

Date 27/02/2025

Licensing Authority
River Park House
225 High Road
London
N22 8HQ

Application for premises license - Black Lion Food Express, 42 Topsfield Parade, Tottenham Lane, Hornsey, London N8 8PT (Ward – Crouch End)

Dear Licensing Team,

I wish to make representations in my capacity as ward councillor for Crouch End ward where the premises are located, as I feel that if the application were to be granted as submitted it would undermine the following licensing objectives:

1. Prevention of Crime and Disorder
2. Prevention of Public Nuisance
3. Public Safety
4. Protection of Children From Harm

The licensing team and committee will be familiar with this location, having carried out a licensing review in May 2023 for the premises at this location, trading under the name Maxxi Food & Wine. The licensing review was brought about by the Trading Standards team following a year of complaints from local residents and councillors regarding illicit activities taking place from the premises, anti-social behaviour as a result of the premises opening hours and sales, and general disturbances to the surrounding area. The activities left residents fearful in their own homes.

The committee resolved to revoke the license due to the failure to promote the licensing objectives of the Prevention of Crime and Disorder, the Prevention of Public Nuisance and the Protection of Children from Harm.

The Trading Standards followed this revocation up, after identifying the continuance of illicit activities at the premises despite the license revocation with a successful prosecution in early 2025 against the owners.

Due to the history of the premises, it is now associated with illicit sales of goods and anti-social behaviour, which the Local Authority, Councillors and local community have been trying to finally rid itself of. The hours presented as part of this application would undo all this work to remove the associated negative behaviour by encouraging customers to visit the shop well into the early hours of the morning (2am or 3am depending on the days) for alcohol and other purchases.

Prior to the previous owners taking over the shop where the problems began, the owners before that, who operated the shop in the exact same way/model, opened the shop no later than 11pm on any day,

and there was never any experience of crime, disorder, nuisance or anti-social behaviour. This commenced with the previous owners extending the opening hours into the early hours of the morning. We know that customers visiting beyond 10pm were not from the local area and would arrive in their vehicles for purchases from further afield due to being aware of the illicit goods that could be purchased here, and that this was one of few places open until the early hours for purchasing.

There is no demand in the Crouch End area for purchases of alcohol into the early hours, and no other premises locally have licenses, and extend their opening hours until the early hours of the morning for sales.

The premises is situated on Topsfield Parade and imbedded within a parade of shops with residential premises above. These residential premises have been plagued by late night nuisance under the previous owners with similar late-night hours until that shop was closed following the licensing revocation and subsequent prosecution. These hours it is feared would be a direct return to those days.

Therefore, the application is completely disproportionate and excessive for the local area due to the associations already in the area with the premises, and the proximity to residential properties.

It is felt that if the premises were to successfully be granted the requested hours, then there would be significant possibility that we would see a return to the ASB issues that we experienced from this location for the past two years.

Whilst it is not clear if the new applicants are associated with the previous owners or not, the reputation of the premises within the wider area must be taken in to account, and a license granted until the early hours of the morning would indicate that the shop has not changed, and therefore would attract the same types of customers as it did under the previous owners.

The application also applies for the license to commence from 8am, which is very early to commence the sale of alcohol.

The premises is located within walking distance of a number of primary schools, and secondary schools, and parents taking their children to school would have to pass the location and potential witness individuals outside or purchasing alcohol at this time, with the premises having only potentially been closed for a few hours since the end of their early hours license. This heightens the risk of crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour as well as a failure to protect children from harm.

It is imperative that license holders ensure a safe and lawful environment, and given the history at this location, and it is my strong belief that it is not possible for the applicant to be able to do this under the proposed hours.

I would therefore like to propose that all licensable hours are amended as follows:

- **Monday to Sunday, 12.00 to 22.00**

Given the proximity to residential properties, and for the Prevention of Public Nuisance I would also request a condition that:

- Deliveries/loading/unloading will not be made to the premises between the hours of 20:00 and 08:00 hours
- Delivery drivers shall be given clear, written instructions to use their vehicles in a responsible manner so as not to cause a nuisance to any residents or generally outside the license premises; not to leave engines running when the vehicles are parked; and not to obstruct the highway.
- Couriers collecting orders to act in a responsible manner so as not to cause a nuisance to any residents or generally outside the license premises; not to leave engines running when the vehicles are parked; and not to obstruct the highway

For the Protection of Children from Harm, that the following conditions are included:

- All staff shall receive induction and refresher training (at least every three months) relating to the sale of alcohol and the times and conditions of the premises licence

- All training relating to the sale of alcohol and the times and conditions of the premises licence shall be documented and records kept at the premises. These records shall be made available to the Police and/or Local Authority upon request and shall be kept for at least one year
- No deliveries should be made to the pavement or left on the pavement or accessible to the public at the front or rear of the premises at any time

In Summary

I object to the application on the grounds stated, and fear that without amending the hours to those proposed, we risk a return to the problems that have blighted local residents and the local area for the past year years, particularly in respect to public nuisance, crime and disorder and anti-social behaviour associated with late night opening hours in a residential location with no other premises exhibiting such hours.

I shall leave you with a quote from a local resident submitted to me:

Hi Councillor Cawley-Harrison,

I hope you're keeping well.

I'm writing today as I'm distressed to see a notice outside Black Lion Food Express, N8 (formerly Maxxi Food & Wine) of their Alcohol License application and that this request is for an extended 01:00 and 03:00 license.

Can we, the local residents, fight against this license approval request?

I despair already about the inevitable anti-social behaviour and further sleeplessness ahead.

Thank you for any advice on this.

Regards,

Cllr Luke Cawley-Harrison
Ward Councillor for Crouch End