

SIMPLY PLEASURE 333-335 HOLDENHURST ROAD BOURNEMOUTH

RENEWAL OF SEX ESTABLISHMENT LICENCE 2024 – 2025

LETTERS IN SUPPORT AND OBJECTION

Support #1

I would like to issue my support for the license renewal of Simply Pleasure in Holdenhurst road. There is nothing wrong with an adult sex store. There are tons all over London and it's never deterred any tourists or locals by the millions from exploring and enjoying the town on a daily basis. Areas like Soho and Camden are a bohemian playground for all walks of life and various generations.

All are required to check IDs and safeguarding policies. Simply Pleasure also offer better quality than ann summers, The x rated content is kept secure, the staff are attentive and friendlier than most retail staff on the highstreet.

Also this is 2024, Its a new age and decade we live in where nothing is taboo anymore as it probably was in the 20's. The shop supplies different kinks for different folks. If anything we need more fun and crazy stores on the high street to give it some life to make Bournemouth different and stand out.

We don't need anymore cheap fast food, charity shops and off licences everywhere.

Support #2

I would like to show my support for the license renewal of Simply Pleasure in Holdenhurst Road. I feel they make all necessary safeguarding checks so displays are no more lude than an Ann Summers store. They also ID people on entry to make sure no minors enter.

Objection #1

This is my objection to the application for a Sex Establishment License at 333-335 Holdenhurst Road.

I would ask that the officer's report to the councillors includes the Bournemouth Sex Establishment Licensing Policy. My understanding is that the Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole Sex Establishment Licensing Policy (BCP Policy-attached)) included replacing the previous Bournemouth policy. My understanding of the nature of a quashing order is that it restores the position before the decision quashed, so that the Bournemouth Policy is now operational again. Because the Bournemouth policy is, on my understanding, operational then the committee members should take it into consideration in making their decision and in the interests of transparency the public should have sight of it. I suggest that there be a reasonable extension of time for submitting objections once this Bournemouth Policy is made public.

I refer to a "factsheet" published by the government whilst a Bill was being considered to reform Judicial Review and this confirms my understanding of the nature of quashing orders, as set out

above. <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/628cc6dbd3bf7f1f422c887a/judicial-review-courts-bill-fact-sheet.pdf>

A publication from Parliament repeats my understanding also at para 16 on this link <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt5802/jtselect/jtrights/884/88405.htm>

Attached is the judgement quashing BCP's Policy on the final page, 41 at point 103. It does not appear to quash only part of the policy, leaving that part of it which replaced the Bournemouth policy intact, for example.

If the committee is taking guidance from the Home Office guidance on licensing sex establishments I would like to make the following points. This guidance is not statutory, unlike guidance issued on planning or transport for example. It cannot alter the law by adding to it or taking away from it. It is also out of date. You can refuse this license not just on the grounds in Schedule 3 Local Govt (Misc) Act 1982 but also on any statutory duty if licensing would result in your breaching that statutory duty. So the Equality Act gives multiple grounds on which to refuse this license. In addition, The Human Rights Act gives you the ability to refuse this license on my understanding. The guidance is also misleading by failing to include the information from case law (Newcastle, ex parte Christian Institute) that when considering location you can refuse on the grounds of the questionable morality of people who may be attracted into an area by the presence of a sex establishment. It is out of date to say that moral objections cannot be considered as since that case (also Newcastle ex parte Christian Institute) the Equality Act has been passed, which obliges you to consider moral objections if made on the basis of a protected characteristic, including sex and religion in those characteristics. If you consider my objections to be based on moral grounds, which is not my intention, then I would suggest you consider my sex, female and Christian upbringing which may have influenced me.

This application should be refused for the following reasons -

Local Government (Misc) Act 1982 Schedule 3 s10(6) requires that such other details as the licensing authority may reasonably require should be provided by the applicant.

Unless the following requirements listed on the application form which I have been shown have been waived, then they have not been provided when they should have been.

At Company Number(s) a telephone number rather than the Company Number has been given. Company number is usually the number allocated by Companies House when a limited company is registered there, and allows a company to be clearly identified.

The space for VAT number, which again would allow the applicant to be identified clearly has been omitted.

The plan reasonably required has not been annexed to the application on the copy application form which I have been sent.

The name and address of the applicant have to be given on an application according to the s10 above (3), yet neither of these is easy to identify on the form because two company names ABS Holdings and Simply Pleasure are given and it is not clear whether one of these is a trading name or the legal identity of the applicant. In fairness to the applicant the application form is a bit difficult to follow as it refers to a "trading company" which might imply that a trading name rather than legal identity is required. Only a legal entity, ie an individual or limited company can be licensed from what I can see of the legislation, so the legal identity should be given, with any separate trading name clearly identified also if different from the legal identity. In addition the property next door to the left of the premises from the road currently trading as Simply Pleasure and also trading as or advertising Prowler is labelled as 333. It is reasonable in any event that a plan be requested to ensure that points of access and ingress can be seen clearly to ensure that illicit entry

can't be made easily for example. However, the difficulty in identifying the premises from the road number makes the plan essential.

A copy of the resolution of the company to apply for a license has not been included as reasonably required by the application form. The fact that the application has not been signed by , but for , a director, makes this copy resolution essential.

The text in the window on the right at present is currently with the planning department to decide on whether the size breaches an advertising code. At time of writing I don't know whether they have resources to allocate to this or what their view is.

I believe that the door of the premises is to be kept shut by a self closing mechanism yet saw it open recently. I waited whilst a man finished his cigarette in the gap between 333-335 and the other 333 and then again whilst a man came out and had a long heated telephone conversation. However, he shut the door when he went back in so I didn't get a picture of the door open. I am in any event loathe to photograph the door in case someone comes out and I inadvertently harass them by photographing them.

Suitability of applicant-The judgment quashing BCP's sex establishment licensing policy advised that credit could and should be given to a licensee which had a longstanding record of trading at the premises. By the same token I urge you to consider the behaviour of the applicant not just in the past year but in the years leading up to this application.

As mentioned last year this applicant has previously been reported as displaying a costume parodying school uniform in the Rochdale branch, this being particularly insensitive given the previous trials for grooming gangs operating in the area.

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-3525018/Health-worker-slams-sex-shop-displaying-skimpy-schoolgirl-outfit-window-store-centre-town-engulfed-child-sex-abuse-scandal.html>. From checking its website recently the term school in the search bar brings up various costumes parodying school uniform. I say that an applicant trading on sexualising clothing worn by children isn't suitable for licensing. I remind you that an applicant can be considered unsuitable for any reason. However, as this is an administrative decision it must be "reasonable". To reinforce that this is reasonable, I draw your attention as last year to the Catcalls of BCP <https://www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/news-hub/news-articles/stop-street-harassment> movement which is a campaign to stop street harassment. I didn't realise last year that the campaign includes mention of harassment whilst wearing school uniform. I would ask you to consider the impact on the likelihood of a young woman finishing school and taking her public exams if she has to endure street harassment whilst wearing school uniform to do so. I also ask you to consider the impact on school run traffic that having to drive children to school to avoid street harassment has, ie of not wanting to use public transport or walk/cycle to school.

[Stop street harassment](#)

A campaign to tackle sexual harassment faced by young people has been launched by a Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole (BCP) UK Youth Parliament member.

www.bcpccouncil.gov.uk



[Sex shop slammed for displaying skimpy schoolgirl outfit in the window](#)

Criticism has been levelled at an outfit on display in the window of Simply Pleasure in Rochdale. It includes a short tartan skirt, a tie and a white blouse cut away from the midriff.

www.dailymail.co.uk

I also draw your attention to a campaign by a (non local) school against sale of school uniform based costumes in sex shops and of their use in pornography.

<https://www.itv.com/news/granada/2022-06-13/students-campaign-to-stop-school-uniforms-being-sold-in-sex-shops>



[Students campaign to stop school uniforms being sold in sex shops | ITV News](#)

A group of schoolgirls and their teacher have launched a campaign demanding school uniforms stop being sold in sex shops and banned from pornography. | ITV News Granada

www.itv.com

I say, as I did last year, that the window displays are not suitable for children to have to see, and having to pass them could also be intimidating for women. This is because some of the articles are clothing designed to expose parts of the body considered erotic in our society. In addition, in the past further articles have been displayed which show the applicant as unsuitable as they are displaying some articles unsuitable for viewing as a child. Because of the difficulties viewing electronic images which may be presented by software designed to screen out indecent material I will try to bring hard copies with me to any hearing, although I don't currently have a colour printer. With regards to repeating what I have said last year, I refer to the attached judgement (file name starts Microsoft Word CO) which helpfully mentions ex parte Sheptonhurst at pages 40-41 point 100 as authority for a council being able to make a different decision despite no change in the neighbourhood. Window displays have included "rock ring" advertising in the past, and these objects have been the subject of information from the London Fire Brigade and a campaign against their use by a couple of doctors.

Further on the window display, in the last couple of days the window display on the left has been changed to a theme which appears to be based on the film Beetlejuice and/or a recent sequel called Beetlejuice Beetlejuice. The first was rated PG 12 and the sequel PG 13. I don't think it appropriate for a sex shop window to display products mingled themed items from a film which may appeal to children. The first Beetlejuice film included a girl's school.

This window display, which could appeal to children, compounds the use of an Easter bunny soft toy, at children's eye level in the window earlier in the year.

Suitability of premises-if there is no point of access for receiving deliveries at the rear of the shop so avoiding the front entrance door being used with the attendant risk of seeing inside, that this be refused on the basis of unsuitability of the premises. At time of writing I have not seen a the plan requested by the licensing department to know whether this is an issue.

I ask you to consider the impact of licensing this premises under the Equality Act. Age is a protected characteristic and children are exposed to indecent material when making their way to the nearby Springbourne Library. In addition the 46 school bus to Avonbourne School goes between Springbourne Library and Boscombe Bus Station which I am assuming means it passes the shop. Mercifully the bus stop opposite would only be for children alighting not waiting in the morning as I understand it. In addition, there are numerous places of worship nearby, within a short walk, and it is reasonable to assume that this will have more affect on people whose religious beliefs are at odds with sex being commodified. BCP council has included socioeconomic status as a protected characteristic. There are numerous properties nearby rented by a landlord which describes itself as an affordable housing provider, as can be seen from their charge registered at Companies House. At time of writing I don't have clear evidence of vulnerable people nearby, and have written to an agency providing shelter or supported housing with what appears to be office premises very nearby to see if they are able to tell me whether they have clients housed nearby. I also ask you to consider the impact on women, including myself, of licensing a shop which displays clothing with parts missing that cover the areas, exposure of which would require a license if used in entertainment venues.

I also ask you to consider your duty under the Equality Act to improve relations between the sexes. As mentioned above, parodying the uniform worn by young women and children is a direct attack on the education of women, and calculated to undermine good relations between the sexes. Likewise, the Royal College of Nursing is highlighting the toll that sexual harassment takes on members of their profession. Sales by the applicant of costumes parodying and sexualising clothing worn as uniform by nurses must undermine relations between the sexes. A search of the applicant's website using the term nurse brings up various costumes, or did at the time of writing this. They are also religiously offensive, often including crosses.

I also ask you to consider your LCWIP policy, as this is an administrative decision so that relevant council policies should be considered as appropriate. The LCWIP Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan mentions both Holdenhurst Road and Springbourne on numerous occasions, including in the context of liveable neighbourhoods. These, on my understanding, aim to improve neighbourhoods for residents and businesses by making it easier to travel round them without being dependent on a car. The presence of a sex shop is

not, in my view, compatible with this because of the window displays deterring people from walking past or waiting at a bus stop.

As previously mentioned the presence nearby of a library which includes children's and community activity makes the licensing of this premises inappropriate. The library is still there and as in Sheptonhurst, above, you can make a different decision than in previous years even if there is no change in the area.

Locality-the area is full of residential premises so that people will be walking past the premises and even if driving or using public transport the wording and explicitness of the displays means they can easily be seen from car or bus windows. For a car driver, who is protected from the people around by the car, this is not such an issue as passers by are not the threat that they are to someone on foot. Yesterday the vulnerability of waiting at a bus stop was reinforced to me as I walked past the bus stops in the Square in the evening to see a man being aggressively harassed by a beggar on a bike demanding money from him and refusing to leave when he refused to pay him money. I repeat what I said last year that when using public transport and waiting at a bus stop, such as the one opposite the premises, you are a sitting duck for anyone that wants to harass you as you can't move down the road to the next bus stop to get away easily, especially if you are women who is pregnant or accompanied by young children. As last year I ask the committee to consider the likelihood of children waiting outside this shop in school uniform for a bus to be harassed because the indecent window display triggers this behaviour.

If there is any doubt in the committee's minds as to the likelihood of women and children walking past google street view shows a woman with a baby buggy doing just this. Even if there is only one woman or child using this area on foot it should not be licensed as a sex shop.

As I understand it, although I have not been able to find any plans at time of writing this part of Holdenhurst Road may be part of a program designed to improve sustainable travel through certain corridors in the BCP area, although as mentioned, I am not certain as to whether this aims to improve public transport, walking and cycling at this point. If it does, then again, undermining the experience of using a bus by putting indecent material in the window opposite shouldn't be allowed to continue.

Buildings in the neighbourhood-There are numerous places of worship, a library used by children, a primary school, a boxing academy and venues used by vulnerable people in the neighbourhood. All can reasonably be expected to be reached by people on foot given the limited parking in the area and the poverty, which is a recognized protected characteristic in the BCP area under the Equality Act. People also like to walk for exercise when getting to local shops etc In addition there are numerous people nearby made vulnerable by not living with the support of a residential family unit as is often the case in HMO's Houses in Multiple Occupation, as shown by the public register of HMOs.

Human Rights Act 1998 Schedule 1 Article 3 "No one shall be subject toinhuman or degrading treatment". Many articles sold by the applicant appear to contravene this. In fact the window lettering on the right includes the term BDSM, which I understand relates to bondage and sadomasochism. Whilst the right to pursue these activities may be broadly within the law, so long as they don't breach the threshold in the "Spanners" case I say that

Article 3 prevents you from licensing a shop which exploits this behaviour commercially. The presence of vulnerable people nearby puts them at risk of being inveigled into what they mistakenly believe to be a romantic relationship when in fact the objective of the other person is to inflict inhuman or degrading treatment using such items. These vulnerable people include the women dropped at Southcote Road and in the Knyveton Road area for the purpose of on street sex work. I don't suggest that there is any connection between these women and the premises, but the applicant must take the neighbourhood as he finds it, and the neighbourhood does include vulnerable people.

Human Rights Act 1998 Schedule 1 Article 8 (2) allows for the protection of health or morals. This contradicts the Home Office guidance that moral objections can't be included. I say that it is immoral to display a soft toy at children's eye level in a shop window which is displaying erotic underwear. (Image attached showing easter bunny soft toy and adult underwear).

You have power to make license conditions if you do decide to license and if you do I suggest the following reasonably additional conditions-

That the premises be closed on Friday, Saturday and Sundays to cover the days of worship for all three Abrahamic religions. Also that religious institutions may apply to the licensing department for up to ten additional days in total between them on a first come first served basis to be deemed religious holidays on which the shop should be shut. This to be renewed annually.

That the premises are not open on school days before 9am nor after 2.30pm to avoid passing school run traffic.

That the outside of the premises only shows the words Adult store, the hours and days of opening and no person aged under 18 to be admitted and advertising the challenge 25 policy (this because the trading names allow access to websites with unsuitable material for children).

That there be no A board nor other display outside and no provision for this condition to be overruled on application to the licensing officers.

That the self closing door be operational at all times and not hooked back, deliveries to be received at a different point of "ingress" not visible from the road.

That the lobby has two doors far enough apart to ensure that the interior of the shop cannot be seen from outside the shop at any time, ie is deep enough for one door to close before the other opens.

That all items for which ISO 3533 applies have such certification and copy of the certificate is held by the licensee. (IEC 60335 will also apply to electrical items but this is already mandatory, so shouldn't be included in a license condition). This to fulfil your public health statutory duty. BCP, like all councils has a statutory duty to improve the health of its residents. Licensing use of this premises is not compatible with this. Items are offered for sale which are variously capable of causing injury and the case of lube products, may impair fertility. The information on this NHS link may be out of date, but I would still suggest that any lube sold be marked with whether it is suitable for anyone wishing to conceive or not. ISO 3533 is the international safety standard for many of the items, ie devices, often known in the trade as "sex toys" advertised for sale. They may carry this, but it isn't stated on any of the adverts which I have seen on the website for the store, although I have not read every page.

Lastly, I would respectfully draw the committee's attention to the following points -

A That you have power to grant a license on such terms as you see fit, whether or not this has been included in the officer's report to you in the public pack. However, if you include a term which is a surprise to the applicant it might be advisable to adjourn to allow them time to respond to the suggestion that it be included.

B That there is no requirement in statute nor case law that harm caused by the grant of the license be proved, past present or future. "Thwaites (2008)", a case sometimes quoted in "pub" licensing, ie for sale of alcohol, and relied on, probably wrongly, to prove the need to show harm, was not incorporated into the licensing regime for sex shops when Parliament had an opportunity to do so on incorporating strip clubs into that regime (2009).

C That you do not need permission from Dorset police to refuse this license.

D You are expected to rely on your own knowledge of the BCP area, as councillors, which may have been acquired through your association with the area including lobbying by residents and your fellow councillors concerning their own residents' concern as well as their cabinet responsibilities.

E That you don't need to rely on an objection from a third party such as myself to refuse an application. You can, as in judicial hearings, do something "of your own motion", but as for A, if you give a reason not previously communicated to the applicant it may be wise to adjourn to give time for them to respond.

22.10.24 @ 21:48 Further email received

Re Simply Pleasure, listed for 13th November

Hi Mrs Rogers, Sarah

I appreciate that the below is past the date for objections but wonder if it is possible to add the below, just received, to my objection. It deals with housing of vulnerable people within the vicinity of the premises, where 10 minutes walk is the measurement used. There is a corner shop, ie the Coop opposite and along a little bit, the Simply Pleasure shop, so I'd suggest it would be reasonable to assume that people might walk there. I also noticed today that the Health Bus was parked up at a car park nearby, which I think is the car park behind Springbourne Fire Station on the Holdenhurst Road side. I believe this is a service for people experiencing homelessness.

Kind regards

From: Sent: 22 October 2024 19:59

To: HOU&COM FOIs

Subject: Re: Sex Establishment License Objections - 12658

Thank you very much Linda

I just noticed the health bus parked up nearby as well today so will add that observation to your email of today's date and ask the licensing officers if they can add that to my objection.

Kind regards

From: HOU&COM FOIs

Sent: 22 October 2024 16:21

To: HOU&COM FOIs

Subject: RE: Sex Establishment License Objections - 12658

Dear

Further to your request for information received on 11/10/24 and further clarification received on 18/10/24, please find information requested.

Within the vicinity of BH8 8BT, BCP Homes are aware of several of our residents who have vulnerabilities which will include drug and alcohol dependency and elderly residents in both general needs and sheltered accommodation. We are unable to provide a specific number but within 10 minutes walk of the post code given, we have a large block of 18 flats which will house various residents, some of which will have vulnerabilities. We have Independent Senior Living accommodation close by providing around 40 flats, most of the residents will have some vulnerabilities. In surrounding roads within an approx. 10 minute walk, there are approximately 50 dwellings. We cannot be specific in how many of those residents have vulnerabilities however, there will be several within those homes that fall under the vulnerabilities that you have specified.

I hope this deals with your query satisfactorily.

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BCP Council
Legal and Democratic
Bourne Avenue
Bournemouth
BH2 6DY

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If you are dissatisfied with the outcome of the Council's review you have the right to refer the matter to the Information Commissioner's Office. Contact details for the Information Commissioner can be found at: <https://ico.org.uk/>

Yours sincerely



**Business & Compliance Coordinator
Housing & Communities**

Objection #2

This is an objection to the renewal of the Licence for the sex shop Simply Pleasure.

My reasons for the objection are:

Location, this shop is on a main road where families with children pass continually to the nearby library, an infant and junior school, bus stops to secondary schools and grocery shops.

Signage and displays agreed by BCP council are completely unsuitable for safeguarding reasons. The URL for a website containing adult material should not be allowed to be advertised. Whilst the website itself is lawful, the publishing of the URL on a licenced sex shop where is promoted to the public is something the council is responsible for allowing or not. There is no other environment where such a site would be promoted where children can see it and I will include a screenshot from the website as part of this objection which if not included in these papers will show that the council does understand the nature of adult material and that this understanding should be applied to the protection of children. In the likely event that the images included in my objection are redacted I want to make clear the page the URL leads to on the day of writing features a 'double ended sex machine', and with two clicks I reached a page featuring a 'Teachers pet schoolgirl' outfit.

The use of words such as BDSM, (bondage, discipline (or domination), sadism, and masochism (as a type of sexual practice).) are not appropriate for a window that children will see.

For example, choking, which is a BDSM practice is something which is so normalised that young women and girls are put at risk. <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/dec/08/sexual-choking-is-now-so-common-that-many-young-people-dont-think-it-even-requires-consent-thats-a-problem>

BCP's commitment to ending Violence against women and girls is meaningless if we continue to allow promotion of BDSM in the street as part of a licence BCP has complete control of.

Twice in the past year men have tried to engage me in unwanted conversations about their sexual proclivities on the basis that I live in the vicinity of local sex industry activity. The area is often seen as seedy with prostitution and sex trafficking a major issue which local services do not have the resources to deal with. It leaves local women and girls feeling unsafe and there is definitely an attitude that we should expect harassment when out alone in an area notorious for these activities. The licensed sex shop is a stamp of approval and sends the message that visitors have hounded the sex industry area when they pass it on they way into Springborne.

I wish my objection to be anonymous due to the level of abuse levelled to objectors to sex establishment licenses and of the many parents I have spoken to who do not want this shop but do not want to object and be subject to abuse.

I know previous objections have been considered as coming from a prudish, religious or moral motivation. I am not objecting for any of these reasons. My objection is solely about the protection of children, women and girls.

Objection #3

Dear All

I am writing to object to the licencing of the Simply Pleasure sex shop on Holdenhurst Road, Springbourne. I am objecting on the basis of the detrimental impact on the local community, violation of the public sector equality duty under the Equality Act 2010 and the exacerbation of existing issues faced by residents as a result of the local sex industry being located in our ward.

I have lived in the area for many years and raised my children here in Springbourne.

I am concerned that there are parts of the ward that have always been associated with the sex industry and continue to be so at the detriment to the quality of life and safeguarding of children, families and vulnerable people in my ward.

Over the last 18 months as a councillor, many residents have raised concerns with me about the sex industry and the associated crime and ASB in the ward. Certain aspects of the sex industry affect residents in their daily lives. In fact, we have held several meetings with residents and the police to address the rising problems and continue to do so.

The sexualisation of women and girls and the dehumanising language that I and others have heard being used to describe 'sex workers', along with the ease of access to porn accessible in just a few clicks from the 'proowler' Simply Pleasure website which is displayed openly in the street, and the increase in sexual assaults and violence against women and girls in the area is of real concern to myself and other residents.

Residents do not feel they can object to such applications – they are fearful about the consequences of being named as it often follows with abuse from local papers and social media and accusations of being a prude etc if their names are published. Hence they stay quiet. As one of their local councillors it falls upon me to feedback on their behalf.

I am particularly concerned about the accuracy of the information provided and the impartiality of licensing officers. This was experienced by a resident wanting to feedback on this application and it has had the effect of putting them off doing so.

I received this feedback from a female resident living in our ward after she emailed an objection to officers "I thought it was very strange and makes me feel mistrusting of her. She is obviously friends with the people who own it."

"Wow – they can give out details such as emails to the shop owner? Seems they don't understand we don't want this kind of shop on our doorstep."

From another female resident in the ward "Have tried to object – its hard work isn't it? Saying I object isn't enough. It will get a renewal as she says – no one has ever objected. I have my view that having obscured windows would at least protect young children/people when walking by."

As such when no objections are received I would question as to why that is.

Impact on Vulnerable Groups and Equality Duty

As a council we have a public equalities duty to foster positive relations between people of different backgrounds as they carry out their activities and have due regard for the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equal opportunities. We have a duty to promote equality and eliminate discrimination, particularly for groups who may be disproportionately impacted by establishments like this. The presence of a sex shop in a residential area, can reinforce harmful gender stereotypes, normalise the objectification of women and potentially contribute to an environment that fosters harassment and exploitation.

Research shows that sex related businesses can disproportionately affect women, the LGBTQ+ community and individuals with past experiences of trauma and sexual exploitation. The licensing committee must consider it's duty to ensure that such licenses do not perpetuate gender inequality or exacerbate the vulnerability of certain groups.

I question how these establishments align with our Public Equalities Duty, especially when located in a residential area like Springbourne where the sex industry already causes real problems for residents who are just trying to go about their business, such as going to school, work or simply stepping out their front door into the street.

Impact on the local area

There are schools, churches and residential streets full of families and workplaces nearby.

The area is changing and there are endeavours from across the community to up lift the district to make it more attractive to families and a more diverse range of businesses. Recently there has been some investment from the Prosperity Fund through the BCP Economic Development team, which is being spent with the intention of enticing more families with young children to Springbourne Park and Library – directly in the vicinity of this shop. There is also now a thriving religious community at the Bourne Spring church and close by at BH1 on Curzon Road.

Holdenhurst Road has been identified as an area of opportunity for the creation of a thriving district centre, housing, new businesses and social opportunities for students and families in the forthcoming Local Plan.

The continued presence of a sex shop may deter visitors or residents, potentially harming the local economy and community atmosphere. Whilst a sex shop is a lawful business, it

can contribute to an increase in street harassment – many female residents have talked with me about their experiences as they feel such establishments do not attract ‘nice men’. Under reporting of these experiences is a key issue. Asking residents to provide police crime references is not a realistic ask.

The ambition for Springbourne (currently going through the process of a Neighbourhood Plan) is to be a thriving community, attracting families and businesses into the area whilst providing a range of positive activities that enhance it's heritage and preserve it's history for it's next stage of development as a flourishing district. This type of establishment does not align with that vision.

The applicant (unclear as to who exactly) states in their last accounts statement that their online business is going well – so why is a shop in the centre of a residential area required? The shop does not have frosted windows, it's window displays containing fetish clothing and items are currently Beetlejuice themed, with huge letters BDSM, ‘proowler’ and ‘simply pleasure.com’ which is a few clicks away from adult materials that are not suitable for children to log onto on their smart phones, who may be passing as they walk home/to school or alight from the nearby bus.

On behalf of residents, I urge the licensing committee to reject the application and demonstrate to the local community that

- The best interests of the local community are your priority
- the safeguarding of vulnerable groups is your priority
- the safety and welfare of residents is your priority
- as a council we take our responsibilities as set out in the Equalities Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty seriously

With best wishes