

Hugh and Jane Clough
13 Fulbrooke Road
Cambridge, CB3 9EE
Emails:

Luke Catchpole
Licensing Team -Cambridge City Council

By email to licensing@cambridge.gov.uk
and upload on the Licensing register

7 January 2025

Dear Luke / Licensing Team

Premises Certificate application PRECAM 000972 London Road Event Hire Services Ltd
(Application 285771 – Representation & objection)

Thank you for your email and our conversation this morning explaining the situation about needing to submit a personal and councillor representation by the deadline of today (7th January)

I have tried to set out the history and background to the current application below and also (as advised) to cover as many of the points I will wish to make at the hearing. Apologies if some of this objection appears rushed as I have had a number of other items to address today.

We live on the south side of Fulbrooke Road, next to the Rugby field. So I am writing to object to this licence application both as residents and also as a City Councillor for Newnham Ward having received a significant number of emails from residents who are also concerned and objecting to this application.

All licence applications must comply with 4 licensing objectives including:

- the prevention of crime and disorder.
- public safety.
- the prevention of public nuisance.
- the protection of children from harm.

I believe that the application **will not comply with aspects of all 4** of the licensing objectives.

Firstly it is necessary to make clear that there are already two licences in operation at the Rugby Club:

- Club Premises Licence Wk/201412247 - licence holder Cambridge Rugby Union Club
- Premises Licence PRECAM 000926 – licence holder – Live Tour Promotions Ltd

The cumulative impact of a further licence to run large scale music events is a particular concern.

Live Tour Promotions Ltd – Ibiza Orchestra plus Sausage & Cider – history

This events company has run their combined Ibiza Orchestra and Sausage & Cider weekend event twice: Friday 7th and Saturday 8th July 2023 and Friday 2nd August and Saturday 3rd August 2024.

July 2023 There was a leaflet drop before the first occasion but only during day on 7th July. This was clearly late and should have been done a month before. Residents had no idea that any licence had been applied for because no information had been circulated out to them at the time. And a small A4 blue notice on the Rugby Club gate would not have noticed. In 2023 the level of music on the first night was quite loud in our garden but acceptable (to us) inside the house.

However **the following night 8th – the level was totally unacceptable**. Even inside our house through the double glazed doors, it was very loud and disturbing. I called the contact number provided on the letter but heard nothing back. I also made complaint to Environment health and was given the reference number 381065 and wrote with my concerns to the Rugby on 9th July. We were promised copies of the noise records by Ashley (Ash) Ramian but they never arrived.

There was also chaos and acute traffic congestion on Grantchester Road around 11pm 7th July when I took my mother home from a visit to see relatives we staying with us for that week.

August 2024 this was after I had been elected to the Council in May 2024 so when we received the letter notifying that there was to be another event weekend, I followed up the email trail with Environmental Health as a “councillor concern” and also re-emailed the Rugby Club. Environmental health were in contact with Ash to discuss residents concerns.

My email to the Rugby Club resulted in a zoom call on Monday 29th July during which it was agreed that we would attend the sound test on the Friday afternoon. Ash had told us that the sound had to be limited to **65 decibels** which is the permitted limit.

The sound test took place at a number of place but more relevantly for us at two places along the fence boundary next our house (no.13) and near to no.27 where Lori Cunningham lives who was the other principal street contact with the Rugby Club.

We had previously downloaded the “Decibel Meter” app onto our phones. The sound engineer from F1 Acoustic came to those locations and watching the display on his professional grade unit against the readings on our mobile apps showed very similar results.

During the first evening, Ibiza Orchestra we monitored the noise volume in our gardens and when the level started to go above 65bd after 10pm, a recording started. I managed to down a segment of data for 17 minutes in CSV format which I was able to pivot table into a layout which showed how the Average peak volume exceeded the 65db maximum in 8 of 17 minutes. This was emailed to Ash the following day but there was no response and also the promised copy of the sound recording has not been supplied.

We continued to monitor the sound on the following evening with the decibel app and they kept to within (just below) the 65db limit during the event so far as we were able to determine.

No relief / summer windows open

The problem with music at 65 decibels at the house boundary is that it is totally dominating of our garden spaces. This is happening in the summer so windows need to be open for cooling so there is little relief other than to move to the rooms in the house on the far side of the house. But even then the music can gain access by travelling over and being bounced back from the houses on the north side of the road.

Type of music / Length

Also it depends whether you actually enjoy listening the type of music being played. Being subjected to music one doesn't enjoy for two days at 65 decibel volume is simply unacceptable.

Code of Practice on Environmental Noise Control at Concerts

We had discovered on the web and also the Environmental Health team sent us the Code of Practice for noise control at concert events produced by the Noise Council which is attached. Table 1 on Page 6 makes it clear that noise should not exceed 65 decibel and that there should only be 1 to 3 concerts at this level of noise during the year.

Live Tour Promotions undertaking

During the zoom meeting on 29th July Ash confirmed to both Lori Cunningham and myself that Live Tour Promotions had no intention of running more than one weekend event. This understanding was confirmed in my email to him and the Rugby Club on 1st Aug which is attached. As they were working to the 65 decibel limit and this would be within the 1-3 concerts per year limit, we concluded that this was probably something that we would have to accept. And the assurance was passed on to residents as being given in good faith.

Other noise impacts during this last year 2024

- Earlier in the summer, the Rugby Club rented out the middle of the field to a student organisation. Marquees were erected and there was some music and evening disturbances. But the main problem was dispersal. Some students clearly remained on site making noise into the early hours. I do not know under which licence this was run. The Rugby Club have advised us that this type of event will not be repeated going forward
- The Club has erected some permanent marquee spaces on the north side of the main built club house. At the end of the summer possibly on match days, there has been a small combo playing and a number of people "jigging" about. This music travel across the space to the gardens and disrupts the peace of a late summer weekend afternoon in the garden.
- The Club also hires out its hard standing to film production companies. There have been problems with noise and fumes from the generators reported by some residents.

Misuse of our back lane

During the dispersal phase on the last LTP weekend in 2024, we found people using our back access lane as a toilet.

London Road Event Hire Services Limited

When we discovered just before Christmas from an email to councillors from the Licensing team that a separate new licence application had been submitted for the Rugby Club site by a new separate event company, London Road Event Hire Services, we arranged an urgent residents meeting with the Rugby on 23rd December and it emerged that initially one (2025) and then two new day events (2026) were being applied for. We were also advised an additional day was being sold by Live Tour Promotions (LTP) for the Sunday of the next Ibiza Orchestra/Sausage and Cider weekend (13/14/15 June 25). Though this would require a further application to amend the existing licence in due course. If that was not successful then the ticket moneys would be refunded.

Assurance of no expansion – not recalled

When Ash was asked about the assurance about not expanding the number of days he had provided last year, he wasn't able to recall the conversation.

In subsequent email exchanges we discovered Ash Ramian has now set up a Event consultancy separate from either LTP or London Road Event Hire Services which is providing health safety and crowd management services to these two event companies.

So in total the number of full heavy music events on the Rugby could increase from **two** in 2024 to **five** in 2026.

Cumulative impact / outside Code of Practice

It is clear that this number of events will exceed the 1-3 events stated in the Code of Practice. Moreover there other lower key outdoor music event happening at the club which need to be considered as part of the cumulative impact on residents. In terms of the film crew generators, we

have not yet attempted to measure or diarise this impact – but it is there and needs to be included in the process.

Neighbouring roads - notified

We have provided briefing emails on our Fulbrooke Road email group and these have been forwarded to Grantchester Road. Selwyn Road – which does not an email / whatsapp group has received a summary letter.

Copies of residents' emails with concerns

I have received a substantial number of emails expressing concern and also been copied into objections to this latest application. People have mostly set out their concerns with the previous events are deeply worried that the new licence will increase their discomfort.

Complaints have included:

1. Blocked traffic and disruption along Selwyn Road and Grantchester Road.
2. Taxi drivers and other drivers refusing to go into the one-way drop off and collect system on the club grounds. Dropping off early and doing three point turns in the middle of Grantchester Road
3. Loud, drunken behaviour along Selwyn and Grantchester Road, urinating in front gardens and alleyways.
4. Damage to cars on Selwyn Road and bottles/broken glass left for residents to clear up.
5. Unacceptable levels of music and disruption.
6. Concerns about the type of music which will be played at the DJ set 80s 90s – which may be heavy beat electronic dance/rave music.
7. Impact on young children with parents not being able to settle down their children down for sleep at the normal 7-8pm slot. It is not practical to move children to other bedroom – or indeed why should they have to?
8. Impact on elderly neighbours who are not able to rearrange their schedules and go away on a music event weekend.

In terms of the licencing objectives ... complaints 1 to 8 above apply as follows:

- the prevention of crime and disorder: 3, 4
- public safety: 1,2,3,4
- the prevention of public nuisance: 3,5,6,8
- the protection of children from harm: 7

Support for the Rugby Club

We, as a household, understand the need for the Rugby Club to run events which help them balance their books. We were prepared to accept a single two day music event as for 2023 and 2024. But the planned expansion from 2 to 5 events is unacceptable. The ad hoc music making in the late summer afternoon is also unreasonable given the handful of people involved. It is fine for the club events within the clubhouse ... but everything done on the field has to be balanced against the impact on residents.

We are keen to support the Club and appreciate the neighbourly help they have given to us in past – such as allowing us to access our back garden during extension works and rent car parking space for our daughter's wedding.

Support for residents – Environmental health team

Having exchanged some detailed emails with the Environmental Health team, it has become clear to me that a number of enhancements to the existing system should be made to help support residents facing this type of situation. These could be addressed on the City Council's website and after discussion and agreement – and also added into the **standard conditions** for this type of event.

- invite ward councillors and RA / street representation to attend the Safety Advisor Group (**SAG**) **meetings** at which the event organisers present their plans ... and also have sets of the plans circulated beforehand
- provide a copy of the **Code of Practice** on the website along with a notice that council subscribes to this industry standard document. [This already happens on the websites of a number of other councils – which is how we found it originally.]
- require event organisers to employ a professional **sound monitoring** consultant and provide copies of their post event **reports** to Ward councillors and RA / street representatives. And also require them to invite RA / Street reps to attend the pre-event **sound tests**.
- confirm the **65 decibel or lower limits** in the licence conditions
- provide details of the recommended decibel monitoring **phone app** that residents can use for monitoring an event.

Conclusion

We personally are opposed to the granting of the licence to London Road Event Services Limited due cumulative impact and on the prevention of public nuisance grounds.

There is considerable objection to this application among residents as summarised above and I will be happy to go through my emails and provide extracts at the next stage ... though I expect a good number of these will already have been provided in the other response and will appear in the officer's report.

Yours sincerely

Hugh and Elizabeth Jane Clough