

In the
YORK CITYCOUNCIL
Licensing Sub-Committee

In the matter of

APPLICATION BY PAIRINGS LIMITED
FOR A PREMISES LICENCE IN RESPECT OF 18 CASTLEGATE, YORK

APPLICANT'S SUBMISSIONS

Background

1. The Applicant, Pairings Limited, has been responsibly operating at 28 Castlegate for nearly 10 years and has had a Premises Licence throughout that time. The applicant has received no complaints from either local residents, neighbouring businesses or the Responsible Authorities throughout that time regarding Pairings undermining the licensing objectives.
2. Pairings is an award winning, independent, wine-led restaurant run by sisters passionate about pairing wine and food. The premises operates as a relaxed table service bar with an appreciation for wine and fine drinks offering small plates and sharing boards featuring the absolute best in locally sourced charcuterie, cheese, fish and desserts. The Pairings concept allows customers to explore and compare a selection of the finest wines and drinks alongside each other in the form of flights or for the true Pairings experience, accompany wines with the recommended food pairings.
3. This application has been made necessary solely because the landlord of 28 Castlegate has refused to extend the lease to Pairings Limited in effect renovicting an existing, well established, business from its current home.
4. It is the applicant's intention to surrender Premises Licence (number CYC-053289) in effect for 28 Castlegate upon the business relocating to 18 Castlegate.

The Application

5. The application is to permit the provision of late night refreshment from 2300 to midnight on Sunday to Thursday and from 2300 to 0100 the following morning on Fridays and Saturdays, to permit the sale of alcohol for consumption on and off the premises from 1000 to midnight on Sunday to Thursday and from 1000 to 0100 the following morning on Fridays and Saturdays and to permit the opening hours of the premises to be from 1000 to 0030 the following morning on Sunday to Thursday and from 1000 to 0130 the following morning on Fridays and Saturdays.
 6. It should be noted that under the application licensable activities on Sundays to Thursdays at the new location will terminate 1 hour earlier than they are permitted to at the current location. The hours for Fridays and Saturdays for the new location are the same as at the current location.
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Responsible Authorities Response to the Application

7. Prior to submitting the application Pairings Limited met with representatives of the Environmental Health and Licensing Departments of York City Council and Yorkshire Police to discuss the application. The comments of these Responsible Authorities were taken into account in drafting the application.
8. The Sub-Committee's statutory experts on matters of noise nuisance are the Environmental Health department². Upon receipt of the application the Environmental Health officers will no doubt have carefully assessed the likely impact of the variation upon the Licensing Objectives. They will have reviewed the history of Pairings at its current location and have not made a representation to this application. The Sub-Committee is therefore entitled to draw the inference from the absence of a representation that the Environmental Health department do not consider that this application will undermine the Licensing Objectives particularly the prevention of public nuisance.
9. The Sub-Committee's statutory experts on matters of crime and disorder are Yorkshire Police. The Police have not made a representation to this application and the Sub-Committee is therefore entitled to draw the inference that the Police do not consider that this application will undermine the Licensing Objectives particularly the prevention of crime and disorder.

Residents' Response to the Application

10. Two letters of representation to the application have been received from local residents. One of the representors has submitted an amended representation limiting the representation to matters related to the Licensing Objectives.
11. Broadly speaking the concerns raised by the representors are around noise from the premises causing a nuisance, extending the hours for the sale of alcohol and anti-social behaviour.

² See s182 guidance, para 9.12

Applicant's Consultation with the Representatives

12. On 13th August the applicant hand delivered a letter to each of the representatives' homes to invite them to meet and discuss their concerns and to explore whether there are any steps the applicant could take to assuage their concerns. A copy of these letters is attached to these submissions as Exhibit 1. A copy of this letter was also e-mailed to the residents by the Licensing Authority on 18th August.
13. did not reply to this letter.
14. did respond, saying that although she was on holiday she would be willing to discuss the application. However, despite numerous attempts by the applicant to arrange a convenient time to talk, has not responded.
15. A second letter was sent to both and on 28th August via the Licensing Authority. A copy of these letters is attached to these submissions as Exhibit 2. This second communication offered to amend the application to reduce the hours for the sale of alcohol to 2300 on Sundays to Thursdays, and midnight on Fridays and Saturdays, with the premises closing to the public 30 minutes afterwards. On bank holiday Sundays, the sale of alcohol would end at midnight, with the premises closing to the public at 12.30am. This offer was made on the basis that the amendment would be formally made if by doing so the residents would then withdraw their representation.
16. This offer to amend was made despite there being no evidence that the premises, in their current location, undermine the licensing objectives or cause the issues that the residents refer to in their letters of representations. There is also no evidence that the relocation of Pairings to 18 Castlegate will change this situation.
17. Disappointingly neither of the two residents have responded to this second communication.

Cumulative Impact Assessment

18. The premises are in the area covered by York City Council's Cumulative Impact Zone. However, the applicant respectfully suggests that this is an occasion where there is good justification for the Licensing Sub-Committee to depart from its policy and grant the application.
19. Pairings is exactly the sort of premises that brings a diversity to the hospitality offering in York and draws a different customer base into the city centre than alcohol led pubs and bars.
20. There is no evidence that Pairings in its current location has caused any incidents of crime and disorder. This is supported by the absence of any representation from the Police.
21. There is no evidence that Pairings in its current location has caused any incidents of noise nuisance. This is supported by the absence of any representation from the Environmental Health Department.
22. The applicant, pre-consulted with the relevant responsible authorities prior to submitting the applications. The comments and feedback from those authorities were woven through the application in terms of the hours for licensable activities and the conditions offered as part of the Operating Schedule. The absence of representations from any of the Responsible Authorities provides a clear indication that they think that this application will not undermine the licensing objectives or impact upon the cumulative impact policy.

23. As stated above it is the applicant's intention to surrender Premises Licence (number CYC-053289) in effect for 28 Castlegate upon the business relocating to 18 Castlegate.
24. Considering the above points it is the applicant's strong view that Pairings' relocation will not add to the cumulative impact in York City Council.

Summary

25. The Applicant understands the representors' wider concerns and that they may relate to other licensed premises on, or nearby, to Castlegate. However, there is no evidence provided by either of the representors or the Responsible Authorities that any of these issues are caused by the operation of Pairings at 28 Castlegate or will be caused by Pairings upon its relocation to 18 Castlegate.
26. The applicant has tried repeatedly to meet with the residents to discuss their concerns but unfortunately these attempts have not been returned.
27. The concerns of the residents are not shared by the Responsible Authorities or supported with any evidence that they are connected to Pairings.
28. The application is simply to relocate a well-established business a few properties along the street that has been made necessary due to an unfortunate renovation.
29. The application for the premises licence at the new location is in terms no more impactful than the premises licence in the current location.
30. The Sub-Committee is invited to give great weight to the absence of representations from the Environmental Health Department and Yorkshire Police and, in the absence of any direct evidence linking the premises or this application to the Licensing Objectives being undermined, grant the application as applied for.

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EXHIBIT 1

13 August 2025

Dear Ms

We are writing in response to your letter of representation regarding our application for a premises licence at 18 Castlegate.

We appreciate you taking the time to share your concerns. Change can naturally bring uncertainty, and we'd like to offer our reassurance that our plans for the new Pairings are entirely in keeping with the way we have always operated, quietly, respectfully, and with the community in mind.

Our move is purely due to necessity, as we must sadly close our current home at 28 Castlegate. We have been part of this street for over 10 years, and it means a great deal to us to remain here. We will continue to operate as a seated restaurant, with table service, freshly prepared food, and a relaxed, conversational atmosphere.

To protect the character and peace of the street, we have already built safeguards into our application:

- Earlier weekday closing times than our current licence.
- Doors and windows kept closed during the evening to contain sound.
- Guests reminded to leave quietly to minimise any disturbance.

These conditions were agreed with both North Yorkshire Police and the council's licensing team before our application was submitted.

In more than a decade of trading on Castlegate, there has never been a single incident of disorder linked to Pairings. We value that record and are committed to maintaining it. Our focus has always been on creating a welcoming space that enhances the area rather than disrupts it.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you in person to discuss your concerns directly. If there is anything we can adjust in our application to address them, we are more than willing to explore those options together.

If you would be happy to arrange a meeting, please contact me at XXXXXXX (e-mail address redacted) at any time. We can meet at a time and place that suits you, whether that's at Pairings, over a coffee, or somewhere else you feel comfortable.

Kind regards

Pairings

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EXHIBIT 2

28 August 2025

Dear Ms

We are writing further to our letter of 13th August and wanted to follow up once more, as we haven't yet heard back from you. We completely understand you may be busy, but we would very much value the opportunity to talk with you about your concerns and explore how we might address them.

To demonstrate our commitment to finding a positive solution, we are prepared to amend our application by reducing the hours for the sale of alcohol at the new restaurant. We would propose a closing time of 11.00pm from Sunday to Thursday, and midnight on Fridays and Saturdays, with the premises closing to the public 30 minutes afterwards. On bank holiday Sundays, the sale of alcohol would end at midnight, with the premises closing to the public at 12.30am.

This represents a significant reduction compared to our current Premises Licence, which allows us to sell alcohol until 1.00am daily, and we hope this goes some way to providing reassurance.

We would be grateful if you could let us know whether, on this basis, you might feel able to withdraw your representation. We would also be very happy to meet with you in person to discuss things further, and to explore any other adjustments we might reasonably make to address your concerns.

If a meeting would be convenient, please don't hesitate to contact me at XXXXXXXX (e-mail address redacted).

Kind regards

Pairings

EXHIBIT 2

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Dear

We are writing further to our letter of 13th August – we have tried to arrange a phone call with you to discuss the application but haven't yet been able to do so.

We completely understand you may be busy, but we would very much value the opportunity to talk with you about your concerns and explore how we might address them.

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