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Sent: 11 February 2024 22:27
To: Planning
Subject: Support / Comments on 2023/5228/P

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I tried to send this via your website, but it was blocked by Cloudflare for some reason:

I write in support of this application to reopen this iconic local venue. This renowned cultural institution (not least for its cabaret, hence being known as "the Palladium of Drag") is as important internationally as it is a vital community hub for residents across the borough of Camden, London and visitors from both the UK and overseas.

Providing haven to LGBT+ individuals and their friends for many decades is just one element of why it is vital the venue must be allowed to reopen in full - the club/performance area, the bar and the relaxed roof terrace all supply different and important areas for different gatherings and different times of day (& night).

As a local resident [REDACTED] I know this became a home away from home for many. It's somewhere to escape to - whether from abuse &/or aggression on the streets of London or from loneliness, depression etc.

Furthermore, it was a benefit to the whole community. Camden High Street was so much safer when the Black Cap was open - not least as it had security outside. When travelling back from the West End after working late, I always felt safe changing buses outside the Black Cap as I knew there were people around, security and somewhere I'd be welcomed if there was someone making people feel uncomfortable in the street. I avoid that end of the High Street at night now as it has gone downhill and is so much less safe than when the Black Cap was open until the early hours most nights.

Many years ago, I remember reading about the Black Cap's successful late night licence renewal - the borough's then top police officer supported it, saying that if all the venues in Camden were like the Black Cap, his job would be much easier. Not only was it safe for the venue's patrons, staff and performers, but the police acknowledged its positive impact on Camden High Street.

Every element of the venue must be allowed to reopen. Even smokers must be accommodated (either on the roof terrace or outside the back of the ground floor at night) to prevent people being pushed onto the High Street which - even in 2024 - isn't always a safe space for LGBT+ people.

Just as a late night licence will be essential for the venue's success, if some hotel/B&B rooms help support the business then I understand they may be necessary. However, it is vital that they can't be used as a trojan horse. Decent-sized staff accommodation (for the manager at the very least) must be retained. Any planning permission should tie any guest rooms to the venue's primary role as an LGBT+ live club and bar.

I trust planning permission will be granted and look forward to being back 'home' with some of my extended 'family' from the community - both near and far.

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