

Residents of Harberton Heights
Mary Price Close/McCabe Place
OX3 0LN

Licensing Authority
Oxford City Council
Ramsey House
10 St Ebbes
Oxford
OX1 1PT

3rd October 2011

Re: Licensing application 11/01430/PREM

As the residents of the Harberton Heights development adjacent to the Oxford Brookes Milham Ford campus, we would like to object to the licensing of these premises. For the vast majority of the year when the Brookes University students are in session, there is currently little disturbance to the local residents, and we feel our relationship with Brookes University is very positive. However, extending the hours when the building will be used, the sale of alcohol for consumption both on and off the premises and noisy social events is likely to change this state of affairs.

The location of this building adjacent to a residential estate which largely comprises families with young children means that the licensing of the Milham Ford campus is likely to severely affect quality of life measured by all four objectives of the Licensing Act. In particular, the greatest impact will be upon the children living in the estate.

Prevention of crime and disorder

The increase in adults who have been drinking around the estate late at night is likely to increase petty crime such as bike theft and damage to cars. Furthermore, the sale of alcohol for consumption off the premises will likely lead to drinking on Milham Ford Park adjacent to both the Harberton Heights estate and the campus.

Prevention of public nuisance

The presence of both intoxicated and sober individuals leaving the Milham Ford campus up to 11.30 pm and sometimes until 1.30 am will inevitably greatly increase noise levels within the Harberton Heights development. Given the location of much of the Brookes student housing a large proportion of students will exit through the estate. The lack of vegetation on the development means that noise is amplified and causes considerable disruption, particularly in the rooms facing the roads. As these bedrooms are generally used by children, there is likely to be disruption to their sleep either due to noise late at night or from people arriving or leaving earlier in the evening around their bedtime.

The levels of litter both on the estate and the neighbouring park are likely to increase with the licensing of the Brookes building, particularly with the sale for off-premises consumption. There is already a noticeable increase in litter when summer students attend the Brookes Milham Ford campus and this pattern is likely to be repeated if there are more students around late into the night.

There is already an issue with rats both around the Brookes building and the estate which will be compounded by an increase in both food and drink waste resulting from licensing.

A further issue arises from the speed of cars driving through the estate for access to the Brookes building. This is currently a problem during the day, but an increase in flow of traffic to access the evening events at the building will cause even greater problems.

There is also a problem of Brookes students parking in residents' spaces which will probably get worse with licensing of evening events.

Protection of children from harm

Many of the issues discussed in the public nuisance impact predominantly upon the children living in the estate, of which the vast majority are of primary school age. Any increase in noise from people talking or shouting in the street late at night will disrupt both bedtime and sleep quality. An increase in bottles and cans either in the estate or in Milham Ford Park can be a hazard to young children as they all enjoy exploring the hidden areas on their own.

Clearly any increase in traffic through, and illegal parking within the residential area increases the danger to children playing and walking to and from school.

Promotion of public safety

The main issue for public safety is related again to increased traffic that the estate can clearly not handle. There are already a number of large delivery vehicles servicing Oxford Brookes which are dangerous to anyone on foot or bicycle. The additional of further lorries delivering alcohol supplies will increase this traffic and accident risk in addition to the further damage to the private road that is used for access and which the home owners are responsible for.

Conclusion

Taking all these points into consideration, but particularly the effects on the children living on the estate and the likely increase in late night noise (which, fortunately, is currently a rare occurrence), we ask that the application for a premises license is refused. The addition of one more venue to serve alcohol will make little difference to the students and staff of Oxford Brookes, but would certainly have a detrimental effect on the lives of many local residents.

Yours sincerely