

17 Amble Avenue
Whitley Bay
NE25 8PS
30/1/2021

I am writing this letter in support of How Do You Do situated on Hudson Street in North Shields having read on North Tyneside Council's website the Police intention to withdraw their licence to serve alcohol.

This business has been operating at its current site for as long as I can remember, I have had dealings with it both as a customer and as a police officer who spent most of his career in North Shields.

I have had no negative dealings with the business in my professional career and certainly none as a customer.

For many years it was the only operating business in that area, everything around it was closed or derelict including the new housing on Hudson Street and Dockwray Square.

The land to the rear of the pub housed a derelict battery factory and the Irving building which now comprises of luxury flats was a derelict hang out for drug users.

The business has passed through several hands and I have had dealings with many of them both personally and professionally and always found the owners responsible individuals who wanted to create a good business.

I have frequented the restaurant on numerous occasions over the past five years, four to five times a month for food and or drinks.

I have taken in friends from out of the area as well as my parents and in-laws. Under the current owners the restaurant is a friendly well-kept establishment, and it is clear investment has been put into the business.

I would say the premises are more of a restaurant than a public house catering for people of my age and I rarely see young people in here.

Up until September of 2020 prior to starting University. my daughter worked at the premises as a part-time waitress. I attended regularly to collect her from work both on weekdays and weekends at around 11 or 12 o'clock.

I would often arrive early and wait outside and at no time did I ever see any antisocial behaviour, I did not witness excess noise and did not see any groups of young people coming or going from the premises.

My daughter felt comfortable at work and never made any reference to feeling unsafe nor did she ever witness fights or disorder at the establishment.

Having read through the incidents of support on the council website I note that many of them are unsubstantiated. There are reports of disorder from local residents and on mainly all but one there is no evidence from police that anything untoward was happening on arrival, indeed on many of the occasions the police have not even attended the premises.

As a resident of the area myself it seems pretty obvious from the nature of these complaints that local residents want the licence revoked as the premises are now in the centre of an expensive redeveloped private housing area.

This business has been at this location for as long as I can remember and if people are buying houses next to it surely, they should take that into consideration prior to purchase and not make efforts afterwards to close a business because they don't like living next to it.

Is the approach to revoke this licence proportional to the alleged disorder listed on the council website. It seems pretty clear to me reading it that the answer is no as the majority of the incidents required no police action.

I actually submitted a freedom of information request to Northumbria Police asking how many incidents they had responded to between September 2019 and December 2020 at the premises.

I was somewhat shocked at the response, there had been 24 calls to the premises, but the police only needed to take any action on 4 occasions.

That action was listed as arrest, summons or warnings but still the number was 4 in 12 months, is this indicative of a business where Police say:

"Northumbria Police are extremely concerned about the escalating incidents at the premises and the apparent lack of control both the owners and specifically the DPS have in relation to the premises," states the force's application"

So, on 20 occasions nothing was found on police arrival or they did not attend which clearly indicates bogus or exaggerated calls in an attempt to falsify figures and create an illusion that Police are at the premises regularly.

In the current situation we find ourselves in worldwide with businesses closed and making no income due to Covid regulations why are the police and the council trying to close another one, putting people's livelihoods at risk and possibly creating another empty derelict building.

I fully support the business and register my objection to the proposal to revoke the licence of the business.

Once restrictions from Covid relax I would like to have a nice restaurant to go to and socialise with friends not see another boarded-up pub that is now becoming such a common sight across our region.

Gary Swinburn.