

My partner and I live next door to 32 Borough Street which, at the moment, is a small, empty retail unit. We moved into 30 Borough Street in October 2007, at that time 32 Borough Street was used as an office. On 16/4/2014 Mr M. Willies opened the Chequered Flag micropub, which was subsequently taken over by Mr. R. Sandham on 11/3/2015. The pub closed in November 2023. The bar area was situated next to our lounge/dining room area and below our bedroom (we have a flying freehold above 32 Borough Street).

During the evenings, when the pub was open, there was a constant background hubbub, in both our bedroom and our living area. I suffer from frequent migraines and need to go to bed in order to sleep them off. This is made more difficult when there is noise, from the pub, coming through the floor. The noise intruding into our living area was also a constant nuisance. All this may seem quite innocuous but living next door to this disturbance, day in and day out, affects our quality of life and absolutely plays on our nerves. Whilst I appreciate this relates to a previous situation, I see no reason why the noise levels, from the proposed wine bar, won't approximate those of our past experience.

In addition, smokers have tended to congregate outside, with their drinks, some resting them on our windowsill, while others have sat on our front doorstep and leant against our front door, so, noise has not only emanated from outside, there was also the nuisance of glasses on our sill and our door being used as a back rest, behaviours that I would like to be prevented should the licence be granted.

Previous licence holders have used the back alley, over which we have right of way, as a 'dumping ground' for empty bottles etc. This should not be allowed as it blocks our rear exit, especially pertinent in case of fire.

I think that the persons who have previously been licensees at number 32 and those who are currently applying for a licence at number 32 don't realise that it is our lives that are being affected, as well as our mental well being. I have now, for many years, had to take a cocktail of anxiolytics, my anxiety being exacerbated by the problems relating to the pub next door. The current applicant's business partner, Mr. Green, asked my partner if we had thought about moving, a suggestion which I feel was totally inconsiderate and inappropriate. Number 30 is our home, not just a house that we live in. In addition, having a licensed premises next door actually devalues our property and would make it much harder to sell, so we probably couldn't move, even if we wanted to.

The previous licensees of 32, Borough Street, Mr. Willies and Mr. Sandham, gave my partner and I verbal reassurances with regard to how the pub would be run. Both Mr. Willies and Mr. Sandham reneged on these undertakings. I do not know the current applicant Mr. Doig, or his business partner, Mr. Green (Mr Green has spoken to my partner and given him assurances with regard to the opening hours), so my concerns can only be based on the previous licensees. The saying 'fool me once, shame on you, fool me twice, shame on me' springs to mind. My concern is that I don't want to be fooled again.

I would ask that considering the effect that having a licensed premises would have not only on the value of our property but, more importantly, on our lives and our mental well being, that it not be granted. The premises are totally unsuitable and the nuisance caused would affect us each and every day.

Should the licence be granted, I would ask that in order to preempt/forestall problems that are likely to arise, the following be taken into consideration:

1. That the licensing hours applied for be 'set in stone' i.e. meaning that they cannot be increased at some future date.
2. That adequate sound proofing be installed, this would go a long way to attenuate the nuisance caused by noise.
3. The back alley should be kept clear at all times.
4. The wine bar's clientele are not allowed to take drinks, in open containers, out onto Borough Street.