

LONDON BOROUGH OF CAMDEN

LICENSING PANEL E

ELYSEE RESTAURANT

12TH March 2026

SKELETON ARGUMENT OF PREMISES LICENCE HOLDER

Key:

A1 = agenda papers page 1.

S2 = supplementary agenda papers page 2

A. INTRODUCTION

1. The Metropolitan Police Service (“MPS”) seeks revocation of the premises licence of Elysee.
2. Representations supporting the review were filed on behalf of the health and safety authority and the licensing authority. The first of these is withdrawn. The second is, with respect, apparently based on a misunderstanding, as set out below.
3. There are 28 representations from businesses and others strongly supportive of the premises.
4. As will be seen, there have been breaches of condition, for which the premises licence holder sincerely apologises. As would be expected, the breaches were promptly rectified.
5. It is submitted that the breaches identified do not justify revocation of the licence of this long-standing business. Such action would be disproportionate.
6. This skeleton argument is intended to be a brief summary, to signpost the important points for the benefit of the Sub-Committee. It does not purport to cover every matter raised in the papers.

B. A BRIEF HISTORY

7. Elysee is a Greek restaurant, a family concern, and the longest continuously trading premises in Camden. It employs 50 people. It is a focal point for the Greek and Cypriot community in London. (See statement of Alexander Karageorgis, **S16.**) There is a restaurant with Greek

musical entertainment on the ground floor, first floor private dining and a roof terrace shisha bar. An impression of its style and facilities is gained from **S16-74**.

8. Following an incident, a review occurred in 2022, with a Panel decision to suspend the licence, curtail hours and add conditions to the licence: **S3**.
9. MPS has omitted to mention that the decision was appealed and a settlement reached, the suspension removed, the hours partly restored and different conditions applied.
10. Since then (and briefly) subsequent variation applications have resulted in a restoration of the hours and further amendment of the conditions.
11. In the 3½ years since the review hearing, the premises has traded uneventfully:
 - a. Approximately 100,000 customers have come through the doors over that period.
 - b. Allegations of crime and disorder have been negligible. The police point to 2 allegations in the last 2 years, the first of which triggered this review, and which are dealt with below.
 - c. Licensing reports no breaches on inspection.
 - d. Environmental health has made no representation.¹
 - e. As stated above, variations have been granted.
12. During that period, the premises' management have engaged constructively with the Police over the above variations.
13. The staff have continued to receive ongoing training in relation to Welfare and Vulnerability Engagement (WAVE), Responsible Alcohol Service and Promoting the Four Licensing Objectives (RASPFL0), Crime Scene Preservation, Drug Awareness and Drink Spiking: **S97-104**.
14. There is no sense at all in which the premises has been a candidate for revocation over this period.

¹ Licensing reports that a complaint was received in August 2025 but this was "investigated and addressed" by the noise team: **A76**. The premises licence holder is not aware of the content of the complaint and has received no visit or communication on the matter.

15. Furthermore, the Panel is respectfully requested to read the 28 supportive representations, coming from a succession of professional people, businesses and other individuals, speaking warmly about their long-standing relationship with the premises, the quality of management, the levels of service, the family environment and safe atmosphere which underpins the operation and explains its place at the heart of the community it serves, including generations of families and female customers: **A84-129**.

C. BREACHES OF CONDITION

16. The premises licence has 92 conditions. It is right to point out that there have been breaches of condition.

17. First, on 21st November 2025, the premises' CCTV stopped working. This was identified immediately and the CCTV engineer summoned: **S17-18**. The engineer identified that the system needed a new part, which would take a few days, and an invoice was generated: **S131**. In the event it was repaired on 27th November: **S19 paragraph 24**.

18. Licence condition 91 required that the Police be notified that the CCTV was not working within 48 hours: **A146**. They were not notified. The premises DPS, who is a highly experienced individual, has apologised for that omission: **S94 paragraph 13**, as has a Director of the premises licence holder: **S19 paragraph 24**.²

19. Second, licence condition 74 required door supervisors to use body worn cameras, with footage available to police in the event of an incident. On 26th November 2025, there was an incident at the premises. The body worn cameras were not functioning properly such that the door staff were not using them. It was the premises' responsibility to ensure both that they were working and were being worn. However, it is clear that some laxity occurred, probably due to the almost total absence of incidents in the premises. First class body worn cameras have now been purchased to replace the old ones and are being worn: **S144 paragraph 10**.

20. The premises licence holder apologises that the condition was breached: **S19 paragraph 24**, **S95 paragraph 14**. It understands and accepts that full compliance is required.

² There is a suggestion that a director stated that the Police were not told deliberately. This is denied. It was an accidental omission.

21. Third, arising from one of the incidents, MPS complain of a blind spot on CCTV, which is said to be a breach of condition 82. The camera arrangement is of long standing, and this has never previously been identified as an issue. Once identified, the issue was promptly rectified.
22. Arising from the above, it is believed that the CCTV system (including body worn cameras) is now compliant with MPS requirements.³
23. Fourth, in order to provide full and frank disclosure to the Panel, the licensee has disclosed an audit summary in Section F below, which includes some breaches which have been rectified.
24. Other allegations regarding breach of condition have been made by the Police at S8, which are dealt with in Section D below.

D. INCIDENTS

25. MPS have made further allegations arising from two particular incidents, which are the only incidents relied upon by MPS, or anyone else, over the last two years. MPS seek to suggest that there could have been other incidents which have gone unreported, but a) there haven't been, and b) the Panel can only act on evidence, not supposition.
26. Because of the MPS review, the premises licence holder engaged Tony Nash, a former Detective Chief Superintendent of MPS, to analyse and report on the incidents. His report, which bears reading, is at **S109**.

The first incident

27. The first incident occurred on 25th November 2025 when an argument occurred between two groups, with some pushing occurring, and with one male pushing another male. Door staff intervened immediately, separating the groups and a member of door staff was pushed as he conducted his duties. As the groups were being separated, one participant visibly and audibly called the Police. Management persuaded the groups to remain on the premises pending Police arrival. Police arrived, made no arrests and pursued no further action, explaining to the venue that this was a "*minor incident that wasn't going anywhere.*" First hand accounts are provided

³ The venue has purchased a new hard drive to allow 31 days continual recording. Residual correspondence on 9 March 2026 has concerned the positioning of a camera on a narrow spiral staircase which has a camera at either end. This will be resolved through discussion.

in the statements of Mr George Karageorgis at **S136**, Kyriacos Pattichi at **S139**, Mohamed El Desoky at **S142** and Christopher Ude at **S144**.

28. MPS complain that the premises did not call the Police, and so breached condition 24, which requires that Police are called to incidents of violence and/or disorder. However, the Police were in fact called, literally during the incident, to the management's own knowledge, and staff kept participants at the scene to await their arrival. Accordingly, there was no breach. As Mr. Nash points out, it is not culpable not to call Police when it is known that they have already been called: **S128 paragraph 49**.

29. MPS have also complained at the absence of CCTV footage, which is dealt with above.

The second incident

30. The second incident occurred on 21st December between a female and her former partner, who were out for the night together with others. MPS suggest that the incident began in the premises with the former partner placing his hands around the alleged victim's neck. However, if this happened, no member of staff witnessed it: **S 128 paragraph 50**. The parties left and an argument ensued outside. A member of door staff sought to intervene to separate the parties. The argument then continued away from the premises, and the Police attended. The male has pleaded guilty to offences arising from what happened outside, away from the premises.

31. The alleged female victim has made a statement, saying:

17. From my experience as a witness and being involved in the matter, the staff acted appropriately and responsibly. We had professional assistance provided once the situation became apparent. I have always felt safe at Elysee and continue to trust the owners and staff completely. The events of that night do not affect my willingness to return, and I have already been back and have planned future visits with friends.

18. Elysee is a long-standing, family-run establishment with over 90 years of history and a valued presence in the community. It would be deeply unjust for the business to face any repercussions for actions entirely beyond its control. I hope my account provides clarity and reassures you that the venue itself remains safe, with responsible and trustworthy management and staff.

32. MPS complain that the premises did not call the Police. However, no member of staff witnessed anything happening inside the premises, no evidence is brought that any other member of the group or other customers saw anything and no charges have been brought in relation to what happened inside. Further, the available CCTV does not show staff noticing or reacting to anything untoward. As for outside, the door supervisor concerned did not witness any assault, see **S144 paragraphs 16-26**. Exterior CCTV bears out his account. Rather, the conduct on which the charges were brought occurred well away from the premises.

33. MPS also complain that body worn video was not activated. However, the door supervisor tried to activate the camera, which was a new one recently purchased but did not press the button hard enough and it did not activate: **S145 paragraph 18**. The CCTV footage shows him pressing the button, clearly believing he had activated it. This is unfortunate but not culpable.

34. Finally, MPS suggest that the venue was uncooperative regarding supply of CCTV. However, the venue has produced evidence that CCTV was supplied more than once, and was easily playable. For unknown reasons, MPS had difficulty playing it on its systems. Should the Panel want further detail, it can be found at:

- **S75**: email chronology.
- **S111 paragraphs 14- 19**, evidence of Mr Nash.

35. As explained by Alex Karageorgis (**S19 paragraph 25**):

What I can say is that we have taken effective steps to ensure our CCTV system is not only continually operational and effective, but that it is part of our daily checking routine (that identified the fault in the first place) to immediately inform the police of any recording/playback issues. The same goes for our new GoPro personal audio and video recorders. Our staff have been fully trained on these, and we can effectively extract and transmit the footage to the police.

E. OTHER MATTERS

36. First, health and safety made a representation that because the smoking area had a roof it was non-compliant with smoking regulations.

37. However, the premises licence holder submitted a report demonstrating that the smoking area was compliant due to the degree of openness of the perimeter walls: **S79**.
38. This matter no longer arises for consideration because, following co-operation between the parties, health and safety has withdrawn its representation: **S147**.
39. Second, licensing have complained that on a venue inspection on New Year's Eve, the venue was not searching customers, contrary to its search policy: **A79 paragraphs 5 and 6**.
40. This is based on a misunderstanding of the policy or a misconception.
41. There is no condition requiring customers to be searched. Since this is a restaurant it would be extremely surprising to find such a condition.
42. The venue reserves the right to search people and to refuse admission to anyone refusing to be searched. That is its policy. It is not a policy requiring the venue to search anybody, or everybody.
43. The premises' DPS states (**S95 paragraph 15**):

With regard to the suggestion of searching customers, in my 45 years in the restaurant industry I would not expect customers to be searched when entering a restaurant. We do have a search policy, that we use when our door supervisors feel appropriate, but this is usually in the later hours, and often for customers we do not know of on a frequent-customer basis. I would ask the Council to note that we have never had an incident where a weapon has been brought, or suspected to have been brought into the premises.

44. Mr. Nash states (**S113 paragraph 131**):

I am now told that police have criticised the Elysee search / screening procedure following a visit on New Years Eve. I am somewhat lost as there is no requirement for a search or screening process within the premises licence conditions. The venue does screen and search bags on an ad hoc basis as they see fit. Where they do it amounts to a condition of entry. This is above and beyond their licence conditions and would be an unusual requirement for a restaurant. Part of the criticism suggests those known are not searched. Even if there were an ad hoc licence requirement for search it would

make sense it is on a risk basis. Where a person is known the potential risks from that person are clearer so if no risk is perceived there would be no requirement to search. Where the person is unknown the risk is unknown and more likely to attract a search / screening.

F. CONCLUSIONS

45. The premises licence holder accepts that there has been a breach of three conditions. It apologises unreservedly for those breaches.
46. The MPS application seeks to depict the premises as generally non-compliant and a threat to the licensing objectives. That is not a fair characterisation:
 - (1) The incident record at the premises since the 2022 review is negligible. That is in part the reason why the licensing authority was content to restore the trading hours to the venue on an application for variation. It is not the case (legally or in terms of proportionality) that a breach of condition three years on should lead to revocation.
 - (2) The record of any complaint of public nuisance, let alone substantiated complaint, is negligible.
 - (3) The supportive representations, individually and collectively, paint a picture of a safe and welcoming environment.
 - (4) There are no inspections from the Council's licensing team showing any, let alone generalised, breaches of the 92 conditions on the licence.
 - (5) The first incident was not considered worthy of investigation even by MPS.
 - (6) The victim of the second incident has produced a witness statement praising the actions and diligence of the venue in high terms.
 - (7) The staff are fully trained, and refresher-trained, in all relevant topics.
 - (8) The independent auditor appointed by the premises, while discovering some items of non-compliance, states: *"There is no pattern within the audit evidence of persistent or systemic operational failure. The compliance record overall reflects structured management*

*systems, regular oversight, and predominantly compliant trading during the audit period”:
S108 paragraph 6.”⁴*

(9) The highly experienced DPS states:

I should say that since I started working as DPS for the Elysee, not only have I found the owners and managers co-operative and supportive, but I have also found the staff to be compliant and eager to learn. They make a good team and work together very well, being polite, efficient and customer-focussed: S95 paragraph 16.

(10) Mr. Nash, a highly senior former police officer, states:(S129):

54. Notwithstanding the breach of licence conditions, I do not believe that the two offences demonstrate that Elysee fails to promote the licensing objectives in both showing a willingness to intervene and a proactive intervention culture to prevent crime and disorder and prevent public nuisance. This assessment is enhanced by the continued investment in WAVE training and promotion of ‘Ask for Angela’. Following the criticism by police Elysee management have been proactive at resolving the concerns.

55. I have then considered the licence breach and whether this on its own is justification for revocation of the premises licence. Based on my experience I would suggest that revocation or major alterations to the licensable hours are neither necessary nor proportionate.

56. Having now spent some time with Elysee’s management and staff observing their attitude and the operation, I believe that Elysee is a family friendly, responsible operator who genuinely want to continually improve. 57. Elysee directly employ up to 50 people, though their logistical chains support many other businesses, and remain an iconic and cultural venue in London with a global draw. Elysee is part of the embedded foundation of Fitzrovia’s community anchored through a diverse client base and support of local community groups. This includes ‘St Andrews Church’ in Kentish

⁴ For completeness, the audit covers: licences and signage; licence compliance; door supervisors; outside management; fire safety; record keeping; internal management; toilets; CCTV. 100% compliance was demonstrated in Jan, Feb, June, July, Aug, Sept, Oct 2025. For the rest: March 2025 80% (1 SIA an hour late), April 2025 80% (1 SIA an hour late), May 99% (fault on alarm panel), Dec 80% (CCTV playback only from installation date), Jan 2026 99% (personal licensee left licence at home); Feb 79% (CCTV playback 29 days, personal licence left at home. In fact, the new hard drive gives 31 days playback, while the app at the front desk gives 29 days).

Town, 'All Saints' in Camden Town, and Noah's Ark Children's Hospice, along with the archdiocese.

58. I fully support Elysee's position to retain its premises licence and trading hours.

47. As national guidance states:

11.20 In deciding which of these powers to invoke, it is expected that licensing authorities should so far as possible seek to establish the cause or causes of the concerns that the representations identify. The remedial action taken should generally be directed at these causes and should always be no more than an appropriate and proportionate response to address the causes of concern that instigated the review.

48. The underlying principle is that the purpose of the review is remedial and not punitive.

49. In this case, the Police identified breaches of licence conditions which have been remedied, and apologised for.

50. The Panel is invited to the view that revocation of the licence is clearly disproportionate and excessive.

51. The Panel has the specific power to take no further action other than recording its findings: see guidance paragraph 11.17.

52. In all the circumstances of this case, it is submitted that that is an adequate response.

53. The premises licence holder, however, is clear about the MPS' views as expressed in this review. It has no intention of providing any cause for further action.

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