

I am writing in my capacity as chair of Digby Community Association which represents around 1500 households in close proximity to the Sandy Park Stadium. Our committee discussed the application at our meeting last night and have asked me to make the following representation regarding the application.

The committee is aware of concerns raised by local residents which centre around the following four areas:

Size - As the stadium currently has a capacity of around 15,000 the licencing committee should consider the application on the basis that this capacity will be fully utilised unless a lower capacity for the proposed events is agreed.

Noise - the application is for events to take place until 11pm. Outdoor events are likely to take place in the summer when neighbouring properties are likely to have windows open. There will also be noise associated with people leaving the venue for some time after events conclude. We feel that an earlier finishing time of 10pm at the latest would reduce the impact on residents. The earlier finishing time would also help to mitigate the other concerns below.

Travel plans - for large events the venue will not be able to provide adequate on site parking. What proposals have the applicants made to get people to and from the venue for events. Will these be similar to on normal Rugby match days? There is only one train after the proposed finishing time of 11pm on the Exeter to Exmouth line and little if no other public transport at this time of night.

Parking - There is a concern that if uncontrolled, those attending events will use the neighbouring residential areas for parking causing inconvenience for residents and late night footfall as people leave the venue. The current matchday residents parking scheme helps to minimise the inconvenience to residents, but similarly extending this for ad-hoc events could be confusing for local residents.

Nuisance - Local residents, in particular in Bishops Court, are already experiencing anti-social behaviour such as public urinating, shouting and swearing and walking from a minority of supporters on matchdays. We feel that it is imperative that there should be a designated route and stewarding before and after events through Bishops Court as a minimum to mitigate the impact on residents.

Kind regards

Graham Brooks
Chair, Digby Community Association