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22/12/2022

**Police Objection - Application for a premises license - COGO (Peoples Festival) at Barking Park, Longbridge Road, Barking IG11 8SP**

Dear Licensing Team,

I acknowledge receipt of an application for a new Premise Licence under section 17 of the Licensing Act 2003. The proposed site is COGO (Peoples Festival) Barking Park, Longbridge Road, Barking, IG11 8SP.

The applicant is shown as Paul Jack Sobierajski who is the director of a company called A Man about a Dog Ltd.

Mr Sobierajski is seeking to obtain a 5 year time limited Premise Licence. If granted, this would allow a Music Festival to take place once a year, for the first year a single day event, then over three days in subsequent years, and allow the following licensable activities:

Provision of films, provision of live music, provision of recorded music, provision of performance of dance and supply of alcohol.

These hours are proposed from 12:00pm until 22:10pm for supply of alcohol and 12:00pm until 22:30pm for every other licensable activity.

Venue opening hours are proposed as 12:00pm until 22:30pm.

On behalf of the Commissioner for Police of the Metropolis, I object to this application, as I believe the following licensing objectives will be undermined.

- Prevention of Crime & Disorder
- Public Safety
- Prevention of Public Nuisance

As part of my role as the Police Licensing Officer, I reviewed the application submitted by the applicant, and consulted with the local Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT).

Park site itself, is an area known for robbery, drug use and drug supply.

This is highlighted in Sergeant Smith's statement as seen in "Appendix A".

It is believed that due to crime and disorder which currently takes place in this park, there is likely to be additional crime and disorder take place (given the number of people attending). The crime statistics are to be followed in an additional document in near future.

### **Prevention of Crime and Disorder**

Evictions – Organisers have submitted several documents, some of which include the ESMP, Eviction Policy, alcohol policy, search policy and others.

There is a significant amount of detail in these documents. However, there is insufficient clarity as to how drugs will be tackled if found on persons trying to enter the site, other than if they were to be arrested by Police.

It would be useful for the festival to demonstrate how they would deal with individuals who try to enter the site with a valid ticket but are also found in possession of illegal drugs, whether class A or B as this would appear to be the most common form of discovery during searches at these types of festivals.

Paragraph 26.7 in the ESMP states that signage and information to customers will inform them of a "Zero Tolerance" to drugs at the festival.

However, it is slightly contradicted by point 26.15 in the ESMP, which states there would be multiple ways to deal with an individual found in possession of drugs and highlights one of the outcomes as them handing over the seized contraband and potentially remaining on site.

There needs to be clarity from a police perspective if there is a "Zero Tolerance" or not.

Line-up – there is yet to be a line-up provided to the Police.

It is appreciated that, this can change leading up to the event, and we are currently 6 months away from the event taking place. However, without some form of line-up provided, Police cannot conduct their intelligence checks to establish what potential risks are posed in relation to the type of crowd the acts could bring with them, or if any of the line-ups have had any previous issues at festivals, such as crushing which was unfortunately the case in the recent event at O2 Academy in Brixton.

It is understood that this event however would attract a slightly different crowd to that in Brixton but it still poses as a concern for Police.

Police would seek a minimum of 3 months to be informed of the proposed line-up. That would allow police time to conduct the checks and liaise with the organisers to address some concerns and also allow the organisers to find suitable replacements, if required.

Police are confident that the organisers will supply this information, however the Sub-committee need to be made aware of this additional point.

Police have requested a CCTV plan be provided to detail where the CCTV cameras will be situated within the site for maximum evidence gathering opportunities.

## **Public Safety**

Water body – There is a concern, which has also been highlighted in “Appendix A” in relation to the water body to the north of the site plan. The concerns are that vulnerable patrons, or patrons who become intoxicated could gain access to this water and increase the risk of drownings.

Mr Sobierajski expressed a desire to use the “splash park” as a facility during the event. This is very close to the open water body at the rear of the building.

Organisers are unsure how the concerns around the water body will be tackled at this stage, as mentioned in the previous SAG on 07/12/2022.

Traffic Management Company – A company has recently been assigned within the last week (CTM). As much as I’m sure the event organisers along with CTM will provide the proposed plans prior to the festival, the application cannot be accepted without having seen a Traffic Management Plan (TMP).

This is due to the fact 15,000 people are potentially in attendance for the first year/ first event. Police and Local Authority are yet to understand how the event organisers will tackle this problem with the large influx of people into the locality and how to disperse of them safely, whilst providing minimal impact to the local residents and community.

The potential issues being how to transfer roughly 90% of 15,000 people (29,000 people is future years) to and from Barking station on foot, navigating around a large roundabout and down Longbridge Road. The pavements down Longbridge Road are not wide enough to carry such a large number of people at once.

This was highlighted by the Highways department themselves when a previous application for a separate festival wished to hold a similar event in Barking Park.

Barking station is a busy station even without an event of this scale taking place, operating the district line, London Overground and C2C lines.

Police are yet to hear from the Rail networks, as to how this capacity will be managed as part of the TMP.

Therefore it could cause a significant impact on the local community who are not attending the festival, in relation to capacities left on the trains they require.

Organisers are yet to explain how the festival would operate and patrons directed during ingress and egress, should there be any form of disruption or failures on the train networks.

Longbridge Road is one of the main routes in and out of Barking.

If the organisers are looking to shut Longbridge Road, this will cause huge disruption in and around Barking and the wider areas across London Bough of Barking & Dagenham as well as parts of Redbridge borough, as a huge diversion would be required to allow the public access from other directions.

The organisers are largely similar to a previous event held on the borough (ELROW – Parsloes Park). However, this location poses different concerns to Parsloes Park where Elrow was held last summer. A lot of the concerns stem from a Traffic Management Plan.

### **Prevention of Public Nuisance**

The organisers promptly conducted letter drops and organised 2 resident meetings in November whereby no residents attended.

However, even with the lack of attendance at the meetings they are highly likely to be affected by this event taking place in the forms of noise nuisance, traffic, parking, litter, and as seen around many festivals, urination problems during ingress and egress.

Some provisions have been mentioned in the organisers documents submitted, although it is still believed the residents will become affected by these issues.

The first event taking place will hold a capacity of up to 15,000 people.

This is then potentially likely to increase to 29,000 people in subsequent years. With there being concerns of a 15,000 person capacity these are clearly heightened further with a near double potential capacity.

Longbridge Road up towards Barking Station consists of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) which is put in place by the Council in March 2021 and expires in March 2024. This order prohibits the following;

1. The consumption of alcohol or being in possession of an open container of alcohol in any public place other than a place licensed for the sale and consumption of alcohol.
2. Urinating in any public place, including any park, open space, square, street, highway, court or passage, or on private property
3. Spitting saliva or any other product from the mouth onto the ground without making any attempt to collect the saliva or product.
4. No person shall beg or seek money or alms within the restricted area
5. Acting in a manner which causes or is likely to cause harassment, alarm or distress to any other person.

This is highly likely to be breached by the mass volume of patrons in attendance.

The police licensing team noted that the organisers have considered Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG), by implementing Ask For Angela campaign and the WAVE

training. They have also included information and training for staff around spiking awareness.

Having said that, there are still some concerns in relation to this event taking place in Barking Park.

Unfortunately police are not in a position to support this application in its current form and would invite the sub-committee to reject this application.

Yours sincerely,

**Regards,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Owen', with the alphanumeric string '3326EA' written in smaller text to the right of the signature.

**PC Owen DUNN 3326EA  
East Area Licensing Team**