

West Midlands Police

Objections to an application for a new premises licence at the Old Bank Buildings, Coventry Street Stourbridge DY8 2HR

In reply to the application for a new premises licence at The Old Bank Buildings Coventry Street Stourbridge, West Midlands Police is of the opinion that should this licence be granted the following licensing objectives will be undermined.

**The prevention of crime and disorder
Public safety
The prevention of public nuisance.**

The proposal is for a lounge bar and restaurant with hours for licensable activities till 2am Monday to Saturday and till midnight on Sundays. West Midlands Police intend to make representations based on the above licensing objectives that the intended variation will undermine the Special Policy regarding Cumulative Impact in Stourbridge Town centre.

The last use of this building was as a bank which has stood empty for a number of years, and as such it has never had any impact on crime and disorder in Stourbridge. While West Midlands Police are not against the premises opening as a licensed restaurant it is the extent of the requested licensing hours and how the operation of the business as described in the application that gives cause for concern.

The application proposes that the premises will be a bar and restaurant serving alcohol until 0130hrs and playing music until 0200hrs apart from Sundays, yet there is no request within the application for late night refreshment, and it is my understanding that the intention will be to serve food until 2100hrs. If this is the case the function of the premises after that time would be as a late night bar only.

Violent crime in Stourbridge used to account for 18.2% of all violence on the Dudley South policing area. Since the introduction of cumulative impact, Stourbridge has maintained a year on year reduction since , reaching a low of 12.8% last year and is on course to

match if not exceed that at the end of 2009. Statistics show that with any significant change to the night time economy, such as a new premises opening or an old one closing has an effect with violent crime rising and falling accordingly. The opening of the Old Bank Buildings as a licensed venue is predicted to have an effect on the increase in violent crime, and it will only be by reducing the proposed opening hours for this venue that the predicted increase in violent crime can be minimised.

The later disorder, noise and traffic in the area must be considered. Stourbridge Town centre is also a residential area with residents living side by side with many of the bars and late night refreshment houses. It is essential that the quality of life for these residents be maintained.

If this venue's main function was as a restaurant there is no reason why licensable activities should not cease at midnight as is the case with other restaurants in Stourbridge Town centre. To add another late night bar within such a short distance of the late night venues already operating will only have a detrimental effect the licensing objectives we all wish to uphold.

Mick Boyd
Licensing Officer
Dudley South OCU.