

Cappuvino, 60 Church Street, Lancaster

Request for variations to the restrictions on use of street café:

1. We would like to be able to serve alcohol without the need for it to be accompanied by a meal
2. We would like customers to be able to use the external area for drinking non alcoholic drinks from 8.30am until 10am and to allow customers to drink alcohol until 9pm rather than 8pm.
3. We would like to serve drinks in glasses.

Background:

Cappuvino is a European style quality bar and coffee roaster with a strong emphasis on wine that provides a refined experience. As such many of our customers tend to be in the 30 plus age group with couples and families being a strong element of our customer base. Our sales mix since we opened in October last year is:

Draft beer: 15%

Cocktails (Mostly specialist and often bespoke): 22%

Wine: 14%

Hot drinks: 24%

Food and other: 20%

Cakes: 6%

We only started selling food in January and were expanding our menu just prior to lock down.

The focus is on quality and a little bit of luxury and as such we are not the venue of choice for heavy/binge drinkers. During the day (week days and weekends) we attract many customers who come for a glass of wine or coffee and cake.

Rational for requesting the variations to the street café restrictions:

Food is not our primary offer and as such limiting the use of the external area to those who are eating substantial meals will prohibit most of our customers from using this area.

An external seating area with hardly any customers using it would be a bad advert – people judge a venue based on how busy it is - and so we would be penalised if drinking was limited to be with meals.

Many customers simply come for a quick drink and it would be damaging to our trade and public image to tell people they can't sit outside – we would lose business to the likes of the Corner House opposite who have an outside seating area on the frontage where people can drink without consuming food. Similarly people would visit the Sun to drink as they have substantial beer garden.

With the significant investment in the bar and the style of operation, we believe we are a credit to Lancaster and tourists visiting Lancaster would benefit from being able to visit Cappuvino and enjoy a drink on the terrace outside.

We are an upmarket bar and provide a more refined experience and as such our target market tends to be respectful and far less likely to exhibit anti-social behaviour than customers of some other establishments that price to sell volume. We do not have offers on drinks that are going to attract those looking to consume as much alcohol as possible for as little money as possible.

We would have a member of staff floating on the trading floor with a PDQ machine (there are 2 of these in use at present). Our intention would be to apply for an extension of our licence to cover this external area so we can take orders and payment from people sat outside.

We accept that those using the external area must be seated and we will explain to customers that they can't drink outside unless they have a seat.

We have a very strong following for coffee which we believe will grow. We have been opening at 8.15am to provide coffee to those working in town and others. We have tried hard to break in to this early morning market but have found many people are creatures of habit and continue to go to the national chain coffee shops. We believe we need to offer this outside seating area to attract customers.

We need more street presence throughout the day – for 10 years, bars have traded unsuccessfully from 60 Church Street, it has a slightly recessed frontage and less visible when walking up Church Street to the castle. People walk straight past to get coffee from other venues as we don't look like a coffee shop in the early hours.

Church Street businesses would benefit from the street being more buoyant and the street needs more reasons for customers to visit it. This in turn would help New Street's foot fall – another street that has declined in foot fall in recent years.

Because of the style of operation and through good management, we believe that we can demonstrate these variations will have a positive impact on customers experiences and the vibrancy of the area.