

“The Castle” Proposed Extension

I have been asked to provide a report in my position as a Safer Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant for Cambridgeshire Police. Along with a small team of officers I have responsibility for responding to all types of incidents across Cambridge and the City Centre.

When I am working nights it is my responsibility to ensure the safety of all in and around the City Centre of Cambridge preventing anti-social behaviour (ASB) and alcohol related offences.

Within the City Centre boundary we have a number of hot spot areas for disorder associated to the pubs and clubs often occurring when patrons are migrating from one venue to another and particularly around the times these venues close on Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sundays. St. Andrews Street, Downing Street and Sidney Street are often very problematic areas as a result. This is a continuing theme with consistent regularity throughout the year.

Another hot spot area we currently have is, in and around the Market Place and Rose Crescent area due to the high volume of venues, late night eating facilities and taxi ranks, this again also draws our officers away from general policing duties.

We also see an increase for service calls to these hot spot areas in the summer nights when it is warmer and patrons hang around with their friends in large groups looking to cause trouble if allowed.

The majority of these calls for service are via the CAMBAC radio which is connected to CCTV and door staff giving venues immediate access to police officers meaning not all incidents are recorded on police systems.

Although distances on a map would appear small between venues it can be at times unnerving when trying to restrain a violent offender whilst waiting for back up to arrive due to already stretched resourcing levels. I have again only this weekend had 2 officers injured on duty whilst restraining 2 males fighting on St. Andrews Street. These officers then needed to attend Addenbrookes hospital to ensure they were still fit to continue their duty, spending a couple of hours waiting in A & E. The knock on effect of this was that I then needed to withdraw other officers from other duties to ensure I had enough officers in the City centre to prevent any further disorder.

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If we have another venue looking to close near to the same time as our main night clubs in the City Centre throughout the week we will need to increase the police presence needed in these hot spot area's on those nights to prevent those who wish to cause trouble from causing trouble and risk more officers being injured.

My biggest fear currently is that by allowing another Public House to extend its opening hours to include week day nights it would seriously affect our ability to attend incidents inside and outside of the City Centre and protect our most vulnerable victims from harm. Particularly if other venues follow suit and also extend their hours. Our response to those incidents may well have to be covered by other districts with long travelling times which may also put the public at risk.

For those reasons I believe another Public House extending its opening hours would adversely impact on this area and would also have a knock on effect on resourcing levels within Cambridge City and our ability to attend all types of calls for service.

Signed:

PS. 1786 Paul Atkinson

Dated: 4/5/2015