

The Atrium Basement,
North Yard,
Camden Market,
London, NW1

Operational Management Statement

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1. This statement is provided to support the application for the use of the lower ground floors and part ground floor as leisure/entertainment (sui generis) use in respect of The Atrium, North Yard, Camden Market, London, NW1. The document sets out the operational arrangements that will take place at the site.

Background

2. The proposals seek permission to use the lower ground floor and basement area of Camden Market for leisure/entertainment (sui generis) use.
3. The facility is to be operated by Little Lion Entertainment, an established company in the entertainment industry, who are to occupy the site as tenant. The company has operated sites in Angel, Islington, Shaftesbury Avenue, Westminster and at the old Granada Studios, Manchester. Its particular specialism is to provide themed experiences for customers and this is epitomised in the Crystal Maze Live Experience in Westminster and Manchester, which emulates the television show "The Crystal Maze".
4. This application is made by the landlord of the site in consultation with the tenant. The tenant will be required to adhere to the principles set out in this document by virtue of a lease agreement.

Proposals

5. Operationally, the proposals for Camden Market are similar to those already operated at other sites. The model is in some respects similar to an 'escape room' style of operation, where participants are guided through a set and complete a variety of activities.
6. The theme proposed is that of 'Judge Dredd', a long-running comic book series and comic strip that was published in the Daily Star and Metro, as well as being portrayed in two films and a number of computer/video games. The character was featured as one of a series of comic characters that was issued by the Royal Mail in 2012. In providing this theme, Little Lion Entertainment has partnered with Rebellion Studios, a major film and software company who market the Judge Dredd brand.
7. The existing layout of the building would be utilised to provide an ancillary, themed retail area and admissions office at the entrance via upper basement level, with the remainder set out to the

entertainment experience and a refreshment area. The retail area would provide souvenirs associated with the experience and the brand.

8. The building would be fitted out to create themed game zones reflecting the atmosphere of the particular theme. Each would have a slightly different experience for customers, who would progress through each of them. Access to the premises is in groups of 24 people. Each group follows a linear journey travelling through all the zones within one visit. The journey for each group has a total duration of 2.5 hrs.
9. Upon arrival, customers would access the lower ground floor area via the existing steps, ramp and lift facility. Entry would be through the existing retail area currently used by the Cereal Killer Café and Retro World, which would be redesigned as a single retail and reception area. Customers entering the area would be able to purchase a ticket if they have not obtained one in advance. Each group of 24 people enter would enter and leave the premises every 20 minutes. The 2.5 hrs journey is planned for 10 teams of 24 customers travelling through the zones. At maximum capacity, including actors and staff, the occupancy limit is proposed at 350 people.



Figure 1 : General access approach

10. Because of the popularity of this type of activity and to enable effective management of numbers, a pre-booking arrangement would be available through the related website. Such arrangements are common with this type of activity and are generally expected by customers, although a limited

number of last-minute admissions might be possible if spaces are available. The experience elsewhere has been that the venues can often be fully booked several weeks in advance.



Figure 2 : Access through existing retail areas

11. By adopting a pre-book arrangement, queuing would be effectively eliminated and this has been seen at the other venues that are operated by the company. Removing the need for queues has a clear benefit to both the business and the general area by appropriately being able to manage the customers who arrive to participate in activities.
12. In terms of hours of operation, it is anticipated that core trading will take place between 9am to 11pm, although there will be limited other occasions where corporate, sponsorship or other events could take place at any time. The operation is based on teams of 24 people entering and leaving the premises every 20 minutes. The last team would commence the journey at 11pm and would leave the premises 2.5 hours later. The estimated time for the last group to exit is 2AM to cover any delays and the use of WC facilities. Because of the location, the controls in place such as the management of entry and dispersion, along with the experience style attraction within the premises this is not seen to give rise to any particular concerns and experience in other premises operated by the tenant does not suggest that there is likely to be any impact from customers leaving the venue on those living in the immediate vicinity. The layout of the premises and the transition from the lower ground floor to the street level further provides the opportunity for control to be exercised over those departing and for customers to adjust to their surroundings as they leave. At any time, the dispersal would account for only 24 people leaving the premises every 20 minutes.



Figure 3 : Current appearance

Capacity

13. The numbers who are admitted to the premises is restricted by the number of activities that are available and the follow rate around the building, unlike the current arrangements with the existing retail use. There is no significant scope to increase the numbers because of the limited space available and the need to keep groups separate in order to preserve the integrity of the experience.
14. Typically, the groups that are formed consist of 4 teams of 6 persons, equalling 24 people per session. Each group takes about 2-3 hours to complete the journey. The regular occupation is estimated on 3 sessions per hour, totalling 72 customers plus staff within the site. Staffing would account for approximately 24 persons on site at any one time for the 3 sessions per hour programme. Because of the layout, up to 10 groups could be accommodated at the same time, typically amounting up to 240 customers per hour with a maximum capacity of 350 people including staff as described in point 9.
15. The question of the number of customers and style of operation are pertinent to both planning and licensing. Whilst matters pertaining to licensing are separate to those considered by the planning system, it is important to note that the market is within a Licensing Special Policy / Cumulative Impact Area. The proposed use of the site would help alleviate the issues raised in the area by providing a use that is an alternative to the existing venues and which is focussed more on providing social interaction and entertainment rather than on the consumption of alcohol.

16. Such Special Policy areas are established where the local authority is of a view that there are sufficient licensed venues and that the presence of such venues is causing an adverse effect on the licensing objectives. Planning, as a consultee on licensing matters, should also weigh this factor and in this instance recognise that by introducing a style of activity that focuses on entertainment rather than the consumption of alcohol, there are likely to be positive benefits. These benefits have already been noted in the other venues operated by Little Lion Entertainment, as the entertainment provides an alternative to the consumption of alcohol in other venues and manages the customers that arrive at or depart from the premises. Such an approach has been welcomed by the local authority in areas such as Westminster, where the tenant operates the Crystal Maze Live Experience on Shaftesbury Avenue.
17. This diversionary activity has a positive impact and the proposals should therefore be seen in the wider context of supporting the Council's policy for a complementary and vibrant mix of uses at the site.

Transport and servicing

18. It is anticipated that the majority of customers visiting the premises will be visiting the area because of the other existing attractions at the market.
19. Lifts already exist within the structure, both for customers and goods depending on the area. This provides ready access.
20. Given that the model of operation is the provision of a service/attraction, it is anticipated that little will be required in terms of servicing, other than the occasional delivery of items for the retail area and the disposal of items from the refreshment area. Existing service and delivery arrangements for the market and the site will be operated in line with those arrangements, although it is anticipated that this requirement will be significantly less than currently exists with the market use.

Access

21. Customers are welcome to enter the reception and ancillary, themed retail area and having completed any necessary paperwork or purchased an entrance, may proceed into the remainder of the building. This retail area, along with the refreshment area, form the only planned ancillary uses within the development.
22. The presence of the retail area provides a security buffer to prevent customers entering the main areas and will be staffed at all times that customers are admitted.

23. Having cleared the reception area, customers receive a briefing the venue, the activities that are available and the safety precautions that are in place. Rules of conduct are explained and a video may be shown to reinforce these messages.
24. The mode of operation in these areas is similar to that which is undertaken in many major visitor attractions which involve some form of activity. It particularly sets the use apart from other activities in that there is close control on customers once they enter the premises and it is possible to reinforce the standards that are expected of customers on a face to face basis. Such briefings do not currently occur in the uses to which the premises are currently put.

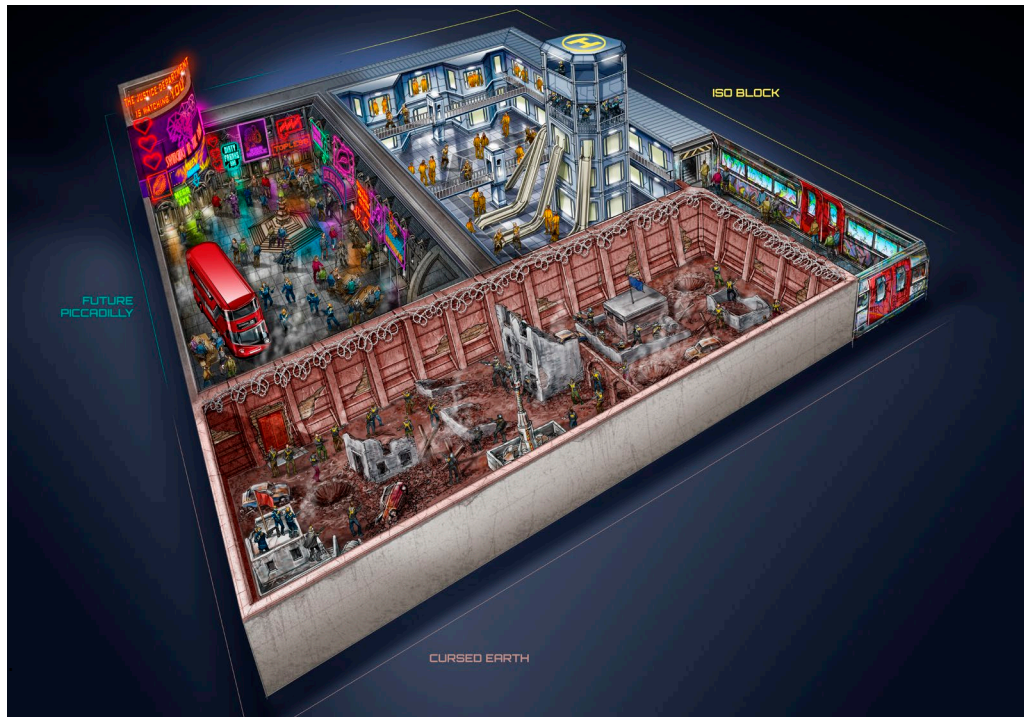


Figure 4 : Notional layout artwork

25. Upon having completed the initial briefing, customers are then guided around the venue in small groups by one or more actors. In each of the zones, the customers participate in the themed activity that is prepared under the supervision of the guide. Under the current indicative proposed model, each of the zones – ISO-Block, Piccadilly Circus, Cursed Earth and New Old Bailey - incorporates different aspects of the experience and follow the feel of the Judge Dredd comic books and film. Figures 4-6 and following provide an indicative layout of the site.
26. The activities vary from zone to zone and follow the model of providing both intellectual and physical challenges for customers to complete. This model, combined with the direct supervision by a host, provides a filter to the demographic of customer that is attracted to participate and encourages orderly behaviour.

Figure 5 : Piccadilly Zone



27. The route that the guide takes though the venue and the various activities is pre-determined and allows groups to be effectively managed and a proper flow of customers through the venue to be achieved.

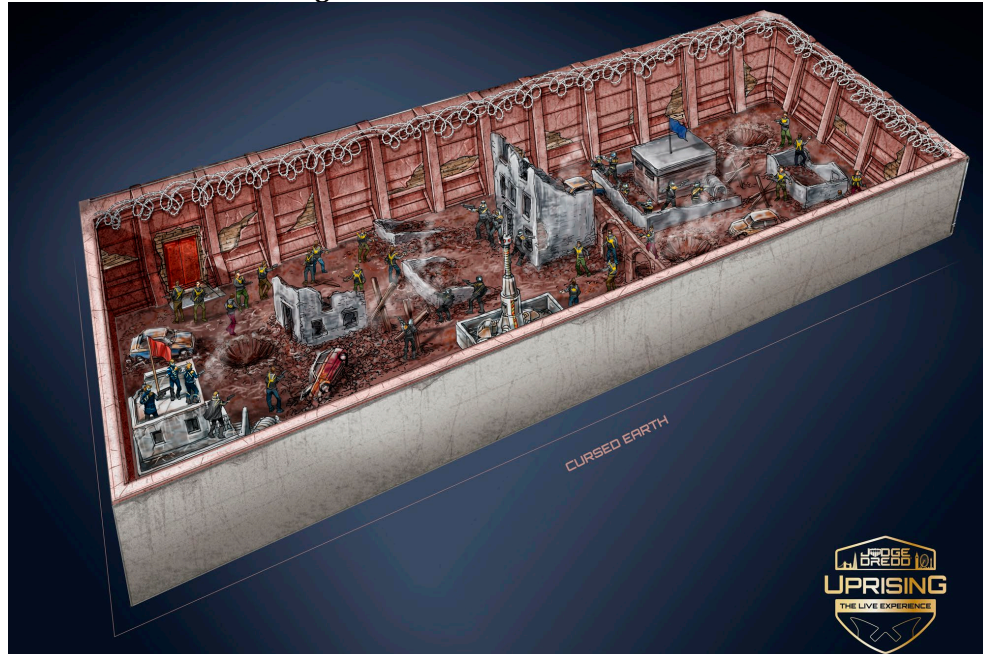
Figure 6 : ISO Zone



28. At the end of the experience, customers are provided with the opportunity to purchase refreshments and to spend some time recounting their experiences in the venue before they then leave. Access to the retail area would also be possible. By allowing this time for decompression after the activities, the customers leaving the venue exhibit better standards of behaviour than may occur in other entertainment venues and assists with customer management when persons leave the premises.
29. The arrangements for access include provision to achieve compliance with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

30. Typically, the participation in the activities within the venue would take between two and three hours to complete, including briefing and refreshment time.

Figure 7 : Cursed Earth Zone



31. Within the venue, a number of additional staff are engaged to re-set games, to provide management of the venue and to generally assist with serving customers or enhancing their experience.
32. No significant changes are currently proposed to the exterior of the building other than to block the two current open-accesses to the lower ground floor that currently exist. Means of access would still be maintained in case of emergency.
33. There are no proposed changes to the supporting structure of the building and all of the sets within it are capable of being removed. Should any external alterations be required in the future then these would be the subject of a separate application, as required.
34. As the sets are primarily static and, unlike a theatre, are not regularly changed, there is little infrastructure that would need to be brought into the building once the initial set design is in place.
35. The existing temporary structures within the main lower ground floor area will be either removed or re-purposed where they align with the theme for a particular area.

Waste Strategy

36. Given that the use of the building revolves around the provision of an experience rather than a physical item, it is anticipated that there will be little waste generation. That which does arise is

likely to be from the retail and refreshment areas, which can be more than accommodated through the existing arrangements for waste disposal.

Summary

37. Overall, the proposals represent a theatrical activity and entertainment venue that can be well-managed and can complement the attraction of the wider Camden Market, particularly as a venue for tourists and locals alike to enjoy.
38. Because of the nature and style of the proposals, the venue will provide an attractive and beneficial asset to both the market as a whole and to the immediately surrounding area.
39. The operational arrangements and staffing provision within the premises will provide an enhanced control over the building.