

Dear LBTH Licensing,

**Spitalfields Community Group (SCG) OBJECTS to the licensing application submitted for “Venue 82” at 82a Commercial Street E1 6LY, for the sale of alcohol from 1100–2300 Monday – Saturday and 1200-2200 on Sunday.**

Spitalfields Community Group (SCG) was founded in 2011 with the aim of representing those who live and work in Spitalfields, enhancing their quality of living, and improving their sense of community. To that end, we have sought to address the ongoing concern shared by many of our members about the need to balance the flourishing licensed economy locally with residents’ domestic and working lives.

SCG actively supported the adoption and implementation of the Cumulative Impact Zone by LBTH, which recognizes the negative impact on residential amenity of the dense concentration of licensed premises in our community. The premises at 82a Commercial Street is within the Zone, and for this reason alone should be refused.

82a Commercial Street has a well documented history illustrating its total unsuitability as a licensed premises. After years of illegal drug dealing, drunkenness, noise nuisance, ASB and routine licence breaches, all of which caused severe problems for the community, the premises was the target of a successful police raid which led to the arrest of 11 individuals, including the current owner. The licence was subsequently revoked. The current application proposes using the underground space again as a venue for the sale and consumption of alcohol. It is difficult to ensure the licensing objectives are being met when a venue is invisible from the street, as was definitively proved.

The venue has only one point of entry and exit, meaning fire risk is inevitable and danger from overcrowding a constant likelihood. It has no soundproofing so will cause noise breakout from below ground and direct noise from above ground, creating nuisance for surrounding residents.

82a Commercial Street is sited on the pavement in front of Christ Church, making it an inappropriate location for the consumption of alcohol. Christ Church is a historical asset to the borough with its Grade 1 status.

The premises gained notoriety for its association with drug selling and using. This will potentially attract patrons hoping for a return to its former incarnation. The local area is already blighted by drug dealing and buying, with the ASB and intimidation that such activity brings to an area. This is a problem which needs no further encouragement in our community. The adjacent small park, Christ Church Gardens, is in use by vulnerable rough sleepers, many of whom are drug and alcohol dependent.

The applicant has made no approach to SCG as a recognised local stakeholder to discuss the proposed business at 82a, unlike all previous applicants over the last few years. This is in spite of the site’s well-deserved bad reputation and subsequent loss of licence, and the clear assumption that any relicensing of the premises will cause potential alarm to the local community.

For the reasons outlined above we wish to OBJECT to the licensing application for 82a Commercial Street E1 6LY.

From and on behalf of Spitalfields Community Group