

Annex 6

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

1.

Darji Mitra Mandal of the UK(referred to as DMMUK) is small non profiting organisation serving Hindu Community around North London. Our aim is to serve the community and therefore, put on events to celebrate our festivals. We hire our centre to fulfil our obligations to community members. Occasionally we will hire to other charity bodies which includes EAWA, Deep 50+, Iranian Charity, Nari Shakti. We do not discriminate in hiring the centre but we ensure we scrutinise the details so that the rules are obeyed and there is no misuse.

One of the reason we have applied for increased Licence is when we have organised events, we have had request for some additional time. As our current Licence does not cover the hours we have made request to increase the licencing hours.

We last received complaint in 2007 regarding the noise from the hall. Having taken this seriously, we took advice from the police & council and implemented the following measures:

- Built an internal foyer and secondary set of self closing doors
- changed ALL existing doors to sound and fire proofed external doors
- we installed triple glazing to our windows and reduced the size from 5ft to 2 ft
- Installed a noise limiter which shuts off power supply should the sound reach the maximum set level

Following on from this, the sound levels have dropped significantly, and the dB measurements confirm this. Subsequently, and directly as a result of the measures taken, we have not had any visits or complaints either from Police or LB Enfield Council. In our communication with both the police and the council last month, both the authorities confirmed to us that there have been no complaints against the Darji Pavilion

In recognition of disturbance which may be caused to the surrounding households in the vicinity of our hall and the premises, we have placed several signs in and outside hall for everyone to leave quietly and to have respect for the people living in the area.

Our caretakers always remind patrons and guests of this each time the hall is in use

It is understandable that complaints have been raised from the local residents who fear that the extension requested may result in misuse and there will be increased noise; we can assure you that we have our control mechanism in place to deal with the issues raised. In fact, we openly invite anyone to come to our hall to inspect our provisions and are glad to discuss any concerns that they may have.

As you see from appendix 1, we limit our booking, and for first six months, we only allowed 75 bookings that is 40% of available time. So, in first six months 107 days the centre was not used. Out of 75 days we only allowed Bar was used 9 times. The senior citizen events were organised 18 times and Prayers for Bereavements 7 times.

In Total out of 75 booking 25 booking were for non-profiting and quite events. We have lots of enquiries from companies for hiring for Christmas Party, we don't entertain them. Last December, we had hired for 4 times and did not have a New Year's Eve party. This is to ensure that we do our best to make sure that there is little or no disturbance to the neighbours.

From our selection of hirers and restrictions placed upon them, there is no possibility of the Darji Pavilion ever becoming a night club as feared one of the complainants.

2.

In keeping with our mission, we also raise money for good causes and charities. Last year we raised money for Cancer research, Heart Foundation, Dementia, Stroke unit, Great Ormond St Hospital and Whipps cross Baby Special Baby care unit and some abroad.

We have looked at the complaints and listed the issues mentioned within and have given our responses below:

Doors open resulting in noise issue

- All our external doors are sound proofed and self closing. Our internal foyer has double set of self closing doors which decreases the sound from the hall considerable. This can be seen by the low level of the decibel meter readings
- Our hall has full air conditioning system so during the summer periods and hot weather, the doors are always closed to ensure efficient cooling of the hall
- We have triple glazing to all windows
- We have not had any complaints from the neighbours, police or the council

Bottles left

We have strict rules regarding the taking of food or drinks outside the hall or the premises. After every hall hire, our caretakers and cleaners check to ensure that there is nothing left outside. We also have a contract with the council to ensure regular weekly collection of all our rubbish.

We appreciate the neighbour highlighting the issue and will ensure we work harder to avoid this occurring.

Buses issue

We do not allow coach load of people coming to our hall and the only buses that come are the Dial A Ride mobility buses which bring and collect the elderly and people with disability

Infants / children running in the road at night

It is harrowing to hear of this. Our hall, premises and the road outside are covered by CCTV and there is continuous video recording. We welcome the co-operation from the neighbours bringing attention to us. We can always check our CCTV recordings to pinpoint any occurrences and get back to the hall hirers.

We will again remind the patrons to be careful to have their children supervised for their own safety

Drum Noise

When there are weddings, there are some instances when drums are used when the bride or the groom arrives. In recognition of disturbance to the neighbours, we do not permit the use of the drums outside and it is restricted to use within the hall.

We will again remind the patrons that it is prohibited to use the drum outside under any circumstances

Later closing of the hall due to extended hours

The wellbeing of the community and the neighbours is of primary importance. In our initial application, we requested the extension until 1am. However, after taking into consideration the issues it may cause, we revised the extension of the hours and now reduced the requested late opening times within our application

3.

Sitting on the wall

To respect our neighbours and their privacy, we always ask people coming to the hall to be considerate in their behaviour when coming and leaving the premises every time. We also ask people to share their cars to reduce impact on the traffic and our communication always reminds them of this.

We have included a photo which shows people sitting on the wall across the mosque as highlighted in a complaint, but this was on a Friday when our hall was not even hired.

We will continue to remind our patrons that they should respect other people's property and be considerate of any action which may cause concern to them

Food containers

All foods are served within our hall is always on a plate and not in containers so it is not possible to comment on this without further details

Car park

We have allocated parking places within our premises and we always request and encourage car sharing to reduce the volume of cars. As for people parking on yellow lines, we advise people not to do this as they are liable to get tickets from the traffic wardens who patrol the area. See attached email example of our communication encouraging car sharing and a photo of cars parked on yellow lines even when our hall has not been hired.

Vandalism and children in danger

All of our hall, premises and the road area are covered by CCTV cameras which record 24 hours a day. The police are also aware of this so if there is any instance of vandalism or child endangerment in the vicinity, the police would contact us to view CCTV recordings. We have contacted the police and they confirm to us that they have not had any instances such as this whereby they needed to view our CCTV recordings to verify any report of to collect evidence.

Noise and disturbance

The complaint appears to highlight problems resulting from people attending the mosque adjacent to our hall.

We have checked with the police and LB Enfield and they confirm that there have been no complaints against the Darji Pavilion regarding the issues mentioned

Finishing on time

All our hire times are pre agreed so no late finishing is permitted. However, we realise this can happen. We have checked our records and found that in the last year, there were only two instances of late finishing and both were half hour late periods. We do have a log of this for our records

We sympathise with the issues raised by our neighbours of which are out of our control (e.g. issues caused by the many people going to the mosque Especially during their Ramadan and every Friday for their prayers). We will continue to work with them and look at our procedures and working practices to reduce any problems

We have an open-door policy and everyone is welcome. We would like for the neighbours and the wider community members to come and visit the hall and to see for themselves all the measures that we have taken.

4.

We have 4 large waste Bins to dispose any rubbish which are emptied on weekly basis by Council. So, we find it difficult to understand that bottles are left outside on 9 days that Bar was used in first 6 months.

We also instructed our cleaner and care takers to pick any rubbish left outside the premises. Oakthorpe road is very busy road. The noise pollution on the road on busy evenings is up to 70dB. There is a Mosque nearby and they have many more cars than us. Our average crowd is 150 people. With maximum capacity of 300 people. Our car park is enough to accommodate average no of people. On Friday afternoon and during the month of Ramzan the road is packed with cars and people from the mosque. Please see Appendix 2. The parked car during Friday afternoon. Sometimes we allow them to use our car park. People have complained that some are seating on their walls. There is no wall on our side. It is situated in front of mosque. There is also a large tent built in Mosque compound. We suspect that the noise with cars may come from the other place.