

Blackpool Council Licensing Service				
Representation made by a Responsible Authority to an application for the variation of a Premises Licence				
Responsible Authority				
Name of Responsible Authority	LANCASHIRE CONSTABULARY			
Name of Officer <i>(please print)</i>	PS1747 Helen Parkinson			
Signature of Officer				
Contact telephone number	01253 604074			
Date representation made	14	11	18	
Do you consider mediation to be appropriate		YES	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Premises Details				
Premises Name	La Casa			
Address	14 Dickson Road			
	Blackpool			
Post Code	FY1 2AE			
Reasons for making representations				
<p>I am in receipt of an application for a major variation to the premises licence for the above address. The variation includes increasing the hours for the sale of alcohol and playing of recorded music to include the daytime hours 11:00 – 17:30. The application requests increasing the licensable activities to include performance of a play, exhibition of films, indoor sporting event, performance of live music and entertainment that is of a similar description to music and dance.</p> <p>As well as altering and adding the above licensable activities the variation then goes on to request the removal of Condition 3 from annex 2.</p> <p>All these amendments suggest to Police that the licence holder is looking to completely change the operation of this premise. Currently it operates as a take-away; it has a licence to sell alcohol but currently chooses not to do this.</p> <p>Looking through the application, the Police do not object in principle to increasing the sale of alcohol hours to include the hours of 11:00 – 17:30 but this is ONLY the case with ALL the current the conditions on the licence remaining, meaning the premises remains effectively a restaurant/take-away.</p>				

Lancashire Constabulary does object to the removal of condition 3 from annex 2:

'Alcohol shall not be sold or supplied on the premises otherwise than to persons taking table meals there and for consumption by such a person as ancillary to his meal.'

By removing the above condition it would completely change the operation of the premises from that of a restaurant/take-away which is of low risk of crime and disorder, to a drinking establishment which, along with the addition of the other proposed licensable activities, would increase the risk of crime and disorder and therefore have an adverse impact on the licensing objectives.

Effectively, as the premise currently has a licence to play recorded music until 3am on Friday and Saturday, removal of the food condition would allow it to turn into a Nightclub. Dickson Road already has two nightclubs directly across the road from La Casa and it has been well documented that the area suffers from a large amount of alcohol related crime and disorder. Allowing another premises to effectively become a nightclub Police fear would significantly add to this further.

The premises is located in Blackpool Town Centre, within the Cumulative Impact Zone, and suffers from high levels of crime and disorder and is in fact located in the most problematic area in terms of alcohol related crime and disorder for emergency services.

The premises is large in size as it is a double unit; twice the size of the other take-aways in the area. On speaking to Mr Aly Farag, his initial plan is to remove half of the food counter (which stretches across the whole length of the shop) and replace it with a bar. This would indicate that the sale of alcohol is planned to become the major operation of the premises. In addition the inclusion of all the other licensable activities requested make it clear to police that the plan for this premises is to become a vertical drinking establishment.

In a recent application to extend the hours of the premises in terms of Late Night refreshment, the applicant, at the initial hearing and subsequent appeal at Magistrates Court stated that due to financial ties, in order to make the business work, he would have to consider selling alcohol again but believed that this carried more risk than selling food alone. Therefore, the applicant is aware of the increased risk attached to selling alcohol.

As stated this application would indicate that the whole business model for the premises is looking to change, however, looking through the application there is no indication of exactly what the future plans for the premises are. Myself and Nicola Helm from Blackpool Council Environmental Protection Team visited Mr Aly Farag during the consultation period. Here he disclosed that he was left with no choice but to sell alcohol to try to keep the business going as he is tied into the lease. At that time however, there appeared to be no long-term plan as to what type of premises this was going to become.

A further concern for Police is with regards to the number of children who frequent this area into the early hours. The junction of Queen Street and Dickson Road is a key area where these youths, ranging from 12 to 17 years, regularly meet and perform card tricks to customers. One premise they are known to frequent is a small shop next door to La Casa, which is run by Mr Aly Farag, called Smokingos. By allowing La Casa to become a vertical drinking establishment this will expose these youths to an increased alcohol fuelled high risk environment.

From vast experience of working in this area over the past two years and knowing the history of recent years in terms of the work that has gone into the area around Dickson Road and Queen Street, Police firmly believe that removing a food condition and increasing the varieties of entertainment available to 3am, in effect creating a further

late night drinking establishment, would be detrimental to the work done to try to improve the area and would undermine the licensing objectives of prevention of crime and disorder, protect children from harm and protection of public safety.

To summarise,

Police object outright to the removal of condition 3 of Annex 2: 'Alcohol shall not be sold or supplied on the premises otherwise than to persons taking table meals there and for consumption by such a person as ancillary to his meal.'

Should this condition remain then police DO NOT object to increasing the daytime alcohol hours of 11:00 – 17:30.

Should the condition be removed then Police object to extending the hours of the other licensable activities, such as live music, indoor sporting events, plays and dance as these add to the alteration to the type of venue that this premises could become.

It is recommended that the licence should only be granted if the application is amended, or if conditions are applied, as detailed below.

Should the committee agree to removing condition 3 of Annex 2, Police would like to see the following conditions attached to the licence:

- When the premises are open for licensable activities on Friday, Saturday, Sundays preceding Bank Holiday Mondays, Boxing Day and New Year's Eve, there will be two SIA-registered door supervisors on duty from 10pm. On all other opening times an adequate number of licensed door supervisors will be on duty as appropriate to any risk assessment.
- All alcoholic drinks will be served in polycarbonate or other appropriate non-glass vessels after 10pm on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays preceding Bank Holiday Mondays, Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.