Over twenty emails of support from residents, customers and other businesses in Ezra Street to the applicant. These have been copied and pasted directly in their original form from the emails which are available should the committee request to see the originals.

Hello,

I live in Columbia Road and have known the Oyster Boy team for the past 7 years.

Columbia Road is a lively place. When you move there, it shouldn't come as a surprise that there are people around on a Sunday, and that Ezra street particularly fills up with laughs, families and friends meeting for a jovial drink. If baffles me that anyone would want to kill even some of that wonderful energy that fills our streets and that make that one corner of London so special. There are hundreds of thousands of lifeless streets in this city – they could've opted for any of those!

Oyster Boy is part of our community, and respectful of the space and the street. Conor knows everyone around and is well liked by everyone I know (I tend to mix with the people who understand where they've moved and enjoy it for what it is, I guess). He keeps the street clean and by sun down there is no sign of him, or anything left behind. In fact, as soon as the cleaning trucks come, 90% of the people around just leave – they do their dispersing job extremely well. I can't imagine Ezra street without his delicious oysters or his wonderful energy.

This is part of an ongoing campaign to strip Columbia Road of its identity and make it a dull, neurotic copy of every other dull, middle class street in this city. They came late and now want the street to mould into their terms – namely, kill the market so they can keep all of that beauty and quaintness of the street for themselves. It's selfish and lifeless. I didn't move to Columbia Road because I wanted to be surrounded by killjoys. The street – and Conor, and the oysters, and the lovely people who come visit every Sunday – has been there longer than any of those complaining have. If they don't like it, Jesus Green down the road is dead quiet.

I hope we can all stop wasting time with this and move on with life. I for one would love to know who's complaining so I can make a complaint about them. Columbia road is better off without people who don't get what the street – and the strong community that Oyster Boy is an integral part of – stands for.

All the best,

Maurizio Von Trapp

Received 27/05/2021

To who it may concern

I'm a Tower Hamlet resident and I know personally Conor and I want to give my support for the renewal of his Licence.

The service Conor is offering is absolutely respectful and loved by the totality of the people who are coming every Sunday to enjoy the flower market. What I consider anti social is rather the attempt of closing down a family business that is providing quality food and drinks to the community with great kindness and following all the rules required.

Mattia Volta

Received 27th May 2021

Hello. My Name is Jessica Brown-Findlay and I am a tower hamlets resident. I am an actor and I have lived in and around Jesus green since 2011 And one of my reasons for buying our house on Elwin Street was our beloved market on a Sunday. The flowers and great, but where the real love and joy comes for locals is on Ezra street.

I understand that Oyster boy, a stall that I have come to for over 10 years is under threat. This is run by my dear friend Conner and the family vibe and love that this man brings to the corner is immeasurable. Firstly, the stall is unique, with a personable touch that people travel back every week for! He brings an eye to the street that knows it's residents, the locals, their children, growing families and friends and for 15 years.

I hear that Some concerns have been coming from very few residents regarding noise and night life, and I can't stress how much this these worries do not apply to this incredible slice of London, to this business in particular. Conner take great care in the running of Oyster Boy. Is kind and involved with the other businesses on the street. Always helping out. The recycling at the end of the day at 5 when the stall closes is always put away, with him and Bruno (his incredible Father) running about the road to collect the days debris (by all the coffee shops) are swept away and collected by the bin men. The stall collets it's own waste in an impeccably organised manner. It doesn't play music, it simply provides something for special, that week Andres week brings thousands of visitors wanting to taste an oyster and meet our brilliant self made Conner.

OysterBoy May look small but the heart it brings to this area is HUGE. It is bringing awareness to local food. Using the best oysters around. Bringing conversation. And Joy.

I moved to be as near to my Favorite organic and community lead small business championing area of London. Once they get pushed out they can never be recreated. This is a very special nook of London. Please let this continue.

We have dreams of showing our children a place we have been coming to for years. And Conner even turned up at our wedding with Oysters as a gift for everyone there! He is a very Special and passionate human being.

Jessica Brown-Findlay.

Received on 29th May 2021

Dear Peter,

My name is Ziggy Heath and I'm a Tower Hamlets resident living on Elwin Street, E2 7BU - just behind Columbia Road itself.

I've been made aware that a handful of local residents have objected to Oyster Boy Events' variation application.

I would like to place on record my full support for Oyster Boy Events.

Simply put, they are a vital part of the Sunday market community. I have been to the market every Sunday for the last three years, lockdowns aside, and I have only ever seen Oyster Boy Events being run with the utmost care and responsibility. They operate with complete consideration for their surroundings and on top of that, they provide a fantastic service; one that is rightly appreciated every Sunday by all sorts of different people passing through.

In Connor and Bruno, the market has two people that go well out of their way to make sure Sundays run as smoothly as possible. They clean up Ezra street regardless of whose litter it is, they help other shop/café/restaurant owners and they are extremely mindful of the behaviours of their own guests.

To me, 5pm seems like a very reasonable time to close, mainly because there is absolutely no chance of presenting any late night issues.

My family and I love Oyster Boy Events. They were a major part of our decision to buy a house in the area, because they made the Sunday market at Columbia Road feel like a welcoming and kind place to come to. And that is surely something that Tower Hamlets as a council need to be working to preserve, not remove.

Best, Ziggy Heath

Received 30th May 2021

Hi Conor,

I am very sorry to hear the latest and surprising news about what is happening. Not only I love to visit your small and authentic place myself but I am bringing every friend of mine who visits London to taste your oysters and see your inspiring and creative business. I never had witnessed any antisocial behavior when I was around but I always enjoyed the elegance and kindness of yours.

Please let me know if there is anything I can help, All my best and please keep in touch. I am at Avantgarde Tower; E1 6GS

C. Efe Onbilgin

Received 1st June 2021

Dear Peter Conisbee,

I'm a resident of Jesus Green Hospital Estate.

I'd like to write in support of Conor Pearson and his Oyster Boy business on Ezra Street. He has operated in Ezra Street for more years than I care to remember and I have always known him to run a fine establishment. It adds to atmosphere of Columbia Road Flower Market on a Sunday.

I gather he just wants to change the location of his alcohol license.

I support him in this application.

Best wishes

Sara Dixon

Received 1st June 2021

Thank you Sara,

Very much appreciated. Essentially it is an application to change the floor plan lay out, the premises will remain exactly where it is. In addition Conor has submitted a few extra conditions and would like to amend the time from 0800-1500 to 1000-1700, it is this two hour time change that seems to be upsetting many.

We very much appreciate you taking time out to support the application. Thank you again

Kind regards

Peter

To be honest Peter - I'm sure his business is struggling after the Pandemic and I highly doubt people are eating oysters at 8am! And five seems a reasonable time to finish trading at.

I open my market stall on Ezra Street market at 8am and he's never there at that time - I mean why would he be?

It's really a well behaved crowd on Ezra Street, I know as a local I would miss it if it wasn't there! We are lucky to live in a place with such atmosphere and it does add to the area!

Thanks for your response,

Sara

Dear Conor,

Oyster Boy is a very responsibly run service within reasonable hours that enriches the Columbia Market experience. Litter is always collected and closing at 5pm is reasonable as there's no loitering or noise into the late hours.

Amelia Hunt

Received 1st June 2021

Having worked in Ezra St for over 28 years in our business S & B Evans & Sons, we watched the area progress from illegal trash dumps to today's collective of thriving and well managed, independent, small trader enterprises.

During our working lives there, Tower Hamlets Council were notorious for repeatedly attempting to clumsily contain the Sunday Market on the basis of perceived resident hostility.

This peaked at a time when proposals were put by one Lib Dem councillor to hold a referendum on closure of the Market and a move to Spitalfields.

The council intended to count the votes themselves in their offices, but when we, as an organised group of traders called in the Electoral Reform Society, the votes were supervised and counted with due diligence.

The results out of about 1,500 votes, confirmed only 3 residents voted for closure.

One of the comments reported by the ERS was that Tower Hamlets should now cease threatening the area and simply manage it correctly.

Little seems to have changed.... forget the history at your peril.

Now outside London we both still have a proprietorial interest in Ezra St. and as visitors (pre pandemic..) thoroughly enjoyed our many visits.

Hope all goes well for you,

Sheila & Bob Evans.

Received 2nd June 2021

Dear Conor

I hope this email finds you well.

Just wanted to write a few words in support of your business (as a frequent customer, an oyster&wine lover and as a concerned citizen).

I strongly believe that in this vulnerable pandemic period of time it's in the primary interest of any London council to keep local places of interest as vibrant, diverse and alive as possible. It also goes without saying that supporting local businesses that make these unique London places such as Ezra Street is vitally important. In light of this, I was extremely saddened to learn that the Oyster Boy company's variation application had been opposed by some Tower Hamlets residents.

I am a frequent visitor of Columbia Road flower market and Ezra Street and through the last 5 years stopping by Oyster Boy has become somewhat a ritual. I have never never witnessed any antisocial behaviour and the staff at the Oyster Boy have always been mindful of the customers, providing responsible service and keeping the surroundings tidy. They offer the best type of adult snack to local residents and visitors that, needless to say, should not and cannot be consumed without a glass of wine. I very much hope that Oyster Boy's variation application will be ultimately accepted and they can carry on providing their excellent service fully in these very turbulent times.

My details are the following:

Dan Leover

Kind regards Dan

Received 2nd June 2021

Hi Peter,

I just wanted to write a letter in support of Conor and his delicious Oyster Bar.

It's a fantastic thing to have on our doorstep here, which really adds to the charm of the market, as well as a nice drop-in for locals to catch up. I live on Ezra Street and have always been greeted there with positivity and good vibes! Long may it continue.

Kind regards, Richard Adam

Received 6th of June 2021

To Peter,

As Tower Hamlets residents and business owners, we were absolutely appalled at the unjust rejection of the variation application and license for brilliant local business, Oyster Boy.

They have provided an outstanding hospitality service to the local community for 15 years (and more broadly to all Londoners and tourists who visit Columbia Road Market and Ezra Street). We have been faithful customers for the entire duration.

Why?

They are an exemplary operation: always respectful of local residents, monitoring guest behaviour and noise levels, and maintaining a clean business space. In addition, they play an integral role in bringing character to the local area and benefitting the community enormously.

They are only operational for daytime hours and with an intended close time of 5pm (an entirely reasonable hour and in keeping with surrounding businesses), they pose no threat of late-night nuisance and so there can be no justified objection on these grounds.

The steps taken to update the floor plan on council records and the subsequent voluntary conditions introduced were done to hold their business more accountable than ever - a move that should only be applauded by the Tower Hamlets Council and the local community.

To allow this to happen to a small, family-run business is a travesty and would be an incredibly bold oversight on behalf of the council. After an incredibly difficult year for hospitality businesses, we should be giving them all the support they need.

Best Wishes,

Sophie Abrahamovitch & Adam Sargent

Received 7th June 2021

Hi Peter,

I am writing to you in support of one of my favourite Tower Hamlet businesses, Oyster Boy. I believe the decision to reject the variation application is unfair and should be reviewed at your earliest convenience.

The stand has become part of the community – and it would be a travesty for such a well run local business to be closed when the concerns expressed by a very small number of residents don't apply.

I visit the stall most weekends and the staff are very mindful of the foot print of their surroundings – and most importantly they are only trading during daytime hours (closing at 5pm). I understand some of the concerns of local residents but I truly believe it would be an error to stop this great business from continuing to trade.

Regards, James Lever

Received 7th June 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

As a resident of Tower Hamlets since 2016, I have had to the opportunity to experience the friendly neighbourhood experience of the Columbia Road flower Market, in particular the Oyster Boy shed. Operating on Sundays in Ezra street, Oyster Boy has created and contributes to an incredibly local community experience.

One of the great joys of living in the Columbia Road area is heading down to Ezra street on a Sunday afternoon whilst the markets stalls are packing up and enjoying a few oysters and a glass of wine in the sun, or a glass of mulled wine in Winter. This creates a very inclusive community atmosphere and experience where Conor can often be seen striking up conversations with locals or collecting rubbish left by the visitors to the flower markets.

It is my understanding that there have been several concerns that this type of establishment could contribute to anti-social behaviour in the area. As a resident of the area for the past 5 years I would assert that serving visitors and locals sangria, wine and oysters until 5pm does precisely the opposite. It creates a space for locals to come together in an area that is all too often developed and geared towards tourists and visitors.

As such I would like to support the variations to the existing license to allow Oyster Boy to continue operating in Ezra street, including the provision to serve alcohol until 5pm on Sundays.

Regards Tom McNamara Received 8th of June 2021

I write in support of Conor 'Oyster Boy' Pearson's business which I have been pleased to use on a quite regular basis on a Sunday afternoon in Ezra St. I am surprised and a little dismayed that complaints have been made against the Oyster Stall which provides an excellent alternative to the usual take away

provision of sandwiches, filled rolls and burgers etc. This is a business that invariably closes at around 5pm on a Sunday afternoon and attracts what I perceive to be an amiable and good humoured clientele enjoying the outstanding facilities of Columbia Rd in this case Oysters expertly served and cheap!! When the highly effective street cleaning activities begin the lorry driver has little difficulty accessing the road area in front of the stall. It would be interesting to know if the cleaning team has registered a complaint - I doubt it It would seem to me that there are no valid reasons for any members of the general public to complain other than vexatious litigants. Indeed the opposite scenario applies with many visitors to the market I know fully appreciative of what the market offers to include the Oyster Stall. I would be happy to verbally support all aspects of this submission as a very local resident who would not want inappropriate anti social behaviour on my Thomas Mannion OBE. 81 James Hammett House Ravenscroft St doorstep. E2 70I

Received 12th June 2021

Dear Conor,

I have been saddened to hear your news that you are having difficulty in relation to your license for the Oyster Stand on Ezra Street near the Columbia Road Flower Market. You have become an institution on that street and add so much to the community on the weekend in the area. I do not share the views of certain residents that have raised an issue with the alcohol license operated by your stand. There is a lot of enjoyment had by visitors, local residents and operators of the flower market in having oysters and a chilled glass of wine on a sunny Sunday. The right of the community to enjoy this should not be stifled by a few disgruntled individuals.

Please see my comments below on my experience of attending your establishment:

- the produce sold is of impeccable quality
- the stand is operated in a socially responsible manner
- the area is extraordinarily clean and kept so by the stand vendor
- there is a clear community spirit provided and enhanced by the operation of the stand
- the hours of operation are prompt and within the small amount of time provided by the licensing authority

There is certainly no encouragement or facilitation of:

- loitering, anti-social behaviour, or
- any other unsavoury behaviours.

Kind regards,

Jonny

(Resident of Tower Hamlets, post code: E3 2BF)

Received 14th June 2021

To whom it may concern,

As a Tower Hamlets resident (Locksons Close, E14 6BH) I would like to state my continued support for a the license for the Oyster Boy stall at Columbia Road Market on Sundays.

I visit the market regularly and the stall here is considered to be an important part of the retail and cultural offering at the market, attracting visitors to our part of London every Sunday and making a vital contribution to the local economy.

Coming out of the pandemic, its vitally important that we continue to support local businesses that play their part in providing not just a service but a real sense of normality and community.

I would add that Conor and his team go beyond that by keeping the street clean, encouraging good behaviour and being generally helpful to locals and tourists alike.

Finishing at 5pm is a more than reasonable time and I have never come across any issues in terms of noise and disruption. Columbia Road Market is an essential part of the East London fabric and oyster boy has a crucial role.

Long may it continue.

Thomas Hawkins

Received 18th June 2021

Dear Madam/Sir,

We were informed that you are considering refusing our neighbour Oyster Boy reasonable request for drinks license change of hours.

As we all know there is a lot of drug dealing and anti-social behaviour going on in the area, in Ezra Street and Ravenscroft Park especially, which is a problem often addressed to Tower Hamlets and which does not seem to go away.

However, to suggest a one day a week pop up contributes to this is completely unreasonable.

The business which Conor from Oyster Boy runs is the type the area needs, as it is quirky/different and small.

What is not to like about oysters and fine wines and a welcome change from yet another 'burger joint'.

Most importantly Conor/Oyster Boy has been in Ezra street for over a decade and proven to be a real asset to the street and Sunday Flower market, he also offers a responsible service within reasonable hours.

Solid Floor is located opposite Oyster Boy and we can speak from experience that Conor keeps negative elements, such as overuse of alcohol and anti-social, at bay rather than fuelling the problem, with his hands on approach.

It is vital for our business to have likeminded companies in the area as Ezra street and Columbia Road are different from what the average shopping street has to offer. Let's keep it that way.

Please do contact me if you have any further questions.

Eelke Jan Bles



Received 24th June 2021

Dear sirs,

I find that I must write in support of local business and regarding a disturbing and continual trend by a small number of 'the usual suspects' many of whom do not in fact live on Ezra Street and that seem to me to be making wilful, self serving and inaccurate statements about the conditions and the environment in which we live and work. They are a well organised few that believe any change has a negative impact on them personally and seem prepared to grab at all timeworn straws to create the impression of an untenable scenario and an unworkable local environment. This is not representative of who we are, where we work and what this corner of the east end embodies.

I was moved, as a local business owner situated at 14 Ezra Street to attend a Licensing hearing at LBTH council offices with the proprietor of printers and stationers around 18 months ago.

This was both adversarial and counter productive in its expectation. Those who sought to paint a picture of denigration even stooping to irrelevant references to Columbia Road school which neither opens in the evening or weekends and does not in fact even use an entrance upon Ezra Street or in the direct vicinity of these businesses which to my mind serves as an illustration of the shallow worth of this and many of their arguments.

The fact was that at that time a small business was refused a pavement license where other such adjacent business are allowed to operate and remain in operation as proof that the assertions of the neigh sayers are quite untrue.

We were fortunate to leave the meeting at a time where Mayor Biggs and several councillors who actually know this area were attending a meeting next door. We had the opportunity to mention the unnecessarily adversarial nature of the way in which the committee seems bound to operate and were in fact surprised that on hearing this corridor conversation that a significant proportion of the objectors in fact indicated being prepared to discuss variation for an appeal.

However, despite Mayor Biggs showing a personal interest which clearly appealed to those demonstrating having second thoughts, sadly they did not in fact make the effort to create meaningful contact.

Less we forget, which is admittedly simpler post covid arrival, this is both a commercial and a residential area and it is in fact a given that the long established flower market is a consideration and to some extent an acknowledged part to any local wishing to live in such a vibrant and interesting environment.

Frankly if you do not like the sound of engines then choosing to live adjacent to a car racing track would be a poor choice. Choosing to change the fabric of an established area should also be regarded as an individual folly.

Failing to acknowledge the part of small business in addressing anti-social issues in what was once a truly degenerate part of the borough is basically very wrong. Protecting a social and financial uplift in property ownership to the cost of those who have created this trend is dishonest.

Small business serving the needs of those who frequent our street makes it both aspirational and special. Those are the same businesses that shepherd behaviour and where allowed to invest in their stake in the neighbourliness and integrity of this wonderful oasis.

As a local resident as well as the proprietor of a business situated upon Ezra Street I am dismayed at the accusations which I have now seen on multiple occasions and each time where a local business is forced to jump through unequal hoops regarding their right to trade alongside other business that is apparently not creating the same hazard.

I have been equally shocked to witness the heavy handed attitude of enforcement of licenses on such businesses and post pandemic to hear of the unbalanced nature of LBTH moving goalposts and failing to take inter-departmental responsibility to support and assist struggling ratepayers on whom our society relies.

Portraying Ezra Street as a place where people ritually urinate in the street, provide soccer style disruption and evoke guttural behaviour is dishonest and especially where in fact it is one of the most special corners of London and one of the few to not have had its soul torn apart by property developers. This is a compendium of untruths set up to paint a picture that is not consistent with tolerance, community or decency.

There are two businesses having to appeal on licence grounds currently in so far as I am aware.

Printers and stationers operates during very restricted hours and I have personally watched their attention to street cleanliness and shepherding of neighbourly behaviour where appropriate.

Oyster Boy is apparently required to represent against various licence variation and again operates entirely within the hours of operation of the locally disruptive tenure of the flower market. For my part I have again witnessed the same investiture in local community, cleanliness and well met business ethics. This is not a major brewer or a business subject to the vagaries of national events they are about residents and visitors engaging in a relaxed and cultural exchange - dare I say a more European and acceptable worldliness than processed campaigns for mass sales and loutish behaviour.

In truth the bigger picture seems to be completely missed in our borough where our Resteraunt business are asked to close by 9pm and not 10pm as per government direction - most of these businesses need flexibility to survive and are in fact critical to the fabric of the community surviving.

We must offer support and understanding. Generally this is rewarded by thoughtful behaviour and investiture Rather than the alternative which is instead waiting for big business to replace the Artisan culture that has saved this area and whereby undue influence on our representatives will become the order of the day.

We are in truth already struggling where we are the only market of the ten in LBTH to have controlled access. This has halved our footfall. To now exacerbate this by heavy handed and unwarranted control is a disgrace and those who seek such self serving ends ought search their hearts as this would still be a degenerate hovel without the goodwill and aspiration created by these Artisan businesses.

Daniel Nash

Received 10th of July 2021

Hi tower Hamlets.

It's come to my attention of some attempts to limit some of the licensed small businesses in and around Ezra street. And I feel compelled to show my support in favour of the businesses that are at the core of the beating heart of Columbia road.

That small cobbled corner is the main feature and draw of the area, when people visit, they undoubtedly take pictures and eat food, and generally get drawn to the amazing vibe that has been carefully protected over the 20 years of me and my family living in the area. It's the reason I moved here, and is the reason I feel so compelled to voice my opinion against any threat to the community, and at contrast to the opinion of the

majority of local residents, visitors and small business owners that collectively make the place the best area of London.

I visit and use the services in and around Ezra street multiple times a week, as do most residents in the area. And I see nothing but conscientious, friendly collaborative business owners working hard at making a living and creating a cultural gem around the area on market day. I see them clearing up, not only their own waste, but also from any market visitor. They have collectively tidied, maintained and improved that area over the years. It never produces late night problems from drinking. And has only positive additions for the community.

In summary, it would be a travesty for a very small number of residents to have such a damaging effect on the culture and heart beat of columbia road. The market has been there for years, if you didn't like visitors, or noise, or community spirit, why would live in a place where this type of culture is at the heart of the area. Covid has shown us how amazing our borough is, it's thriving after such a difficult time of absence, and I will do as much as possible to help protect it.

Feel free to contact me more for more information.

And I shall be letting the rest of the areas residents know about this threat to our community.

James and Hanna.

Received 13th July 2021

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support for a popular local business and my concern that their business may be threatened by opposition to their licensing agreement.

I have been a resident in Shoreditch since 2008. I am raising my daughter here and our trip to get oysters and a glass of wine has become a treat for the whole family.

The oyster stall by Columbia Road Flower Market is a much-loved institution and over the years I have got to know both Conor and his father, Bruno.

They are honest, hard-working and friendly and contribute to the rich sense of community in the area. They have NOTHING to do with any of the anti-social elements or issues that impact the area.

I would be greatly saddened if they were unable to continue their business because of a misunderstanding over licensing.

I would be more than happy to support their application and any appeals process in any way that I can.

Yours faithfully,
Resident of Anlaby House, Boundary Street, E2 7JQ
Received 17 th of July 2021

Hello,

I am a resident of tower hamlets (E2 7NN) and I would like to speak out in support of Oyster Boy Events as being a vital part of the Sunday Flower Market. They have served the community with oysters and drinks for years and have always been upstanding business owners - they always clear up any litter that their customers leave behind and provide much community spirit. I believe 5 pm is a reasonable time to close and will not create any late-night nuisance for the residents of Ezra Street.

I really hope you will grant them the licence to trade on Ezra street so that me and my friends and family can continue to enjoy their business.

Many thanks,

Siân

Siân Goff (she/her)

Spotlight | Showreel

Received 19th July 2021

Hi Conor,

Just writing to support your application to change your opening hours in Ezra Street from 8am-3pm to 10am-5pm. It seems to me that this change is perfectly reasonable, and is likely to be even less problematic for neighbours than the current hours.

Best wishes

Catharine Knowles

Received 19th July 2021

Hello

I am writing to support the variation for Conor selling oysters on Ezra street

I am a resident at 23 Ezra St, directly opposite Connor's location.

It is ludicrous that such variation can be objected. Conor operates on a Sunday only until 5pm when the market is in operation.

The business is conscientious, employees staff, has a rubbish company to dispose of their waste and cleans the road before leaving.

It poses no threat to the community.

I am supporting this variation on the grounds that it does not contravene any licensing objectives and that no antisocial or crime has been logged for several years during the market hours on Sunday.

Regards

Emma

Received 19th July 2021