

Andrew Farrow
 Chief Officer (Planning, Environment & Economy)
 Prif Swyddog (Cynllunio, Amgylchedd ac Economi)



Ms J Dale
 Licensing Team
 Flintshire County Council
 County Hall
 Mold
 CH7 6NB

Your Ref/Eich Cyf
 Our Ref/Ein Cyf DLJ/224779
 Date/Dyddiad 19 September 2023
 Ask for/Gofynner am Mr. D.L. Jones
 Direct Dial/Rhif Union 01352 703276
 E-mail/e-bost pollution.control@flintshire.gov.uk

Dear Jacqui,

**APPLICATION FOR THE REVIEW OF A PREMISES LICENCE –
 THE RUTHIN CASTLE, MOLD**

I write with reference to the application for the review of the Premises Licence (PA0338) at the Ruthin Castle, 73-77 New Street, Mold CH7 1NY.

Pollution Control support the grounds for review put forward by Flintshire County Council under the licensing objective for the prevention of Noise Nuisance and prevention of Crime and Disorder.

The Pollution Control team were informed of several complaints of alleged noise nuisance from 18 April 2023. These complaints referred to several concerns occurring at the premises including loud music, karaoke, loud voices in the beer garden and outside the front of the pub, anti-social behaviour, public urination, drug use, taxi noise etc. The times indicated that the problems were occurring from opening time until at least 3am (or even later) every Friday and Saturday and some Sundays and subsequently Bank Holidays as well.

As a result of the complaints letters were sent out to complainants and to the Licensee. Following this a joint visit with James Lowe, Licensing Officer, was arranged and made to the premises on 10 May 2023. We spoke to the Licensee and her husband informing them of the problems and what could potentially happen if the alleged nuisance other problems persisted. This included a potential Abatement Notice and Licence review. They undertook to look at the issues raised and make appropriate changes.

Following this a night-time visit was arranged the following week for Friday night starting at 10pm on 19 May 2023. I met up with James Lowe the Licensing Officer and Gemma Potter, Licensing Manager in the New Street car park near to the Pub. Loud live music from a band was clearly audible in the car park as I arrived. We walked all around the area of the pub and recorded music was audible some distance away in all directions. In addition, closer to the pub loud voices were clearly audible from the beer garden at the rear of the premises and from people at the front near the access door.

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www.sirfflint.gov.uk

We welcome correspondence in Welsh. We will respond to correspondence received in Welsh without delay.

Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth Gymraeg. Ymatebwn yn ddi-oed i ohebiaeth a dderbynnir drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg.



We next went into a complainant's property adjoined to the Ruthin Castle where the noise from both the beer garden and the amplified recorded music including lyrics and bass beat were clearly audible inside every room. At 10.30pm the live band started playing again and the volume increased significantly. In my view all the noises heard would materially affect the use and enjoyment of the property and would prevent sleep.

We left and went to another complainant's property along the same row at the far end away from the Ruthin Castle. The music noise and bass beat were also clearly audible in every room. In addition, people outside the pub could be heard shouting.

We next went to another complainant's property across the road from the pub. The music was very loud in this area and was still audible inside every room in the house. The noise in the bedroom was particularly loud even with all the windows closed. With the window open it was even worse. We left the area just before midnight and the music was still clearly audible in New Street car park.

On 25 May 2023 a meeting was organised by Licensing Manager Gemma Potter and James Lowe at County Hall Mold. This meeting was to bring all the interested parties together to discuss the issues and complaints still being raised. I attended with my colleague Martyn Kirby. Also in attendance were James Lowe and Gemma Potter, the Designated Premises Supervisor, Laura Millington, Steve Hogan a Manager representing Stonegate, the brewery/pub owners and The Police Charlotte Carr, Eastern Licensing Officer and Thomas Matthews, District Support Sergeant. The outcome of the meeting was detailed in a formal letter sent to the DPS and Stonegate documenting the numerous concerns and the proposed actions and the reasons for them to be carried out at the premises.

Several measures were put forward including. The noise from people using the beer garden was considered excessive and it was suggested that some control was put in place to control it by limiting the number of people allowed in there after 10pm and that no drinks were allowed to be taken outside. There should be no live bands. Amplified music volume was decreased. Door supervisors were used to manage the front and rear access to limit noise from customers. The letter drafted by the Gemma Potter, Licensing Manager should be referred to for full details.

I subsequently carried out noise monitoring using recording equipment on two occasions at one of the complainant's properties opposite the pub. The first was installed the same day as the previous meeting 25 May and collected on 30 May. The second was installed 23 June and collected on 27 June.

These recordings showed that the problems associated particularly with the late licensing hours were continuing albeit that the recorded music noise had lessened by a small degree in that that it was mostly audible when the door was opened to allow ingress/egress of customers and if windows were opened at the premises. Noise from the DJ was often audible. Noise from people using the outside space continued to cause significant disturbance from raised voices at all hours. The Door Supervisors seemed to

be ineffectual at controlling people outside the pub and were also contributing to the noise disturbance by talking at length to customers outside.

On the first recording on Saturday 26 May at 1am there was clearly audible queue of people forming waiting to be allowed into the premises. There was shouting and raucous noise. This appears to be a regular occurrence late at night due to all the other pubs in the area closing. This makes the Ruthin Castle the last destination for late night drinking in Mold.

The recordings also showed that the complainant was witnessing that there were people being sick and also urinating outside the pub in various locations including the archway of the pub, across the road and on the footpath to New Street car park. Other noises keeping people awake includes taxis and other vehicles stopping and turning in the road in front of the pub, some with loud music playing, car horns, people congregating outside talking/shouting, door knocking on residents' properties.


There is also disturbance from the customers who have left the pub after closing at 2.30am whereby they loiter and continue to socialise outside people's houses often for a considerable period. This is occurring every Friday and Saturday and Bank Holiday Mondays. Sundays can also be noisy but to a slightly lesser degree.

It is clear from my own observations and the recordings made by the complainant that the noise, anti-social behaviour and numerous other disturbances being caused by the activities at the Ruthin Castle are associated with inadequate controls at the pub and especially with the late licence and the proximity to residential properties. The late licence is particularly incongruous as it makes the Ruthin Castle the last destination for late night drinking in Mold therefore, potentially, attracting an already intoxicated customer base.

Live music is also not suitable for this venue as the building structure is inadequate to contain the additional noise produced. In addition, the pub is attached on the northern end to residential property which is susceptible to the transmission of sound and bass noise. I would recommend the permission for live music is removed from this licence, and a condition added to the licence to disapply the permissions afford by the Live Music Act 2012.

As a result, I would support the application to have the Licence reviewed and would strongly recommend that the late licensing times be reduced considerably and modified to mirror those of other Public Houses in residential areas of Mold.

Yours faithfully



Mr. D.L. Jones
Pollution Control Officer

