

Dear Mill Hill Preservation Society

I am writing this letter in response to your recent objection to the Premises Licence application for 51st & Titan Festival, to be held at Cophall Playing Fields on Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st August 2022.

Thank you for taking the time to express these concerns, I hope that in the contents of this letter I am able to answer the points which you have raised.

Viking Events have been procured as the production company to deliver this year's events, based upon our vast experience within the events sector, and specifically in delivering festivals of all sizes throughout the UK. We regularly deliver events with 20,000+ capacity, including production for Winter Wonderland in Hyde Park and Heritage Live shows at Kenwood House.

For this year's events our Management Team consists of an ex Superintendent from the Metropolitan Police, 2 NeBOSH qualified Safety Officers, a Crowd Manager, Noise Consultants, Waste Manager, Medical Manager, Welfare Manager and Resident Liaison Manager.

The licence will be subject to an extensive list of conditions to promote the licensing objectives. The list is attached to this letter for your reference. We are also working with a number of working groups comprising the statutory authorities (police, licensing, environmental health etc) to ensure that the event happens without any harm to the licensing objectives.

Because of this, none of the statutory authorities, or indeed anybody else, has objected to this licence application.

We deal with each of the concerns you have expressed below:

A. The prevention of crime and disorder

You have expressed a concern regarding the capacity of the event. The Premises Licence application has been made to Barnet Council for a maximum of 9,999 people per day. This number includes all spectators, staff, crew and artists. The total figure of 9,999 will not be exceeded under any circumstances.

Mentioned in your letter is a concern that in our publicity we state that the 2022 festival will be "bigger and better". To clarify, that statement simply means that there will be improved on-site facilities and production values, making for a better event. This event will not be larger than previous events at Trent Park, where there was a licence in place in 2021 for 17,500 people.

51st Festival has run for 6 out of the past 7 years, with 1 year cancelled due to the Covid pandemic in 2020. We worked very closely with Enfield Council and the Metropolitan Police. We work with fully qualified and recognised security firms such as Saber Security. All security workers at the event will be licensed by the Security Industry Authority. The event will be run in a safe manner so as to minimise crime and disorder.

A new addition to the management team is Richard Woolford, an ex-Superintendent from the Metropolitan Police and Gold Command, who is in charge of security, prevention of crime and disorder and emergency planning and protocols. Richard has attended the Council's Safety Advisory Group meeting and has liaised with the Police in relation to the crime prevention plan for the event. Viking Events have also been given endorsement by the Police Command Team for Public Order (MO6) for previous events that we have produced.

This year we have increased the ratio of security staff to customers to a higher level than we have had in any previous years. We have procured 3 security companies based upon their track record and experience and all three are approved by the Security Industry Authority under their gold standard Approved Contractor Scheme (ACS). We are working with the Metropolitan Police, our security advisor and our security companies to provide a robust and safe solution to the event.

The authorities are satisfied that we will be able to run an event so as to promote the crime prevention objective. We do hope that you are able to take assurance from that.

B. Public Safety - Waste management and litter

We have contracted Greenline Environmental to manage all waste and refuse solutions for the event, including inside and outside the site and in the surrounding streets. We will be meeting with the Council's various teams the week prior to the event to walk the site and take pictures, and will do the same post-event to ensure that it is returned as it should be. The site and surrounds will be cleared of litter after the event on both days.

We will be more than pleased to share with you our litter picking map before the event so that you are able to check that we are doing all we have undertaken to do.

C The Prevention of Public Nuisance - Travel and Parking

You have expressed concern that the traffic management plan is being developed 4 months before the event. There is nothing unusual in this. With regards to outdoor music events, it is common practice for the traffic management plan to continue to be developed, in collaboration with the statutory and transport authorities, until approximately 1 month before the event.

We have a sufficient amount of parking on the site for people travelling to the event by car, and are also working closely with the Power League who are happy for us to use their car park as a drop off point for attendees arriving by taxi, or being dropped off.

In consultation with the Highway Authority and residents, we will restrict access to local residential streets, so that parking is protected. We will have 800 parking spaces for the general public on Greenlands Lane, and an additional 100 parking spaces for artists and staff on the playing fields off Champions Way.

We will be providing shuttle buses to Mill Hill Broadway and Mill Hill East transporting attendees to and from the festival to the tube stations. We are also liaising with TFL with regard to the transport options. The outcome of these deliberations will be set out in the Traffic Management Plan.

We are fully confident that the finalised traffic management plan will avoid significant difficulties for the local highway network. We are also working closely with local stakeholders including Barnet Copthall Leisure Centre, Metro Golf, Mill Hill Rugby Club and Hendon Rugby Club to ensure these are open and are operating as usual with minimal disruption.

Exclusion of regular users

I would like to assure you that we will do our utmost to ensure that park users are not inconvenienced or deterred by the presence of the festival. I will ensure that the security teams are fully aware of the non-festival attendees who will be using the green spaces and will ensure the area isn't obstructed in any way. As mentioned above, we are aware that Copthall is a live site with multiple stakeholders, and business will be open as usual.

Damage

Having previously worked on many environmentally sensitive event sites (SSI Designations, Hyde Park, Council Sites, etc) and being on site for outdoor events at Kenwood House within the next two weeks I am very aware and conscious of the importance in keeping the grounds protected and returning a site back to its original state. I'm in regular contact with Barnet Council's Greenspaces Team regarding the protection of the cricket tables on the playing fields, and will be putting a robust plan in place to achieve this. We have doubled the amount of trackway that will be deployed on site, this is the heavy duty aluminium roads, this will allow us to keep all heavy vehicles off the grass.

Litter

Please see comments above in the Waste Management section.

Toilets

We are using more toilets than is suggested within the Government's written Purple Guide which is the backbone for how health, safety and welfare at music events is prioritised. In addition to the toilets within the grounds, we will also have toilets placed outside the event on the main access routes into the site, near to entrance, in the public car park and taxi / shuttle drop off / pick up point, and also by the leisure centre to help combat public urination issues.

The number of facilities within the event are as follows:

- 85 x plastic event toilets
- 6 x disabled easy access toilets
- 20 x 4 male urinals
- 6 x 3 +1 toilet trailer(4 toilets and 3 urinals per unit)
- 10 x toilet attendants (8 hours per day)
- Plus extra servicing i.e. overnight clean etc

This below relates to point 23 of the conditions: "23. Sufficient sanitary facilities will be made available within the premises to prevent public urination (as per the Event Management Plan)".

The number of facilities placed on the exterior are:

- 2 x car park
- 2 x on Greenlands Lane
- 2 x Leisure Centre car park (as it will be a walk-through)
- 2 x toilets placed at the Power League car park which is drop-off and pick point for public

Noise

The noise levels on site will be set in consultation with the Environmental Health Authority to ensure that nuisance does not occur off-site. We have contracted a professional and experienced noise management company that is working alongside our management company to create as little off-site noise leakage as possible. We will be working within the following conditions on the licence:

"22. Noise limits will be agreed with the local authority noise management agents and adhered to vigorously. All residents within the area will be advised, by way of a letter drop, of any use of the premises, no less than one month before any event. A contact number will be provided in this letter drop for residents to be able to contact the noise management staff to ensure any complaints can be dealt with in a timely fashion.

24. Noise limits will be set in advance. These limits will be implemented throughout the course of the build, de-rig and live dates.

25. The organisers will monitor on-site DB noise levels and ensure that set noise limits will be adhered to, with regular readings to be taken and recorded.

26. A dedicated festival 'hotline' will be in place for local residents to contact the festival organisers, enabling them to respond to noise disturbance concerns and react accordingly".

We will also have pre-agreed monitoring points all over the local area which will be checked throughout the weekend.

We have contacted local residents by letter giving information on the event, and also a direct contact to our Resident Liaison Manager to discuss any queries or concerns that they may have. We have had a number of local residents contact us with positive feedback on the event, along with requests for tickets which we are currently processing.

D. The Protection of Children from Harm

You state that the event would discriminate against children without gardens and whose families cannot afford to take them away on holiday. We would respectfully comment that every music event held in a park takes up a footprint within the park and attracts an audience for an outdoor cultural experience. This event will take up part of the open space for a short period, but will leave the remainder of the open space available for recreation.

We estimate that on the event day, 60% of the playing fields will be used by the festival leaving 40% for public use, and 50% of the Playing Fields will be occupied by us for build and break, leaving 50% for public use. We do not believe that this event would interfere disproportionately with rights of children to access open space for recreation.

You also refer to sports clubs on the site, and comment that it is difficult to supervise the safety of young people. We would comment that there will be a significant number of personnel, both security, stewards and crowd and traffic management, outside the event site to ensure that the event does not interfere with use of the space outside of the event site. We are confident that the provision we will be making will afford adequate protection.

There is an economic benefit to local businesses that comes with having an extra 20,000 visitors to the borough, and we will therefore be liaising with local shops and businesses in advance to ensure that they are prepared.

Our priority is to build a good relationship with the Council, Police, local residents and stakeholders.

We would be very grateful to meet you to see whether there is more we can do to meet your concerns. It would be excellent to work together with your group to establish a good working relationship for this year's event. While your objection remains, then we will all need to prepare for a public hearing. A better alternative may be for us to establish some regular liaison to ensure that we continue to have a productive dialogue around the event. Please do let us know if this is something you are willing to explore.

In any case, if your group, or representatives would like to discuss the contents of this letter in more detail or have any further questions please do let me know.

Kind Regards



Harry Agombar
Viking Events