

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing in relation to the licence amendment application submitted by The Vane Arms pub and restaurant in Thorpe Thewles.

My name is [REDACTED] for 6 years. As you may be aware, my property backs onto the green space/garden of the pub. I would like to make it clear that I have had no issues to date with The Vane Arms, and I have enjoyed numerous birthdays, anniversaries, and Sunday lunches in the restaurant since moving to the village.

In March 2020, I started to work from home because of the COVID pandemic, to this day I work from home 3-4 days per week. I am based in the back bedroom of the house, whilst my husband makes use of the home office. Throughout the spring/summer of 2021/2022 I have worked undisturbed throughout the week, even on particularly warm days when I have had windows open when the pub has been busy. As like many other people during the pandemic, I have spent a considerable amount of time in my garden over the last 2 years and have had no issue of noise from the pub or its patrons, I have chatted with a couple of parents with their children whilst pottering in the garden and they have been nothing but polite, even asking permission for an apple from our apple tree.

On the 5th of September 2022, I was disappointed to see a sign on the goal posts in the garden with the following message: "Please do not use the goals under any circumstances, our neighbours aren't happy with the noise or balls going over the fence therefore we have suspended it until we can come to an agreement". My garden is located very close to the goals and in all the time we have lived here there was perhaps 2 balls that have come over the fence and caused no damage as usually only children under the age of 10 have played football. I then contacted Ben Icke to get some more information as this was not something I was aware of, I was then advised several residents of the village (including my neighbours) had made multiple complaints regarding noise and ball games, amongst other issues. Specifically, that they were getting 4-5 balls over the fence a day which I find difficult to believe given my experience.

Following this conversation, Ben invited me to a meeting along with other residents to discuss the points raised. It was at this meeting that I learned the full extent of the complaints that had been made, and in all honestly found some of it rather bizarre, as individuals that live opposite and either side of me had allegedly experienced dramatically different behaviour from the staff and visitors at the pub.

Ben was very polite, understanding, and amenable during this meeting. He listened to everyone's views and made significant apologies for incidents in the past that occurred under previous management. At the close of the meeting, it was my understanding that there were no concerns from residents about the proposed licence changes, unfortunately the residents have gone back on their word and submitted numerous complaints which I feel is very dishonest and unfair.

I would be very disappointed if the licence change is not upheld, as the proposed changes would make it more family friendly and would mean the pub is available for breakfast which is something I would normally need to travel to Norton for.

I would be happy to discuss any of the points made in more detail if required to elaborate.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Dear Sir/ Madame

I am writing this letter to support the Vane Arm's Licence amendments. I live at [REDACTED] and my house backs onto the pub garden, firstly, I would like to say I am thrilled that this pub has had significant local investment recently to really make it a standout, high end, restaurant, something which is difficult to find in the local area. The proposed changes to licence will make it even more accessible and family friendly to all customers. Prior to the new owner's investment, the pub sat empty and derelict for a period of nearly 2 years. In a difficult economy with covid, followed by the cost-of-living crisis, the pub has managed to not only survive but thrive, to bring jobs to the area, and a bit of joy to the village, its pleasant to hear the sound of children playing or the ambient background music.

I personally feel the pub has been targeted by a few residents who have conspired to do the maximum damage the pub's good reputation. I say this after being approached by one neighbour to get together to talk about how to get the pub to remove the decking, a meeting which I declined to attend. Since then, I have not been invited to any further meetings by these residents.

I had also noticed a laminated piece of paper in the garden that stated, "goals can't be used because of disputes with neighbours" This came as a complete shock, because, as a neighbour myself, I had no issue with the ball games. After raising this as a point on the village social media page to say how sad it was the children were no longer allowed to play and getting a few positive comments the administrator removed the ability to leave comments. My assumption being that this was to intentionally stifle support for the pub.

After this had happened the landlord Ben invited us, along with the other residents, to a meeting to discuss the ongoing issues with neighbours. At this meeting, Ben discussed every concern from the neighbours and made significant concessions to appease everyone to remove the animosity towards the pub, this included removing ball games, removing outdoor music and re-arranging the outdoor seating area, as well as, putting up signage and foliage to help with adherence privacy. This is above and beyond what he would need to do.

The second part of the meeting we reviewed the proposed licence changes, in detail, point by point, and every concern was addressed and seemingly resolved at the meeting. The only point that was still a concern was children staying later, but once it was explained to be only children that have not ordered food it really made little difference, as most children at the pub at that time would have ordered food. Ben has listened and acted upon any genuine concerns being extremely considerate and respectful.

My feeling is that the immediate neighbours are doing everything possible to damage the pub and see it fail, to bring silence to the village and yet another pub closure

In Summary the changes to the licence will make very little difference to how the pub impacts the local area and offering breakfast is a huge benefit to the locals, I feel to limit the licence would damage this brilliant local business and I feel the whole village would feel the pain of this becoming derelict once again, and refusing these licence changes will put this business one step closer to closing down.