



Ref: 25/00296/LIQ_02

18th April 2025

Licensing Section,
East Cambridgeshire District Council,
The Grange, Nutholt Lane,
Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 4EE

Dear Licensing Officer

Subject: Objection to Licencing Application - Bottisham Budgens, Units 2-6, 56 High Street, Bottisham, Cambridge, CB25 9DA

We are writing to formally object to the licensing application submitted by Budgens for the premises located at Units 2–6, 56 High Street, Bottisham, Cambridge, CB25 9DA. This objection is made on the basis that the proposed licence undermines several of the core licensing objectives under the Licensing Act 2003.

Whilst we recognise that some points made fall outside the direct scope of this licensing application, we do ask that the Licensing Committee also recognises some of the other additional concerns that we, as residents, have and especially the lack of coordinated planning and communication from a number of departments and the developers.

Licensing Objectives

1. **The Prevention of Crime and Disorder**
2. **Public Safety**
3. **The Prevention of Public Nuisance**
4. **The Protection of Children from Harm**

1. The Prevention of Crime and Disorder

- **Risk of Anti-Social Behaviour:** Bottisham has a documented history of anti-social behaviour, especially among younger individuals congregating and drinking in public areas. Alcohol sold from early morning (6 AM) until late evening (10 PM) increases the potential for disturbances, especially near sensitive areas such as the churchyard, the village spaces, nearby Cemetery and residential streets and the proximity to a conservation area.

Increased Incidents of Theft and Vandalism: The Co-Op, located nearby, already monitors students from Bottisham Village College due to past incidents of theft (including alcohol and confectionery) and disorder. There is no assurance that Budgens will enforce similar security measures or engage with the community to mitigate such risks. Bottisham Village College supplies a “chaperone” to the Co-Op for before and after school due to the high number of theft and anti-social behaviour.

Concerns Regarding Transient Visitors and Localised Disorder: Bottisham is a small, relatively rural village that frequently serves as a thoroughfare for those travelling to neighbouring areas such as the Swaffhams and Burwell. As a result, it often attracts a transient population who may not have the same connection to, or respect for, the local community and environment. This raises legitimate concerns around increased littering, alcohol-related disturbances, and inconsiderate or unsafe parking—particularly along the High Street and in nearby residential areas. Such behaviour can escalate into anti-social activity, placing additional strain on local resources and undermining the sense of safety and order that residents currently enjoy.

Oversaturation of Licensed Premises: This proposal would represent the fifth alcohol retailer within approximately 0.01 square miles, creating an excessive density of alcohol outlets, which could increase alcohol-related crime and disorder.

2. Public Safety

Traffic Congestion and Hazardous Parking: Bottisham's High Street is already heavily congested and frequently reduced to a single lane due to parked vehicles. The addition of a convenience store without sufficient dedicated parking will exacerbate this problem, leading to unsafe road conditions for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians. The lack of proper parking provision may also result in illegal or inconsiderate parking, blocking driveways and increasing the risk of accidents.

Increased Vehicle Movements: A new store operating from 6 AM to 10 PM will bring in a constant stream of delivery lorries, customers, and staff vehicles. This adds to existing safety issues, particularly during school pick-up/drop-off hours when hundreds of students are walking or cycling nearby.

Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) Activity: Increased HGV movements for deliveries and refuse collection will deteriorate road conditions and pose additional risks, particularly on residential roads ill-suited to high-frequency heavy traffic.

3. The Prevention of Public Nuisance

Noise from Deliveries and Operations: Early-morning and late-night deliveries (outside of 6 AM–10 PM) are likely to disturb local residents, especially those living in nearby listed buildings which lack modern sound insulation.

Employee and Customer Disruption: Staff arriving early and leaving late, along with late-night customers, will increase foot traffic and noise. This is particularly disruptive in a quiet, residential, and conservation-focused village.

Litter and Environmental Degradation: The sale of takeaway food, snacks, and beverages will likely increase littering in the surrounding area. Additional footfall without increased waste management will affect the village's appearance and require additional public resources to maintain cleanliness.

Light Pollution: The use of bright security and commercial lighting poses a nuisance to nearby homes, especially given the proximity to heritage properties and a Conservation Area.

4. The Protection of Children from Harm

Proximity to Bottisham Village College: With nearly 3,000 pupils attending the nearby secondary school, there is significant concern that the increased availability of alcohol will exacerbate issues of underage drinking and exposure to alcohol-related behaviours.

Lack of Community Oversight: Unlike existing local retailers who have built relationships and work with community leaders to address concerns around young people and alcohol, there is no indication Budgens will provide similar engagement or safeguards.

Off-Premises Alcohol Consumption: The extended alcohol licensing hours create the potential for inappropriate youth congregation and alcohol consumption in unsupervised public areas near schools, playgrounds, and homes.

Safeguarding. Bottisham has previously required the support of multi-agency teams to address serious safeguarding concerns, including alcohol and drug misuse, as well as the exploitation of young people. Tackling these issues took over 18 months of concerted effort, involving residents, the Parish Council, local businesses, East Cambridgeshire Police, and other partner organisations. While these efforts were ultimately successful, safeguarding remains an ongoing priority. It is also important to recognise that vulnerability is not limited to children and young people—there are vulnerable individuals of all ages within every rural community, and the risks must be considered holistically.

Additional Concerns and Points for Consideration

Unnecessary Duplication of Services: Bottisham already has a Co-Op providing convenience goods and alcohol, as well as The Bell pub, Classic Spice restaurant, and Bottisham Sports and Social Club. The Budgens proposal duplicates services without offering a clear community benefit.

Loss of Retail Diversity: Occupying five units in the development, Budgens eliminates the possibility for varied and independent shops that had previously been promised to the community.

Heritage and Conservation Area Impact: The proposed store is directly adjacent to the Conservation Area and near Grade II listed properties. The introduction of a modern convenience store, along with increased traffic, lighting, and signage, would detract from the village's historical character and violate the spirit of conservation-led development.

Precedent for Future Applications: Approval of this licence may open the door for future incremental development changes, retrospective applications, and expansion of activities that conflict with local planning, conservation goals and the Bottisham Neighbourhood Plan.

Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA): As outlined above, we believe there is already a high number and density of licensed premises within this particular area, and the addition of another will have a significant detrimental effect on nearby residents. We therefore request that a Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) be undertaken to examine the combined effects of existing and proposed licensed premises—including the planned developments such as the retirement village and 50 affordable homes, each of which may include convenience stores—on the environment and wider community.

A CIA considers the totality of direct and indirect impacts, as well as the cumulative pressure placed on key licensing objectives such as the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, and the prevention of public nuisance. We respectfully urge the Licensing Authority to consider these

cumulative impacts and to resist granting further alcohol licences in what remains a small, predominantly residential rural village.

Conclusion

We respectfully urge East Cambridgeshire District Council to reject this licensing application on the grounds that it does not support the four key licensing objectives and would negatively affect the safety, character, and wellbeing of the Bottisham community. We also request that the cumulative impact of existing alcohol licences in the area be given serious consideration before granting any additional permissions.

While we acknowledge the separation between licensing and planning functions, councillors have an important role in ensuring these services are aligned. This particular development has proceeded via a change of use and therefore did not require full planning permission. However, it has nonetheless caused significant tension within the local community, highlighting the need for a more joined-up approach.

We are concerned that the public engagement process has not been robust. Licensing applications must be clearly advertised in accordance with statutory requirements, including visible display of notices in the correct format (at least A4, on pale blue paper), and publication in a local newspaper. We request confirmation that these requirements were fulfilled and ask for evidence of such compliance. The notice displayed at the site was obscured from public view, located within an active construction area, and often blocked by parked vehicles. This lack of visibility may have prevented local residents from being fully aware of the application.

As residents living in close proximity to the proposed premises, we believe we would be directly and significantly affected by this application. We would welcome clarification from the Licensing Authority on the local licensing policy relevant to Bottisham and the Woodditton area. We also urge consideration of wider statutory duties, including those under the **Human Rights Act 1998** and the **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**.

Bottisham Parish Council is in the final stages of developing its Neighbourhood Plan. The proposed type of business in this application does not reflect the original vision shared by developers, which referenced small, independent, and artisan-style retail—not alcohol-led outlets.

In summary, we believe granting this licence would undermine the core licensing objectives and have a lasting negative impact on the heart of our village.

Yours sincerely



Simon and Nadene Cundell