

Alexis Mather
12 Trafalgar Street
Cambridge, CB4 1ET

To: Cambridge Licensing authority

Cc: West Chesterton Councillors

Re: Licence variation application 298057 for Othersyde Ltd 'Alcademy' Venue at 54-56 Chesterton Road

13 February 2026

I write in **objection** to the above licence amendment application.

1. Clarification of entities and persons:

For avoidance of doubt, and given the changes of trading names, I draw your attention to the equivalence between these entities:

- Othersyde Limited (<https://find-and-update.company-information.service.gov.uk/company/11126270>)
- The Alcademy
- The Artyst

I note that Matthew Taylor, born [REDACTED], is the only individual listed by Companies House as being a 'person of significant control' of Othersyde Ltd since December 2017. To all intents and purposes, he is the ultimate proprietor and accountable person of The Artyst.

2. Supporting Documents:

These documents are included by reference into the present letter. Full text for these appears at the end of the present objection letter.

- Item 1: "Alcademy licence objection - final v1.01.pdf" – my original objection
- Item 2: "FormSubmission-report-threats-verbal-abuse-or-assaulttaa-82172-25-3535-ir04.pdf" – report submitted to police following harassment by Mr Taylor
- My letter of objection to the initial granting of this licence, dated 5 June 2024. I have reviewed this letter prior to submitting it here, and I stand by every word and every point made, notably as related to negative impact on the core tenets of licensing regulation; its contents form the basis for the present objection.

- A copy of the report that I made to Police, that gave rise to a crime (public order – intimidation) being recorded, reference [REDACTED]. I was the victim, and identified Matthew Taylor, proprietor of Othersyde Ltd/The Artyst, as one of the two perpetrators.
 - I am firmly of the belief that these incidents would have led to a criminal prosecution of Mr Taylor, had his own premises' CCTV system been able to deliver evidence to the investigating police officer (Ciara Twomey, warrant 1249). More on this point below, under 'Failure to keep active CCTV'.
 - I am of the view that Mr Taylor's involvement in this incident and an assault (see also 3.1 Failure to keep active CCTV) on the premises in question are grounds for REVOCATION of the licence, and that any question of extending this licence is beyond the pale, given the GROSS infringement of the primary licensing objective that the Council is expected to uphold.

3. Further points of unsuitability of licence and licence extension.

Further to the mentioned documents, which speak loudly in their own right, I wish to call out a few additional points:

3.1 Failure to keep active CCTV, or obstruction of Police investigation

Relating to crime reference [REDACTED], and to crime ref [REDACTED] (Common Assault against Ben Rollings) which were investigated by Constable Ciara Twomey (warrant 1249).

These incidents were considered serious enough to warrant Constable Twomey visiting the premises as part of their enquiries; I believe this was principally to review and/or retrieve CCTV footage of the events of 30th October 2025.

Both crimes took place in full view of The Artyst's own CCTV cameras, indoor and outdoor. The assault took place indoors, and the harassment/intimidation outdoors.

Despite this, Mr Taylor (or representative) told the police officer that the CCTV system was not or had not been operative, and that thus there would not be any footage available.

Paragraph 13 of Annex 2 of the **Existing Licence** states:

"Digital CCTV with appropriate recording equipment shall be installed, operated and maintained throughout the premises internally to cover all public areas (apart from toilets). The system will be switched on and live during all times that the public have access to the premises whilst open to members of the public."

Consequently, one or both of the following are true:

- The Artyst did not comply with the licence provision cited above.
- Mr Taylor obstructed the duties of a police officer investigating two crimes, i.e. lied about availability of footage.

In either case, The Artyst has failed (in this regard alone, relating strictly to CCTV) to comply with conditions under **The prevention of crime and disorder**.

As a point of clarification, when I initially queried this avenue with Luke Catchpole, I was given an explanation that since the incidents occurred during a TEN, that the licence conditions (including para 13 above) did not hold. However, upon review, including of the exceptionally clear wording cited above, I disagree and have challenged Mr Catchpole to provide me with full documentation of how he and the council have come to this position.

3.2 Mr Taylor's personal failure to enforce licence conditions

On October 30th 2025 (date of crimes recorded in above incidents), my wife witnessed two or three people OUTSIDE the premises smoking, while holding drinks in glasses that had presumably been supplied by The Artyst.

Mr Taylor was also outside engaged in discussion with another individual. Mr Taylor, was making no effort whatsoever to enforce the provision explicitly added to the licence by the committee on July 1st precluding use of the outdoors. Viz: Annex 3, paragraph 1: "1. No alcohol to be consumed outside the premises".

3.3 Misrepresentations by Mr Taylor - Petition

On September 2nd 2025, **prior to full public opening of his premises**, Matthew Taylor created an online petition entitled "Help The Artyst Stay Open Later!".

- I presume that in the context of a full licencing hearing to follow from present and other objections, Mr Taylor will claim to have support for this initiative in the form of signatories to this petition.
- Mr Taylor has expressed to me and to others that his business is not viable without extending the hours. This was also on September 2nd when I attended his 'community outreach' event that appeared to be a pre-opening announcement of his intent to seek to amend the licence (that he had essentially not even exercised yet).
- In the 14 months between July 1st 2024 (grant of licence by committee) and September 2nd 2025, Mr Taylor was investing his time, money and effort into a venture that he knew was not viable (his own statement) without extended licencing which he had been denied on July 1st.

Ergo: Mr Taylor cannot in good faith state that he tried to make his business work before realising this point. He cannot reasonably ask the council and local residents to compromise licencing objectives in order to effectively 'subsidise' his poor business judgement.

3.4 Misrepresentations by Mr Taylor - TENs

I have noted from interactions with Council Licencing Officers themselves, that the use of TENs is promoted in order to 'set the stage' for later permanent license variations. In an email to me of 17 June 2024, Alex Beebe (Environmental Health Officer – Commercial & Licensing, Communities, Cambridge City Council) states:

“

Temporary Event Notices (TENs) can be submitted to allow licensable activities to take place at premises that do not have a licence or their licence does not cover what they want to do. The only people that can object to a Temporary Event Notice are the Police and Environmental Health. It is accepted that the use of TENs in these situations can help all parties to determine whether a variation to the licence would cause any issues in regards the licensing objectives.

“

I was quite surprised by this, and the fact that this is in fact being served as advice from the Licensing team to licensees (apparent from unrelated discussions with other licence-holders). This approach struck me at the time as being ripe for abuse. For example: apply for a TEN, hold a minimal low key event, repeat 9 times and then apply for a variation which enables fully-attended, lucrative, but negatively-impacting ongoing use of the premises.

For avoidance of doubt, I am NOT accusing Council staff of promoting an abuse of their own system. I am outlining a fairly obvious strategy for a bad-faith actor to adopt.

I believe that Mr Taylor has been undertaking precisely this strategy. My evidence follows:

As of 28 November 2025: the TENs granted to The Artyst are as follows:

295942	The Artyst	TEN	20/11/2025	21/11/2025
295814	The Artyst	TEN	14/11/2025	15/11/2025
295573	The Artyst	TEN	07/11/2025	08/11/2025
295285	The Artyst	TEN	30/10/2025	31/10/2025
295198	The Artyst	TEN	24/10/2025	25/10/2025
294685	The Artyst	TEN	10/10/2025	11/10/2025

(an updated and current list has been requested, but was not available at time of writing, though an identical event was advertised for 11 Dec 2025 at least)

On most (possibly every single one) of these, The Artyst modestly advertised ‘Chess Night’, and it was clearly the case that on those occasions, chess (possibly THE reference ‘low-key activity’...) was played on multiple tables at the premises.

In stark contrast:

- The updated licence application states, under “RECORDED MUSIC” an intention to play “recorded music played by a DJ”. This is precisely in line with the original application made in 2024, when a party/nightclub atmosphere was being promoted in materials related to the venue.
- Mr Taylor stated to a journalist (Amy Britton, Cambridge News, article published 7 September 2025) in the lead up to the opening that “The basement is going to be an events space with a cocktail bar”

These two latter facts, and including Mr Taylor’s own admission that his business is not viable unless it sells alcohol for extended (vs current) hours, indicate that his economic imperative completely outweighs any of the nominal cultural and local benefits he has espoused.

Lastly, and relating to the crime number [REDACTED] 5 (public order – intimidation) for which my report is attached, I will point out that this incident took place while a TEN (id: 295285) was in force. Crime ref [REDACTED] 5 (Common Assault, on the premises no less) was also reported in the window of that TEN.

Thus, not only do I believe that Mr Taylor has been acting in bad faith with respect to his use of TENs to support a licence variation, one of these TENs appears to have given an opportunity for his true nature to show itself, and to support in evidence that fact that this individual should not be remotely involved in licenced activities.

I urge you to reject this application outright.

Sincerely,

Alexis Mather

