

Bower Claire

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 May 2018 14:47
To: licensingservice
Subject: Objection to license application renewal for Spearmint Rhino

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Dear Licensing Service

Re: License application renewal for Spearmint Rhino SEV

I object to the renewal of the license for the SEV Spearmint Rhino on the following grounds:

1. Spearmint Rhino fosters unequal relationships between the genders; this club sexualises and objectifies women, treating them as commodities to buy and sell. As a campaigner against the sexual harassment of women and girls, I am dismayed that the licensing committee does not think through the messages that this club sends and doesn't take their Public Equality Sector Duty seriously.

2. The club is located in our Cultural Industries Quarter, right next to the Sheffield Hallam University Students' Union, a location so wholly inappropriate that I fail to understand the council's reasoning in renewing a license on those grounds alone. Sheffield Hallam University's plans for its City Campus will mean they will become the only University in the country with its own on-campus strip club.

3. It's 2018. This club is a relic of outdated attitudes towards women. If you need evidence of that just look at the amount of press coverage the Presidents Club scandal generated where hostesses were put on show. The world has moved on and so should Sheffield City Council.

I am one of the many people who don't want to see SEVs in our city, and Sheffield City Council should have the courage to refuse this license.

Your sincerely

[REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

Bower Claire

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 May 2018 14:48
To: licensingservice
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Spearmint Rhino - SEV application

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am writing as a ward councillor to lodge a formal objection to the renewal of the Spearmint Rhino licence.

In doing so, I wish to support residents and other businesses in City Ward who are adversely affected by the location of a lap-dancing club in the growing Cultural Industries Quarter.

Whilst Spearmint Rhino has been trading for a number of years, its location is becoming increasingly unsuitable for a lap-dancing club. The growing development of the Cultural Industries Quarter and the expansion of student accommodation and teaching locally are highly relevant to the appropriateness of the location. The premises are located on what is to be known as the Knowledge Gateway, recognising the enhancement of the area as a place of creative knowledge and progressive development. Furthermore, the location is adjacent to land earmarked for a major proposed expansion of Sheffield Hallam University.

A lap-dancing club is increasingly at odds with this vision. I note the application form does not attempt to address any of the licensing objectives except by stating it is a renewal application. Nor does it attempt to address the minimum legal duties of the authority in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

The nature of a lap-dancing club means there is significant difference in the treatment of the sexes. In particular, I understand the establishment treats the regular staff (mostly if not all, men) as employees but requires the dancers (i.e. women) to be self-employed, with correspondingly lower degrees of employment protection. This is not a matter of choice on the part of the dancers. The local authority must demonstrate it has due regard to the various principles in the public sector equality duty when considering the application, so as to comply with its own legal obligations.

If the authority is minded to grant the licence, I would support a condition requiring all workers, including dancers, to be engaged directly only under the terms of a written contract of employment.

I trust the Committee will take these views into account.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

Bower Claire

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 May 2018 14:52
To: licensingservice
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Objection to renewal application for Spearmint Rhino
Attachments: 180427 Letter of objection to Spearmint Rhino SEV licence.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Dear Sir or Madam,

Please find attached a letter from [REDACTED] to Steve Lonnia, Head of Licensing and Chief Licensing Officer, on the renewal application for Spearmint Rhino.

Please acknowledge receipt of this email.

Yours sincerely,

—

[REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Follow [REDACTED] on Facebook  Follow Paul on Twitter 

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Steve Lonnia
Head of Licensing and Chief Licensing Officer
Licensing Service
Sheffield City Council
Block C, Staniforth Road Depot
Staniforth Road
Sheffield
S9 3HD

14 May 2018

Dear Steve,

Re. Renewal of a Sexual Entertainment Venue licence by Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown St, Sheffield S1 2BS

We are writing to object strongly to the above application for reasons which correspond with the grounds for refusal as set out in Sheffield City Council's Sex Establishment Policy.

Primarily we would urge the Council to refuse the application based on an assessment of the relevant locality and to the use to which any premises in the vicinity are put, as set out in Paragraph 12 of Schedule 3 to the 1982 Act. We will set out our objections according to Sheffield City Council's own Sex Establishment Policy and the discretionary grounds upon which the Council may refuse an application for the grant or renewal of a licence. We also believe that there is a strong reason for the Council to reject the application due to its legal duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

Firstly, under the 'Discretionary Grounds for Refusal', Council policy states that *"the grant or renewal of the licence would be inappropriate, having regard to the use to which any premises in the vicinity are put"*. The Council will be aware that the premises of Sheffield Rape and Sexual Abuse Centre (SRASAC) and Sheena Amos Youth Trust are in the vicinity of Spearmint Rhino. Given the nature of the work carried out by both organisations and the vulnerability of their clients, the continued presence of an SEV in the local area will continue to have an impact on the safety and wellbeing of their staff and clients.

We would also argue that the vicinity is an entirely inappropriate location on the grounds that it is directly adjacent to Sheffield Hallam University Students' Union, and is in close proximity to a significant concentration of student accommodation. We would contest the view in last year's 'Determination Notice' that the hours that students use the area do not coincide with the opening hours of Spearmint Rhino. Students frequent the area at all hours of the day and night, partly because of the Union Building and partly because of the student accommodation in the area.

Although the 'Determination Notice' noted that university students are over 18 and adult, they are living independently away from home for the first time in their lives and we therefore have a particular duty of care. Female students are particularly vulnerable to some of the risks or perceived risks that SEVs can engender.

In addition, there are other strong reasons to object to the location on the following grounds, as set out in the Council's own Sex Establishment Policy – *“the Act permits applications to be refused where the grant would be inappropriate having regard to other premises in the vicinity... the licensing Authority will have regard to, but not limited to the following:”*

(a) schools, nurseries or other premises substantially used by or for children under 18 years of age

Sheena Amos Youth Trust offers educational and recreational activities for children from 11 years of age, whilst SRASAC supports victims from as young as 13 years old. In addition, the University Technology College and Sheffield College on Granville Road are nearby. Also, the Leadmill often has events for young people from the age of 14.

(The Act also permits applications to be refused where the grant would be inappropriate having regard to the character of the relevant locality and this includes “the premises are sited near premises or areas which are sensitive because they are frequented by children, young persons or families”.)

“c) places primarily used for religious worship;”

Christ Church Central meets weekly at the Workstation, 15 Paternoster Row, which is in the immediate vicinity.

(The Act also permits applications to be refused where the grant would be inappropriate having regard to the character of the relevant locality and includes “the premises are sited near properties which are sensitive for religious purposes e.g. synagogues, churches, mosques, temples”.)

“d) hospitals, mental health or disability centres, substance misuse treatment centres, sexual exploitation services, sexual abuse centres or similar premises;”

In addition to SRASAC, Freeman College, an education and care centre for young people with special educational needs and disabilities, is in the immediate vicinity.

“e) a central gateway to the city or other city landmark, historic building or tourist attraction.”

The location is just yards from the central pedestrian route from the train station to the city centre and forms a gateway to the Cultural Industries Quarter (CIQ). As the Council points out, in the CIQ there are 16 listed buildings and several unlisted significant buildings such as the Showroom Cinema. Sheffield Hallam Students' Union is also a city landmark, attracting visitors from across and beyond the city. As outlined above, the significant concentration of art galleries such as the Site Gallery and Yorkshire Art space Persistence Works attracts many tourists to this area. The Leadmill is also an important cultural entertainment venue and tourist attraction in the city.

“g) the Cultural Hub (Millennium Galleries, Tudor Square, theatres and library);”

The location of Spearmint Rhino is in the Cultural Industries Quarter Conservation Area. The area is a “cultural hub”, housing the popular Showroom Cinema, which plays an important role in many city cultural festivals including Doc Fest, a number of art galleries, as well as popular bars and restaurants on neighbouring streets.

In addition, the City Centre as a whole is undergoing significant regeneration that includes the area in which Spearmint Rhino is located, also known as the Knowledge Gateway on which the Council undertook a consultation with the following description:

“This project seeks to transform the corridor running along the Lower Sheaf – Porter Valley, including the station to a similar high standard as the highly acclaimed Gold and Steel Routes in City Centre.

It will improve links between several key destinations and several potential development sites. For example links within and to the Cultural Industries Quarter, Digital Campus and Sheffield Hallam University and to the Railway Station. It will improve accessibility and safety as well as the environment in order to encourage new investment and jobs. Key locations such as Fitzalan Square and streets will be transformed as part of the initiative.

The project recognises that the station is Governments preferred location for an HS2 station which may be 10-15 years away. The station is a key gateway and this project seeks to improve the existing taxi queuing, movement of traffic and pedestrian access. This should all make this area, the corridor and indeed the City Centre much more attractive to inward investment.”

This example is relevant in terms of the discretionary grounds for refusal based on the character of the relevant locality, and backed up by recent case law from the case of *Thompson, R (On the Application Of) v Oxford City Council (2014)* wherein it was held by the Court of Appeal that:

“In making that assessment, the sub-committee was permitted to have regard to an imminent development of which it was aware [developments of student housing], even if there could be no certainty that it would be completed and operational within the period of the licence.”

This is an area that has been going through a period of redevelopment and one that the Council intends for further development in the coming months and years. The City Centre Masterplan, Knowledge Gateway, plans for HS2 and aspirations for an international Tech Hub are all evidence of this. Whilst it is still a number of years until HS2 is built, we feel it is important and necessary to consider the location of an Sexual Entertainment Venue within the proximity of the intended station, and the message that a lapdancing club sends to potential investors, business people, and tourists that will inevitably increase with the building of the new station. In addition, Creative Sheffield is also bidding for Channel 4’s national headquarters to be based in the city, with nearby vacant land in Sheaf Square earmarked for potential development.

There is also a strong argument for the Council to reject the application due to the legal duty under the Public Sector Equality Duty to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their

activities. There is an increasing body of research that links sexual objectification of women to acts of violence, including a paper from the US, *Men's Objectifying Media Consumption, Objectification of Women, and Attitudes Supportive of Violence Against Women*, written in May 2016, and a paper *Link between sexual objectification and aggression* from the University of Kent written in January 2017. This research demonstrates the problem of Sexual Entertainment Venues, such as a Spearmint Rhino, for Councils that are committed to carrying out their legal duties in terms of equalities.

Sheffield City Council is known for going beyond the minimum requirements of its legal duties when it comes to promoting equality for women, with its support for the Women of Steel campaign, a gender-balanced Cabinet, strong female leadership, and a Women's Hub that is supported and facilitated by the Council to tackle sexual violence and sexual exploitation/sexploitation, amongst other issues. The city also has Purple Flag status for providing an "entertaining, safe and enjoyable night out," which will undoubtedly be of relevance and interest to female residents and tourists alike. The presence of a lapdancing club that sexual objectifies women is clearly counter to all of this.

We note that, in relation to employment conditions, last year's 'Determination Notice' noted that "the arrangements entered in place are legal and entered into with full knowledge and consent". However we would refer members to the powerful letter from Rotherham child abuse survivor Sammy Woodhouse to Sheffield City Council calling for a meeting to discuss her concerns around the lap dancing industry. In her letter Sammy, who worked in the industry for around nine years from the age of 18, writes that "taking my clothes off for men's sexual gratification... is degrading, disrespectful and I'm worth much more and so are other women." She says that although it was her choice to work in clubs she "had a low self-esteem and no respect for myself due to my abuse as a child." She also says: "Myself and others were treated very badly in the industry. I've never met a lap dancer that hasn't at some point in their life been abused mentally, sexually or physically and that's the reason why they are dancers. Their vulnerabilities allow them to become exploited." We believe that her powerful testimony should be considered.

We would urge the Licensing Committee to consider the strong grounds for refusing this application as outlined above. We would also hope that the Committee considers carefully the objections from local organisations and citizens, many of whom have raised strong concerns about the granting of this licence in previous years. In so doing, we hope that they will bear in mind the purpose behind the measures introduced by the Government in 2010 concerning Sexual Entertainment Venue licences, which give local people a greater say over where lap dancing clubs open and operate in their neighbourhood.

We look forward to receiving notification of the receipt of this letter of objection and of the date and nature of the hearing.

Yours sincerely

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Bower Claire

From: [REDACTED] >
Sent: 14 May 2018 15:01
To: licensingservice
Subject: Objection to licensing of Spearmint Rhino Strip Club
Attachments: Spearmint Rhino Objection 2018.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Dear Licensing,

I wish to register my objection to licensing this strip club - see attached.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Licensing Service
Block C, Staniforth Road Depot
Staniforth Road
Surrey Street
S9 3HD
By email to: licensing@sheffield.gov.uk

Monday 14th May

Dear Licensing

Objection to Spearmint Rhino licence renewal 2018

I refer to the application for a sex establishment licence by Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS.

I believe that the Council should refuse the licence application under the Discretionary Grounds for Refusal of the current Sheffield City Council's 2018 Sex Establishment Policy (the Policy) on the following grounds:

Discretionary Ground d)

i) Character of the relevant locality

(a) the fact that the premises are sited in a residential area;

The club backs onto student accommodation and the area is increasingly becoming more residential for students and non-students alike.

The city centre's residential population had risen from 6,000 to 30,000 over the last 10 yearsⁱ with further plans for more residential accommodation within the Cultural Industries Quarter (CIQ) and Knowledge Gateway. Furthermore, "the Alsop Fields development is a mix of residential apartments, studios, offices for the high-tech and creative sectors and places to eat and drink" and "... designed to be a destination in itself – a regeneration of part of the Cultural Industries Quarter that will be similar to the trendy parts of Manchester and London"ⁱⁱ for which Brown Street and Paternoster Row are the main thoroughfares.

(d) the premises are sited near premises or areas which are sensitive because they are frequented by children, young persons or families, including but not limited to educational establishments, leisure facilities such as parks, libraries or swimming pools, markets and covered markets;

The Showroom and adjacent Work Station are frequented by families and both host events specifically for children including the world renown Children's Media Conference.

(e) the premises are sited near places and or buildings of historical/cultural interest and other tourist attractions.

It is directly opposite the Showroom cinema, which is "one of Europe's largest independent cinemas paired with the longest-running creative business centre in the city "housed in a converted 1930s car showroom."

It is also opposite the Site Gallery which has just undergone a huge expansion. Spearmint Rhino is not only centrally located in terms of proximity to a number of national and international events locations but

it is also a direct access route, for example: Doc Fest; the aforementioned Children's Media Conference; Off the Shelf etc all of which are tourist attractions.

The Club is next to Sheffield Hallam Students Union (an iconic and a city landmark building).

ii) Use of other premises in the vicinity

The Licensing Authority will have regard to, but not limited to, the following:

(a) schools, nurseries or other premises substantially used by or for children under 18 years of age,

There are many educational establishments in the vicinity and Brown Street is also an access route to the Sheffield College Granville Road campus and UTC which provides education for children from the age of 14. It is in close proximity to Freeman College which provides education for students (16 – 25) who have a range of complex learning, mental health and behavioural needs.

The Club is also at the epicentre of the designated "Knowledge Gateway" and located on Sheffield Hallam University's city campus whose masterplan is to further develop the area which includes "new buildings for the Business School and social sciences, refurbishing the Students' Union building known as The HUBS, creating a University Green [Festival/CIQ Square] and improving our current estate."ⁱⁱⁱ

(b) parks or other recreational areas designed for use by or for children under 18 years of age;

The recreational space (formerly known as Festival Square but now named as Cultural Industries Quarter Square on the map of the area which can be found on Sheaf Square) is directly adjacent to the club and the club's presence is holding back further use and development of this space into its full potential.

(c) hospitals, mental health or disability centres, substance misuse treatment centres, sexual exploitation services, sexual abuse centres or similar premises;

There are a number of charities and organisations in the area which support vulnerable children, young people and adults, one of which is situated directly behind the club. Charles Street is a direct access route from the bus stop on Arundel Gate and the car park on Arundel Street; direct access from both means that service users pass directly past the club through the unused and desolate Festival/CIQ Square.

(d) any central gateway to the city or other city landmark, historic building or tourist attraction;

See (e) under (i).

(f) predominately residential areas;

See (a) under (i)

(g) The Cultural Hub (Millennium Galleries, Tudor Square, theatres and library).

The location of the club is a de facto "cultural hub" given it is named the Cultural Industries Quarter. It is also on the direct access route to the 24/7 Addsetts learning centre from numerous student accommodation blocks in the immediate vicinity, which many will be accessing during the club's opening hours.

(iii) to the layout, character or condition of the premises, vehicle, vessel or stall in respect of which the application is made.

The building, despite the removal of signage during its closed hours, is a blacked out sinister presence incongruous with its surroundings and clearly marked buildings. Removal of the signage is “a sticking plaster to a gaping wound” approach by Licensing. Regardless of whether the club’s signage is visible in the day, it is widely known what the building is. Those who are not familiar with the building’s use visiting SHU on open days and viewing properties in the vicinity during the day will be unable to make an informed decision about moving into an area with a sex establishment on the doorstep.

Furthermore, the building could be put to a different use serving a far more diverse and greater number of people thereby enriching the CIQ in a far more inclusive and compatible way.

Further grounds for refusal

The Public Sector Equality Duty and Gender Equality

The Policy states under the heading “The Equality Act 2010”:

This Act legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society. This includes the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which means that the Council must thoroughly consider, in the discharge

of its licensing functions, the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity;
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- promote good relations.

This applies for this policy and to the consideration and determination of applications for sex establishments. (p.5)

I believe that sex establishments such as Spearmint Rhino directly discriminate against women by normalising the sexualisation and objectification of women, and that this contributes to their sexualisation and objectification in other areas of society. A 2016 review highlights how these venues undermine women’s equality:

“Thus, in objectifying media women’s role as a source of male sexual pleasure is emphasized and their humanity is deemphasized. After having internalized the messages of male sexual privilege and female dehumanization, it should be easier for men to envision imposing themselves sexually on women and reacting punitively to women who frustrate their sexual goals.”^{iv}

The Council has a fundamental and non-delegable role to give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, including tackling gender inequality. This applies notwithstanding the fact that Parliament has legislated to allow the possibility for sex establishments to be licensed in specific areas – subject to the choices of the local communities.

The Policy further states that:

Licences will be refused if the Licensing Authority perceives a venue will have negative impacts on members of the public or vulnerable persons living, working or engaged in normal activity in the area.

Many women have voiced their concerns and fears about the presence of Spearmint Rhino in previous objections, including LGBT women and disabled women. In 2017, many examples of the negative impact of this club were given in objections, for example: one woman giving up her studio at Yorkshire

Artspace and a contributory factor was the presence of the club and “running the gauntlet of men hanging around outside the club and harassing women.” (objection 12) and others have stated how the club impacts on their business at hearings and in writing.^v

As Philip Kolvin (2010) cites the Royal Town Planning Institute’s Gender and Spatial Planning Good Practice Note:

“In relation to the 24-hour economy policy, ensure that the views of women are considered. Evidence shows that in certain locations, lap-dancing and exotic dancing club make women feel threatened or uncomfortable”^{vi}

Kolvin continues with:

“If a woman, whether objectively justified or not, fears to use part of the town centre characterised by sex establishments, this may be argued to amount to discrimination, in that her access to the public infrastructure of the town is impaired in comparison to that of men. Where relevant these considerations ought properly to be taken into account by authorities at the decision-making stage, and possibly at the policy-making stage”^{vii}.

This is further corroborated by 2012 research published in Criminal Justice Matters which states that:

“. . . the women describe feeling frightened, disempowered, violated, embarrassed, unsafe (particularly if men are around) and avoid certain streets at night where they know there is a lap dancing club.”^{viii}

In addition to an Australian article about women and girls’ perceptions of safety in urban spaces highlights how they restrict their freedom of movement to avoid zones where there are strip clubs.^{ix}

Lap dancing clubs also reinforce negative gender stereotypes of male insatiable sexuality and female sexual availability which are hugely damaging to both sexes and non-binary people. The stereotypes upon which they are founded do not foster good relations between the sexes, as evidenced in 2016 by Zero Option at the Villa Mercedes hearing representation and its 2017 oral representation at the hearing^x.

In their UK study published in 2011 Sanders and Hardy^{xi} reported that 30% of the women performers interviewed said that as a result of doing the job they had lost respect for men; a finding echoed many testimonies of former performers.

The Policy states that “The Licensing Authority will also consider the following factors when deciding if an application is appropriate”:

(b) proximity to areas with high levels of crime;

On 22nd February 2018, it was reported in the Star that Arundel Gate which runs in parallel to Paternoster Row and is approximately 1-2 minutes on foot away depending on walking pace, is 10th in the top 10 areas of crime in the city and that “These offences, including assaults, robberies and sex attacks on women, were recorded between January and November 2017.”^{xii}

This image of a high-end establishment portrayed by this club goes in some way to normalising this type of venue in a very active part of the city, and as such giving the impression that Sheffield as a city condones both the sexualisation and objectification of women, which is in complete contradiction to the Council’s equality policies. The fact that its location within Sheffield Hallam University buildings and the CIQ also conveys the message that this SEV is culturally embedded within the two and indeed integral to a higher education experience and Sheffield’s local heritage.

The Committee is asked to note that in the last few years Leeds City Council successfully defended a refusal to renew two SEV licenses at judicial review:

R (Bean Trading A Ltd) v Leeds City Council (2014)

It was held that a council can “take a fresh look” despite no changes to the character of locality. The Council is also asked to note the following from Philip Kolvin regarding licence renewal:

“Given that there is potential for the discretion to be exercised afresh, the renewal should not just be a rubber stamping exercise, but an opportunity, if needed, to review the principle and content of the license.”^{xiii}

The case of *Thompson v Oxford City Council* (2014) was also supported at court of appeal, and the Council told they could “take a fresh look” at any application for renewal.

According to the BBC, lap dancing clubs have fallen by a third in England^{xiv}. The same report states that “a survey conducted by YouGov in 2015 found 64% of people in Great Britain said strip clubs were a negative part of British culture.” I ask that the Committee refuses to grant the club a licence for all the reasons outlined and because Spearmint Rhino is anachronistic, it gives Sheffield and our much vaunted CIQ a negative image and may deter investors and developers. At a time when we are hoping to attract large investors and are bidding for Channel 4 to relocate in the vicinity, the Committee needs to turn down this licence application, which it is empowered to do.

I look forward to hearing from you.

References

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- ⁱ Sheffield Star 16th January 2018 *Dramatic rise in the number of people living in Sheffield city centre* Available from: <https://www.thestar.co.uk/news/dramatic-rise-in-the-number-of-people-living-in-sheffield-city-centre-1-8960059>
- ⁱⁱ Sheffield Chamber of Commerce *Sheffield’s Cultural Industries Quarter expansion in £10m City Estates project* Available from: <https://www.scci.org.uk/2017/03/sheffields-cultural-industries-quarter-expansion-in-10m-city-estates-project/>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Sheffield Hallam University 22nd February 2018 *New campus masterplan places Hallam at the heart of the city* Available from: <http://www4.shu.ac.uk/mediacentre/new-campus-masterplan-places-hallam-heart-city>
- ^{iv} Wright, P.J & Tokunaga, R.S (2016) Men’s Objectifying Media Consumption, Objectification of Women, and Attitudes Supportive of Violence Against Women in *Archives of Sexual Behavior*
- ^v *Zero Option oral representation at the Spearmint Rhino hearing April 2017* Available from: <https://zerooptionblog.wordpress.com/2017/04/14/zero-options-representation-at-the-spearmint-rhino-licence-renewal-hearing-11th-april-2017/#more-524>
- ^{vi} Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87
- ^{vii} Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87
- ^{viii} Patiniotis, J. & Standing, K. (2012) ‘License to cause harm? Sex entertainment venues and women’s sense of safety in inner city centres’ in *Criminal Justice Matters*, 88:1, 10-12.
- ^{ix} Safe in the City? Girls tell it like it is. March 26, 2017 <https://theconversation.com/safe-in-the-city-girls-tell-it-like-it-is-72975>.
- ^x Slideshare available from: <https://www.slideshare.net/ZerooptionSheffield/villa-mercedes-hearing-8th-september-2016>
- ^{xi} Sanders, T., & Hardy, K. (2011) *The Regulatory Dance: Sexual Consumption in the Night Time Economy – Initial Findings*. Leeds: University of Leeds
- ^{xii} Sheffield Star 22nd February 2018 Available from: <https://www.thestar.co.uk/news/listed-these-are-the-10-most-crime-ridden-streets-in-sheffield-1-9030246>
- ^{xiii} Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.90
- ^{xiv} 23rd February 2018 Available from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-43043842>

Bower Claire

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 May 2018 16:16
To: licensingservice
Subject: Objection to Spearmint Rhino licence renewal

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Licensing Service
 Block C, Staniforth Road Depot
 Staniforth Road
 Surrey Street
 S9 3HD
 By email to: licensingservice@sheffield.gov.uk

14 May 2018

Dear Licensing

Objection to Spearmint Rhino licence renewal

I refer to the application for a sex establishment licence by Spearmint Rhino (“the club”), 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS.

I believe that the Council should refuse the licence application under the Discretionary Grounds for Refusal of the current Sheffield City Council’s 2018 Sex Establishment Policy (“the Policy”) on the following grounds:

Discretionary Ground d)

i) Character of the relevant locality

(a) the fact that the premises are sited in a residential area;

The club backs onto student accommodation and the area is increasingly becoming more residential for students and non-students alike.

The city centre's residential population had risen from 6,000 to 30,000 over the last 10 years^[i] with further plans for more residential accommodation within the Cultural Industries Quarter (CIQ) and Knowledge Gateway. Furthermore, “the Alsop Fields development is a mix of residential apartments, studios, offices for the high-tech and creative sectors and places to eat and drink” and “. . . designed to be a destination in itself – a regeneration of part of the Cultural Industries Quarter that will be similar to the trendy parts of Manchester and London”^[ii] for which Brown Street and Paternoster Row are the main thoroughfares.

(d) the premises are sited near premises or areas which are sensitive because they are frequented by children, young persons or families, including but not limited to educational establishments, leisure facilities such as parks, libraries or swimming pools, markets and covered markets;

The Showroom and adjacent Work Station are frequented by families and both host events specifically for children including the world renowned Children's Media Conference.

(e) the premises are sited near places and or buildings of historical/cultural interest and other tourist attractions.

It is directly opposite the Showroom cinema, which is "one of Europe's largest independent cinemas paired with the longest-running creative business centre in the city, housed in a converted 1930s car showroom."

It is also opposite the Site Gallery which has just undergone a huge expansion. Spearmint Rhino is not only centrally located in terms of proximity to a number of national and international events locations but it is also a direct access route, for example: Doc Fest; the aforementioned Children's Media Conference; Off the Shelf etc all of which are tourist attractions.

The club is next to Sheffield Hallam Students Union (iconic and a city landmark building).

ii) Use of other premises in the vicinity

The Licensing Authority will have regard to, but not limited to, the following:

(a) schools, nurseries or other premises substantially used by or for children under 18 years of age,

There are many educational establishments in the vicinity and Brown Street is also an access route to the Sheffield College Granville Road campus and UTC which provides education for children from the age of 14. It is in close proximity to Freeman College which provides education for students (16 – 25) who have a range of complex learning, mental health and behavioural needs.

The club is also at the epicentre of the designated "Knowledge Gateway" and located on Sheffield Hallam University's city campus whose masterplan is to further develop the area, which includes "new buildings for the Business School and social sciences, refurbishing the Students' Union building known as The HUBS, creating a University Green [Festival/CIQ Square] and improving our current estate."^[iii]

(b) parks or other recreational areas designed for use by or for children under 18 years of age;

The recreational space (formerly known as Festival Square but now named as Cultural Industries Quarter Square on the map of the area which can be found on Sheaf Square) is directly adjacent to the club and the club's presence is holding back further use and development of this space into its full potential.

(c) hospitals, mental health or disability centres, substance misuse treatment centres, sexual exploitation services, sexual abuse centres or similar premises;

There are a number of charities and organisations in the area which support vulnerable children, young people and adults, one of which is situated directly behind the club. Charles Street is a direct access route from the bus stop on Arundel Gate and the car park on Arundel Street; direct access from both means that service users pass directly past the club through the unused and desolate Festival/CIQ Square.

(d) any central gateway to the city or other city landmark, historic building or tourist attraction;

See (e) under (i).

(f) predominately residential areas;

See (a) under (i)

(g) The Cultural Hub (Millennium Galleries, Tudor Square, theatres and library).

The location of the club is a de facto "cultural hub" given it is named the Cultural Industries Quarter. It is also on the direct access route to the 24/7 Addsetts learning centre from numerous student accommodation blocks in the immediate vicinity, which many will be accessing during the club's opening hours.

(iii) the layout, character or condition of the premises, vehicle, vessel or stall in respect of which the application is made.

The building, despite the removal of signage during its closed hours, is a blacked out sinister presence incongruous with its surroundings and clearly marked buildings. Removal of the signage is "a sticking plaster to a gaping wound" approach by Licensing. Regardless of whether the club's signage is visible in the day, it is widely known what the building is. Those who are not familiar with the building's use visiting SHU on open days and viewing properties in the vicinity during the day will be unable to make an informed decision about moving into an area with a sex establishment on the doorstep.

Furthermore, the building could be put to a different use serving a far more diverse and greater number of people thereby enriching the CIQ in a more inclusive and compatible way.

Further grounds for refusal

The Public Sector Equality Duty and Gender Equality

The Policy states under the heading "The Equality Act 2010":

"This Act legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society. This includes the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which means that the Council must thoroughly consider, in the discharge of its licensing functions, the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity;
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- promote good relations".

This applies for this policy and to the consideration and determination of applications for sex establishments. (p.5)

I believe that sex establishments such as Spearmint Rhino directly discriminate against women by normalising the sexualisation and objectification of women, and that this contributes to their sexualisation and objectification in other areas of society. A 2016 review highlights how these venues undermine women's equality:

"Thus, in objectifying media women's role as a source of male sexual pleasure is emphasized and their humanity is deemphasized. After having internalized the messages of male sexual privilege and female dehumanization, it should be easier for men to envision imposing themselves sexually on women and reacting punitively to women who frustrate their sexual goals."^[iv]

The Council has a fundamental and non-delegable role to give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, including tackling gender inequality. This applies notwithstanding the fact that Parliament has legislated to allow the possibility for sex establishments to be licensed in specific areas – subject to the choices of the local communities.

The Policy further states that:

"Licences will be refused if the Licensing Authority perceives a venue will have negative impacts on members of the public or vulnerable persons living, working or engaged in normal activity in the area".

Many women have voiced their concerns and fears about the presence of Spearmint Rhino in previous objections, including LGBT women and disabled women. In 2017, many examples of the negative impact of this club were given in objections, for example: one woman giving up her studio at Yorkshire Artspace

and a contributory factor was the presence of the club and “running the gauntlet of men hanging around outside the club and harassing women.” (objection 12) and others have stated how the club impacts on their business at hearings and in writing.^[v]

As Philip Kolvin (2010) cites the Royal Town Planning Institute’s Gender and Spatial Planning Good Practice Note:

“In relation to the 24-hour economy policy, ensure that the views of women are considered. Evidence shows that in certain locations, lap-dancing and exotic dancing club make women feel threatened or uncomfortable” ^[vi]

Kolvin continues with:

“If a woman, whether objectively justified or not, fears to use part of the town centre characterised by sex establishments, this may be argued to amount to discrimination, in that her access to the public infrastructure of the town is impaired in comparison to that of men. Where relevant these considerations ought properly to be taken into account by authorities at the decision-making stage, and possibly at the policy-making stage” ^[vii].

This is further corroborated by 2012 research published in Criminal Justice Matters which states that:

“. . . the women describe feeling frightened, disempowered, violated, embarrassed, unsafe (particularly if men are around) and avoid certain streets at night where they know there is a lap dancing club.”^[viii]

In addition an Australian article about women and girls’ perceptions of safety in urban spaces highlights how they restrict their freedom of movement to avoid zones where there are strip clubs.^[ix]

Lap dancing clubs also reinforce negative gender stereotypes of male insatiable sexuality and female sexual availability which are hugely damaging to both sexes and to non-binary people. The stereotypes upon which they are founded do not foster good relations between the sexes, as evidenced in 2016 by Zero Option at the Villa Mercedes hearing representation and its 2017 oral representation at the hearing^[x].

In their UK study published in 2011 Sanders and Hardy ^[xi] reported that 30% of the women performers interviewed said that as a result of doing the job they had lost respect for men; a finding echoed many testimonies of former performers.

The Policy states that “The Licensing Authority will also consider the following factors when deciding if an application is appropriate”:

(b) proximity to areas with high levels of crime;

On 22nd February 2018, it was reported in the Star that Arundel Gate which runs in parallel to Paternoster Row and is approximately 1-2 minutes on foot away depending on walking pace, is 10th in the top 10 areas of crime in the city and that “These offences, including assaults, robberies and sex attacks on women, were recorded between January and November 2017.”^[xii]

This image of a high-end establishment portrayed by this club goes in some way to normalising this type of venue in a very active part of the city, and as such giving the impression that Sheffield as a city condones both the sexualisation and objectification of women, which is in complete contradiction to the Council’s Equality policies. The fact that its location within Sheffield Hallam University buildings and the CIQ also conveys the message that this SEV is culturally embedded within the two and indeed integral to a higher education experience and Sheffield’s local heritage.

The Committee is asked to note that in the last few years Leeds City Council successfully defended a refusal to renew two SEV licenses at judicial review:

R (Bean Trading A Ltd) v Leeds City Council (2014)

It was held that a council can “take a fresh look” despite no changes to the character of locality. The Council is also asked to note the following from Philip Kolvin regarding licence renewal:

“Given that there is potential for the discretion to be exercised afresh, the renewal should not just be a rubber stamping exercise, but an opportunity, if needed, to review the principle and content of the licence.”^[xiii]

The case of *Thompson v Oxford City Council* (2014) was also supported at Court of Appeal, and the Council told they could “take a fresh look” at any application for renewal.

According to the BBC, the number of lap dancing clubs has fallen by a third in England^[xiv]. The same report states that “a survey conducted by YouGov in 2015 found 64% of people in Great Britain said strip clubs were a negative part of British culture.” I ask that the Committee refuse to grant the club a licence for all the reasons outlined and because Spearmint Rhino is anachronistic, it gives Sheffield and our much vaunted CIQ a negative image and may deter investors and developers. At a time when we are hoping to attract large investors and are bidding for Channel 4 to relocate in the vicinity, the Committee needs to turn down this licence application, which it is empowered to do.

I look forward to hearing from you.

References

^[i] Sheffield Star 16th January 2018 *Dramatic rise in the number of people living in Sheffield city centre* Available from: <https://www.thestar.co.uk/news/dramatic-rise-in-the-number-of-people-living-in-sheffield-city-centre-1-8960059>

^[ii] Sheffield Chamber of Commerce *Sheffield’s Cultural Industries Quarter expansion in £10m City Estates project* Available from: <https://www.scci.org.uk/2017/03/sheffields-cultural-industries-quarter-expansion-in-10m-city-estates-project/>

^[iii] Sheffield Hallam University 22nd February 2018 *New campus masterplan places Hallam at the heart of the city* Available from: <http://www4.shu.ac.uk/mediacentre/new-campus-masterplan-places-hallam-heart-city>

^[iv] Wright, P.J & Tokunaga, R.S (2016) Men’s Objectifying Media Consumption, Objectification of Women, and Attitudes Supportive of Violence Against Women in *Archives of Sexual Behavior*

^[v] *Zero Option oral representation at the Spearmint Rhino hearing April 2017* Available from: <https://zerooptionblog.wordpress.com/2017/04/14/zero-options-representation-at-the-spearmint-rhino-licence-renewal-hearing-11th-april-2017/#more-524>

^[vi] Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87

^[vii] Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87

^[viii] Patiniotis, J. & Standing, K. (2012) ‘License to cause harm? Sex entertainment venues and women’s sense of safety in inner city centres’ in *Criminal Justice Matters*, 88:1, 10-12.

^[ix] Safe in the City? Girls tell it like it is. March 26, 2017 <https://theconversation.com/safe-in-the-city-girls-tell-it-like-it-is-72975>.

^[x] Slideshare available from: <https://www.slideshare.net/ZerooptionSheffield/villa-mercedes-hearing-8th-september-2016>

^[xi] Sanders, T., & Hardy, K. (2011) *The Regulatory Dance: Sexual Consumption in the Night Time Economy – Initial Findings*. Leeds: University of Leeds

^[xii] Sheffield Star 22nd February 2018 Available from: <https://www.thestar.co.uk/news/listed-these-are-the-10-most-crime-ridden-streets-in-sheffield-1-9030246>

^[xiii] Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.90

^[xiv] 23rd February 2018 Available from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-43043842>

Bower Claire

From: [Redacted] >
Sent: 14 May 2018 16:32
To: licensingservice
Subject: Objection attached
Attachments: SpearmintRhinoObjection2018.docx

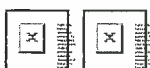
Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Please find our objection attached.

Kind regards,

[Redacted signature block]



[Visit our blog](#) to find out more about what our young people are doing



Element Society // Registration No: 08576383 // Charity No: 1157932 // UKPRN: 10047367

HQ: Element House, 113 Arundel Street, Sheffield, S1 2NT

We are a non-profit youth charity based in Sheffield, delivering development, social action and enterprise programmes to young people and vulnerable adults. Our aims are to empower young people to change their communities, raise their own aspirations and become role models to their peers.

Licensing Service
Block C, Staniforth Road Depot
Staniforth Road
Surrey Street
S9 3HD
By email to: licensing@sheffield.gov.uk

14/05/2018

Dear Licensing

Objection to Spearmint Rhino licence renewal

I refer to the application for a sex establishment licence by Spearmint Rhino (“the club”), 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS.

I believe that the Council should refuse the licence application under the Discretionary Grounds for Refusal of the current Sheffield City Council’s 2018 Sex Establishment Policy (“the Policy”) on the following grounds:

Discretionary Ground d)

i) Character of the relevant locality

(a) the fact that the premises are sited in a residential area;

The club backs onto student accommodation and the area is increasingly becoming more residential for students and non-students alike.

The city centre's residential population had risen from 6,000 to 30,000 over the last 10 yearsⁱ with further plans for more residential accommodation within the Cultural Industries Quarter (CIQ) and Knowledge Gateway. Furthermore, “the Alsop Fields development is a mix of residential apartments, studios, offices for the high-tech and creative sectors and places to eat and drink” and “. . . designed to be a destination in itself – a regeneration of part of the Cultural Industries Quarter that will be similar to the trendy parts of Manchester and London”ⁱⁱⁱ for which Brown Street and Paternoster Row are the main thoroughfares.

(d) the premises are sited near premises or areas which are sensitive because they are frequented by children, young persons or families, including but not limited to educational establishments, leisure facilities such as parks, libraries or swimming pools, markets and covered markets;

The Showroom and adjacent Work Station are frequented by families and both host events specifically for children including the world renowned Children’s Media Conference.

(e) the premises are sited near places and or buildings of historical/cultural interest and other tourist attractions.

It is directly opposite the Showroom cinema, which is “one of Europe’s largest independent cinemas paired with the longest-running creative business centre in the city, housed in a converted 1930s car showroom.”

It is also opposite the Site Gallery which has just undergone a huge expansion. Spearmint Rhino is not only centrally located in terms of proximity to a number of national and international events locations but

it is also a direct access route, for example: Doc Fest; the aforementioned Children's Media Conference; Off the Shelf etc all of which are tourist attractions.

The club is next to Sheffield Hallam Students Union (iconic and a city landmark building).

ii) Use of other premises in the vicinity

The Licensing Authority will have regard to, but not limited to, the following:

(a) schools, nurseries or other premises substantially used by or for children under 18 years of age,

There are many educational establishments in the vicinity and Brown Street is also an access route to the Sheffield College Granville Road campus and UTC which provides education for children from the age of 14. It is in close proximity to Freeman College which provides education for students (16 – 25) who have a range of complex learning, mental health and behavioural needs.

The club is also at the epicentre of the designated "Knowledge Gateway" and located on Sheffield Hallam University's city campus whose masterplan is to further develop the area, which includes "new buildings for the Business School and social sciences, refurbishing the Students' Union building known as The HUBS, creating a University Green [Festival/CIQ Square] and improving our current estate."ⁱⁱⁱ

(b) parks or other recreational areas designed for use by or for children under 18 years of age;

The recreational space (formerly known as Festival Square but now named as Cultural Industries Quarter Square on the map of the area which can be found on Sheaf Square) is directly adjacent to the club and the club's presence is holding back further use and development of this space into its full potential.

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There are a number of charities and organisations in the area which support vulnerable children, young people and adults, one of which is situated directly behind the club. Charles Street is a direct access route from the bus stop on Arundel Gate and the car park on Arundel Street; direct access from both means that service users pass directly past the club through the unused and desolate Festival/CIQ Square.

(d) any central gateway to the city or other city landmark, historic building or tourist attraction;

See (e) under (i).

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The location of the club is a de facto "cultural hub" given it is named the Cultural Industries Quarter. It is also on the direct access route to the 24/7 Addsetts learning centre from numerous student accommodation blocks in the immediate vicinity, which many will be accessing during the club's opening hours.

(iii) the layout, character or condition of the premises, vehicle, vessel or stall in respect of which the application is made.

The building, despite the removal of signage during its closed hours, is a blacked out sinister presence incongruous with its surroundings and clearly marked buildings. Removal of the signage is “a sticking plaster to a gaping wound” approach by Licensing. Regardless of whether the club’s signage is visible in the day, it is widely known what the building is. Those who are not familiar with the building’s use visiting SHU on open days and viewing properties in the vicinity during the day will be unable to make an informed decision about moving into an area with a sex establishment on the doorstep.

Furthermore, the building could be put to a different use serving a far more diverse and greater number of people thereby enriching the CIQ in a more inclusive and compatible way.

Further grounds for refusal

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“Thus, in objectifying media women’s role as a source of male sexual pleasure is emphasized and their humanity is deemphasized. After having internalized the messages of male sexual privilege and female dehumanization, it should be easier for men to envision imposing themselves sexually on women and reacting punitively to women who frustrate their sexual goals.”^{iv}

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I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours faithfully,

References

ⁱ Sheffield Star 16th January 2018 *Dramatic rise in the number of people living in Sheffield city centre* Available from: <https://www.thestar.co.uk/news/dramatic-rise-in-the-number-of-people-living-in-sheffield-city-centre-1-8960059>

ⁱⁱ Sheffield Chamber of Commerce *Sheffield’s Cultural Industries Quarter expansion in £10m City Estates project* Available from: <https://www.scci.org.uk/2017/03/sheffields-cultural-industries-quarter-expansion-in-10m-city-estates-project/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Sheffield Hallam University 22nd February 2018 *New campus masterplan places Hallam at the heart of the city* Available from: <http://www4.shu.ac.uk/mediacentre/new-campus-masterplan-places-hallam-heart-city>

^{iv} Wright, P.J & Tokunaga, R.S (2016) Men’s Objectifying Media Consumption, Objectification of Women, and Attitudes Supportive of Violence Against Women in *Archives of Sexual Behavior*

^v *Zero Option oral representation at the Spearmint Rhino hearing April 2017* Available from: <https://zerooptionblog.wordpress.com/2017/04/14/zero-options-representation-at-the-spearmint-rhino-licence-renewal-hearing-11th-april-2017/#more-524>

^{vi} Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87

^{vii} Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87

^{viii} Patiniotis, J. & Standing, K. (2012) ‘License to cause harm? Sex entertainment venues and women’s sense of safety in inner city centres’ in *Criminal Justice Matters*, 88:1, 10-12.

^{ix} Safe in the City? Girls tell it like it is. March 26, 2017 <https://theconversation.com/safe-in-the-city-girls-tell-it-like-it-is-72975>.

^x Slideshare available from: <https://www.slideshare.net/ZerooptionSheffield/villa-mercedes-hearing-8th-september-2016>

^{xi} Sanders, T., & Hardy, K. (2011) *The Regulatory Dance: Sexual Consumption in the Night Time Economy – Initial Findings*. Leeds: University of Leeds

^{xii} Sheffield Star 22nd February 2018 Available from: <https://www.thestar.co.uk/news/listed-these-are-the-10-most-crime-ridden-streets-in-sheffield-1-9030246>

^{xiii} Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.90

^{xiv} 23rd February 2018 Available from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-43043842>

Bower Claire

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 May 2018 17:02
To: licensingservice
Subject: Fw: Application for a renewal of licence for Spearmint Rhino strip club

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, May 14, 2018 4:59 PM
To: licensing@sheffield.gov.uk
Subject: Application for a renewal of licence for Spearmint Rhino strip club

To Whom It May Concern

I wish to register my objection to the application by Sonfield Developments Ltd c/o 161 Tottenham Court Road, London for renewal of a Sexual Entertainment Venue licence for Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield S1 2BS on the following grounds;

- Strip/lap dancing clubs are a form of violence against women, promoting the idea that women’s bodies can be bought, treating performers as commodities. This is dehumanising. If the performer really wanted to strip she wouldn’t need to be paid to do so.
- Testimonies from men who admit to using such establishments demonstrate that those men eroticise their power over the performer, getting a sexual thrill from control over her. This is related to the negation of, and absolute disregard for, her feelings within the financial transaction. This is toxic, abusive masculinity.
- Many ex-strippers describe psychological harm experienced as a result of the work. This is trauma caused by dissociation, the act of separating minds and feelings from their bodies, in order to cope. Often, it is only when they have stopped stripping that the impact of that harm is realised. This is similar to the experiences of women leaving abusive relationships
- Condoning, by licensing, a club which is set up to profit from the objectification of women gives a message to everyone in the city, not just the men who use it, that Sheffield Council thinks it is acceptable for women to be treated like this. This is not consistent with the Council’s Equality duty to foster good relations between men and women.
- Research suggests that men who hold objectifying views of women are more likely to be violent and to attribute responsibility (Victim blame) to women for violence perpetrated against them. Thus in licensing Spearmint Rhino the Council may be compromising its own Domestic and Sexual abuse strategy.
- Many women have advised the Council of feeling unsafe in the vicinity of Spearmint Rhino and avoid walking past it. No woman should feel unsafe anywhere in the city.

- The Council states explicitly that it is committed to reducing the normalisation of the objectification of women. SEVs of this type do not contribute to that aspiration. Spearmint Rhino actively contributes to the normalisation of objectification of women and actively discriminates against women by promoting negative and limiting gender stereotypes and impacting on women's comfort and freedom in moving round the city. Neither is this consistent with the Council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.
- Spearmint Rhino is situated in a residential area that is now undergoing major and extensive re development. The area has become increasingly residential with sites of cultural interest, charities providing support to vulnerable people, education providers and recreational areas in the vicinity. This gives further basis for refusal of the licence on the discretionary grounds available.
- In conclusion Sheffield should be a city that aspires to promote fairness and equality for all. As such I would ask that Spearmint Rhino's license renewal is declined.

[Redacted text]



This email has been checked for viruses by Avast antivirus software.
www.avast.com

Bower Claire

From: [REDACTED] >
Sent: 14 May 2018 17:30
To: licensingservice
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Objection to Licence Renewal for Spearmint Rhino

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Licensing Service

Block C, Staniforth Road Depot

Staniforth Road

Surrey Street

S9 3HD

Monday 14th May, 2018

Dear Licensing,

I am writing with regards to the application for license renewal for Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS.

I would strongly oppose the licence application under the Discretionary Grounds for Refusal of the current Sheffield City Council's 2018 Sex Establishment Policy ("the Policy"):

Discretionary Ground d)

1. **i) Character of the relevant locality**

(a) The premises are sited within a residential area that is also the heart of the City's cultural quarter. There are a high number of young people (a lot who are living away from home for the first time) who walk along Brown Street at all hours of the day and night as well as a high number of people working close by. It is important that this unique thriving vibrant area is allowed to flourish in a location that should feel safe and diverse for all people including women.

The City Centre as a whole is undergoing significant regeneration that includes the area in which Spearmint Rhino is present, also known as the Knowledge Gateway. This is an area that has been going through a period of redevelopment and one that the Council intends for further development in the coming months and years. The City Centre Masterplan, Knowledge Gateway, plans for HS2 and aspirations for an international Tech Hub are all evidence of this. Sheffield City Council should take note of the recent case law from the case of Thompson, R (On the Application Of) v Oxford City Council (2014) held by the Court of Appeal which stated that:

"In making that assessment, the sub-committee was permitted to have regard to an imminent development of which it was aware [developments of student housing], even if there could be no certainty that it would be completed and operational within the period of the licence."

The Public Sector Equality Duty and Gender Equality

The Policy states under the heading "The Equality Act 2010":

"This Act legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society. This includes the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which means that the Council must thoroughly consider, in the discharge of its licensing functions, the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity;
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- promote good relations".

This applies for this policy and to the consideration and determination of applications for sex establishments. I believe that sex establishments such as Spearmint Rhino directly discriminate against women by normalising the sexualisation and objectification of women, and that this contributes to their sexualisation and objectification in other areas of society. A 2016 review highlights how these venues undermine women's equality:

"Thus, in objectifying media women's role as a source of male sexual pleasure is emphasized and their humanity is deemphasized. After having internalized the messages of male sexual privilege and female dehumanization, it should be easier for men to envision imposing themselves sexually on women and reacting punitively to women who frustrate their sexual goals."

The presence of Spearmint Rhino has an impact not only on women working in the club, women customers or 'vulnerable people' in the local area but on all women in the City. As someone who works close to Spearmint Rhino, the very presence of a lap dancing club has a negative impact everytime I walk past. I do not experience the same personal feelings of safety and freedom to that of a man walking past Spearmint Rhino as the very presence and purpose of the club is about gender based objectification and sexualisation.

There is an increasing body of research and evidence that links sexual objectification of women to acts of violence including a paper from the US -Men's Objectifying Media Consumption, Objectification of Women, and Attitudes Supportive of Violence Against Women. written in May 2016, and a paper entitled Link between sexual objectification and aggression from the University of Kent written in January 2017. This research clearly demonstrates the problem of Sexual Entertainment Venues, such as Spearmint Rhinos, for Councils that are committed to carrying out their legal duties in terms of equalities.

Therefore, I would urge you to refuse the renewal of this license application and I look forward to hearing from you with confirmation of receipt of this objection.

Yours sincerely

Bower Claire

From: Women's Equality Party - Sheffield <[redacted]>
Sent: 14 May 2018 18:10
To: licensingservice
Subject: Objection to Spearmint Rhino License Application
Attachments: Objection to Renewal Spearmint Rhino 2018 FINAL.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Dear Licensing Service,

Please see attached our objection to the current license application by Spearmint Rhino to continue their business at the premises on Brown Street, Sheffield.

Please ensure that the committee members on the panel for the day of the hearing are given enough time to read all the applications. At previous hearings the panel chair has opened the hearing by stating that he had not read all of the objection submissions.

Please also ensure that all of the objections are made available to us as soon as possible and at least 10 working days prior to the hearing.

I look forward to receiving details of the hearing. Please acknowledge receipt of this email and attachment.

Regards

[redacted]
[redacted]
Women's Equality Party Sheffield

[@WEPSheffield](https://www.facebook.com/WomensEqualityPartySheffield)



**OBJECTION TO APPLICATION FOR A RENEWAL OF
SPEARMINT RHINO'S SEXUAL ENTERTAINMENT VENUE LICENCE 2018
From The Women's Equality Party, Sheffield Branch**

Public Sector Equality Duty

1. Spearmint Rhino unashamedly promotes extreme sexual objectification of women. It is the essence of the business and at the core of its promotional publicity, as evidenced by photographs from the company's website and twitter (see attached).
2. The imagery and publicity of these clubs, particularly online, promotes misogyny and sexism, and 'celebrates' dysfunctional attitudes to women.
3. As a result of what has happened over the last year, with scandals in Hollywood and Westminster and the work of the 'Me Too' movement, many companies and institutions are reviewing ways to support women in employment and ensure that they avoid being objectified and harassed in the work place. Many are now prepared to reconsider whether an acceptance of the lap dancing industry is conducive to fostering better relations between men and women.
4. Sheffield City Council licensing committee should likewise review its responsibilities when having regard to its Public Sector Equality Duty.
5. This consists of a general equality duty, set out in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, to have due regard to the need to:
 - a. Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - b. Advance equality of opportunity between the sexes and
 - c. Foster good relations between the sexes.
6. Previously the assessment of risk (of women experiencing discrimination, harassment and victimisation from Spearmint Rhino's activities) has been narrowly applied and the extension of the SEV licence has been justified on the grounds that the club causes no trouble.

7. This takes no account however of the need to ensure that women and girls in the city are not the victims of the misogynistic behavior that is fostered by these kinds of clubs.
8. There is a pressing need to address women's lack of employment in all areas particularly science, technology, engineering and mathematics. Sheffield City Council should not be promoting lap dancing as a viable and fulfilling job opportunity given the nature of the dancers employment and their working conditions.
9. Whatever the apologists for this industry may say, lap dancers have no employment protection with many working on what can be best described as 'less-than-zero' contracts. A large number have to pay up front for their spot each night. Some have raised concerns about the pressures they feel under to do more than merely dance, in order to 'please the punter' and earn a living.
10. Lap dancing clubs can avoid paying tax, including VAT on the services supplied by the dancers, by not offering contracts of employment with attendant benefits such as holiday and sick pay, pension and NI contributions. We understand there is a degree of competition for better paying nights and this can increase uncertainty and financial pressure.
11. Spearmint Rhino make it clear that none of their dancers are directly employed by the company. The dancers pay a flat fee of approximately £140 per night and are paid £20 per dance of which £5 is 'raked' by the company. On some nights there can be as few as 10 customers.
12. At last year's hearing questions were asked by one committee member about the working conditions of the dancers at Spearmint Rhino and specifically about what happened if there was a slow night. Counsel for the applicant replied (having consulted with his client) that the dancers also had the opportunity to work at a club in Wakefield.
13. Regrettably this was not followed up with further questioning and we ask the committee to make proper enquiry of the club as to the precise relationship if any between Spearmint Rhino, its dancers and other clubs including the one referred to in Wakefield.
14. While we object to any renewal of the SEV licence, in our submission it is of paramount importance, if the club is allowed to continue, that the dancers are provided with full contracts of employment. This will make their relationship with the club transparent and their tax affairs can be openly regularized with HMRC under the PAYE system. It will also avoid discrimination between the dancers and those employed by the club such as managers and other staff.
15. The very purpose of current SEV licencing is to give City Councils greater control and discretion over this problematic industry which has higher risks of exploitation. At the last hearing Spearmint Rhino's

counsel informed the committee that a number of conditions could be imposed on the club to meet public concerns. In our submission this should include a direction that dancers must be put on the payroll to give them proper employment protection.

Locality and use of buildings

16. Since the April 2017 hearing in relation to Spearmint Rhino's SEV licence, there have been significant changes in the character of the relevant locality and the uses to which any premises in the vicinity are put.
17. At that hearing counsel for the applicant conceded that as the plans for the area developed there may need to be a reconsideration of the presence of a lap dancing club in that locality, namely Brown Street. It was the applicant's argument that such a moment had not yet arrived, but matters could develop.
18. Sheffield Hallam University has repeatedly objected to the application to renew the SEV licence at 60 Brown Street. It is our submission that in the light of the University's £220m development plans for the area it would be unreasonable for the Licensing Committee to continue disregarding the views of this major city developer any longer.

Sheffield Hallam University (SHU)

19. The Master Plan for the extended development of the locality has been recently unveiled. The proposals are significant, ambitious and will transform not just the University but the city as well. According to the Sheffield Telegraph (22nd February 2018) "a 'university green' with trees, lawn and seating will be laid out between the new blocks and drawings suggest Pinball Square ... would also be spruced up next to the union off Paternoster Square."
20. Vice-Chancellor Professor Chris Husbands has stated publicly:

"We are uniquely placed at the heart of the city to contribute to it's vibrancy and reputation and we want to encourage everyone, not just our staff and students, to enjoy the campus by creating attractive places... In a shifting and highly competitive landscape students expect exceptional teaching, in an outstanding environment with increased opportunities... This is a bold vision for the future of the university's estate which will enhance the presence and profile of the city region and support its wider regeneration and development."
21. In the light of these projects the continued presence of Spearmint Rhino is untenable and wholly out of step with the combined plans of the University and the Council.

22. It should be noted that Professor Husbands has given his backing to the objections being lodged by the University Estates department in relation to the current application and it would be illogical to ignore SHU's concerns.
23. At the last hearing the applicant's counsel suggested that the presence of a lap-dancing club near university buildings including student residential areas is not wrong in principle. He cited the proximity of Spearmint Rhino's venue in Tottenham Court Road, London to University College buildings as one example.
24. This is a false equivalence. Tottenham Court Road is in a busy London tourist area, with numerous restaurants, bars etc. Unlike the Sheffield venue, Spearmint Rhino's London club is not on a University campus and does not sit within an area increasingly occupied by museums, arts spaces, university halls of residence, student unions and academic buildings.

Site Gallery, Showroom and Yorkshire Arts Space

25. 60 Brown Street faces the 'Site Gallery', and is located near the 'Showroom and Workstation' and 'Yorkshire Arts Space'. These are three long established arts venues which host numerous events for people from all backgrounds including teenagers, each in substantial premises that dominate the area.
26. At the time of the last hearing the Site Gallery was about to close for a year while new building works commenced. The reopening is imminent and the presence of Spearmint Rhino's "Gentleman's Club" is undoubtedly a source of embarrassment to the gallery.
27. In proposing its new 'no limit' policy the council made it clear that it viewed the existence of lap dancing clubs as an important component of a thriving retail and entertainment quarter.
28. Even if you accept this principle it is illogical to allow a club like Spearmint Rhino to continue its business in a location such as Brown Street, which is quiet and well away from the general night-time economy of Sheffield in the West Street and Devonshire Green area.
29. It also contradicts the Council's plans for the area which are being developed in tandem with Sheffield City Region.
30. In a recent prospectus Sheffield City Region (SCR) has referred specifically to Brown Street as falling within the 'Knowledge Corridor'.

'Following the long-awaited renovation of the former head post office as Sheffield Hallam University's Sheffield Institute of Arts (SIA), Sheffield City Council is planning to upgrade the route from the Edwardian-era square along Pond Street to

Paternoster Row and Brown Street, the focus of the Cultural Industries Quarter as well as improving connections to the city centre and station.

The project aims to help unlock major development opportunities at Sheaf Square, Site Gallery, the site of the former Nelson Mandela building, the former sorting office on Flat Street and the Digital Campus.

These developments will create the setting for more than 4,000 new jobs over the next five years. The project will also aim to address road safety issues, increase pedestrian areas and reduce the number of buses using the area, and encourage safer walking and cycling and create space for events and seating.'

31. The Council has participated in the promotion of the SCR as it seeks to encourage investment in the city, create jobs and attract new industries. The SCR views job creation in the arts and in the creative industries as an integral part of its plans. However the credibility of those ambitions, and the prospects for development and expansion, are we submit undermined if these current and future arts projects are asked to continue sitting 'cheek by jowl' with a Sexual Entertainment Venue.
32. Sheffield Chamber of Commerce has also promoted a number of projects on its website to develop new accommodation sites in the Cultural Industries Quarter. It should be noted that developers describe the vicinity as part of Sheffield Hallam University campus when promoting its attractions.
33. In *R (on the application of Thompson) v Oxford City Council* [2014] EWCA Civ 94 the Administrative Court upheld the decision of Oxford City Council to refuse to renew a licence. In his judgement Mr Justice Haddon-Cave said as follows:

'As to the law, licensing decision-makers are entitled to take into account both the present and future "*character*" of an area. There is no reason to limit the reference to "*character*" in paragraph 12(3)(d) only to the present character of the area. Indeed, it would make no sense to do so in the context of prospective licenses which were to be granted for 12 months in the future. Prospective licenses required a prospective view. The fact that an area is developing and in a continued state of change is a relevant consideration to why renewal might be inappropriate'.

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SPEARMINTRHINO.COM

Spearmint Rhino

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Conclusion

34. There are compelling reasons why the committee should prevent Spearmint Rhino continuing to operate from 60 Brown Street. The presence of this club at that location, or at all, adds nothing to the night-time economy of this city apart from promoting extreme sexual objectification and the application for renewal should be refused.

Women's Equality Party
Sheffield Branch
14th May 2018

Bower Claire

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 May 2018 18:54
To: licensingservice
Subject: Objection to renewal of licence for Spearmint Rhino 1
Attachments: Objection letter to Sheffield Council re Spearmint Rhino SEV License Renewal.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Please find the attached letter objecting to the renewal of a Sexual Entertainment Venue licence for Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield S1 2BS

[REDACTED]

Licensing Service, Sheffield City Council,
Block C
Staniforth Road Depot,
Staniforth Road
SHEFFIELD S9 3HD
email to: licensing@sheffield.gov.uk

14 May 2018

To Whom It May Concern

We wish to register our objection to the application by Sonfield Developments Ltd c/o 161 Tottenham Court Road, London for renewal of a Sexual Entertainment Venue licence for Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield S1 2BS on the following grounds;

- Strip/lap dancing clubs are a form of violence against women, promoting the idea that women's bodies can be bought, treating performers as commodities. This is dehumanising. If the performer really wanted to strip she wouldn't need to be paid to do so.
- Testimonies from men who admit to using such establishments demonstrate that those men eroticise their power over the performer, getting a sexual thrill from control over her. This is related to the negation of, and absolute disregard for, her feelings within the financial transaction. This is toxic, abusive masculinity.
- Many ex-strippers describe psychological harm experienced as a result of the work. This is trauma caused by dissociation, the act of separating minds and feelings from their bodies, in order to cope. Often, it is only when they have stopped stripping that the impact of that harm is realised. This is similar to the experiences of women leaving abusive relationships
- Condoning, by licensing, a club which is set up to profit from the objectification of women gives a message to everyone in the city, not just the men who use it, that Sheffield Council thinks it is acceptable for women to be treated like this. This is not consistent with the Council's Equality duty to foster good relations between men and women.
- Research suggests that men who hold objectifying views of women are more likely to be violent and to attribute responsibility (Victim blame) to women for violence perpetrated against them. Thus in licensing Spearmint Rhino the Council may be compromising its own Domestic and Sexual abuse strategy.
- Many women have advised the Council of feeling unsafe in the vicinity of Spearmint Rhino and avoid walking past it. No woman should feel unsafe anywhere in the city.
- The Council states explicitly that it is committed to reducing the normalisation of the objectification of women. SEV's of this type do not contribute to that aspiration. Spearmint Rhino actively contributes to the normalisation of objectification of women and actively discriminates against women by promoting negative and limiting gender stereotypes and impacting on women's comfort and freedom in moving round the city. Neither is this consistent with the Council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010.
- Spearmint Rhino is situated in a residential area that is now undergoing major and extensive re development. The area has become increasingly residential with sites of cultural interest,

charities providing support to vulnerable people, education providers and recreational areas in the vicinity. This gives further basis for refusal of the licence on the discretionary grounds available.

In conclusion Sheffield should be a city that aspires to promote fairness and equality for all. As such we would ask that Spearmint Rhino's license renewal is declined.

[Faint, illegible text]

Bower Claire

From: [redacted] <[redacted]>
Sent: 14 May 2018 18:55
To: licensingservice
Subject: Objection to renewal of licence for Spearmint Rhino

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Licensing Service

Block C, Staniforth Road Depot

Staniforth Road

Surrey Street

S9 3HD

Monday 14th May, 2018

Dear Licensing,

I am writing with regards to the application for license renewal for Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS.

I would strongly oppose the licence application under the Discretionary Grounds for Refusal of the current Sheffield City Council's 2018 Sex Establishment Policy ("the Policy"):

Discretionary Ground d)

1. **i) Character of the relevant locality**

(a) The premises are sited within a residential area that is also the heart of the City's cultural quarter. There are a high number of young people (a lot who are living away from home for the first time) who walk along Brown Street at all hours of the day and night as well as a high number of people working close by. It is important that this unique thriving vibrant area is allowed to flourish in a location that should feel safe and diverse for all people including women.

The City Centre as a whole is undergoing significant regeneration that includes the area in which Spearmint Rhino is present, also known as the Knowledge Gateway. This is an area that has been going through a period of redevelopment and one that the Council intends for further development in the coming months and years. The City Centre Masterplan, Knowledge Gateway, plans for HS2 and aspirations for an international Tech Hub are all evidence of this. Sheffield City Council should take note of the recent case law from the case of Thompson, R (On the Application Of) v Oxford City Council (2014) held by the Court of Appeal which stated that:

"In making that assessment, the sub-committee was permitted to have regard to an imminent development of which it was aware [developments of student housing], even if there could be no certainty that it would be completed and operational within the period of the licence."

The Public Sector Equality Duty and Gender Equality

The Policy states under the heading "The Equality Act 2010":

"This Act legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society. This includes the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which means that the Council must thoroughly consider, in the discharge of its licensing functions, the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity;
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- promote good relations".

This applies for this policy and to the consideration and determination of applications for sex establishments. I believe that sex establishments such as Spearmint Rhino directly discriminate against women by normalising the sexualisation and objectification of women, and that this contributes to their sexualisation and objectification in other areas of society. A 2016 review highlights how these venues undermine women's equality:

"Thus, in objectifying media women's role as a source of male sexual pleasure is emphasized and their humanity is deemphasized. After having internalized the messages of male sexual privilege and female dehumanization, it should be easier for men to envision imposing themselves sexually on women and reacting punitively to women who frustrate their sexual goals."

The presence of Spearmint Rhino has an impact not only on women working in the club, women customers or 'vulnerable people' in the local area but on all women in the City. As someone who works in a volunteer capacity close to Spearmint Rhino, the very presence of a lap dancing club has a negative impact everytime I walk past. I do not experience the same personal feelings of safety and freedom to that of a man walking

past Spearmint Rhino as the very presence and purpose of the club is about gender based objectification and sexualisation.

There is an increasing body of research and evidence that links sexual objectification of women to acts of violence including a paper from the US -Men's Objectifying Media Consumption, Objectification of Women, and Attitudes Supportive of Violence Against Women, written in May 2016, and a paper entitled Link between sexual objectification and aggression from the University of Kent written in January 2017. This research clearly demonstrates the problem of Sexual Entertainment Venues, such as Spearmint Rhinos, for Councils that are committed to carrying out their legal duties in terms of equalities.

Therefore, I would urge you to refuse the renewal of this license application and I look forward to hearing from you with confirmation of receipt of this objection.

Yours sincerely

I _____

Bower Claire

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 14 May 2018 18:59
To: licensingservice
Subject: Objection to Spearmint Rhino licence renewal 2018 (2)
Attachments: Spearmint Rhino Objection 2018.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Please find attached letter setting out the grounds for the refusal of the the application for a sex establishment licence by Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS.

Licensing Service
Block C, Staniforth Road Depot
Staniforth Road
Surrey Street
S9 3HD
By email to: licensing@sheffield.gov.uk

14 May 2018

Dear Licensing

Objection to Spearmint Rhino licence renewal 2018

We refer to the application for a sex establishment licence by Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield, S1 2BS.

We believe that the Council should refuse the licence application under the Discretionary Grounds for Refusal of the current Sheffield City Council's 2018 Sex Establishment Policy (the Policy) on the following grounds:

Discretionary Ground d)

i) Character of the relevant locality

(a) the fact that the premises are sited in a residential area;

The club backs onto student accommodation and the area is increasingly becoming more residential for students and non-students alike.

The city centre's residential population had risen from 6,000 to 30,000 over the last 10 yearsⁱ with further plans for more residential accommodation within the Cultural Industries Quarter (CIQ) and Knowledge Gateway. Furthermore, "the Alsop Fields development is a mix of residential apartments, studios, offices for the high-tech and creative sectors and places to eat and drink" and ". . . designed to be a destination in itself – a regeneration of part of the Cultural Industries Quarter that will be similar to the trendy parts of Manchester and London"ⁱⁱ for which Brown Street and Paternoster Row are the main thoroughfares.

(d) the premises are sited near premises or areas which are sensitive because they are frequented by children, young persons or families, including but not limited to educational establishments, leisure facilities such as parks, libraries or swimming pools, markets and covered markets;

The Showroom and adjacent Work Station are frequented by families and both host events specifically for children including the world renowned Children's Media Conference.

(e) the premises are sited near places and or buildings of historical/cultural interest and other tourist attractions.

It is directly opposite the Showroom cinema, which is "one of Europe's largest independent cinemas paired with the longest-running creative business centre in the city "housed in a converted 1930s car showroom."

It is also opposite the Site Gallery which has just undergone a huge expansion. Spearmint Rhino is not only centrally located in terms of proximity to a number of national and international events locations but

it is also a direct access route, for example: Doc Fest; the aforementioned Children's Media Conference; Off the Shelf etc all of which are tourist attractions.

The Club is next to Sheffield Hallam Students Union (an iconic and a city landmark building).

ii) Use of other premises in the vicinity

The Licensing Authority will have regard to, but not limited to, the following:

(a) schools, nurseries or other premises substantially used by or for children under 18 years of age,

There are many educational establishments in the vicinity and Brown Street is also an access route to the Sheffield College Granville Road campus and UTC which provides education for children from the age of 14. It is in close proximity to Freeman College which provides education for students (16 – 25) who have a range of complex learning, mental health and behavioural needs.

The Club is also at the epicentre of the designated "Knowledge Gateway" and located on Sheffield Hallam University's city campus whose masterplan is to further develop the area which includes "new buildings for the Business School and social sciences, refurbishing the Students' Union building known as The HUBS, creating a University Green [Festival/CIQ Square] and improving our current estate."ⁱⁱⁱ

(b) parks or other recreational areas designed for use by or for children under 18 years of age;

The recreational space (formerly known as Festival Square but now named as Cultural Industries Quarter Square on the map of the area which can be found on Sheaf Square) is directly adjacent to the club and the club's presence is holding back further use and development of this space into its full potential.

(c) hospitals, mental health or disability centres, substance misuse treatment centres, sexual exploitation services, sexual abuse centres or similar premises;

There are a number of charities and organisations in the area which support vulnerable children, young people and adults, one of which is situated directly behind the club. Charles Street is a direct access route from the bus stop on Arundel Gate and the car park on Arundel Street; direct access from both means that service users pass directly past the club through the unused and desolate Festival/CIQ Square.

(d) any central gateway to the city or other city landmark, historic building or tourist attraction;

See (e) under (i).

(f) predominately residential areas;

See (a) under (i)

(g) The Cultural Hub (Millennium Galleries, Tudor Square, theatres and library).

The location of the club is a de facto "cultural hub" given it is named the Cultural Industries Quarter. It is also on the direct access route to the 24/7 Addsetts learning centre from numerous student accommodation blocks in the immediate vicinity, which many will be accessing during the club's opening hours.

(iii) to the layout, character or condition of the premises, vehicle, vessel or stall in respect of which the application is made.

The building, despite the removal of signage during its closed hours, is a blacked out sinister presence incongruous with its surroundings and clearly marked buildings. Removal of the signage is “a sticking plaster to a gaping wound” approach by Licensing. Regardless of whether the club’s signage is visible in the day, it is widely known what the building is. Those who are not familiar with the building’s use visiting SHU on open days and viewing properties in the vicinity during the day will be unable to make an informed decision about moving into an area with a sex establishment on the doorstep.

Furthermore, the building could be put to a different use serving a far more diverse and greater number of people thereby enriching the CIQ in a far more inclusive and compatible way.

Further grounds for refusal

The Public Sector Equality Duty and Gender Equality

The Policy states under the heading “The Equality Act 2010”:

This Act legally protects people from discrimination in the workplace and wider society. This includes the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED), which means that the Council must thoroughly consider, in the discharge

of its licensing functions, the need to:

- promote equality of opportunity;
- eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- promote good relations.

This applies for this policy and to the consideration and determination of applications for sex establishments. (p.5)

We believe that sex establishments such as Spearmint Rhino directly discriminate against women by normalising the sexualisation and objectification of women, and that this contributes to their sexualisation and objectification in other areas of society. A 2016 review highlights how these venues undermine women’s equality:

“Thus, in objectifying media women’s role as a source of male sexual pleasure is emphasized and their humanity is deemphasized. After having internalized the messages of male sexual privilege and female dehumanization, it should be easier for men to envision imposing themselves sexually on women and reacting punitively to women who frustrate their sexual goals.”^{iv}

The Council has a fundamental and non-delegable role to give due regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty, including tackling gender inequality. This applies notwithstanding the fact that Parliament has legislated to allow the possibility for sex establishments to be licensed in specific areas – subject to the choices of the local communities.

The Policy further states that:

Licences will be refused if the Licensing Authority perceives a venue will have negative impacts on members of the public or vulnerable persons living, working or engaged in normal activity in the area.

Many women have voiced their concerns and fears about the presence of Spearmint Rhino in previous objections, including LGBT women and disabled women. In 2017, many examples of the negative

impact of this club were given in objections, for example: one woman giving up her studio at Yorkshire Artspace and a contributory factor was the presence of the club and “running the gauntlet of men hanging around outside the club and harassing women.” (objection 12) and others have stated how the club impacts on their business at hearings and in writing.^v

As Philip Kolvin (2010) cites the Royal Town Planning Institute’s Gender and Spatial Planning Good Practice Note:

“In relation to the 24-hour economy policy, ensure that the views of women are considered. Evidence shows that in certain locations, lap-dancing and exotic dancing club make women feel threatened or uncomfortable”^{vi}

Kolvin continues with:

“If a woman, whether objectively justified or not, fears to use part of the town centre characterised by sex establishments, this may be argued to amount to discrimination, in that her access to the public infrastructure of the town is impaired in comparison to that of men. Where relevant these considerations ought properly to be taken into account by authorities at the decision-making stage, and possibly at the policy-making stage”^{vii}.

This is further corroborated by 2012 research published in Criminal Justice Matters which states that:

“. . . the women describe feeling frightened, disempowered, violated, embarrassed, unsafe (particularly if men are around) and avoid certain streets at night where they know there is a lap dancing club.”^{viii}

In addition to an Australian article about women and girls’ perceptions of safety in urban spaces highlights how they restrict their freedom of movement to avoid zones where there are strip clubs.^{ix}

Lap dancing clubs also reinforce negative gender stereotypes of male insatiable sexuality and female sexual availability which are hugely damaging to both sexes and non-binary people. The stereotypes upon which they are founded do not foster good relations between the sexes, as evidenced in 2016 by Zero Option at the Villa Mercedes hearing representation and its 2017 oral representation at the hearing^x.

In their UK study published in 2011 Sanders and Hardy^{xi} reported that 30% of the women performers interviewed said that as a result of doing the job they had lost respect for men; a finding echoed many testimonies of former performers.

The Policy states that “The Licensing Authority will also consider the following factors when deciding if an application is appropriate”:

(b) proximity to areas with high levels of crime;

On 22nd February 2018, it was reported in the Star that Arundel Gate which runs in parallel to Paternoster Row and is approximately 1-2 minutes on foot away depending on walking pace, is 10th in the top 10 areas of crime in the city and that “These offences, including assaults, robberies and sex attacks on women, were recorded between January and November 2017.”^{xii}

This image of a high-end establishment portrayed by this club goes in some way to normalising this type of venue in a very active part of the city, and as such giving the impression that Sheffield as a city condones both the sexualisation and objectification of women, which is in complete contradiction to the Council’s equality policies. The fact that its location within Sheffield Hallam University buildings and the CIQ also conveys the message that this SEV is culturally embedded within the two and indeed integral to a higher education experience and Sheffield’s local heritage.

The Committee is asked to note that in the last few years Leeds City Council successfully defended a refusal to renew two SEV licenses at judicial review:

R (Bean Trading A Ltd) v Leeds City Council (2014)

It was held that a council can “take a fresh look” despite no changes to the character of locality. The Council is also asked to note the following from Philip Kolvin regarding licence renewal:

“Given that there is potential for the discretion to be exercised afresh, the renewal should not just be a rubber stamping exercise, but an opportunity, if needed, to review the principle and content of the license.”^{xiii}

The case of Thompson v Oxford City Council (2014) was also supported at court of appeal, and the Council told they could “take a fresh look” at any application for renewal.

According to the BBC, lap dancing clubs have fallen by a third in England^{xiv}. The same report states that “a survey conducted by YouGov in 2015 found 64% of people in Great Britain said strip clubs were a negative part of British culture.” I ask that the Committee refuses to grant the club a licence for all the reasons outlined and because Spearmint Rhino is anachronistic, it gives Sheffield and our much vaunted CIQ a negative image and may deter investors and developers. At a time when we are hoping to attract large investors and are bidding for Channel 4 to relocate in the vicinity, the Committee needs to turn down this licence application, which it is empowered to do.

We look forward to hearing from you.

References

ⁱSheffield Star 16th January 2018 *Dramatic rise in the number of people living in Sheffield city centre* Available from: <https://www.thestar.co.uk/news/dramatic-rise-in-the-number-of-people-living-in-sheffield-city-centre-1-8960059>

ⁱⁱ Sheffield Chamber of Commerce *Sheffield’s Cultural Industries Quarter expansion in £10m City Estates project* Available from: <https://www.scci.org.uk/2017/03/sheffields-cultural-industries-quarter-expansion-in-10m-city-estates-project/>

ⁱⁱⁱ Sheffield Hallam University 22nd February 2018 *New campus masterplan places Hallam at the heart of the city* Available from: <http://www4.shu.ac.uk/mediacentre/new-campus-masterplan-places-hallam-heart-city>

^{iv} Wright, P.J & Tokunaga, R.S (2016) Men’s Objectifying Media Consumption, Objectification of Women, and Attitudes Supportive of Violence Against Women in *Archives of Sexual Behavior*

^v *Zero Option oral representation at the Spearmint Rhino hearing April 2017* Available from: <https://zerooptionblog.wordpress.com/2017/04/14/zero-options-representation-at-the-spearmint-rhino-licence-renewal-hearing-11th-april-2017/#more-524>

^{vi} Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87

^{vii} Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.87

^{viii} Patiniotis, J. & Standing, K. (2012) ‘License to cause harm? Sex entertainment venues and women’s sense of safety in inner city centres’ in *Criminal Justice Matters*, 88:1, 10-12.

^{ix} Safe in the City? Girls tell it like it is. March 26, 2017 <https://theconversation.com/safe-in-the-city-girls-tell-it-like-it-is-72975>.

^x Slideshare available from: <https://www.slideshare.net/ZerooptionSheffield/villa-mercedes-hearing-8th-september-2016>

^{xi} Sanders, T., & Hardy, K. (2011) *The Regulatory Dance: Sexual Consumption in the Night Time Economy – Initial Findings*. Leeds: University of Leeds

^{xii} Sheffield Star 22nd February 2018 Available from: <https://www.thestar.co.uk/news/listed-these-are-the-10-most-crime-ridden-streets-in-sheffield-1-9030246>

^{xiii} Kolvin, P (2010) *Sex Licensing*, The Institute of Licensing p.90

^{xiv} 23rd February 2018 Available from: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-43043842>

Bower Claire

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 May 2018 20:31
To: licensingservice
Subject: Spearmint Rhino Licence

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

I am a resident of Sheffield, as such I would like to state my objection to the renewal of the Spearmint Rhino Licence in our town centre.

I feel the location is poor, Sheffield Hallam university having such a club on their doorstep is a joke, such could be a negative influence on young students.

I work in the sexual health sector, I am far from a prude, but find it irresponsible of the council to normalise the commodification of women in this way. Granting the licence legitimises the gender imbalance that a democratic council should seek to redress.

Thank you for seriously considering the message that will be sent to the women of Sheffield by your decision.

[REDACTED]

Bower Claire

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 May 2018 20:44
To: licensingservice
Subject: Objection letter re license renewal application for Spearmint Rhino
Attachments: Zero Option objection letter to Sheffield Council re Spearmint Rhino SEV License Renewal May 2018.docx

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Dear Madam/Sir,

Please find attached an objection letter from Zero Option Sheffield regarding the SEV license renewal application for Spearmint Rhino.

Yours faithfully,

[REDACTED]

--

Zero Option is a campaign to make Sheffield SEV free.

You can read more about us [here](#).

Licensing Service -Sheffield City Council,
Block C , Staniforth Road Depot,
Staniforth Road
SHEFFIELD S9 3HD

14th May 2018

To Whom It May Concern

I wish to register my objection to the application by Sonfield Developments Ltd c/o 161 Tottenham Court Road, London for renewal of a Sexual Entertainment Venue licence for Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield S1 2BS on the following grounds;

- Strip and lap dancing clubs are a form of violence against women, promoting the idea that women's bodies can be bought and treating performers as commodities. This is dehumanising: if the performer really wanted to strip she wouldn't need to be paid to do so.
- Testimonies from men who admit to using such establishments demonstrate that those men eroticise their power over the performer, getting a sexual thrill from this control over her which is related to the negation of, and absolute disregard for, her feelings within the financial transaction. This is toxic, abusive masculinity.
- Many ex-strippers describe experiencing psychological harm as a result of this. This is trauma caused by dissociation, the act of separating their minds and feelings from their bodies in order to cope. Often it is only when they have stopped stripping that the impact of that harm is realised. This is similar to the experience of women who have left abusive relationships.
- Condoning, by licensing, a club which is set up to profit from the objectification of women gives a message to everyone in the city, not just to the men who use it, that Sheffield Council thinks it is acceptable for women to be treated like this. This is not consistent with the Council's duty under the Equality Act to foster good relations between men and women.
- Research suggests that men who hold objectifying views of women are more likely to be violent to women and to attribute responsibility (victim blaming) to women for violence perpetrated against them. Thus, in licensing Spearmint Rhino the Council may be compromising its own Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy.
- Many women have informed the Council's Licensing Department that they feel unsafe in the vicinity of Spearmint Rhino and avoid walking past it. There should be no no-go areas for women and no woman should feel unsafe anywhere in the city.
- The Council has stated explicitly that it is committed to reducing the normalisation of the objectification of women. Strip and lap dancing clubs do not contribute to that aspiration. Spearmint Rhino actively contributes to the objectification of women and actively discriminates against women by promoting negative and limiting gender stereotypes and impacts on women's comfort and freedom in moving round the city. This is not consistent with the Council's obligations under the Equality Act 2010
- Spearmint Rhino is situated in an area that is now undergoing major and extensive redevelopment. The area has become increasingly residential and several sites of major

cultural interest, charities providing support to vulnerable young people, education providers and recreational areas are situated nearby. This gives further basis for refusal of the licence on the discretionary grounds available.

- Sheffield should be a city that aspires to promote fairness and equality for all. As such I would ask that Spearmint Rhino's license renewal is declined.

SIGNED : 

On behalf of Zero Option Sheffield



Bower Claire

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Sent: 14 May 2018 21:14
To: licensingservice
Subject: Objection letter re SEV license renewal for Spearmint Rhino
Attachments: Scan0010.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Dear Madam or Sir

Please find attached a letter from [REDACTED] objecting to the SEV license renewal for Spearmint Rhino.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

--
Zero Option is a campaign to make Sheffield SEV free.

You can read more about us [here](#).

Licensing Service, Sheffield City Council,
Block C
Staniforth Road Depot
Staniforth Road
SHEFFIELD S9 3HD
By email to: licensing@sheffield.gov.uk

To Whom It May Concern

I wish to register my objection to the application by Sonfield Developments Ltd c/o 161 Tottenham Court Road, London for renewal of a Sexual Entertainment Venue licence for Spearmint Rhino, 60 Brown Street, Sheffield S1 2BS on the following grounds;

- Strip clubs are a form of violence against women
- Strip clubs promote the idea that women's bodies can be bought, treating the performer as a commodity with no regard to her actual feelings, as if she were an object: if she really wanted to strip for whoever pays her she wouldn't need to be paid to do so. This is dehumanising and disempowering to the performer. The punter is eroticising his power over the woman and getting a sexual thrill from his control over her. This is toxic, abusive masculinity.
- Many ex-strippers have spoken of the psychological harm they have experienced as a result of working in strip clubs. This is trauma caused by dissociation, the act of separating their mind and feelings from their bodies, which is required in order to cope. Often, it is only when they have stopped stripping that they realise the harm caused to them by it, which is similar to the experience of women once they have left an abusive relationship.
- Licensing Spearmint Rhino gives a message to everyone in the city, not just the men who use it, that Sheffield Council thinks it is acceptable for women to be treated like this.
- Condoning, by licensing, a strip club which is set up solely to profit from the objectification of women is to effectively promote views and behaviours which are associated with male violence towards women and girls, stoking the misogynistic attitudes that lead to this violence.
- Research again and again identifies the link that men who hold objectifying views of women as lesser than human are more likely to be violent to them.
- Many women have written to the Council specifically stating how uncomfortable and unsafe they feel walking past Spearmint Rhino. Many try to avoid walking past it. No-one should feel unsafe in Sheffield and there should be no no-go areas for women.
- Thus, to relicence Spearmint Rhino would have the effect of promoting inequality between the sexes, which is not consistent with the Council's obligations under the Equality Act to foster good relations between men and women.
- Sheffield should be a city that aspires to promote fairness and equality for all. As such I would ask that Spearmint Rhino's license renewal is declined.

SIGNED

PRINT NAME & ADDRESS

Bower Claire

From: Zero Option <[redacted]>
Sent: 14 May 2018 21:19
To: licensingservice
Subject: Objection to SEV license renewal for Spearmint Rhino
Attachments: Scan0011.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Dear Madam or Sir

Please find attached a letter from [redacted], objecting to SEV license renewal for Spearmint Rhino.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

--
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You can read more about us [here](#).

Licensing Service, Sheffield City Council,
Block C
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SHEFFIELD S9 3HD
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6.5.18.

To Whom It May Concern

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SIGNED

PRINT NAME & ADDRESS

Bower Claire

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 May 2018 21:20
To: licensingservice
Subject: Spearmint Rhino

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

I dont beleive this licence should be renewed based on the fact that the premises are in the middle of town centre and not at all discreet. I beleive everyone of whatever gender or sexuality has the right to choose what they sell of themselves sexually but it is also questionable what constitutes choice. These supposed choices appear to be often exploited and Spearmint Rhino premises are currently opposite a vulnerable womens charity.

Sent from Samsung Mobile on O2

Bower Claire

From: [REDACTED] n>
Sent: 10 May 2018 06:54
To: licensingservice
Subject: Spearmint rhino

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

I am writing to voice my opinion about spearmint rhino. Having a strip club sexualizes and objectifies women and does not fulfil the Council's public sector equality duty to foster good relations between the genders. Please take my opinion into account
Thank you

Bower Claire

From: Zero Option <[redacted]>
Sent: 14 May 2018 21:24
To: licensingservice
Subject: Objection to SEV license renewal for Spearmint Rhino
Attachments: Scan0012.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Dear Madam or Sir

Please find enclosed a letter from [redacted] objecting to SEV license renewal for Spearmint Rhino.

Yours faithfully

[redacted]

--

Zero Option is a campaign to make Sheffield SEV free.

You can read more about us [here](#).

Licensing Service, Sheffield City Council,
Block C
Staniforth Road Depot
Staniforth Road
SHEFFIELD S9 3HD
By email to: licensing@sheffield.gov.uk

G. 5118

To Whom It May Concern

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- Many ex-strippers have spoken of the psychological harm they have experienced as a result of working in strip clubs. This is trauma caused by dissociation, the act of separating their mind and feelings from their bodies, which is required in order to cope. Often, it is only when they have stopped stripping that they realise the harm caused to them by it, which is similar to the experience of women once they have left an abusive relationship.
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- Sheffield should be a city that aspires to promote fairness and equality for all. As such I would ask that Spearmint Rhino's license renewal is declined.

SIGNED

PRINT NAME & ADDRESS

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

100

Bower Claire

From: Zero Option <zerooption@sheffield@gmail.com>
Sent: 14 May 2018 21:28
To: licensingservice
Subject: Objection to SEV licence renewal for Spearmint Rhino
Attachments: Scan0013.pdf

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Categories: SPEARMINT RHINO

Dear Madam or Sir

Please find attached a letter from [REDACTED] objecting to SEV license renewal for Spearmint Rhino.

Yours faithfully

[REDACTED]

--

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To Whom It May Concern

6.5.18

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PRINT NAME & ADDRESS