

Application for review of Premises Licence 2701 for Bygrave Plantation

Introduction

In 2017, NHC granted a Premises Licence for Bygrave Plantation (Bygrave Woods) which permits the Licence Holder to hold unlimited events on a rural site just over 0.5km from Bygrave village. The events which are being held under this licence are blighting the lives of Bygrave villagers whilst delivering little, if any, benefit to the local community.

We have tried to resolve the issues directly with the Licence Holder but without success. Consequently, Bygrave Parish Council is now seeking a review of the licence.

Impact on residents

Bygrave village is a tranquil settlement in the North Baldock Chalk Uplands, surrounded by agricultural fields. Villagers have chosen this area as their home, as they value the peace and quiet this rural setting affords. The festivals are entirely out of keeping with the nature of the area and are causing the villagers much stress, concern and upheaval.

The impact on villagers includes: being kept awake by festival music until the early hours of the morning (on consecutive nights); being unable to relax or socialise in their own homes and gardens due to the festival noise; fearing for their own safety, the safety of others and the safety of their property; and being unable to go about their business unhindered. The impact is so great that some villagers make the difficult decision to vacate their properties during the festivals. Others do not want to be at home but do so either because they have no alternative but to be there or they consider that it is not safe to leave their property unoccupied at this time. This is wholly unacceptable and has a significant detrimental impact on villagers' wellbeing.

Key issues

Set out below is a summary of the key issues with the events being held under the licence:

1. The noise from the events (music and comperes) is far too loud
2. The festivals go on until far too late into the night / early morning (for the camping festivals the music continues until 4 am at weekends)
3. There are too many events
4. The events are too long - many of the events are multi day which increases the adverse impact on villagers
5. Too little notice is given to villagers of forthcoming events
6. Traffic volumes are too great for the narrow, winding country lane between Ashwell and Baldock which is used for event traffic
7. The events have resulted in anti-social behaviour around the site (including public bridleways) and in the village
8. Insufficient consideration is given by the Licence Holder to the villagers

In the appendices, we provide more detail on each of these issues.

Evolution of events held at the site

The Licence Holder first began holding festivals at the site in 2012 (under a previous licence). These early festivals were once a year, ran from Friday afternoon until Sunday morning, had a capacity of 3,000 and were largely attended by local youngsters. Over the next few years, the length of the festival was extended to start on a Thursday afternoon (rather than Friday) and capacity increased but the target audience was still local people.

In 2017, the Licence Holder applied for, and was granted, a wide-ranging licence to hold one event per year for between 7,500 and 15,000 people and unlimited events for up to 7,500 people. We were unaware of the

application for this licence; had we been aware, we would have objected. Under this new licence, there has been a significant increase in the number and size of events held at the site each year and a change in the types of events being held, generally appealing to people from outside the area.

In 2021, there were two large scale events; the first time that there had been two large events at the site in one year. There were two events the following year (more had been planned but were cancelled at short notice) but no events in 2023.

This year (2024) there have been three large events held at the site:

- [REDACTED]
- Brockwood – a weekend festival of dance music, with multiple stages and music until 4 am each morning. This festival was originally planned to be held near Winchester, Hampshire but the Council refused to issue a licence over concerns that the festival noise would harm the tranquil site. The venue was changed to Bygrave just a few weeks before the event.
- AMA Fest – a one-day festival of amapiano music (a subgenre of kwaito and house music). This festival was originally planned to be held near Hounslow but the Council revoked the licence just days before the event.

Another festival had been planned for 2024 but this was postponed to 2025. [REDACTED]

We are aware (from internet searches) that a large number of festivals and other events are already being arranged for 2025:

- Vegan camp-out – 4 days (29 August – 1 September; attendee numbers in previous years: 12,000 – 13,000; multiple stages; live music and afterparties.
- Paradisium (postponed from 2024) – 3 days (5 – 7 September, ie just 4 days after the Vegan camp-out festival) - festival of harmonies and psychedelic art.
- Menhirs Fate – 12 days - four separate 3-day events (April, May, August and September – just days after the Paradisium festival) each running from 8am on a Friday morning to 5pm on the Sunday. High fantasy festival LARP (live-action role-planning).

We are also aware, from our ward Councillor, Tom Tyson, that three other events are already in planning for 2025 but we have no details at this stage on dates or capacity:

- Balloon Festival
- Monster Trucks Family Day
- AMA Fest 2025

So we are aware of over 20 festival days already planned for 2025.

The increase in event days, the numbers attending and the change in target audience (now largely travelling from outside the area) have significantly increased the adverse impact on residents of Bygrave.

Liaison with the Licence Holder

The Parish Council has been in regular liaison with the Licence Holder (the Farr family) for a number of years to try to resolve the issues caused by the festivals. This was stepped up in 2022, following the problems encountered with the 2021 festivals: Warm-up Festival and Electric Woodlands Festival. This

liaison (which involved exchanges of emails, telephone calls and face-to-face meetings) was between Bygrave Parish Council, our NHC Councillor (Tom Tyson), some of the residents of Bygrave village who have been significantly impacted by the festivals, representatives of the Licence Holder, the Designated Premises Supervisor and the appointed Sound Engineer. Details of the liaison (such as meeting notes) can be provided if that would be helpful.

Although we appreciated the opportunity to explain the problems encountered and the concerns of the villagers, we were (and are) entirely reliant on the Licence Holder to take the necessary action to ensure that the recognised problems are resolved and to anticipate and deal with new problems as and when they arise. Whilst 2022 saw limited improvement in terms of littering, there was no improvement in other problem areas (eg noise). In fact, there was actually a worsening in some areas (eg drugs and anti-social behaviour). Consequently, Bygrave Parish Council agreed after the 2022 events to seek a review of the Premises Licence.

However, we put the request for a review on hold when we learned that there would be no festivals in 2023. We hoped, at this stage, that the Licence Holder had recognised that the location was not suitable for large scale events and was, instead, focusing on using the site to host weddings. Unfortunately, this was not the case, as this year (2024), there have been three large events held on the site [REDACTED]. With significant problems still being encountered with events at the site and a large number of events already being arranged for 2025, we are now urgently seeking a review of the licence. We are anxious to ensure that the villagers of Bygrave Parish do not have to endure next year the unacceptable impacts on their lives (caused by the festivals and other large scale events) that they have experienced in the last few years.

NHC Licensing Policy for rural areas

Bygrave is a tranquil village set in a rural landscape and most people living here have chosen to make it their home as they value the peace and quiet that it usually affords. NHC recognises the need to take this into consideration when determining suitable licensing arrangements for rural areas. Section B10 of NHC's Statement of Licensing Policy states "The Council is aware that those living in the rural communities of the district often do so to enjoy the quiet of a rural location. In making a balanced decision, the Council accepts that the level of disturbance that is reasonable in a rural location will be less than in a town centre location. This could be addressed by reduced licensable activity timings, particularly in the evenings and early mornings, and the frequency of activities. Whilst a 1-off event may cause some reasonable disturbance, it would be more tolerable than an event lasting multiple days or occurring numerous times throughout the year."

We consider that the current wide-ranging licence which provides for unlimited events at the site and for music noise to continue until very late into the night / the next morning (6 am at weekends!) is at odds with Council policy.

Grounds for review

We consider that there are grounds for review of the Premises Licence under each of the licensing objectives, namely:

1. The prevention of crime and disorder
2. Public safety
3. The prevention of public nuisance
4. The protection of children from harm

In Appendix 2, we set out for each of the key issues which of the licensing objectives these represent a breach of.

We have included in the appendices some first-hand accounts of experiences of Bygrave villagers. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

We have included in the appendices reference to events in 2021 and 2022. One might consider that historical events should be disregarded but we believe that they are of direct relevance to a review of the licence. The impact of any one event depends on a number of factors including: hours of operation; location of the stages; number of attendees; traffic route; target audience (eg some genres of music are more closely associated with drug use); and wind direction (clearly not something that can be changed but the impact can be considered when agreeing suitable soundproofing measures). Without a change to the licence and event management requirements, should these events (or similar ones) be held again at the site, it would be expected that the problems would be encountered again. Therefore, we are firmly of the view that problems encountered with historical events are directly relevant to this review.

Next steps

We believe that we have demonstrated the need for an urgent review of the Premises Licence for Bygrave Plantation (Woods) but please let us know if you require any further information or any matter requires clarification. We would be happy to discuss the matter with you if that would be helpful.

I trust that you will keep us informed of progress. In particular, if you do agree to the review, we politely request that as soon as the notice is issued, you send a copy to us or at least make us aware that it has been issued.

Bygrave Parish Council
10 December 2024

Appendices

1. Key Issues
2. Breaches of the Licensing Principles
3. Villager A's account of noise nuisance caused by the 2022 and 2024 festivals Julie Colegrave
4. Villager B's & Villager C's account of noise and other nuisance caused by the 2024 festivals Katy and David Kelly
5. Villager D's account of noise nuisance caused by Brockwood 2024 festival Mark Goddard

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
8. Villager G's complaint to Bygrave Parish Council regarding the Electric Woodlands 2022 festival Grietje Brenner
 9. Email to the Licence Holder and Designated Premises Supervisor on 30 May 2022 regarding security concerns of a Bygrave villager Sent by Julie Colegrave and referred to Jade Simon-Brown
 10. Email from the Chair of Bygrave Parish Council to the Licence Holder setting out issues relating to the Electric Woodlands Festival 2021

Appendix 1: Key Issues

1. The events (music and comperes) are too loud

Music noise - daytime

The music noise emanating from the festivals causes a severe nuisance not just to the Bygrave villagers but also, depending on wind direction, to Ashwell villagers. This has a serious impact on villagers with reports of people being unable to enjoy their gardens, entertain friends and family (indoors and outdoors) and relax in their homes. This is having a serious detrimental impact on villagers' quality of life and wellbeing.

Music noise – night-time

It is normally very quiet in the village in the evenings and during the night. Music from the festivals is heard throughout the village and further afield until the cut-off time which is generally not until 4 am at weekends! The noise levels are such as to prevent the residents (including young children) from being able to sleep.

This is not only unacceptable from a moral and human rights perspective but it is also a breach of the terms of the licence. Under the licence, the Licence Holder is required to comply with the Code of Practice on Environmental Noise Control at Concerts (the "COP") which states that "For events continuing or held between the hours of 23.00 and 09.00 the music noise should not be audible within noise sensitive premises with the windows open in a typical manner for ventilation.". This requirement is clearly being breached.

Compere noise

The comperes can be heard clearly in the village. This is intrusive and unacceptable.

On the evening of 13 July 2024, during the Brockwood Festival, a compere was using offensive language and this could be heard very clearly in homes in Bygrave. The Chair of Bygrave Parish Council complained to the Licence Holder and event organiser and the compere was removed from the stage. This should not have happened in the first place and should not have required a complaint for the matter to be addressed.

Comments

We understand that for each event, a Noise Management Plan is agreed between the Licence Holder and NHC which sets out the maximum permitted noise levels for day-time and night-time operation. We also understand that compliance is tested by taking sound readings at pre-agreed locations. This approach is not accurately assessing the noise levels at homes in Bygrave (borne out by villagers' experiences of noise nuisance). We set out below what we believe are some of the reasons for this:

- The test location closest to Bygrave village is in a dip relative to the festival site. Consequently, the noise levels at nearby homes (both inside and outside the properties) are much higher than at the test site.
- The noise levels outside (and inside) homes are amplified by the sound waves bouncing off the buildings. There are no buildings at the test location. Consequently, noise levels are much higher at villagers' homes than at the test site.
- The sound comes in waves and the noise levels experienced at some homes are much higher than at the test locations. Indeed, noise from the festivals can often be clearly heard much further away than the test locations. [The technical explanation is that sound waves move faster in warm air and slower in cold air. So as sound moves through the atmosphere, some parts of the wave will be moving faster than the rest. For example, if the air at the surface is cooler than air higher in the atmosphere, (which would be expected at nighttime) the top of a sound wave will be moving faster

than the bottom; the wave will tilt and refract back toward the ground. In this case, sound would go up into the atmosphere and then be bent back down to the surface toward the cooler air. This means the sound would be louder and you could hear the noise from farther away.]

Comment / action

Noise nuisance is significant and needs to be urgently addressed. To illustrate this, we set out in the appendices details of some villagers' experiences of noise nuisance from the 2021, 2022 and 2024 festivals (there were no festivals on 2023).

We believe that changes are required to the procedures for monitoring of noise levels to ensure that the actual noise levels experienced at nearby homes are within the levels set out in the licence. We also note that for the AMA Fest festival this year, the music stages were located at the edge of the field furthest away from Bygrave village. This (and the Easterly wind that day) helped enormously with reducing the impact of noise on Bygrave villagers. Usually, for festivals, the music stages are located at the edge of the site closest to Bygrave village which we consider to be unacceptable.

As regards night-time noise, we understand that compliance with the requirement under the licence for music noise "... not be audible within noise sensitive premises with the windows open in a typical manner for ventilation ... " is enforced by setting a maximum permitted noise level. This approach does not work, as music noise is not only audible in nearby homes and but is at such a level as to prevent people from sleeping. We believe that the permitted noise levels are too high and the procedures for monitoring of noise levels need to be revised to accurately record noise levels at villagers' homes.

2. The events go on until far too late into the night / early morning

Music and compere noise

As stated above, the noise levels are such that people in nearby houses are unable to sleep. At weekends, the music continues until 4 am! This is not acceptable.

Traffic noise

Many festival goers do not stay onsite for the duration of the festival. As the music continues until 4 am at the weekend, this results in traffic flowing through the village (often speeding) throughout the night. The road is usually very quiet at night, so villagers are not used to the traffic noise which disturbs their sleep with some villagers reporting being kept awake all night.

Comment / action

Taking into consideration the rural location, the proximity to homes and the number of events which are held under this licence, we believe that there should be a strict cut-off point of 10 pm for music noise (11 pm on Saturdays). We believe that this would be consistent with licences issued for other events both within North Hertfordshire and in the UK more generally.

3. There are too many events

There were three large scale events in 2024 with a further event planned but postponed to 2025. This was in addition to the weddings hosted at the site which generally do not cause problems but have done on occasion.

We are aware that there are already over 20 days of events planned for 2025. In addition, there will be weddings plus events which have not yet been publicised/arranged.

Comment / action

We believe that there should be a limit on the number of events permitted each year and this limit should be set in conjunction with the length of the events. [REDACTED]

Bygrave is a tranquil village set in a rural landscape and most people living here have chosen to make it their home as they value the peace and quiet that it usually affords. A limit on the number of events (and event days) in any one year should be imposed and this should be consistent with the requirements of Section B10 of NHC's Statement of Licensing Policy (referred to previously).

4. The events are too long

Most of the events are multi day which significantly increases the impact on the villagers. It also increases the likelihood of anti-social behaviour in and around the village (see below), as festival goers do not stay on site for the whole duration of a multi-day event.

5. Too little notice is given to residents of forthcoming events

We do not receive adequate notice of events.

For one large scale event this year, we received just 10 days' notice and for the other two large scale events we received just one month's notice, despite, we believe, one of them being planned for at least a year. This lack of notice is not just discourteous but also prohibits the villagers reflecting the festivals in their own plans, for example, ensuring that they are at home or they are away (whichever they deem appropriate) and not planning their own events (such as family barbecues) for those dates.

Comment / action

We believe that the year's events should be agreed between the Licensing Authority and the Licence Holder at the beginning of the calendar year and promptly communicated to the villagers. Thereafter, no further events should be arranged and any cancellations of any events should be promptly communicated.

6. Traffic volumes are too great for the narrow, winding country lane through Bygrave

There is a constant flow of festival traffic (including lorries, camper vans, caravans and cars) down what is usually a quiet, largely single track, country lane with a number of blind bends. The road is not suitable for high volumes of traffic, especially large vehicles.

Furthermore, usually the arrangement is for all traffic exiting the festival site to do so by using a bridleway; we consider this to be extremely dangerous.

In the appendices, we set out details of some villagers' experiences with traffic problems.

Comment / action

For the AMA Fest festival, the official traffic route to the festival site was through Newnham and this vastly reduced the impact on Bygrave. We consider that this should apply for any and all future events at the festival site.

7. The festivals have resulted in anti-social behaviour around the site and in the village

The village has suffered numerous incidents of anti-social behaviour over the last few years which are directly related to the festivals.

Public urination

Villagers have witnessed festival goers urinating in Bygrave village.

Illegal Drugs

Evidence of illegal drug use has been found after the festivals. Nitrous oxide canisters and drugs have been found scattered around Bygrave village and the fields, footpaths and verges surrounding the festival site. Hypodermic syringes have been found on the footpaths surrounding the festival site, posing a danger to children, dogs and wildlife.

Villagers have witnessed what they believe to be drugs deals being carried out in Bygrave and Ashwell villages during the festivals.

There are reports online of festival goers' concerns about the prevalence of drugs and lack of appropriate policing and welfare provision at the Electric Woodlands Festival 2022.

Fights

There have been fights in Bygrave village during the festivals. Bygrave village is a very small hamlet and usually extremely peaceful and tranquil. Behaviour such as this is frightening for the villagers, many of whose houses are situated very close to the narrow pavement.

Trespassing

Villagers have reported festival goers being in their gardens. One villager reported this on the evening of Electric Woodlands 2021 to the festival helpline. They had young children at home and were very scared and concerned for their safety. They were assured that somebody would be sent to their property but this did not happen. More detail on this is included in the appendices.

Human defecation

During the Warm-up Festival 2022, there was evidence of human defecation at the side of the public right of way that runs along the Eastern side of the festival site. It was reported to the helpline who arranged for it to be cleared away only for it to happen again the next day and the following day. There was evidence of human defecation following the Brockwood and AMA Fest festivals this year.

This is not only disgusting but is also a health hazard.

Litter

There is a significant amount of littering from the festivals.

Comment / action

These issues could be resolved, or at least reduced, by deployment of security teams in and around the village for the duration of the events.

8. Insufficient consideration given by the Licence Holder to the villagers

The Licence Holder gives insufficient (if any) consideration to the impact of their events on the villagers. This is evident in numerous ways, including the lack of notice of events, the scaled back (from earlier years) and inadequate security arrangements, the ineffectual festival helpline, the scheduling of events (for 2025, events are already planned for three (long) weekends in four in August/September) and their willingness to host events that other authorities have rejected on the grounds of having an unacceptable adverse impact on local communities.

The poor level of consideration of the villagers is also evident in a lack of foresight, planning, responsibility and accountability by the Licence Holder. A prime example was the Electric Woodlands Festival in 2021 which was, from the perspective of Bygrave villagers, absolutely shambolic (details are included in the appendices). The Licence Holder will likely argue that the issues stemmed from the fuel shortages at the time of the festival. Whilst we accept that the fuel shortages undoubtedly caused some of the problems, others were entirely unrelated. We also contend that the potential for the fuel shortages to impact the festival could, and should, have been anticipated and contingency plans put in place. When the village (of less than a hundred residents) was mobbed by thousands of festival goers making their way home, there was no sign of any of the people who were supposed to be responsible for the running of the festival. Villagers felt utterly abandoned and extremely vulnerable.

Appendix 2: Breaches of the licensing objectives

Below, we set out for each of the key issues which of the licensing objectives these represent a breach of.

Issue	Prevention of crime and disorder	Public safety	Prevention of public nuisance	Prevention of protection of children from harm
Noise levels are too high			X	X
Festival noise goes on too late	X		X	X
There are too many events			X	
Festivals are too long	X		X	
Too little notice is given			X	
Traffic volumes, speed, noise	X	X	X	X
Anti-social behaviour	X	X	X	X
Insufficient consideration by Licence Holder	X	X	X	X

Appendix 3: Villager A's account of noise nuisance caused by the 2022 and 2024 festivals

The noise from the festivals has a significant detrimental impact on my life. The noise levels are such that it is impossible to enjoy use of my garden on the festival days whether that be to tend to the garden, read a book or enjoy the company of friends. We are unable to use the bedroom at the front of the house (it is simply too noisy, even with the window closed) and it is difficult to sleep in the rooms at the back of the house.

Music Noise Complaint – 19/20 August 2022

I had cause to complain about the music noise emanating from the Warm-Up Festival in Bygrave Woods on the night of 19/20 August 2022.

I (along with some of my neighbours) have had a number of meetings with the Licence Holder (the Farr family), the Designated Premises Supervisor and the Sound Consultant in the run up to this year's festivals to address the significant issues arising in previous years. I had hoped that this would result in the noise disturbance caused by previous years' festivals not being repeated this year. Unfortunately, this was not the case.

I am aware that the Premises Licence requires that the Licence Holder complies with the Code of Practice on Environmental Noise Control at Concerts (the "Code") which includes the requirement that between the hours of 11 pm and 9 am, music noise emanating from a festival "... **should not be audible within noise sensitive premises with the windows open in a typical manner for ventilation**". This condition was not complied with on the night of 19/20 August 2022. The noise in our house was clearly audible with the windows **closed** and prevented me from sleeping. Please note that I was trying to sleep in a bedroom at the back of our house, facing away from the festival site. The noise was even louder in the bedroom at the front of the house which was, fortunately, unoccupied that night.

At 12.10 pm, I rang the festival helpline to register my complaint. At 12.50 pm, having had no response to my earlier complaint and the music noise being unchanged, I rang the helpline a second time to complain. I was told that the noise consultant had been asked to take noise measurements but had not reported back. I expressed my frustration and pointed out that they were not complying with the Code. I was told that they would call me back when they had spoken with the noise consultant but they did not do so.

I understand that the conditions regarding nighttime noise are imposed by way of setting noise level limits which must be complied with. I also understand that compliance is tested by taking sound readings at pre-agreed locations. The noise levels experienced at my home are significantly higher than at the test location.

The requirement under the licence that music noise emanating from a festival is not "audible within noise sensitive premises with the windows open in a typical manner for ventilation" was not met on the night of 19/20 August. For information, I was not at my home on the previous night, so unable to comment on the noise levels then. On the following night (20/21 August) the wind direction had changed and the festival noise levels at my home were much lower. I understand, however, that people living in other local areas were affected by noise nuisance that night.

Please also note that I was not at home for the previous festival in 2022 (Electric Woodlands) but understand from neighbours that the noise levels were unacceptable.

Music Noise Complaint – 13 July 2024

I had cause to complain about the music noise emanating from the Brockwood Festival in Bygrave Woods on the night of 13 July 2024 (I was away on the previous night so am unable to comment on noise levels). The noise was clearly audible throughout the house with the windows closed. I called the helpline number

shortly after 11 pm and spoke with the sound engineer who explained that he was already taking sound readings across the road from me (I believe that a neighbour had complained). I was assured that action would be taken to reduce the noise impact.

Summary

The music noise levels from the festivals held in Bygrave Woods are far too high and have a significant detrimental impact on my wellbeing.

Appendix 4: Villager B's and villager C's account of noise and other nuisance caused by the 2024 festivals

We live in Bygrave village in one of the houses closest to the festival site and are significantly impacted by events held there.

Noise levels

The music noise levels from the festivals can be unbearable. The multi-day festivals cause the most significant issues for us and the problem is acute at night-time. There is nowhere in our house where the noise levels are low enough to enable our family (including our young children) to sleep. With the music noise continuing until the early hours, this has a serious detrimental impact on our lives.

Over the years, we have made numerous calls to the festival helplines regarding noise levels. Many of the calls have gone unanswered and those that have been answered have failed to sort the problem. I am sure you can imagine how frustrating and stressful this is; especially in the middle of the night.

For AMA FEST 2024, we were pleasantly surprised that we did not get the full brunt of what we heard other villages have had to endure from this festival. The time scale and music noise were reasonable compared to other festivals that have taken place here. However, traffic was still an unbearable problem for friends in Newnham, who had to put up with long noisy queues of traffic sounding their horns as they passed going in and out of the festival. We too experienced some disruption coming in and out of the village. Perhaps the much smaller crowds than anticipated worked in the village's favour this time.

Anti-social and criminal behaviour

An unpleasant outcome of several festivals that have been placed here, is the rubbish and human excrement found in the surrounding fields. AMA FEST 2024 was unfortunately no exception to this, as both were found on our family dog walk the Sunday following the festival.

We have witnessed drugs deals in the village.

Suitability of the site for festivals

These festivals need careful planning and great thought before being granted permission. A small village like ours can cope with a large agricultural festival like Cereals or a one day festival like AMA FEST, but when they run for several days and into the early hours of the morning, inviting drug taking and heavy drinking crowds to this semi remote area, it just calls for trouble and generally delivers it!

I hope that you take our thoughts into consideration when granting permission to the next request.

Appendix 5: Villager D's account of noise nuisance caused by Brockwood 2024 festival

I am a resident of Bygrave and the noise from the Brockwood Festival held in July 2024 was so loud it was as if I was actually in the festival myself.

On the Friday night, I had my bedroom window open as it was a warm muggy evening but the noise from the festival was too loud for me to be able to sleep. I sent an email of complaint at 23.30 on Friday 12th July to the environmental health department using the following words. "It is 23.30. I have double glazing, which is closed. I live in the far side of Upper Bygrave & can still hear the thumping music from the festival on the Farr's land. I really would like to open my window as it's very warm but it would be impossible to sleep with the noise. This is unacceptable."

It was even worse on Saturday evening. As well as music noise, at 9pm an act came on that consistently used the word 'F**k' or a derivative of it for over an hour. This was blasted out across the village of Bygrave and I'm sure Newnham, Ashwell and northern Baldock too. In Bygrave we have a large number of young families who shouldn't have to put up with this.

The location of the site for these festivals means that sound cannot be shielded and Bygrave will always be affected.

I believe that this weekend festival could not get a licence in its preferred location (because the noise would affect local residents in that area) so came to Bygrave Woods where it seems that anything goes. When it spreads throughout the festival community that NHDC are an easy touch, having made getting the go ahead for all events just a tick box exercise, then this will encourage 2 things to happen. The type of festivals that can't get licences elsewhere (the worst of the worst) will end up in Bygrave, and the frequency & number of festivals will increase making living in Bygrave hell, from the extra traffic to the cacophonous noise, night after night.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Appendix 8: Villager G's complaint to Bygrave Parish Council regarding the Electric Woodlands 2022 festival

Dear Sir/Madam

I am writing as I wish to complain about the festival which was held in Bygrave Woods from 1/7 to 3/7.

When the festival started on Friday afternoon the noise levels were very high and made it virtually impossible to be in the garden. I complained to the sound engineer who was monitoring sound levels in the field across the road and he said he would pass the information on to the festival team but I did not notice any difference at all afterwards.

We decided that we could not stay at home with all the noise so made arrangements to be away from Friday evening. However, from speaking to those who were less fortunate the event continued to blight the village for the whole weekend with evidence of drug dealing and other public nuisance issues as well as the continuous noise!

I am extremely concerned about how these festivals continue to grow and how there were no letters to residents before the festival licence was granted. As you are aware for many of us the festival is literally one field away and we cannot escape at all from the noise!

I understand that there are two more festivals planned with only one weekend in between! The festival in August is a four day one which means that people who have to go to work on the Friday will not be able to get any sleep on the Thursday night.

Bygrave is generally a peaceful village and the festivals in the wood are turning our summers into a nightmare!

I do hope that something can be done to address these issues as we all have to live here and should not have to put up with our lives being spoilt by something we have no control over and definitely did not get clear notification about.

Appendix 9: Excerpt of email (following a liaison meeting) to the Licence Holder and Designated Premises Supervisor on 30 May 2022 regarding security concerns of a Bygrave villager

“I have been speaking with one of the residents of Bygrave Village and agreed to pass on her comments. She told me how distressed she had been after the Electric Woodlands event last year. She said that she had people “doing all sorts of things” in her garden. She called the helpline and was assured that security were on their way. They did not turn up. She is now very worried about this year’s festivals and concerts. She is concerned about her and her family’s personal safety. She is not alone in feeling this way. I am sure that we will all agree that it is wholly unacceptable that people should feel unsafe in their own homes. At our meeting, [] raised the request of the Chair of the Parish Council that there be a marshal in Bygrave Village throughout the duration of these events. This would provide some comfort but is unlikely to be adequate in isolation. As I am sure you are aware, the Electric Woodlands Event was not the first time that Bygrave Woods’ festival goers have caused issues in our village. I would be grateful if you could set out your proposed arrangements for security for the local residents for this year’s events.”

Response from the Designated Premises Supervisor: “Regarding point two, as previously promised, we have a vehicle out with two SIA that will be patrolling over the entities course of these events.”

No response was received from the Licence Holder.

Appendix 10: Content of email from the Chair of Bygrave Parish Council to the Licence Holder setting out issues relating to the Electric Woodlands Festival 2021 and Warm-up Festival 2021

Good morning Alex

When we met you requested that you have feedback to the two festivals.

Yesterday [Electric Woodlands]

Non stop traffic from 11am to 12.30am.

- cars, taxis, buses coming from the event constant stream
 - exacerbated by cars and taxis also going to the event through Bygrave against the flow of traffic both dropping off and picking up
- double decker buses totally inappropriate for Ashwell Road
- The roads both sides lined with cones - these were ignored and parking was still taking place. Also in Church Lane opposite []'s house. I did ring the emergency phone number regarding this but I am not aware of what action was taken
- The traffic lights at Cat Ditch although working were poorly operated.
- Signage as installed confusing
- People who parked cars and others were walking the track opposite Church Lane not through designated entry points
- People who I spoke to had not a clue where they were actually going both going to the event and from
- I witnessed four people urinating in the village!!
- Starting at 10.45pm people were leaving and walking the Ashwell Road in dark clothing with all the traffic going past them on an ostensibly single track road. I pray that all got home unhurt.
- From 11pm -12.30am there were car hooters blaring and people shouting when most residents would be in bed.
- Witnessed on two separate occasions blue lights (ambulance?) coming away from the event
- Noise levels on Friday were high but acceptable Saturday

I believe that the Organisers of this event have let you down completely. They have shown a total disregard and disrespect to Bygrave with no marshalling or understanding of the area
I have already received complaints from upper and lower Bygrave and anticipate more today.

Three day event [Warm Up]

We had our parish council meeting last week and it was reported that

- people were gathering late at night outside homes in Ashwell Road
- silver canisters (sniffing compound) were left littering
- a packet of drugs was found in the village
- some residents on festival side of the village considered that the noise levels were high

I am very happy to meet with you again to discuss further if you wish