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**WEST YORKSHIRE
POLICE**

Leeds District Licensing Department

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West Yorkshire Police
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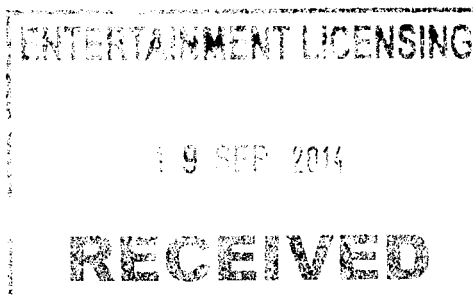
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19th September 2014

Mr Andrew Herrick
HALO Nightclub
Trinity St David's Church
177-179 Woodhouse Lane
Leeds
LS2 9JT



C.c. Entertainment Licensing Section, Leeds City Council, Civic Hall, Leeds, LS1 1UR

**RE: HALO & THE JOINT, 178 WOODHOUSE LANE, LEEDS, LS2 9HB
VARIATION PREMISES LICENCE – PREM/00867/005 – LICENSING ACT 2003
POLICE – LETTER OF REPRESENTATION – FULL OBJECTION**

Thank you for submitting your variation application for the above premises, received by West Yorkshire Police on 22nd August 2014.

The premises have been closed since the beginning of June 2014 for the summer period due to an expected refurbishment, which unfortunately did not take place. West Yorkshire Police (WYP) were only made aware that it had been postponed on the 15th August 2014 and were advised that the scheduled refurbishment would now be taking place in the New Year. During this time, there were therefore no calls for service to WYP relating to the venue.

Since the current Premises Licence Holder (PLH) has been in place there have been high levels of calls for service (97) linked directly to that location. Looking at incidents which have been recorded/reported, there have been 52 thefts, 58 lost property reports, 14 assaults – varying in severity, 7 drunk and disorderly arrests, and 3 sexual assaults. Due to the number and nature of the reports attributed to the premises, various meetings have taken place with the management.

On 24th October 2013, Leeds City Council (LCC) Licensing and I attended a meeting to introduce ourselves to the new premises management, as they had taken over the venue at the start of Fresher's week. During the meeting, concerns were raised over the 60p vodka promotion on a Friday night. The promotion itself was explained and they advised that they did not plan to continue with it after the coming Friday night. The PLH was also informed that the premises had attracted recent complaints about noise leakage and lack of control of customers that were queuing to attend the venue. These were all issues which the new operators were going to look into and address.

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In the early hours of 5th November 2013, WYP received calls relating to serious disorder at Halo. Customers attending the venue had gathered outside, chanting, running around and blocking the arterial road from Leeds City Centre, Woodhouse Lane. Due to the complaints and nature of the anti-social behaviour (ASB)/disorder which had occurred that evening, the premises management attended a meeting with WYP, LCC Licensing and University of Leeds Security to discuss the incidents and address other ASB/public nuisance concerns. During the meeting it was explained that the door company had failed to control the situation which allowed the incident to get out of hand. Other issues were also raised during this meeting which suggested that again customers were not controlled being outside the venue i.e. customers fighting outside, throwing empty bottles and inebriated customers using the wall of the Security Office as a toilet.

In early December 2013 Licensing had been informed that Halo were due to host the event 'Tequila'. The risks of taking on such a high profile event was not recommended and management were informed that the previous venue which had run the event had been taken for a licence review. Even after the meeting, the venue decided that with measures they were going to put in place, they would still run the event. Fortunately it was cancelled just prior to the date due to the risks involved.

Over the Christmas 2013 period 3 serious incidents took place at the venue during two consecutive evenings. The first incident was reported as a Section 18 Wounding where a male had been knocked unconscious in the smoking area. Officers commented on the levels of intoxication of both the parties involved. The suspect admitted to attending the venue to participate in the £1 drink promotion and went on to advise that he had been drinking for a full 8 hours that evening.

During that same evening a call had been made to the police stating that a female had been raped in the toilets. The complainant confirmed that she had been so heavily intoxicated that she was unable to consent to the activity.

The following evening, another section 18 wounding was reported. It was reported that this complainant was assaulted whilst leaving the venue. He was punched and hit his head on the kerb. Fortunately this incident only resulted in heavy bleeding and a night in hospital for observations but could have ended up with a much more serious outcome.

Due to the number and severity of incidents which had occurred, an action plan meeting was held on the 9th January 2014. Discussions took place about the apparent over inebriation of customers and drink promotions which concerned WYP as being part of the reason for over intoxication. CCTV was also addressed, as a large proportion of reported incidents which had occurred did not appear to have been captured as they were in a blind spot. It was agreed that a new system would be installed in the premises when the refurbishment took place.

In March 2014, the Neighbourhood Policing Team Inspectors requested another meeting between WYP and representatives of the PLH, due to the high number of calls for service. During this meeting it was suggested that an ID scan machine would be a way forward to try and assist with the reduction in thefts etc. Unfortunately, the representatives were against the idea due to cost implications and a delay in admission of customers, even though the Door Team Representative was in favour of it due to positive results in other Leeds City Centre venues. After the meeting, further communication took place between WYP and the PLH explaining the benefits that have been experienced in other licensed venues however the only time that serious consideration appears to have been taken for installation of the system, was a week after the variation application was submitted. No confirmation has yet been received that the system has been adopted at the premises.

I am aware that the premises reopened on 15th September 2014, as a practice run for Fresher's week.

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Even though there were no calls for service that evening/morning at the premises, complaints were still received by WYP about the high amount of ASB/public nuisance caused in the area whilst the club were operating. The University of Leeds reported that there were 27 instances of customers urinating by the Security Office; this practice had been discussed back in the meeting on the 5th November 2013 where Management of the venue agreed to employ someone to monitor the area and clean up after their customers. I have been informed since that this does not appear to have occurred.

I have viewed the CCTV footage from the University of Leeds Security office and have seen the scale of the public nuisance that evening. One particular point of interest was a young female sitting by the wall, with a male either side of her. She was clearly heavily intoxicated as during discussions with the males her head kept drooping onto her chest and she kept trying to bring herself round to speak to them. Neither of the males sported an SIA badge and it was concerning that this female, who was clearly very vulnerable, was not monitored by door staff and one can only hope that the males she was sitting with were her friends.

In addition to this, I witnessed footage from the same evening up to 0347hrs. The premises had closed but there did not appear to be any staff assisting with the dispersal of their customers. The footage showed large numbers of customers congregating around the side of the premises, Hilary Place. They were talking and even play fighting between each other. No staff were seen to be moving them on or assisting with the dispersal from their premises.

Currently the licence for the venue allows sale of alcohol until 0300hrs daily and other licensable activities until 0330hrs. Whilst they were operating in the past year, they have received a high call volume and they are now seeking to extend licensable activities until 0600hrs daily. There have been no additional measures offered on the application to support the extension of hours and it is felt by WYP that to allow this application to go through, would exacerbate the current issues being experienced. Whilst I appreciate that since the application has been received, they have changed the door staff company again and they have telephoned for contact details of companies which supply ID scan machines, nothing has been offered on the application.

Because of the issues over the last year and complaints received from their re-launch on the 15th September 2014, I believe that the premises need to be able to control their venue and customers within their current hours of operating before applying for additional hours. Currently I have no confidence that they are able to do this and do not feel that they could offer anything in the application which would satisfy WYP.

These are the premises specific grounds for objecting to this application.

In addition to the above the application also relates to premises which fall within one of the areas of Leeds currently subject to a policy of cumulative impact, as detailed in the present Statement of Licensing Policy 2014-2018, issued by Leeds City Council as the licensing authority.

The area concerned in this particular case is Area 3 – Woodhouse.

The following extract has been taken from the current Statement of Licensing Policy of Leeds City Council, in relation to the cumulative impact policy for Area 3 – Woodhouse:

- The most recent evidence and public consultation responses gathered in respect of Area 3 shows that the A660 corridor still experiences a greater proportion of alcohol related crime and antisocial behaviour than the rest of the Hyde Park/Woodhouse area. The police attribute this trend to the high concentration of licensed venues in the area. There are also worrying signs that displacement of problems may be taking place as evidenced by the strong responses received

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during the consultation process about public nuisance problems and alcohol fuelled anti-social behaviour and criminal damage.

In terms of location and in terms of applying to operate until 0600hrs with dancing, recorded music, and the sale/supply of alcohol West Yorkshire Police consider that this application also implicates the current policy of cumulative impact in every respect.

Yours faithfully

Cat Sanderson
Licensing Officer

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