

## **OBJECTION TO:**

### **Licence application 298057**

Existing licence 279321

The Artyst (Othersyde Ltd), 54-56 Chesterton Road CB4 1EN

## **To:**

Cambridge Licensing

## **From:**

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

12 February 2025

## **OUTLINE**

This venue has already received the Council's rejection\* for this proposed licence (alcohol & music to 11pm (10:30pm Sundays) just 18 months ago. The venue's location within a Cumulative Impact Area, the lack of reliable management, and the neighbourhood public nuisance issues remain the same. On this basis alone, the application should be rejected.

\*Reference: Council's 'Record of Decision' letter, 1 July 2024.

I trust the current Council members and reviewers of this application will take into consideration the previous objections, Licensing meeting and outcomes – as they are still relevant.

However, herewith specifics for my objection. The majority fall under the four licensing objectives, with a strong emphasis on the **Prevention of Public Nuisance**.

### **1. LOCATION**

The venue is in a residential area, on the edge of the DeFreville conservation area. It is on the corner of Trafalgar Road, leading to Trafalgar Street – very narrow Victorian streets with a quiet, closely-knitted community of working families, elderly and single people. IF an all-night drinking/music venue was on this corner, with the associated noise, drink, drugs and disruption that can spill out late at night and down past our homes, it would have a seriously detrimental impact on the health and quality of life for my family and our neighbours.

### **2. TRAFFIC**

The venue entrances are close to heavy moving traffic on a busy one-way junction with Chesterton Road. The corner into double-yellow-lined Trafalgar Road is very narrow, less than two car widths when turning, with vehicles often mounting and occasionally parking illegally on the pavement. Drunk people and boisterous crowds (especially if an event stops at 11pm, with a mass exodus into the streets over an additional half hour) would be a danger to themselves, traffic and to general public lives.

### **3. CUMULATIVE IMPACT AREA**

Or, excessive alcohol supply creating negative public experiences. We already have an over-supply of alcohol-related venues, and the associated negative impacts. Within 100m, along the Chesterton Road shopfront, including The Artyst we have ten+ alcohol premises; on and off-licences, restaurants, shops, newsagents, TENS-related locations, bars and pubs. And within just a few more metres, even more. We are also very close to Wintercomfort Homeless Centre. As residents we experience first-hand the fall-out of the alcohol-related venues down our streets with loitering, littering, noise pollution, shouting/arguing and occasional fighting. Adding another late-night drink/music venue will simply worsen the situation.

### **4. ALLEYWAY**

There is an unlit alleyway behind the venue location and the rear of Trafalgar Road/Street. This is used as bin storage and rear access by residents, including my own children to/from school. Over many years there have been numerous instances of drink and drug use, urinating, littering and other anti-social behaviour. It is not safe at night: adding a drink/music crowd on the corner will increase this behaviour, particularly as the venue closes with an exit of a large number of noisy people, 'needing the loo', nauseous etc – this dark alleyway is ripe for exploitation. And hence, endangering the health and safety of residents.

### **5. HOURS**

Considering the above points, a seven-days-a-week, all-night every-night event venue serving alcohol to 11pm (and the added later time in 'drinking up' and exiting) is far too excessive. Plus the added noise and disruption that would follow. It is a strain and an abuse on the local neighbourhood. The immediate local neighbourhood made its views very clearly at the previous application: 21 objections; 20 of which live within 100m of the venue. We need to arrive safely at home and sleep at night in order to work in the day to care for our families. The Council has already heard neighbourhood views and reviewed the locality and impact, and has given the venue a daily licence to 7pm. There is no positive value by extending these hours.

### **6. LAYOUT**

The venue has two floors, a large ground floor and an even larger basement. An open stairwell connect the two, close to an entrance. The application proposes use of music throughout – live and recorded – including DJs. By its very nature, an underground venue with no windows, playing music for a crowd with alcohol (and unseen drug use) creates a noisy atmosphere. Large events mean large numbers of people, and large quantities of alcohol. And at closing times, a large exit of inebriated people. And, for this to be potentially every single day, until 11pm (10:30pm Sundays). Again, this is not the location for an pub/ club and would have a serious detrimental impact to the neighbourhood.

## 7. MANAGEMENT

Alongside neighbours, we have expressed our concerns to the venue's owner directly, and at the previous Council meeting. We have spoken before, during and after the venue opening in late summer 2025. Despite the marketing name change from pre-licence bar/club 'The Alcademy' to The Artyst 'community arts space', the plan seems to be reverting back towards an all-week all-night drinking venue with music and DJs. i.e., a focus on large volume alcohol sales. Even though, just 18 months ago the Council, following the previous neighbourhood objections, limited alcohol sales to 7pm and no use of the outside space. I cannot see any management plan for handling a quiet and safe exit of post-event crowds. It would be impossible to manage people heading down Trafalgar Road/Street: in fact it is outside the management's scope. So far I have not been reassured of the venue's business plan and management's ability to handle alcohol and the public. In fact the opposite, having witnessed violations of the licence and abusive behaviour (below). I feel very uncomfortable – in fact, unsafe and extremely concerned for my family's health – about this venue serving any alcohol at anytime, let alone beyond 7pm every night with crowded events.

## 8. LICENCE VIOLATIONS AND INCIDENTS

To back up point 7. Before, during and since opening, the following incidents have been witnessed and reported to Licensing and/or Police. Photographic proof available on request.

**Initial blue poster licence application.** This was up for just a day or so, then removed without a valid explanation. A neighbour only spotted the poster by chance; we had to follow up with Licensing to get it reinstated, at our time and effort.

**Unlicensed use of pavement.** Several times after opening, the venue placed tables and chairs outside, some with people having drinks. This was reported to Licensing.

**Illegal parking on the pavement.** Several instances of an untaxed vehicle (related to the owner/business partner) directly outside the venue entrance on the pavement, unattended, some with parking tickets. It is illegal to drive an untaxed car. This is a '**Public safety**' issue.

**Unlicensed drinking outside.** Recorded instance of three individuals with alcohol, loitering on the corner entrance during a TENs event. Reported to the Police and Licensing.

**Verbal and physical abuse by the owner.** One late evening I enquired politely inside the venue as it was post-7pm licensing hours, and alcohol was being served. The owner smelt of alcohol, was verbally and physically aggressive to me, and pushed me outside. Reported to Licensing and the Police with an Assault Crime Reference recorded. ***This alone, to me, warrants removal of the licence, let alone extending it.***

**Verbal abuse by the owner and/or staff.** Late evening, a neighbour was accosted in the street, followed, and shouted at by two people from the venue. This was witnessed (heard) by my wife. Again this was reported by the neighbour to Licensing and the Police.

**CCTV not working.** Coincidentally, the CCTV at the above incidents was 'broken'. It should be working at all times, for the '**Prevention of crime and disorder**'. This again is a licence breach – as noted by the Police – and reported to Licensing.

**Smashed window.** This is most recent. For a few weeks now there is a pane of glass that has been repeatedly punched in several places. It has been ignored; it has not been repaired, covered up, or even temporarily covered up with a warning sign and safety tape. Despite this, seating is still provided inside next to the glass, even with children seated. This does not fulfil '**Prevention of children from harm**'. Glass is falling out on to the pavement, endangering the public and cycles. This lack of common sense and care is deeply worrying. If the owner is failing to do even basic maintenance and repair, how can the public entrust them with running a safe venue, let alone sales of alcohol to a crowded event?

The above incidents cover just one person's experience, over less than six months of the venue opening. It should not be the public's responsibility to manage this venue, at our negative expense.

## CONCLUSION

I see no evidence on how the management can meet the licensing objectives. Extending the current hours will increase the negative effects of the Cumulative Impact Area, create more public nuisance – and I fear – increase crime and affect public safety including children.

I strongly object to this application and trust the Council will support these concerns.

Sincerely,

Ben Rollings

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## APPENDIX A: PREVIOUS OBJECTION

The following (line indented) relates to the original Licence application 279321, June 2024. Although the trading name (from the 'Alcademy' to 'Artyst' [SIC] ) has changed, the location, applicant Othersyde Ltd and the management have not. Many of the objections remain the same – licensing hours, music/DJs, Cumulative Impact Area.

Of relevance to this new application, is the potential additional disruption to the neighbourhood for **C) OUTSIDE PUBLIC PAVEMENT AREA**. We are still very concerned about the venue's 'creep' towards this – as evidenced by the unlicensed pavement use, and the current 'creep' of re-applying for extended alcohol hours, despite the Council's limit.

### OBJECTION TO

**Licence application 279321  
The Alcademy, 54 Chesterton Road**

**UPDATE #03 to online submitted application - please add to your records**

**From:**

██████████  
██  
██████████

## **#3) OBJECTIONS, DETAILED,**

**NEW: Emailed 4 June 2024**

Following recent communications with the applicant, I am making these additional detailed objections: (as “quoted”).

**The following are all based on objections to Public Nuisance & Public Safety, specifically:**

- daily, long late hours of alcohol and music licensing
- use of outside pavement area
- ...which relates to prevention of public nuisance (noise, late hours, drunk behaviour, loitering)
- and public safety

### **A) MUSIC AND ALCOHOL HOURS:**

#### **1) Full time music:**

The applicant has stated “it is not our intention to establish a nightclub or full-time music venue”.

However the application is requesting full-time music: it states 8am to 23:00 (10:30 Sundays) on every day of the week. It also states recorded music played “within the venue” and “Usually at weekends ...by a DJ”. This is alongside live music in the basement.

#### **2) Use of recorded music**

The applicant has stated “We haven’t applied for a late night licence because we have no intention of running a nightclub, disco or full-time music venue (we simply want to be able to run occasional music evenings)”.

However, this is again in direct contrast to Alcademy publicity:

- “occasional” this is in contrast to publicity which states “regular music nights”
- “DJ Night with Construct Sounds - Immerse yourself in a perfect blend of electronic beats curated by top-tier record label: Construct Sounds.” (Source: crowdfunder page, alongside picture of DJ at mixing table)
- type of music: “from techno and house to drum ’n’ bass, grime and trap” (Source: [constructsound.com](http://constructsound.com)) - this loud and heavy music with heavy bass and repetitive beats

#### **3) All venue music/alcohol**

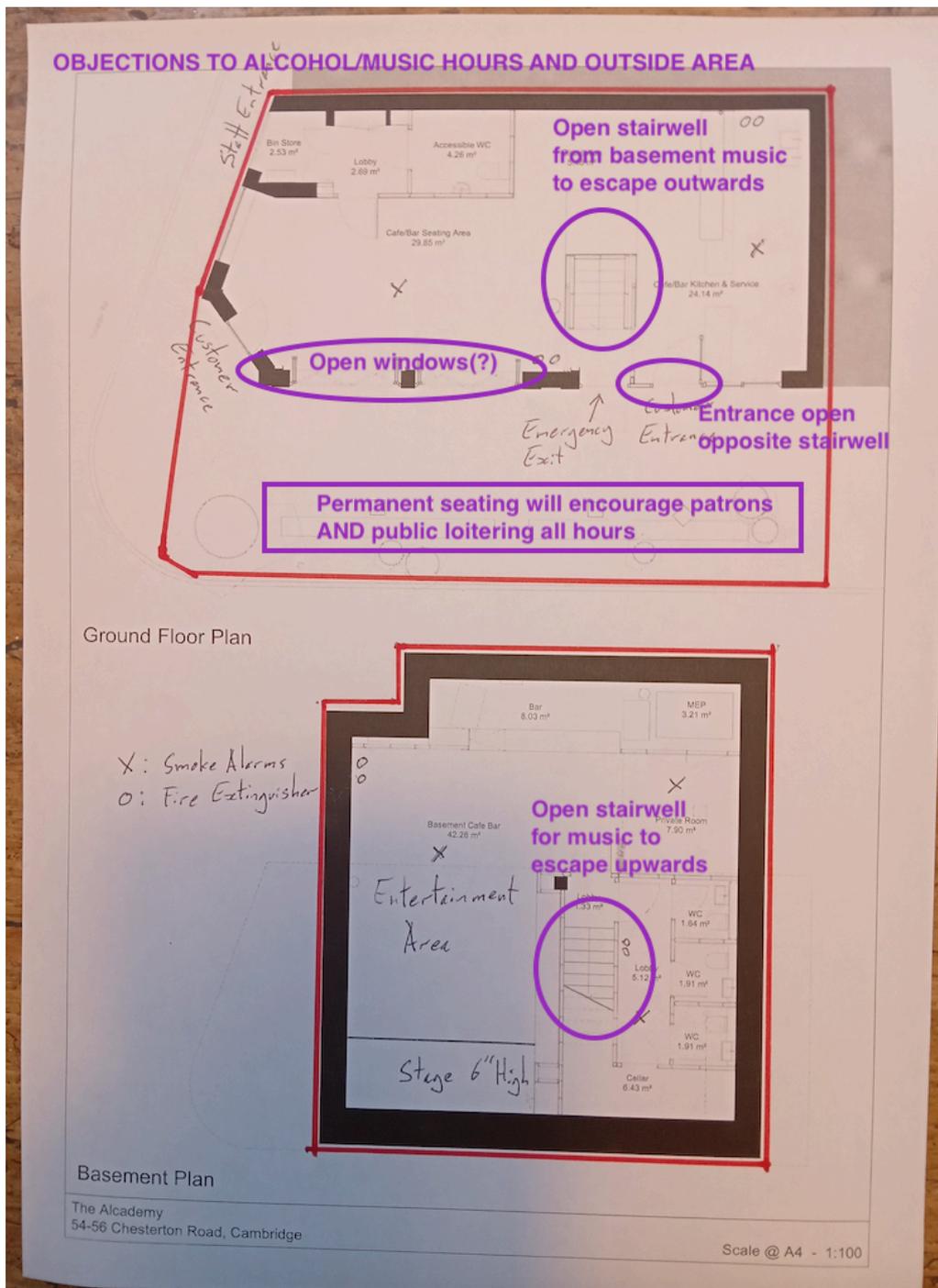
Applicant states music “in the basement only”, and “...the noise levels are so low that no sounds from the basement will be heard in any of the adjoining flats .... and they certainly won’t be leaking out onto the street (the basement is very well insulated).”

But, in contradiction:

i) as above, the application states states recorded music played “within the venue”

ii) Also, sound, music and people-over-music bounces and travels...

iii) On their floor plans as part of the application, and publicity photos, there is an open flight of stairs in the middle of the venue, directly facing a door on Chesterton Rd, the corner door on Trafalgar Rd - and - open windows if the illustration is correct (in red below)...with this many ‘holes’ in the building how can any noise “won’t be leaking out onto the street” ?



#### 4) Patrons' behaviour

Applicant states "at which people are sitting down".

However, the type of music above actively encourages dance - it is a 'mini' nightclub with a stage and 'entertainment area'

#### 5) Potential for extension.

If this licence goes ahead (music to 1030pm/11pm daily), then it is only a minor extension that would create a full nightclub/bar/venue that could potentially continue into the early hours. This would ruin our lives.

#### 6) Extensive hours.

Applicant states "our opening and closing hours won't be excessive".

But, this is excessive for a residential area. Full time music, every day until 10:30/11pm whilst we are trying to work, study, rest or sleep is not acceptable.

## **7) Alcohol hours**

All of the above points relate to alcohol use, as well as music

## **8) Alcohol crowding** ('Cumulative zone' limits?)

- We already have plenty of alcohol on and off places within a minutes walk. It is becoming excessive and I believe there is a limit to this 'crowding'. To state: along Chesterton Road we have The Old Spring, Co-op, La Dispensa, Hungary market and restaurant, Thirsty, Newsagent, Grape Britannia, The Waterman, Tivoli, The Boathouse - plus around Mitcham's Corner The Fort St George, The Portland Arms, Pink Elephant, Fellows.

## **B) LOCATION**

### **1) Noise & nuisance**

Applicant states "With regard to noise, I think it is highly unlikely that our customers will leave our venue and walk down Trafalgar Road. Trafalgar Road only leads to the river and isn't a shortcut to anywhere else in Cambridge. I am very confident that virtually 100% of our customers will leave the venue and then walk or cycle back home by setting off from our exits onto Chesterton Road – they will have no reason to leave our venue and then walk down Trafalgar Road – unless they happen to live there or if they are members of a rowing club."

2) The above is an incorrect assumption. Plus it completely ignores Trafalgar Street. And, Trafalgar Road does not "just lead to the river" - it leads to Trafalgar Street, Victoria Bridge, Ferry Path and the Fort St George Bridge, which all lead directly to city centre. For a venue that is seeking to serve the community, it is shocking that it does not even recognise the local layout of the streets: in fact, ignoring them in this statement.

### **3) 20+ years experience**

We have lived here for twenty years so can speak truthfully from experience; ie from direct exposure to Trafalgar Road/Chesterton Road corner. We can hear traffic in the evening. We can hear people talking at the top of the road at night. We have many people 'cutting through' Trafalgar Road and Street; it is a shortcut to the city. And when events are on, we experience increased traffic (cars, on foot, and drunken behaviour) eg Firework Night, May balls, Strawberry Fair, the Fair/circus etc.

### **4) Thirsty (venue, Chesterton Road)**

Side note, again from experience: We recently last year had Thirsty's rear area closed due to noise as we had no peace in our gardens during the summer. And that was not even amplified music, and in the daytime.

## **C) OUTSIDE PUBLIC PAVEMENT AREA**

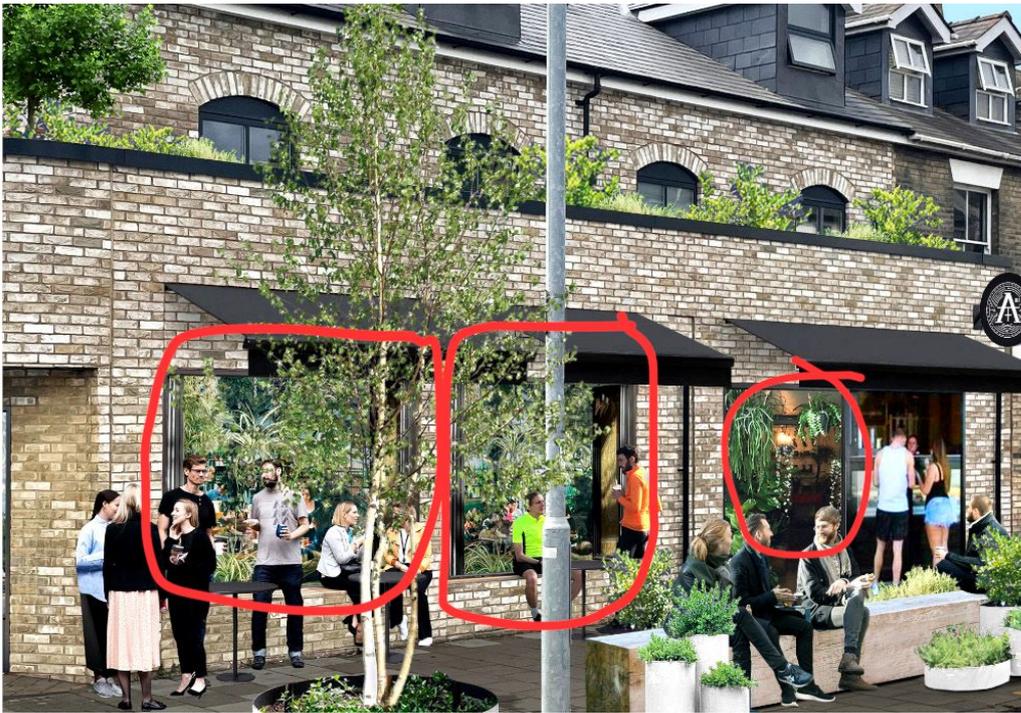
### **1) Outside seating area**

Applicant states "We will only be serving people in the outside seating area up until 9.30pm".

- However, this use of "outside seating area" is not stated in the application. If so, this means alcohol, glass/breakages, music from the open door/windows, noise and public nuisance in the street, which will easily spill down our road.

- Also, isn't the outside area a danger to pedestrians and cars? Driving up from Trafalgar Road, it is difficult even now with a clear pavement to see left before people are crossing. Having street furniture, alcohol and loitering will increase this danger.

- The plans and publicity photos appear to show solid, fixed seating. If this is there permanently, how can it be policed for people (patrons or not) to sit/drink at any time of day or night?



## 2) People management

Applicant states "after which we will ask customers to move to the inside of the venue."

- I can't see how this is ever to going to be policed and enforced. How can it possibly be controlled to exactly 9:30pm; any later and they are in breach of licence.

- As point earlier - what if the licence is extended, to 10:30/11pm every night?

## 3) Noise

Applicant states "I very much doubt that conversations taking place in the seating area at the front of the venue, on Chesterton Road, will be audible on Trafalgar Road. If customers do start getting noisy, then our staff will request that they keep the noise down as a mark of respect for people living nearby."

- As above. I've lived near a pub on a corner before and I can guarantee that people will get merry, noisy and occasionally rowdy. We simply cannot accept this on our doorstep. How can this be policed/controlled? It will make our lives unbearable.

## 4) Use of the street as a toilet / drug use.

Applicant states "We are constructing toilets in the venue, in the basement, and a disabled toilet on the ground floor. So I don't think there will be any problems with our customers being caught short and needing to relieve themselves in the outside areas that you mention."

- How can this possibly be policed either? What about people leaving the venue - and the outside area?

## D) OTHER ASPECTS TO THE VENUE - NO OBJECTIONS

### 1) Continental Cafe, Community Activities

Applicant states: "The venue that we are seeking to establish is more of a continental type cafe/bar where people gather together for good conversation, to participate in community activities (such as talks, presentations, board game nights, book readings, etc)"

We have NO objection to this, or to a cafe, within cafe hours to the late afternoon, and a community space. As an example, the venue Stir, further east on Chesterton Road, is a similar place and looks like their business is doing well - and they close late afternoon and do not serve alcohol, or play music outside. We suggest this is a better, more neighbourly and community-orientated business model.

## **E) PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT**

### **1) Consultation**

#### **Applicant states:**

“We have consulted with all the necessary Council departments and the Police, so we now have a very clear understanding of what the venue can and cannot be and how it should be managed to ensure that it meets the needs of the community and addresses their likely concerns. On the basis of those consultations, we are now able to consult with you and other members of the locality with a clear description of the venue”

However, this public ‘consultation’ has happened too late, in fact after the licence application was submitted and displayed. Fact: prior to the application, there has been zero consultation with the neighbourhood. I have not heard from anyone on our Road/Street (and we have a strong community that talks and WhatsApps often) on any form of consultation. It is also very worrying that a business that markets itself as ‘community’ based does not seek the views/ opinions of it’s immediate neighbourhood.

### **2) Facebook.**

**Applicant states** “We have also posted information about the venue on the Facebook CB4 community page and invited people to add their thoughts, positive and negative, to the thread.”

- Facebook is a closed private social app. It’s not a public space and not everyone subscribes or can view it. From what we have seen, there appears to be little support; of which another point:
- Parking: on Facebook CB4, the response to a question of parking was ‘plenty of parking in the streets nearby’ (paraphrasing). Trafalgar Road/Street are residents only parking for the majority of the time. It is very difficult to find a space, even for residents.

**3) Applicant continues:** “...the application for an alcohol licence is the beginning of this consultation process.”

- The application is not a consultation. It is a small notice posted at the END of the business process. How can it be a public consultation if the licence is granted without consultation direct with the local community?
- We have only recently received an invitation to the premises and talk with the applicants (this past week, and the day before the licence ends). This is way too late and appears to be a last-minute attempt to tick the box of local consultation.

## **F) SUMMARY**

As stated, I object to:

- late licensing hours every day
- alcohol licensing to late hours every day
- music
- outside public seating area

Please can the above points be seriously considered. We are very concerned about this venue’s licensing and request that the hours be cut to daytime and alcohol/music removed.

Thank you for your consideration

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## **#2) ADDITIONAL POINTS,**

**Emailed, 21 May 2024**

Additional point 4)

Along with quieter events, the application is asking for live and recorded music (including a DJ), every day until 11pm. So that potential for loud, live, recorded, DJ music could mean a mini-club night every single night until 11pm - and later as patrons leave. If granted, this would then have the potential for extended hours into the morning. Simply, this quiet conservation area is not the place for a disco or a club, and would seriously harm the health, safety and peace of local residents.

Additional point 5)

According to visual plans, the lack of sufficient toilet facilities (particularly for males), would mean outside areas being used as a toilet - particularly the dark private passage between Rickard House and Trafalgar Street rear gardens. This also has the potential for drug abuse, as I have previously witnessed over the years living here. This is of concern for public safety and for my children and neighbours' children who use this rear access.

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## **#1) ORIGINAL OBJECTION,**

**Online, 13 May 2024**

Point 1) The licence application notice was only display for less than a couple of days. Is this legally incorrect? See uploaded file\*, as of the weekend of 11 May there is no onsite notice. This should not be the case, as it does not give the public and neighbourhood sufficient time. Please can this be reinstated and with a longer notice period.

Point 2) Objection related to item '3. Public Nuisance' .

2a) Trafalgar Road is a quite area with many families - especially at night. The excessive licensing hours will lead to noise from patrons leaving the premises, every day and every evening. Noise from the basement will emanate from the surrounding building and especially with a door open. This is not the area for a underground nightclub.

2b) The outside pavement seating area - this will further increase the noise and disturbance; patrons will clearly be heard at night; any queues in our street for the basement events will create noise; on school weekday evenings whilst our children are studying/sleeping it will be very disruptive

2c) There has been zero consultation with the neighbourhood. We have a WhatsApp Group to communicate local news and I have not heard from anyone within our Trafalgar Road and Street community that has been spoken to or consulted about this venue.

2d) The application states "9. Community Engagement: We will engage with the local community to address concerns and foster a positive relationship". This has not happened. It is therefore a worrying precedent that in the future our voices will not be heard and concerns not addressed.

2e) We already have plenty of drinking establishments in this area.

\*3) Your 'upload file' is not working.

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