

## Appendix 1 – 1 (b)

### **Victim Statement Regarding Anti-Social Behaviour at The Portobello Inn, Bransford Road, Worcester. 17.01.22**

I am writing this at the request of PC Jennifer Evans to be included in the review of the improvement plan following numerous complaints over several months.

I will not include specific dates of each incident as these have been recorded on the West Mercia Police crime reporting system on its website, via calls to 999 and 101 and in numerous emails to PC Evans and Councillor Amos.

I have lived in my current home near the Portobello Inn in [REDACTED] Road since 2001 and until June 2021 had no cause to make any complaint against the pub or the behaviour of its clientele. It was a quiet local pub in a residential area that respected its neighbours and its location. They had a function room, but music was kept to a level in keeping with the residential area and could not be heard outside. You would occasionally hear people leaving the pub at closing time, but this would merely be talking and only for a couple of minutes at the most. This was a pub with normal pub hours not a nightclub opening to 1am. My son had his [REDACTED] birthday party in their function room and one of his friends worked at the pub and told him that troublemakers were quickly barred and not allowed to return.

However, since the pub reopened under new management at the end of the Lockdown in June 2021 it has become a hub of antisocial behaviour and very loud music. All those people that had previously been barred have been allowed to return and it appears that word got round that this was a pub where “anything goes” – certainly not the family pub that Marston’s try to portray. Prior to re-opening the “smoking area” was adapted into an outdoor entertainment area with a TV constantly on that was originally very loud and attracted an element that were constantly shouting, swearing and aggressively chanting when they were in it. At one stage it was used as a disco every Friday night into the early hours. As you will see from the complaints from myself, my wife and several of our neighbours it soon became a source of anti-social behaviour most Friday and Saturday nights. Other neighbours have complained to me about it but do not wish to complain themselves as they don’t want to declare this should they sell their homes. Since June last year we have had to put up with the noise but also intimidating groups, vomit, urination and bottles in the street and on one night a mass brawl where the police had to be called. This is a quiet suburb of Worcester not a city centre.

This constant antisocial behaviour has taken its toll and particularly on my wife who has had to contact her GP and is on the waiting list for Worcestershire Healthy Minds to help her cope with the anxiety every Friday and Saturday night brings. Any noise from the pub sends her into a panic now, and she has found it very difficult to sleep at the weekends even when the noise has stopped as she is anticipating it all the time. The aggressive nature of the groups of men doing this is particularly frightening

for her. Because of this she now has to sleep with earplugs in and we are having to fit Triple Glazing, at great expense, in an attempt to block out the noise from the pub.

Since the improvement plan has been in place (though we are yet to see the plan or contents) there has been some improvement with regard to the music but even this returned to its normal level this weekend. However, the antisocial behaviour from the pubs clients has continued with a particularly bad incident on Christmas Eve with a large group of men shouting, swearing and chanting in a very intimidating fashion in the pub car park until gone 1am. When they left they then congregated outside a neighbours house where they left it strewn with bottles, rubbish and vomit. This is a residential area with numerous small children who shouldn't be witness to such language and behaviour. In this instance I called 999 as I was fearful of how this was escalating but although I was assured the police were on their way, none arrived. This incident left my wife very shaken and ruined Christmas day for her and the following week as she was so fearful of what would happen on New Year's eve.

As a community we have been very patient with the pub and its manager but enough is enough. The manager has shown that she is either unwilling or incapable of controlling her own clients so the time for them to put their own house in order has passed. I would therefore request that its music licence is revoked and also its late opening stopped so that it closes at 11pm each night. That is the only way that there might be a chance of this antisocial behaviour being curtailed and I would suggest that if it then continues the whole licence is revoked. The smoking area should return to its original purpose and the TV be removed – I believe this is in breach of the licence now anyway as they are only licenced for sport inside.

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