

I would like to clarify and address a few points raised in your letter of objection for my application for a TEN relating to SOHO, Albert Road, Middlesbrough.

- 1) Only 1 male was ejected from SOHO not four males as your letter of objection implies. The further 3 males left on their own accord a few minutes after the first male was ejected.
- 2) Four males were aggressive towards several people not just door staff. The door team and myself tried for several minutes to calm the situation. A 999 call was made. Just over 7 minutes later a further 999 call was made after a male who was a passer by was knocked unconscious following his attempt to execute a kung fu style kick. It took over 15 minutes for the police to arrive. Myself and the door staff assisted in apprehending the males.
- 3) Paragraph 4 " *Following the Police visit it became apparent that CCTV had been removed from these areas and it was only operating in the basement despite the venue having traded like this over the Easter Bank Holiday. Assurances were given that this would be rectified prior to the venue operating in these areas again*"

The CCTV had not been removed from this area as it was never in place since we took occupation. We had sufficient CCTV to satisfy licence conditions. After a discussion with Paul Higgins I agreed to install further cameras. A further 4 cameras were installed following the conversation with Paul Higgins prior to the first bank holiday weekend of May

- 4) We had under 500 guests on the night of the incident and a total of 8 door staff.
- 5) " *Police have also had to speak to the applicant about under age persons being in the venue in relation to two incidents, one being a 17 year old promotor offering free drinks to people who attended the venue and another involving a 16 year old girl which made national news.*"

We immediately terminated the appointment of the external promotion company who was employing the 17 year promoter once we became aware and have amended our procedures so this does not happen again.

The 16 year old girl gained entry to SOHO with Photo identification, once she was in the premise the door staff were made aware she had used fake ID and she was removed from the property, this was captured on CCTV.

It is also worth pointing out the incidents happened all within our normal opening hours.

I am a responsible operator and every week welcome thousands of patrons into my multiple venues. I feel the refusal of the TEN sends out the wrong message as the incident on the first Bank Holiday was not down to anything related to how I operate the venue. It was four thugs who were hell bent on causing trouble, this trouble could have happened anywhere. It is very unfortunate that an innocent young man was seriously injured but should not reflect badly on me or my venue. The actions of myself and the door staff was far above and beyond what I would expect.

We must stand united to send a clear message we will not tolerate this behaviour in our town, not penalise an innocent venue. I have put forward all 4 males to the Pub Watch meeting for a barring.