

████████████████████
████ Bolt Court

London EC4A 3DQ

27 February 2024

Dear Mr Breese

Premises License Application: Bloomsbury Leisure Holdings Ltd for Tokyo Hit, Ground Floor and Basement , 165 Fleet Street, London EC4A 2AE

I write to object to this license application. The application relates to a themed mini golf course on the ground floor with bars and a food offering, plus a bowling alley with bars and fixed seating on the basement floor. The premises extend from Fleet Street along St Dunstan's Court.

The application seeks:

1. Sale of alcohol to be consumed on and off the premises from 10am to 2am, seven days a week.
2. To provide entertainment, live and recorded music, films for the same hours over seven days.
3. Provision of late night refreshments both indoors and outdoors from 11pm to 2am, seven days a week.
4. Closure of the premises at 2.30 am, seven days a week.

My objection is based on the four licensing objectives: the prevention of crime and disorder, public safety, the prevention of public nuisance and the protection of children from harm.

My husband and I have owned and lived in our flat in 6 Bolt Court since 2006. I am a barrister practicing from chambers in the Inner Temple.

The premises at 165 Fleet Street is in close proximity to residential premises, not only in Bolt Court but also in Crane Court, Red Lion Court and Dr Johnson's Court. The licensing application if granted would seriously affect residents. It is my understanding that there is a plan for student residential accommodation opposite 165 Fleet Street, in the premises formerly housing Freshfields. Furthermore, the application if granted would cause problems for Bolt Court and Gough Square more generally, which are frequented regularly not only by local residents but by pedestrians, tourists and visitors including children.

The sale of alcohol for 16 hours every day of the week appears to be an integral part of the business plan for the leisure facility to be operated by Tokyo Hit.

The premises at 165 Fleet Street has no outside space for the consumption of alcohol off the premises all day, or of late night refreshments. Inevitably, public areas adjacent would be used by customers, in particular the courts running immediately off Fleet Street, Bolt Court and Gough Square.

The sale of alcohol for 16 hours every day of the week for consumption on and off the premises clearly has the potential for crime and disorder, threat to public safety, public nuisance and the risk of harm to children. Drunken customers may well frequent the adjacent courts throughout the day.

There is potential for antisocial behaviour, in the form of aggression and other activities such as littering, vomiting, urination and defecation. The latter two regrettably occur frequently in St Dunstan's Court and I already contact on a regular basis the City of London Street Cleansing Service and the Ambassadors of the Fleet Street Quarter to provide an urgent remedy.

The disruption to residents in Bolt Court and the other courts from late night sale of alcohol and refreshments for consumption off the premises until 2am is self-evident. Nor can residents be assured that customers leaving the premises by 2.30am would do so quietly.

There are in addition matters of more general concern, not confined to residents of nearby courts. Bolt Court is used as a pedestrian thoroughfare and has attractive planters. There is already a problem with the planters being used for cigarette butts and disused drinking cans, with consequent littering. The steps at the entrance to 6 Bolt Court are frequently used by unauthorized persons for consumption of food and drink. These problems would be exacerbated were the license application to be approved. Furthermore, the use of Gough Square must be considered. Gough Square is an historic precinct with Dr Johnson's House, attractive visitor seating and the much loved statue of Dr Johnson's cat Hodge. Individual tourists and tourist guided groups visit Gough Square through the day. In addition, during the Christmas/New Year Season 2023 – 2024, Gough Square was on the popular Snowman trail and attracted many families with children. The potential for customers consuming alcohol during the day using the seating provided in Gough Square, with consequential antisocial behaviour, poses a potential nuisance to visitors generally and a risk to the safety of children who visit throughout the year.

Finally, I draw a comparison with the mini golf facility Puttshack Bank in the basement at 1 Poultry, London EC2R 8EJ. This is not a residential area. Furthermore, there is to the best of my knowledge no sale of alcohol or food for consumption off the premises at any time, and the hours of operation are more restricted than those in the application for 165 Fleet Street.

Please acknowledge receipt of this objection.

Yours sincerely

Rebecca Bailey-Harris