

Dear Sir/Madam

In response to the comments that have been received by Charnwood Borough Council in relation to the application for a licence for Beacon Hill Café, we would like to reassure the members of the public that have commented, and Members of the Licencing Committee, that we have no intentions to turn the café into an all-day drinking establishment with loud music and lighting it would not be appropriate for the location and not something that we would look to develop in a family-friendly country park.

Why are we applying for a licence?

We've been fortunate to be able to open for dine-in during the pandemic following the national easements in May but as we approach our next stage of recovery, we wanted to be able to develop our offer and give people the confidence and desire to return to hospitality. We've already been awarded the 'Good to Go' mark recognising that we are covid secure and the granting of an alcohol licence will allow us to enhance our menu and social offer while supporting local businesses, including Charnwood Brewery and Burleighs Gin. If successful with the licence, we're looking to plan carefully considered one-off events such as prosecco afternoon teas and expand the range of sophisticated drinks we offer. We have a strong vision that this will include working with local breweries and wine merchants to encourage our community to support local. The space could be used for private hire and would cater for a wide range of audiences. Customers we will be looking to welcome include local charities, community groups, corporate events, sophisticated celebratory occasions like baby showers and anniversaries and local artists and filmmakers.

Why have we applied for a licence from 8am – 8pm?

To process the application, I was required to standardize the application times and align the licensable activities with trading hours.

The café trading hours change through the year in line with the season and footfall, it is not my intention to promote the serving of alcohol 8am to 8pm, 7 days a week or utilise any of the other licensable activities within the application for the full duration of the times in the licence. We'd like to use the music and performances licence at set times throughout the year and be able to widen our drinks offer in order to allow people the option to have an alcoholic beverage that accompanies a lunchtime meal, special breakfast or evening sharing plate.

The licence covers the sale of alcohol from 8am – 8pm and it must be consumed on site – this means only in the café building or on the decking. We currently have no plans to open from 8am – 8pm – we intend to continue adapting hours based on footfall and seasonal changes. However, if our application is successful it will mean we would have the opportunity to serve alcohol at a private breakfast event for example or a ticketed local artists early evening viewing.

By having events, won't that contradict the green agenda and the need to protect green spaces?

We've carefully considered our clientele and visitors to the country park when opening these discussions and we're confident that when we do plan events, they will be in-keeping with natural space and carefully consider the environment. We all have a responsibility to help protect our green spaces and we plan to continue to do just that.

Will this impact on parking and the multi-use path?

This is something new for us, but from experience of managing events at county parks, we know pre-booking would be the preferred option – even more so with covid-19 still prevalent. Our table capacity is limited which will limit our numbers inside the café and on the decking, so we don't envisage a huge impact on parking. Should we plan any larger scale events in the future that may affect parking or the multi-use path, we will work with the necessary counterparts to seek appropriate permissions and plans and ensure they are widely communicated.

I'm concerned about my horse when riding by the café if you have events going on, how are you going to remedy that?

Currently we're just looking at one off-events that are small-scale and we'll be looking to communicate them well in advance of them happening so that visitors and users are aware. Our plans at the moment focus on smaller intimate events. If we do look to do anything larger, we'll work with the necessary partners and organisations to settle any concerns users, including equestrians, might have.

With events, there may well be an increase in volume of visitors, how are planning to combat waste issue?

As any small-scale events we host will have controlled numbers and will need to be pre-booked, we don't anticipate an increase in waste. As a café, we're very environmentally conscious encouraging people to recycle in the areas we provide. We also work alongside the rangers and the litter-picking volunteers to encourage visitors to dispose of rubbish responsibly in the bins provided or take litter home with them.