar in Wells - the Wells Wine Bar in Staithe Street. We don't see the need for another one.

Yours faithfully

Nigel Dark & Linda Gower

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