

APPENDIX C

Representations from Interested Parties

NOTE: All representations made against this application were submitted digitally to the Licensing Authority. The content of the objections raised is included below, along with the provided name of the interested party. Additionally, any suggestions made by interested parties regarding amendments or conditions (where this has been addressed on the online objection form) have also been added.

#1 Brompton Regis Parish Council

"The Brompton Regis Parish Council strongly objects to a licence being granted for the sale of alcohol on and off the premises at Wimbleball Lake. The remit of the lake is for it to be a place of quiet enjoyment available throughout the day and to benefit from the Dark Skies at night. The ethos of the site is to be family friendly and the South West Lakes Trust encourages many activities for both families and schools. The existing cafe provides adequately for the current visitors and for its small campsite and it should be noted that there are two pubs in the locality.

Over the last few years problems have started to arise with social media encouraging gatherings whose activities have been influenced by alcohol. However, in the last few weeks unprecedented numbers of people have come to the lake and to date the Police, Exmoor National Park Authority and South West Lakes Trust have been unable to work out a strategy for containing the extremely anti-social behaviour obviously fuelled by alcohol. Such behaviour includes indiscriminate and dangerous parking; prevention of use by the many fishermen who frequent the lake; intimidation of local residents and the leaving of excessive amounts of rubbish much of which is dangerous especially to children and animals.

A readily available supply of alcohol for sale 7 days a week from 11.00 - 23.30 both on and off the premises could clearly exacerbate the problems.

Many local residents support the council objection to this licensing application as does the adjacent parish council of Upton."

#2 Upton Parish Council

"Re - Somerset West and Taunton Licence representation Application WK/44720Â Coffee Couture, Wimbleball Lake, Brompton Regis, Dulverton TA22 9NU Licensable activities applied for Supply of alcohol (on and off sales) (11:00 to 23:30 Monday to Sunday) Opening hours applied for 07:00 - 00:00 Monday to Sunday opening hours, sale of alcohol between 11:00 and 23:30 only.

Upton Parish Council strongly objects to the granting of an alcohol licence, for on and off premises sales at the Cafe, Wimbleball Lake. This amenity is a peaceful, tranquil, and safe area used by families, within a protected National Park, Â for nature watching, recreation and sport.

Unfortunately we have a serious problem with youngsters flocking to the lake in search of a place to party; a situation that the police are struggling to control. A licence to serve alcohol would only exacerbate this problem.

Upton Parish Council feel that an alcohol licence is wholly inappropriate on the grounds that it will encourage even more social disturbance and anti social behaviour. This would require additional enforcement from an already absent police force.

It will also generate additional traffic on already unsafe local roads until late into the night, many of these are single track with few passing places and require slow careful observation when driving.

It puts commercialism and profit above the protection of the natural environment and sustainability policies.

Finally we feel it presents health, (by unnecessarily encouraging alcohol consumption), and safety hazards, (proximity of the deep water reservoir, bridge and dam), requiring additional resource to ensure safe operation of the facilities.”

Are there any licence conditions or amendments to the applications which you could suggest that would remedy your concerns, or other suggestions you would like a Licensing Sub Committee to take into account – *“Upton Parish Council strongly objects to the granting of an alcohol licence, for on and off premises sales at the Cafe, Wimbleball Lake. This amenity is a peaceful, tranquil, and safe area used by families, within a protected National Park, Â for nature watching, recreation and sport.*

Unfortunately we have a serious problem with youngsters flocking to the lake in search of a place to party; a situation that the police are struggling to control. A licence to serve alcohol would only exacerbate this problem.

Upton Parish Council feel that an alcohol licence is wholly inappropriate on the grounds that it will encourage even more social disturbance and anti social behaviour. This would require additional enforcement from an already absent police force.

It will also generate additional traffic on already unsafe local roads until late into the night, many of these are single track with few passing places and require slow careful observation when driving.

It puts commercialism and profit above the protection of the natural environment and sustainability policies.

Finally we feel it presents health, (by unnecessarily encouraging alcohol consumption), and safety hazards, (proximity of the deep water reservoir, bridge and dam), requiring additional resource to ensure safe operation of the facilities.”

#3 Nick Thwaites- SWT Cllr for Dulverton Ward

“I have been approached by Brompton Regis parish council in my capacity as their District Cllr asking for my representation in this matter. The premises in question are located in a quite rural location close to the banks of the Wimbleball reservoir which is managed by the charity, South West Lakes Trust. A barrier provides entrance to the car park which I understand is unused and never closed. Access to the parking are is via a small lane with passing places. The granting of a premises and more likely the OFF sales licence will encourage those finishing their meals to natural migrate with drinks towards the water. This lake/reservoir is very deep and large with no protection barriers to prevent people entering the water whether by design or accident. The sale of alcohol is likely to encourage those camping in the tents (glamping) a stone throw away (in the adjacent field) and those travelling

home to migrate and roam down towards the water there by increasing the likely hood of disturbing, not only those still eating but also those camping close by.

Public safety - the presence of a large deep body of water mixed with alcohol.

Public nuisance - The consumption of alcohol within the grounds is likely to lead to unruly behavior.

Prevention of crime and disorder - This is a remote location unlit and as such would be difficult to police”

Are there any licence conditions or amendments to the applications which you could suggest that would remedy your concerns, or other suggestions you would like a Licensing Sub Committee to take into account – “No Off Sales - limit alcohol consummation within the Cafe premises and the associated seating area just outside.”

#4 Cllr Dave Mansell

“I represent the Wiveliscombe and District Ward, which is close to Wimbleball Lake and includes roads leading to it. Wimbleball Lake is a wonderful facility in our area and rightly should be open and accessible to all users, including young people. Unfortunately, there can be some mis-use, disturbance and nuisance caused to local residents, including on roads leading to Wimbleball and especially on and around the bridge over the northern end of the lake. Problems from this have been particularly bad over the lockdown period in good weather and, from local reports, it appears SW Lakes and the Police are able to do little to deter or control the situation. There is evidence from till receipts in litter left behind that people have visited from Taunton, Weston-Super-Mare and Bristol.

There is understandable concern that an alcohol licence, without sufficient restrictions, could make the situation worse and also lead to other problems.

The cafe location is away from the bridge and close to another part of the lake and the main car park and campsite. However, it could attract more people if it starts to sell alcohol for off-site consumption, including to those initially attracted to other parts of the lake, such as the bridge.

It would have been helpful to have details of the applicants plans for the cafe building and why they have applied for an alcohol licence for on and off-site sales for the times requested.

I have doubts about the suitability of the location for attracting customers late into night. The lake is in a quiet rural area with some narrow access roads.

In my view, the cafe should be serving day time customers and possibly this could extend to early evening, but not to late evening and night time.”

Are there any licence conditions or amendments to the applications which you could suggest that would remedy your concerns, or other suggestions you would like a Licensing Sub Committee to take into account – “I suggest a licence is allowed for on-site sales only. It should also be timed for consumption with meals and not to allow late night drinking at this location.”

#5 Mark Blaker, SWT Member for Wiveliscombe/District

“Further to comments submitted by Cllrs Dave Mansell and Nick Thwaites, I concur with the view that a license for on-site consumption is appropriate, but given recent and significant concerns about incidents of unruly and potential dangerous behaviour in the vicinity it would not be appropriate.”

#6 Kevin Lawes

"We live next to the Lakes Trust property on which land the cafe is situated. This application therefore directly affects us. We already have a large number of walkers, runners and cyclists passing by our property. Most of them are well behaved and cause no trouble. However, there are several who do not treat this beautiful site with any respect and leave bottles, litter and other unpleasant articles behind when they leave. In some cases their behaviour can only be described as unruly and a nuisance. Granting an alcohol licence to the cafe could only make matters worse and I feel sure that it would result in more drunkenness, bad behaviour, discarded cans and bottles, criminal damage to boats and equipment and disruption to what is usually a quiet and tranquil area. There is no need for access to alcohol here if the site is used properly. There is a lovely old pub in the village of Brompton Regis if anyone is desperate for an alcoholic drink. The final reason for my objection is that there is already a real public nuisance problem at the Bessom Bridge end of the lake where young people in particular congregate in large numbers and jump into the water from the bridge. Last week 194 cars were counted on both sides of the road and there is often noise and unruly behaviour. At least they stay in the bridge area at the moment and go home late afternoon. I cannot begin to imagine what problems would arise if the young people thought it worth their while moving up from the bridge to the cafe to get a drink. There would be disorder on a grand scale with no one able to police the behaviour. I must therefore respectfully request that this application be refused in no uncertain terms. Thank you."

Are there any licence conditions or amendments to the applications which you could suggest that would remedy your concerns, or other suggestions you would like a Licensing Sub Committee to take into account? "no"

#7 Dr B. J. Chaffey and Dr C. M. Chaffey

"We have had serious public disorder problems here over the last few years with the congregation of youths on Besom bridge (over 100 cars) and at the Wimbleball picnic areas. The Police have been called to acts of public disorder and nuisance. I am concerned that if the cafe can sell alcohol this venue will become even more popular and uncontrolled. This is a national park and should be an area for peaceful family recreation. This application causes me great concern and distress. The problem of uncontrolled gatherings has escalated significantly over the last five or six years and the availability of alcohol will only make things worse. Also everyone visiting the site has to drive here so the risk of drink driving is also increased. There was an illegal rave in the woods by the lake last year and this application will not help. Where will the revellers go after the premises stops serving?"

Are there any licence conditions or amendments to the applications which you could suggest that would remedy your concerns, or other suggestions you would like a Licensing Sub Committee to take into account – "No, this is a National Park venue and should be preserved as a site for family recreation."

#8 Mrs M Heywood

"I am 82 years old and I have lived here all my life. The area has become increasingly busy and there are many young people gathering around the lake and I feel alcohol will cause problems especially late at night and on hot sunny days when hundreds of people are here jumping off the bridge and

driving in their cars. I feel vulnerable and the sale of alcohol is not necessary as this should be a family picnic area and beauty spot.”

#9 Glenn Bengtson

“To ensure the safe and controlled consumption of alcohol near a watersport activity centre, the surrounding countryside and policing of such site.”

Are there any licence conditions or amendments to the applications which you could suggest that would remedy your concerns, or other suggestions you would like a Licensing Sub Committee to take into account – *“Limited serving to customers for consumption on site, within a designated area (indoors and outside fencing to control area with no alcohol beyond), and to be served no later than the serving of food.*

That the outdoor area remains clean tidy and organised.”

#10 Steven Hopkinson

“I have been coming to the lake for several years now as it provides beautiful scenery for walks and cycle rides. In recent years I have seen a noticeable increase in the number of visitors to the site. Whilst not a bad thing, it tends to be a lot of families and older couples who come here for the peace and quiet. On the way in across the bridge however I have frequently seen larger and larger congregations of people parked all over this area and jumping and swimming in the lake (which is prohibited). I am worried that allowing the sale of alcohol - particularly for such a long period during the day - will cause these groups to disrupt the tranquil environment that people seek when they come to the lake. The lake also offers water sports facilities which would be unsafe if alcohol has been consumed previously. I do not think the two will mix well together and the alcohol will encourage dangerous behaviour.

It is also worth considering that due to the location almost everyone who visits the lake will need to drive to get there. Therefore the sale of alcohol is potentially going to lead to drink driving offences! Something we naturally need to avoid happening.”

#11 Jeremy and Angela Andrews

“Due to the extreme anti-social behaviour [drunkenness, dangerous driving, littering, drug abuse etc] currently displayed at Wimbleball lake we feel that an alcohol licence would only exacerbate the problem.

South West Lakes Trust have failed to deal with the current problem and Wimbleball lake is becoming an unsafe environment for visiting families and locals.”

#12 Kingsbrompton Farm

“I'm strongly objecting to the proposed alcohol license at wimbleball reservoir. There is a major problem with the reservoir visitors especially around bessom bridge with alcohol being the main culprit, there's anti social behaviour, threatening behaviour, broken drinks bottles and empty cars, vandalism of council verges, bessom bridge used as a car racing strip after dark, no social distancing whatsoever, bad parking, abandoned cars, illegally trespass, illegal jumping off the bridge etc etc.all alcohol fuelled so if the license gets the go ahead it'll make an already out of control situation even worse. South west lakes trust and the national park know they have a major problem there but have both failed to do anything about it. The police have been there numerous times and haven't done anything so having alcohol ad lib will just add more fuel to the fire, victimising locals and families

who used to visit the reservoir. The company applying for the license are only interested in money, not the beauty and tranquility of the lake.

There is no mobile phone service so drunk drivers will cause absolute carnage on the roads.

Wimbleball lake is supposed to be a dark skies status area so by allowing drinking into the night will cause light pollution and as we know even more anti social behaviour by encouraging the wrong type of visitor.

It must not be allowed to happen at any cost as this will lead to more unwanted events and many many more people won't visit the area as well as more vehicle and light pollution."

Are there any licence conditions or amendments to the applications which you could suggest that would remedy your concerns, or other suggestions you would like a Licensing Sub Committee to take into account - For the good of Wimbleball lake this license mustn't be allowed to happen.

#13 Laura Elizabeth

"To whom it may concern,

I have been a frequent visitor to Wimbleball lake over the past 20 years and have enjoyed it for its stunning natural beauty and quiet relaxing atmosphere. I deeply fear that grant of an alcohol licence would harm both of these qualities, would be detrimental to the majority of visitors enjoyment, and would in fact fly directly in the face of South West Lakes Trusts charitable statements which include the protection and conservation for the public benefit of the natural environment in areas within the South West of England and the provision in such parts of the Area of Benefit as is appropriate of facilities for recreation and other leisure time occupation in the interests of social welfare .

I believe this because:

1} Wimbleball lake is primarily an area of conservation, which requires responsibility from all of its visitors to maintain e.g keep free from litter, respect natural flora and fauna. Persons under the influence of alcohol are far less likely to uphold these crucial responsibilities.

2} Another main attraction for visitors to Wimbleball lake is the enjoyment of outdoor activities such as watersports and high-wire ropes. Neither of these are appropriate activities for persons under the influence of alcohol to partake in for obvious safety risks, yet it is difficult to see how activities staff at Wimbleball would be able to effectively monitor alcohol consumption by visitors, particularly those who purchase take-away alcohol to consume while out on the water, and those who self-launch their own boats. I am deeply troubled by the safety risks outlined here.

3} Many visitors to the lake enjoy it as a family-friendly day out, and many have young families. It is difficult to see how the provision of alcohol would enhance the visits of such visitors, and instead is more likely to result in noise disruption and nuisance. Moreover, the lakes adventure playground, watersports activities, and lake itself all pose safety risks to children as serious as drowning, therefore constant supervision of a responsible adult is required. The sale of alcohol is therefore not appropriate in such an area that requires a high level of vigilance; something that may not be realised by parents unfamiliar with the area who purchase alcohol at the cafe upon arrival before exploring the rest of the lake.

4} Transportation provisions are completely unsuitable. The lake is not accessible by public transport, and the closest taxis are based miles away in Minehead or Tiverton. I fear that persons who purchase alcohol at the lake may be inclined to drive under the influence. Although hopefully many responsible visitors would have a designated driver, it is not difficult to imagine a common scenario in which visitors purchase alcohol upon arrival before spending the day at the site with the belief that they will be under the limit by the time they intend to leave. My concern in this dangerous scenario is that

when drivers are incorrect, they will have few alternative options, with no public transport and no reliable mobile phone signal to arrange alternative transport. Driving under the influence of alcohol is of course illegal, and is a particular threat on the small single-lane country roads which service the lake {that many visitors are not used to driving on} and is a huge danger to local residents.

5} Swimming in the lake is prohibited for both safety and conservation reasons. Persons under the influence who decide to swim are at risk of drowning, and as staff at the activities centre are not on 24 hour patrol to monitor these behaviours despite the lake being accessible 24\7, this poses a huge risk to visitors who have consumed alcohol.

6} The lake is entirely surrounded by farmland, mostly livestock farms. Persons under the influence of alcohol, and particularly those who are dog owners, may pose a risk to livestock as well as local wildlife. It is imperative that dog owners prevent sheep worrying, but it is difficult to see how this could be ensured when referring to those under the influence of alcohol.

7} Recently, there has been a surge in crime at the lake. Particularly, people use Bessom Bridge {the road bridge over the northern end of Wimbleball} as an area to meet and partake in antisocial behaviour and crime relating to drugs, for which the police have been called to on multiple occasions. The supply of alcohol at the lake itself and the presence of people under the influence of alcohol at the site detract from the family-friendly atmosphere of the lake, and its use as quiet attraction to be enjoyed for its natural beauty. I truly believe that this change would negatively impact the enjoyment of most peoples visits to the area, and even result in fewer visitors.

8} The cafe site is in close proximity to a number of local residencies, and the supply of alcohol in the evenings{e.g. by visitors staying at the campsite} or at events held at the cafe will inevitably cause noise disruption to these residents, most of whom are over the age of 60, and pose a nuisance to the wider local community.

I heavily urge you to consider these arguments before granting the licence. Wimbleball lake is a special place to many of its visitors who want to come to a quiet place of natural beauty. There are plenty of alternative places in which people can enjoy alcoholic beverages in a responsible manner that do not present the same safety, environmental and social concerns outlined here."

Are there any licence conditions or amendments to the applications which you could suggest that would remedy your concerns, or other suggestions you would like a Licensing Sub Committee to take into account – "No amendments to suggest. I believe that the grant of any licence would be inappropriate."

#14 Abigail Farmer

"The cafe is next to the lake and it is very dangerous to be around feel water and attempt water sports while drunk. There is not a security presence around the lake to prevent intoxicated individuals from swimming or jumping into the lake and injuring themselves.

Wimbleball is a quiet beauty spot, and the peace of the national park could be ruined by drunk and rowdy individuals.

There is also substantial farmland and a number of residents living around the lake and close to the cafe, it would be a nuisance to the farmers to have drunk and disorderly individuals around their livestock, as well as disputing the peace for those living nearby.

The cafe is in a very remote location with no mobile signal and no local taxi company (that I am aware of). This area already has a problem with drunk drivers as it is very rural, there is little to no police presence, and no public transport to the lake. As such it would be tempting for customers to drink and drive, endangering their lives and the lives of others.

The location and general environment of this business is not one that encourages drinking, as it is frequented by families, tourists and walkers; therefore I do not think the cafe should be able to serve alcohol, as the risks outweigh any boost it could provide to an already popular business."

#15 Mrs Payne

"Wimbleball is a place where people can come and enjoy the piece and quiet with the family to get away from the stress of life and boost their well being. Drinking all day till the late evening is not good, as we would have people drink driving around our lanes. We welcome visitors but no need to have alcohol."

#16 Elizabeth Oxley

"There is already a big problem at wimbleball lake with youths gathering and jumping from the bridge. This creates difficulty driving over the bridge and is a safety issue. I feel that the addition of a late license would fuel this and potentially increase the problem. I worry about the risk of increased crime in the area due to people being around much later than they would be currently."