

**From:** Catherine Nelson  
**Sent:** 14 May 2021 17:40  
**To:** Elizabeth Macdonald <Elizabeth.Macdonald@merton.gov.uk>  
**Subject:** Re: Response to Licence Application WK/202102239

Dear Elizabeth

Our address is as follows:

The Friends of Cannizaro Park  
Willow House  
35 High Street  
Wimbledon Village  
London SW19 5BY

Dear Elizabeth

I am writing to set out The Friends of Cannizaro Park's response to Licence application WK/202102239 (Hotel du Vin Van for off-sales of alcohol).

**Overall, we do not oppose the provision of an alcohol licence for the Van, but we would recommend that any licensing hours are reduced from the proposed 1200-2030 to 1200-1800. Our neutrality is also based on an assurance from the Hotel du Vin General Manager, Ian Fletcher, that the Van will remain permanently sited on the Orangery terrace, and is not a mobile facility.**

Our position is based on the following reasons:

1. As a charity formed to support the maintenance and restoration of Cannizaro Park and to facilitate its enjoyment by visitors, we have been supportive of the arrival in 2020 of the existing Van/cafe service. From a 2020 Visitor Survey, we know this is a service which park visitors wanted, and we are happy to see the soft drinks/pizza service remain.
2. Balancing this, Cannizaro Park experienced significant issues in 2020, when park visitors brought picnics and alcohol. This resulted in late evening activity in the park, with noise disruption and informal toileting which was very unpleasant both to park neighbours and to our Friends' clean-up volunteers. The Hotel du Vin has been a constructive partner in working to address such issues. This spring, we have worked together to re-open the park's public toilets, and to date we have seen a significant improvement in informal toileting. The Hotel is also funding extra bins, which will handle Van takeaway waste. So we believe progress is underway - but are keen to encourage people to leave the park in the late afternoon/early evening.
3. Reducing the opening hours to an 1800 closing time aligns with the opening hours of the public toilets, which also close around 6pm.
4. Within Merton, only two other public parks have cafes: South Park Gardens and Wimbledon Park. The former does not serve alcohol, and the latter (which does advertise alcoholic beverages on its Facebook page) is only open during daytime (9-5pm), thereby limiting the potential for anti-social behaviour into the evening.

5. The Hotel du Vin can already supply takeaway alcohol from within the premises, and we understand that the service provided from the Van will only include a small number of lines, to complement existing soft drink offerings. The Hotel du Vin General Manager assured us that this new Van service merely simplifies serving structures.

6. We understand from discussion with the Hotel du Vin that the Van will retain its current position on the terrace of the Hotel, and that any music will be internal and not creating an external “party” vibe - again, to avoid late evening disruption to neighbours and mess in the park.

Our charity’s focus is on the maintenance and restoration of the Cannizaro Park, and on facilitating appreciation and understanding of the landscape. We have some concern that a new licence opens the possibility for noise and disruption, which is directly contrary to what the majority of park visitors look for in Cannizaro: peace and tranquillity. However, provided that the licence is not a “Trojan horse” to longer hours/expanded offerings, and conditions are as stated above, we believe the service is likely to be a neutral to slightly positive benefit for park visitors, with minimal impact to neighbours.

Catherine Nelson

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Dr Catherine Nelson

Chair of Trustees, The Friends of Cannizaro Park (Charity No. 1160982)

*To join the Friends, or support our Grade II\* listed park, visit [www.cannizaropark.com!](http://www.cannizaropark.com!)*