

South Derbyshire District Council
 Licensing Section
 Civic Way
 Swadlincote
 Derbyshire
 DE11 0AH

9 March 2022

Dear Sirs

Objection to License Application made on behalf of Melbourne Hall Events by Mr R Lowe

I write to register my objection to the license application submitted by Mr R Lowe on behalf of Melbourne Hall Events for part of the Melbourne Hall estate to be used for the presentation of plays, comedy nights, films, live and recorded music, along with the sale of alcohol. The application is proposed for events to be held between April and October, for a maximum of 7 days per month but with certain events lasting up to 4 days. The Events are to be held from 10.00 to 23.00 on event days with an allowance of 1 hour before and ½ hour after for public entry and exit. The Application also requests the sale of Alcohol and live and recorded music performance between 09.00 and 22.30. This is in addition to the regular food evenings, which are held every Wednesday. All of this activity is excessive in the heart of Melbourne

Mr Lowe has a background in events management at Donnington Park and clearly wishes to use this expertise at Melbourne Hall, a completely different situation altogether. Mr Lowe has failed to take into account the unique nature of Melbourne and the residential status that it enjoys, and is attempting to exploit a business opportunity, rather than to consider any implications the application will have on the existing residents and infrastructure of the town. Plans are required to cater for these circumstances, otherwise the application is flawed and with the potential to damage the environment and the distinctive atmosphere of the Village.

The event site falls within the Melbourne conservation area and the area supported by the Historic England heritage list, as part of the Estate, Park and Gardens. Given the special nature of the site and the number of visitors already present it would seem inappropriate to overburden this unique space with up to 1000 additional visitors for 42 additional days of the year. It should be noted that facilities already exist for such events at near by Donnington Park and Caulk Abbey. This license proposal would seriously compromise public safety, is likely to create noise nuisance and increase the crime and disorder within Melbourne village.

Melbourne has difficulty accommodating its current visitor numbers and is every day struggling with the amount of traffic and lack of parking. Derbyshire County Council have looked at various schemes to alleviate congestion, provide parking, routes for public transport and to accommodate the normal operation of the industrial estates. This work is on-going but does not accommodate increases as proposed around Melbourne Hall.

There is no mention of parking provision in the application. This will lead to large areas of the Village being used as a car park and the resultant log jam of traffic. Melbourne Festival Art and Architecture Trail weekend brings 2000 people to Melbourne and this once a year event is well supported in the village. This amount of visitors requires parking provision at the school, Tori and Ben's Farm Shop and land on Blackwell Lane. Only the latter is available to Melbourne Hall and it is not currently in use. It is understood that proposals to create a car park in this location are in hand but this would be subject to planning consent.

Any event held over several days rarely contains audiences at a venue for the duration, so any such event will have an impact on Melbourne, with all of its facilities being put under strain due to 1000 extra visitors in the village for 4 days at a time. Events would have a detrimental impact on the area and will exclude those who call at Melbourne for its relative tranquillity to be replaced with those who are present, not for Melbourne, but to pursue other interests with no regard to their environment. Mr Lowe will be unable to influence matters outside of the designated site.

Melbourne is a tranquil village with a population of 6500 and with a unique identity, previous winner of a desirable place to live award but it does have to address noise from East Midlands Airport and Donnington Park. The latter location, depending upon wind direction, shares the noise of its events with Melbourne and other villages for both the racing arena and festivals such as Download. Mr Lowe has given a noise qualification within the licence application however without independent measurement and impact assessments how can the residents of Melbourne be confident that they will not be disturbed until after 23.30 hours. There can be no doubt that to approve Melbourne Hall and Gardens as an events venue will have a detrimental impact on noise levels within the immediate location, which is residential in nature. The license application may suggest that noise levels can be contained within the venue but, again, is unlikely to control the resulting nuisance outside of that arena.

Will the panel provide assurances that if any license application is approved that no additional entrances, signage, temporary or other event detritus will be visible on what is now the only unspoiled access to the village. This to accord with the Conservation Statement as amended.

The licensing committee must consider how many additional enforcement officers are to be provided in the location and whether this is a likely possibility given current constraints? How many local families will be impacted by these new proposals? What nuisance can be accommodated by local people with a

greater influx of visitors? What additional consents will be requested to accommodate any new venue and whether members feel that this is really necessary given the unique nature of Melbourne.

The license application supports no clear plan and Mr Lowe has chosen a scattergun approach in completing the current documentation in the hope that members will approve a measure of license. I refer to the application that suggests that alcohol can be served starting from 9am in the morning and the absence of any entertainments agenda that supports the 42 days of the license application. The license should be rejected until such time as clear and unambiguous documentation can be presented. Members should be aware that this applicant does not comply with current license conditions imposed in relation to a previous application and the panel must exercise caution prior to granting any additional license approval.

I should be obliged if my arguments will be taken into consideration during your deliberations and I would hope that any decision made will not be to the detriment of Melbourne and that it can remain one of the jewels within the South Derbyshire district.

Yours faithfully

