



Representing the interests of Barbican Residents

33 Lauderdale Tower
Barbican
London EC2Y 8BY

City of London Licensing Authority
Walbrook Wharf
78-83 Upper Thames Street
London EC4R 3TD

22nd May 2014

Dear Mr Sirs,

Re

**The Meat Company Aldersgate Ltd
Unit 3, 200 Aldersgate Street EC1**

I write on behalf of the Barbican Association. The Barbican Association is the Recognized Tenants' Association for the Barbican Residential Estate, with over 95% of the properties on the estate being long leasehold.

Our chief concern in this matter is the Prevention of Public Nuisance.

It is a matter of regret to us that the applicant choose not to contact and engage with local residents' associations either before lodging this application or immediately after. However, the Barbican Association did contact the applicant's solicitor, but the earliest meeting that could be arranged between the parties was on Wednesday 15 May, leaving insufficient time to resolve differences before the deadline for representations to be made; thus triggering the necessity of a hearing.

Our overall concerns

We see in the City of London Corporation, Licensing Act 2003, Statement of Licensing Policy, January 2013, the reference in paragraph 2 to "***the well-established, concentrated housing developments at the Barbican***" and we are informed in the same paragraph that, "***It is vital that their residential amenity is protected and this is emphasised in the City's Core Strategy which aims 'To protect existing housing and amenity and provide additional housing in the City, concentrated in or near existing residential communities...'***"

We note that the applicant seeks to open a "restaurant and bar" with 190 "covers" and 21 "bar seats". They wish to be able to show films (sporting events on TV??), have live music, have recorded music, allow performances of dance, and have other unspecified entertainment (section H). Section M states that customers at the Bar may consume alcohol without food. This does not appear to be planned to be a quiet establishment and the applicant has informed us that they wish it to become a "destination" restaurant (in which case the patrons will be unfamiliar with the immediate locality).

The premises in question is across the road from the edge of the Barbican area, a major residential concentration in the City of London. Whilst the doors of the premises are probably not visible from many Barbican flats, when arriving or departing customers are two metres out from the doors, then they are within sight of over 100 Barbican flats.

In addition, we believe that many of the patrons of The Meat Company may leave the premises and walk northwards, seeking to hail a cab on the street or be wandering towards the Barbican Underground station, or perhaps be going towards the vibrant nightlife area that the northern side of Smithfield has become. We have grave concerns that many patrons who may arrive at this "destination" "restaurant and bar" in the dark, and then leave in the dark, will not fully appreciate that the Barbican – Aldersgate Street area is mixed use, both residential and offices.

Our reality is that the buildings on the west side of Aldersgate Street have created an acoustic canyon effect. In addition, the prominent concrete balconies of the Barbican residential blocks have their own unfortunate acoustic characteristics, in that street-level sound is reflected off the smooth white soffits under the balconies and then into the bedrooms and other rooms in the flats, for which opening the windows is the principal means of ventilation.

Minimizing street noise in an area that is usually quiet by 21.00hrs is a key concern for Barbican residents.

Opening Hours

At the meeting arranged by the Barbican Association with the applicant and the applicant's licensing solicitor residents' representatives stated (amongst other matters) that residents wanted "last orders" at 23.00 and all patrons, customers and the public out of the licensed premises by 23.30.

Subsequently, the applicant's solicitor has informed the Barbican Association, as far as the timings are concerned, that the applicant was willing to meet our request as far as "last orders" at 23.00 and all patrons, customers and the public out of the licensed premises by 23.30 on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings, but **not** on Friday evenings.

For Fridays, the applicant has proposed to the Barbican Association, and to our house group, "last orders" at 24.00 midnight and all patrons, customers and the public out of the licensed premises by 00.30. This is not acceptable to us. We note that the City of London's "Statement of Licensing Policy" says, "***Residents have a reasonable expectation that their sleep will not be unduly disturbed between the hours of 23.00 and 07:00.***"

We therefore request that the applicant's proposed timings are rejected and that new timings are imposed so that last orders are at 23.00 and customers are off the premises before 23.30, on all days of the week, so as to Prevent Nuisance caused by departing customers.

We adhere to the principal that residents, need and are entitled to decent night's sleep (particularly if they work on Saturdays) and we know that many of the flats overlooking Aldersgate Street have children living in them who need decent quality sleep.

Applicant's Proposed Conditions

The applicant's solicitor has also offered the following conditions to us, which we find acceptable:

QUOTE

For the avoidance of doubt our client has also agreed to the following conditions which were put to you at our meeting:

1. All windows will be kept closed whilst the premises licence is in use
2. A lobbied area shall be provided at the entrance and exit to the premises
3. The entrance/exit doors shall be fitted with self closing devices
4. A contact telephone number shall be made available to local residents which they can use to report any noise disturbance.
5. A free taxi phone service and an internal waiting area will be provided for customers

6. All deliveries and refuse collection will be via the loading bay and not from the street
7. An incident book/register shall be maintained to record:
 - all incidents of crime and disorder occurring at the premises;
 - details of occasions when the police are called to the premises.
 - Any noise complaints made by neighbours

This book/register will be available for inspection by a police officer or other authorised officer on request.

8. A notice shall be displayed at the exit to the premises with words to the effect that customers will be asked to depart quietly so as not to disturb nearby residents.

UNQUOTE

We interpret number 2 above as meeting our request for two pairs of double-doors to help prevent sound leakage from the premises.

We seek further conditions

We wish it to be a condition and / or part of an agreed management plan that the "ordered mini-cab" / Addison Lee etc queue / dwell area should be in Albion Way and not on the Museum of London roundabout and not in Aldersgate Street north of the roundabout.

We note in section J of the applicant that it is intended that alcohol may be supplied for consumption both "on" and "off" the premises. Whilst we are not concerned about "on" sales, we wish that the "off" sales are limited by condition so that such sales are to be "only in sealed containers". We do not want smokers carry glasses of wine or open bottles of alcohol beverages outside whilst drinkers have a cigarette or make a phone call, or, worse still from Barbican residents perspective, wander across the road to the public bench by the Aldersgate Turret.

We would like the applicant to revisit the internal designs so that any internal lift can also go up to the restaurant section up on the mezzanine level where it appears that the table density is lower and therefore the dining experience will be better. This would allow wheelchair users to have access to that better ambiance.

We are more than willing to engage further with the applicant and other interested parties before the hearing and, as we have done with other applications, to appear in front of the Members of the City of London Committee at the Hearing,

We thank you for your attention to this,

Yours sincerely,

Robert B. Barker
Chairman
Licensing Sub-Committee
Barbican Association – General Council