

Licence Application for St Stephen House, 62 Little Ealing Lane, W5

Comments of Ealing Fields Residents' Association

August 2026

Ealing Fields Residents' Association (EFRA) is a large residents' association with a subscription membership of some four hundred households across more than thirty streets which are centred on Northfields Station and our Community Library. We are recognised by Ealing Council as a formally constituted body that has the authority to comment on issues affecting our members. St Stephen House is located within the area covered by our residents' association.

EFRA objects to the licensing application for St Stephen House, 62 Little Ealing Lane.

The application seeks permission for 24-hour alcohol sales (on and off sales), late-night refreshment until midnight Sunday to Thursday and until 01:00 on Fridays and Saturdays, and live and recorded music until 01:00 on Fridays and Saturdays and until midnight on Sundays.

This application significantly exceeds Ealing Council's recommended framework hours and is incompatible with the residential nature of Little Ealing Lane and Julien Road which is to the rear of the building. Our objection is based on all four licensing objectives and on specific provisions of the Ealing Council Statement of Licensing Policy.

The Council must also recognise that there are numerous shops and other outlets near St Stephen House that sell alcohol within permitted hours. There are also several bars and pubs locally that offer alcohol within permitted hours which suggests that the applicant should only secure a licence to sell alcohol for special occasions.

Licensing Policy 2025–2030 – Hours in Residential Areas

There are three schools within a short distance of St Stephen House. Large numbers of children who attend these schools live near the site in question and will have their sleep and education disturbed by the additional hours sought in the application.

The 2025–2030 Licensing Policy makes clear that later hours are not automatically granted and that premises in residential areas should operate within appropriate hours. Applications seeking extended or late-night hours must provide exceptional justification and demonstrate that they will not undermine the licensing objectives. The proposed hours for 62 Little Ealing Lane—particularly 24-hour on and off premises alcohol sales and regulated entertainment until 01:00—go far beyond what is appropriate in a predominantly residential location. The application does not provide exceptional justification for these hours.

Grounds for Objection Under the Licensing Policy

Public Nuisance: The proposed hours will generate noise from people leaving at midnight or 01:00, increased traffic and taxis; noise from the premises and smoking areas; and disturbance during recognised quiet hours. The applicant's mitigation measures, such as signage and house rules, are generic and insufficient for a venue operating until 01:00.

Little mention is made of any music noise control which one of our principal concerns.

The Licensing Policy states that licence conditions must be precise and enforceable and must be unambiguous, clear in what they intend to achieve and should be written in a prescriptive format. The proposed conditions by the applicant do not comply. All that is offered is "The doors and windows are kept closed after a particular time" and "The building has double glazing windows." No mention is made of decibel levels and monitoring systems which are both vital.

Crime and Disorder: Extended hours and alcohol availability increase risks of anti-social behaviour, loitering, public drunkenness, and disorder late at night. The proposal for 24-hour (including online) alcohol sales is unacceptable and must be unprecedented for a community venue. It would attract people to the area and presumably delivery vans and vehicles at all hours, including overnight, when staffing and supervision are minimal.

Public Safety: Little Ealing Lane has no infrastructure for late-night crowds. The premises would create predictable risks for residents and visitors. The applicant lists standard internal safety measures, but these do not address external public safety risks created by late-night operation in a residential area.

Protection of Children from Harm: The premises would host cultural events, film clubs, folk dancing, lectures, religious services, and community gatherings attended by children. Introducing 24-hour alcohol sales, late-night music events, and crowds leaving at 01:00 conflicts with safeguarding children in the neighbourhood. Children living nearby would be exposed to late-night noise, drunken behaviour, crowds outside the premises, and alcohol-related activity at all hours.

Off-Sales Are Unnecessary and Harmful

The application seeks 24-hour off-sales, which is unjustified. Northfield Avenue and South Ealing Road already provide ample off-licence provision within normal hours. Allowing off-sales here would create 24/7 demand, drawing people to the premises at all hours. Overnight off-sales are entirely inappropriate in a residential area. There is no community need for additional off-sales, and certainly not round-the-clock provision.

The Nature of the Premises

The applicant describes the building as a cultural centre, chaplaincy, and community hub offering literary events, concerts, film clubs, folk dancing, lectures, and religious services. This is fundamentally incompatible with 24-hour alcohol sales, late-night refreshment and live and recorded music until 01:00. If the application is only for events for up to 100 people with only pre-sold tickets and no door sales, neither the

application nor the proposed conditions make that clear and do not address the necessary controls around those events. As it stands the proposed licence would transform the building into a late-night events venue, which is unsuitable for a residential area.

Appropriate Licensing Approach

Given the nature of the premises in a local neighbourhood, an appropriate licence would be supply of alcohol on the premises and regulated entertainment on the days and for the time periods set out in the Licensing Policy for Local Neighbourhood Areas. There is no need shown for off-sales or late-night refreshment or music. For occasional cultural or community events requiring extended hours, the applicant can use Temporary Event Notices. TENs are the correct mechanism for occasional late-night events, not a permanent licence running until 01:00 with 24-hour alcohol sales.

Conclusion

The application is excessive, disproportionate, and incompatible with the Ealing Council Licensing Policy. It would introduce 24-hour alcohol sales, create late-night noise and disturbance, increase risks of crime and disorder, undermine public safety, harm the residential character of Little Ealing Lane, and expose children to alcohol-related activity late at night.

The licensing authority should refuse the application in full. If any licence for sale on premises is to be granted, it must be strictly limited to the days and hours for a Local Neighbourhood Area and there must no off-sales, no late-night refreshment, no music beyond 23:00, and proper conditions which comply with the Licensing Policy and in particular protect against public nuisance including noise.