

## **REPRESENTATION BY WICKERSLEY PARISH COUNCIL TO LICENSING APPLICATION FOR FIKA COFFEE LOUNGE, 212, BAWTRY ROAD, WICKERSLEY**

A licensing application has been sought for proposed premises to be known as Fika Coffee Lounge within the Tanyard shopping centre of Wickersley. These premises are currently vacant with planning consent granted in 2020 for change of use to a restaurant/cafe.

The application seeks a license to supply alcohol on the premises from 11:00 to 23:00, 7 days a week as well as play live and recorded music from 8:00 to 23:00.

Rotherham MBC has adopted a Cumulative Impact Policy for the whole of Wickersley in recognition that the area is suffering from a high concentration of restaurants and bars in the village centre which has resulted in a number of adverse effects being experienced by the local population so far as 3 of the licensing objectives are concerned. These relate to excessive drinking and lack of capacity to move people from the area when the premises close; public nuisance through late night noise and disturbance, litter, broken glass etc; crime and disorder through higher crime associated with the late night economy and anti-social behaviour impacting in particular on the higher than average elderly population in Wickersley. There is therefore now a presumption against granting any further license unless the applicant can demonstrate that their proposal will not further add to the impact already being felt from the existing licensed premises in Wickersley.

There are already 11 licensed premises within Wickersley, 7 of which are restaurants (often with bars) and 4 drinking establishments representing 14% of the units within the village centre (79 commercial units in total). Furthermore, a further 3 former retail units are in the process of being converted to a restaurant (Seasons) having been granted a license after the Cumulative Impact Policy was adopted. Planning consent has also been granted recently to change an existing restaurant to a bar (The Garrison). Whilst that property already has a license to sell alcohol, the change of use to a drinking establishment with additional outside seating will significantly intensify the use of what was previously a low key cafe/restaurant.

All of these factors mean that Wickersley Parish Council are very keen to ensure that no additional alcohol licenses should be granted unless the applicant can very clearly demonstrate that there will be no additional adverse impact on the local community and that the conditions imposed on the license can ensure that to be the case.

The license application submitted for Fika Coffee Lounge does not currently provide sufficient information to satisfy the Parish Council that there will not be additional adverse impact from the premises and therefore wish to object to the granting of the license for the following reasons:

- The application states that the premises are to operate as a coffee lounge providing food and refreshments, serving alcohol on the premises as an accompaniment to meals while seated in one of the seated areas. However, there is a business in Rossington called Fika Coffee and Wine Lounge which we assume is also operated by the applicants and where the serving of alcohol is not always ancillary to a food offer but somewhere that customers might go in the evening just for a drink.
- The application states that it is only intended to open in the evenings for private bookings and special events organised by themselves. It says this could include special ticketed

events where live amplified music could be played. In the view of the Parish Council such events could be attended by large groups of people drinking significant amounts of alcohol with the potential to cause noise and disturbance when leaving the premises late in the evening, as well as the potential for anti-social behaviour. It is therefore not considered acceptable for the premises to provide private bookings or special events because this will inevitably add to the existing adverse impacts.

Wickersley Parish Council consider that the applicants should be invited to address these concerns and to fully set out the business model they intend to operate at these premises.

The Parish Council consider that it would only be acceptable to grant a license for these premises if they operate solely as a cafe/restaurant with alcohol served only to those seated and ancillary to a meal. It is considered that if customers visit the premises largely to drink alcohol rather than to eat then this would undoubtedly result in people leaving the premises intoxicated and would therefore exacerbate the issues already being experienced from the large number of licensed premises within Wickersley.