

29 October 2024.
Licensing Officer
Southwark Council
Licensing Department

Support for Responsible Operation of AJ Restaurant and Bar.

To Whom It May Concern.

(The Residents - John Ruskin Street, SE5 0NS and Neighbourhood Collectively),

I am writing on behalf of AJ Restaurant and Bar regarding the recent application for a license to operate at **11 John Ruskin Street, SE5 0NS**. We deeply value our relationship with the local community and fully appreciate the concerns raised by residents regarding public nuisance, safety, and the preservation of neighbourhood peace. Please allow us to address these concerns directly and outline the specific measures AJ Restaurant and Bar will implement to operate responsibly within the community's interests.

Firstly, I would like to clarify that AJ Restaurant and Bar is committed to fostering a welcoming and family-friendly atmosphere rather than functioning as a nightclub or late-night venue. To demonstrate our commitment, AJ Restaurant and Bar will limit its operating hours from 12 noon to 11 p.m. daily. These hours have been carefully chosen to respect the needs of the community, particularly regarding the peace and quiet that residents have recently worked to restore in their neighbourhood.

Commitment to Operating Hours Compliance

AJ Restaurant and Bar recognises that one of the main concerns of residents is the fear that late operating hours, combined with music and alcohol service, could lead to disturbances. Unlike other establishments that may have operated with late-night licensing, AJ Restaurant and Bar will strictly adhere to the 11 p.m. closing time. This commitment will be upheld consistently, with clear internal policies and managerial oversight ensuring compliance. Our team understands that maintaining a timely closing schedule is not just a regulatory matter but also essential to sustaining good relations with the surrounding community.

Additionally, we have utilise sound-proofing techniques and volume control mechanisms to minimise noise spillover, ensuring that any music or entertainment offered within our premises is contained. As part of this commitment, AJ Restaurant and Bar will also forego any outdoor music or activities, further reducing the likelihood of noise affecting the residential environment.

Crime Prevention and Disorder Mitigation

To address concerns related to crime and disorder, AJ Restaurant and Bar has developed a robust security plan. Although we intend to cultivate a peaceful and welcoming atmosphere, we are prepared to proactively prevent any form of disorderly conduct. This will include:

1. **Trained Security Personnel:** Security staff will be present on-site during all hours of operation, ensuring orderly conduct and monitoring the premises for any disruptive behaviour.
2. **Strict Alcohol Service Policies:** Our team will adhere to strict guidelines for alcohol service, ensuring that patrons are served responsibly, and intoxicated behaviour is not tolerated. Additionally, AJ Restaurant and Bar will implement a “last call” well before closing time, allowing guests ample time to finish their drinks and exit in an orderly fashion.
3. **Clear Departure Guidelines for Patrons:** To prevent noise from patrons departing late at night, our staff will provide friendly reminders about the importance of leaving quietly and respecting the neighbourhood. We believe these proactive measures will prevent common issues such as excessive noise, public urination, and littering.

Ensuring Public Safety

Public safety is a priority for AJ Restaurant and Bar. We understand the concerns regarding increased foot traffic in the area and potential risks associated with any increase in nighttime activity. To address these concerns, we will establish a designated area for parking that minimises disturbance near residential buildings. Additionally, our staff will encourage patrons to use public transport or arrange ridesharing services as an alternative to parking in residential areas, further reducing the risk of inconvenience to residents.

We will also ensure the premises are well-lit, clean, and maintained to the highest safety standards. This includes regular monitoring of the exterior areas to remove any potential hazards, litter, or disturbances to the immediate surroundings.

Protecting Children and Supporting Community Wellbeing

We recognise that many residents have children and are deeply concerned about the potential impact of any establishment on their family’s wellbeing. AJ Restaurant and Bar is committed to creating a safe and welcoming environment that is appropriate for all ages. We are not seeking to create a nightclub environment but rather a restaurant that contributes positively to the local economy and provides a place for families and individuals to enjoy.

As part of this commitment, AJ Restaurant and Bar will actively work with local law enforcement and the council’s noise control teams, making every effort to address any concerns promptly and transparently. Additionally, our staff will undergo ongoing training focused on the responsible operation of a licensed venue. By taking these measures, AJ Restaurant and Bar intends to contribute to, rather than detract from, the wellbeing and peace of the local community.

To sum up, considering the steps outlined above, I hope AJ Restaurant and Bar’s objective is not only to comply with but to exceed the expectations set forth in the licensing objectives. We believe that with reduced operating hours from 12 noon to 11 p.m., AJ Restaurant and Bar will offer a responsible and community-friendly establishment that prioritises the needs of the neighbourhood.

We kindly ask for your support in approving our license application, with the understanding that AJ Restaurant and Bar is committed to operating responsibly and transparently. We are dedicated to upholding Southwark Council's licensing objectives and ensuring that our presence contributes positively to the community.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



AJ Restaurant and Bar
11 John Ruskin Street, SE5 0NS