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**Islington Council Public Protection  
LICENSING ACT 2003**

**REPRESENTATION FORM FROM ISLINGTON COUNCIL IN RESPECT OF  
NEW APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE FOR FINSBURY PARK  
BY WE ARE THE FAIR LIMITED**

<b>Your Name</b>	Jan Hart
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<b>Name of the premises you are making a representation about</b>	Open Arms
<b>Address of the premises you are making a representation about</b>	Finsbury Park

**This representation relates to the following licensing objective(s)**

Please tick one or more boxes

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| 1) The prevention of crime and disorder | X |
| 2) Public safety                        | X |
| 3) The prevention of public nuisance    | X |
| 4) The protection of children from harm | X |

Islington Council appreciate the difficulties caused by the current financial climate due to Covid and the problems that this must present in maintaining Finsbury Park, which is a valuable asset to all residents in the local area.

With Finsbury Park being located at Islington's border it is a welcome resource that many of our residents enjoy. The main tube station for the park is located in Islington and we know from other events, that attendees often use businesses in our area before or after. This has not always been a positive experience and we have to direct resources to manage the issues presented.

The first consultation we received for this event indicated it would be a community event part-funded from the culture recovery fund. The licensing application is very different however. The application refers to a limit on numbers but the area is not enclosed. Off



sales has been requested as part of the application and therefore there are no real limits on numbers at any time as the park will be available in its entirety. Time limits are given but without any detail as to how this would be enforced, especially as the park is currently not locked. For these reasons we believe that the application as proposed would have an unacceptable impact on local residents as well as council and police resources.

The application is proposing to operate each week from Wednesday to Sunday, across the summer and the site will be serving food and drink from a variety of independent traders.

The primary concern for Islington is that this application for “The Open Arms” will be free to all attendees with no restriction on where they can go within the vicinity. Through the pandemic, we have seen the issues caused by gatherings in the park and this application would be encouraging them, with no safe space reserved for those who do not want to be impacted.

The application also indicates that they are considering a similar venture in Clissold Park. This is in very close proximity and if they were to happen together, the impact would be great with both being on our boundaries.

The focus of the application, it stresses, is to create a diverse programme of live music, theatre and spoken word background. If this is the case, then the need to have off sales as part of the application seems unnecessary.

### **Crime and disorder and public nuisance**

The premises licence borders an area that is part of Islington’s Holloway Road and Finsbury Park Cumulative Impact Area: This area features prominently in alcohol related crime datasets and the three underground stations in the area are identified as transport hub crime hotspots.

We have been working with partners and support services to tackle street drinking within this area and although its intervention strategies have been largely successful in reducing the scale of the problem, it is a recurring issue, compounded by the fact that the area is saturated with licensed premises.

Previous approaches to tackle street drinking in the area have largely focused on dispersal and treatment however, the Licensing Authority believes that it is appropriate to consider restricting the supply of alcohol in order to minimise the impact of public nuisance arising from the consumption of alcohol.

Islington has also been working with local businesses and residents to address safety. The perception of not feeling safe in the area is very real and Islington, Haringey and Hackney councils and police have been working together to tackle the root causes. Feedback is showing improvements in how people feel about the area but the park continues to feature as a concern. We believe that an event such as this, which will run across the summer will only add to this and possibly undo much of their good work. It will be counter to making the park more family friendly and to creating a space for all persons to enjoy in this difficult time.

LBI has adopted a Borough Wide Public Space Protection Order (PSPO), sometimes known as controlled drinking zones, to deal with anti-social alcohol drinking in public

places.

The PSPO gives Police the ability to deal with alcohol related anti-social behaviour as it gives them the power to confiscate alcohol or require a person to stop drinking in public if they are causing a nuisance. The powers do not prohibit drinking in public places and can only be used where the drinking is associated with anti-social behaviour. We work closely with the Met Police to ensure a targeted approach to enforcement.

Haringey do not have a PSPO covering Finsbury Park and on concert days this can cause issues on and across the borders of the Borough. This application would encourage alcohol consumption in the park and the surrounding areas by creating a large outdoor bar.

### **Toilet provision and bins**

We Are The Fair Limited claim "The Open Arms" will hold a duty of care over staff, alongside ensuring the welfare of guests with accessible requirements.

The organiser's then state they will be only be offering a small number of public toilets for general use, and only a limited number of extra bins.

As we have witnessed in public parks in London last summer there was significant public nuisance and anti-social behaviour due to persons consuming alcohol and litter in public parks.

To propose a small number of toilets and refuse bins as part of this application shows a lack of appreciation of the impact this event will have and little commitment to addressing it.

### **Economic impact**

The pandemic has had a huge impact on the local area and we are doing much to support recovery. Granting this application could take essential business from the area, especially the local shops, cafes and restaurants.

### **Covid-19**

There are currently Covid restrictions in place and we have no certainty as to when or how they will be relaxed. The application states that a full Covid-19 Risk Assessment will be carried out giving greater detail of the activities of staff, sanitation, social distancing measures, and signage and crowd management. This ought to be presented now so that there is transparency of the controls in place for the requirements.

The application gives no detail as to how the organisers intend to comply with the legislation or guidance within the licensed area or the wider impact of their off sales within the park. It is also likely that the Covid controls will change and we should be able to see the effect they believe this will have on numbers attending as by July, this small area could potentially be occupied by a much larger crowd if social distancing is removed. Without this detail, the licence is being granted for an event that could significantly change over the summer.

## Summary

This application should be refused

If the application was to be granted it should be limited to as follows:

- The site enclosed by a fully secure, staffed and gated perimeter fence so the site can be managed with all the current Covid guidelines; and
- Alcohol must not be taken off the premises
- Islington would be consulted on the detail of access and egress from the event

Jan Hart – Director of Public Protection and Regulation

8 April 2021