

Bars

Terrorism threat to bars

- It is highly likely that terrorist actors would have the intent to conduct attacks against bars in the UK due to their easily accessible nature, their proximity to busy public spaces, and the routine gathering of large crowds within and in proximity to their sites.
- It is highly likely that any terrorist attack conducted against a bar in the UK would be conducted by an individual or small cell using a low sophistication methodology. E.g., Bladed or Blunt Force Weapons, Vehicle as a Weapon, or Fire as a Weapon.
- There is a realistic possibility that terrorist actors in the UK could have the capability to conduct a high-sophistication attack at a bar. E.g., Improvised Explosive Device (IED), Person Borne Improvised Explosive Device (PBIED) or a Marauding Firearms Attack. The complicated nature of plotting a high-sophistication terrorist attack makes it highly likely that there will be greater opportunity for UK police and security services to disrupt potential attacks.
- The large crowds that gather at bars almost certainly provide an attractive target for indiscriminate terrorist attacks. As such, it is likely that any terrorist attack against a bar in the UK would be conducted by an Islamist inspired individual due to the ideologically driven intent to conduct indiscriminate attacks against members of the public.
- The assessments in this report were made using the PHIA Probability Yardstick, for further information please see the Assessment Methodology [section below](#).

Location based threats to bars in the UK

- It is highly likely that there would be a heightened terrorism threat to bars in major cities and those in proximity to iconic sites and/or major transport hubs. There is a realistic possibility that a bar located in proximity to iconic sites and/or busy public spaces could be impacted by a Marauding Terrorist Attack in proximity to their site.

Previous terrorist incidents related to bars in the UK and overseas

- Terrorist actors have previously demonstrated the intent and capability to conduct attacks against bars in the UK, including:
 - **2021 London;** On 23 July 2021, Heaven, a nightclub associated with the LGBTQIA+ community, was evacuated for the second time after a “suspicious item” was reported. The nightclub had previously been evacuated in May 2021 following an alleged “intentional hoax”.¹
 - **2020 Durham;** In January 2020, Jack Reed, 18, was sentenced to six-years and eight-months in prison for planning a terrorist attack in the UK.² Reed reportedly adhered to an Extreme Right-Wing ideology and had researched explosives and listed potential targets in Durham for his attack.³ Included in his potential targets were pubs, intended to “prevent degeneracy” and “scare/anger laymen”.⁴
 - **2017 London;** On 03 June 2017, Khuram Butt, Rachid Redouane, and Youssef Zaghba conducted a Marauding Terrorist Attack in proximity to Borough Market. The attack started on London Bridge using a Vehicle as a Weapon to ram pedestrians before attacking members of the public using Bladed Weapons in proximity to Borough Market. There were eight fatalities and 48 others were injured. Multiple pubs and bars in proximity to the attack site were affected.⁵
 - **2007 London;** On 30 April 2007, five British individuals were jailed for life for plotting an al-Qa’ida inspired bombing campaign on targets across Britain, including, nightclubs, trains, and shopping centres.⁶ Media reporting suggests that the individuals were linked to the perpetrators of the 2005 7/7 attacks on London’s transport systems.⁷
 - **1999 London;** Between 17 and 30 April 1999, David Copeland, an Extreme Right-Wing terrorist, conducted three Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attacks in London. One attack targeted the Admiral Duncan Pub. The Admiral Duncan was located in Old Compton Street, a hotspot for London’s LGBTQ+ community. There were three fatalities and 48 were injured.⁸
- Terrorist actors have previously demonstrated the intent and capability to conduct attacks against bars globally, including:
 - **2025 Germany;** On 18 May 2025, Mahmoud M, a 35-year-old Syrian national, reportedly conducted a Bladed Weapons attack against individuals outside of a bar in Bielefeld. Five people were injured. German prosecutors allege that the suspect was inspired by an Islamist ideology.⁹
 - **2025 USA;** On 01 January 2025 at approximately 03:15 local time, Shamsud-Din Jabbar, drove an electric Ford pick-up truck into crowds of people that had gathered on Bourbon Street in New Orleans, a notable hotspot for bars, clubs, and restaurants. Jabbar was reportedly inspired by Islamic State. 15 people were killed, and at least 35 others were injured.¹⁰
 - **2022 Slovakia;** On 12 October 2022, Juraj Krajcik conducted an Extreme Right-Wing inspired firearms attack against the Teplaren bar in Slovakia’s capital, Bratislava. The bar is associated with the LGBTQ+ community. There were two fatalities.¹¹

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- **2022 Israel;** On 06 April 2022, Raad Hazem, a 28-year-old Palestinian, conducted a Marauding Firearms Attack against a bar in Ilka, central Tel Aviv.¹² Three individuals were killed, and several others were wounded.¹³
- **2020 Germany;** On 19 February 2020, Tobias Rathjen conducted an Extreme Right-Wing inspired firearms attack against two shisha bars in Hanau, Germany. There were nine fatalities. The attacks were reportedly racially motivated.¹⁴
- **2002 Indonesia;** On 12 October 2002, three Islamist terrorists conducted Improvised Explosive Device (IED) attacks in Bali. The attacks targeted busy night-time economy locations. One of the attackers conducted a Person-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (PBIED) attack at a bar called Paddy's Bar. There were 202 fatalities overall.¹⁵

Other potential threats to bars in the UK

- It is likely that there would be a heightened threat to bars associated with specific communities and/or groups. E.g., A bar hosting an LGBTQIA+ event could face a heightened threat from individuals motivated by an Extreme Right-Wing or Islamist ideology:
 - **2024 USA;** On 17 December 2024, Mack Davis pleaded guilty to plotting a mass killing at a political party headquarters and a nearby bar in Michigan, as he associated both locations with the LGBTQIA+ community. Davis was inspired by an Extreme Right-Wing ideology.¹⁶
 - **2022 Norway;** On 25 June 2022, Zaniar Matapour, 44, conducted a Firearms attack against the London Pub; a popular LGBTQIA+ venue in Oslo. Matapour had pledged allegiance to Islamic State shortly before the attack. There were two fatalities, and eight others were hospitalised. Oslo's annual Pride parade was cancelled.¹⁷
 - **2018 UK;** On 05 February 2018, Ethan Stables, 20, was convicted for preparing a terrorist attack against a pub. Stables was inspired by an Extreme Right-Wing ideology and had planned to conduct a Bladed Weapons attack using a machete against guests attending a Pride Night for Barrow's LGBTQIA+ support group.¹⁸
- There is a realistic possibility that staff employed at bars could pose an Insider Threat to bars in the UK, including:
 - Third party security staff and/or in-house staff could enable terrorist actors in the UK to access the site with malicious items by allowing such individuals to bypass security mitigations in place at that site.
 - Third party security staff and/or in-house staff could grant terrorist actors in the UK access to high-profile guests or performers in the private areas of a bar.
- It is almost certain that any terrorist actor with the intent to conduct an attack against a bar would have open access to the site and the capability to conduct uninterrupted hostile reconnaissance due to the relaxed security posture and publicly accessible nature of bars in the UK.
- There is a realistic possibility that terrorist actors in the UK could have the intent to target high-profile individuals hosted by bars in the UK. E.g., The presence of celebrities at a high-profile bar could lead to an increased threat from individuals with terrorist intent.
- There is a realistic possibility that terrorist actors in the UK could use bars as a meeting point when planning to conduct an attack or as sites of radicalisation. Terrorist actors in the UK have previously used pubs and bars in the UK to conduct terrorism-related activity:
 - **2017 Warrington;** Jack Renshaw, a member of the proscribed terrorist group, National Action, announced that he planned to murder MP Rosie Cooper during a National Action meeting in the Friar Penketh pub in Warrington. Renshaw was later sentenced to life imprisonment for preparing an act of terrorism and making threats to kill.¹⁹

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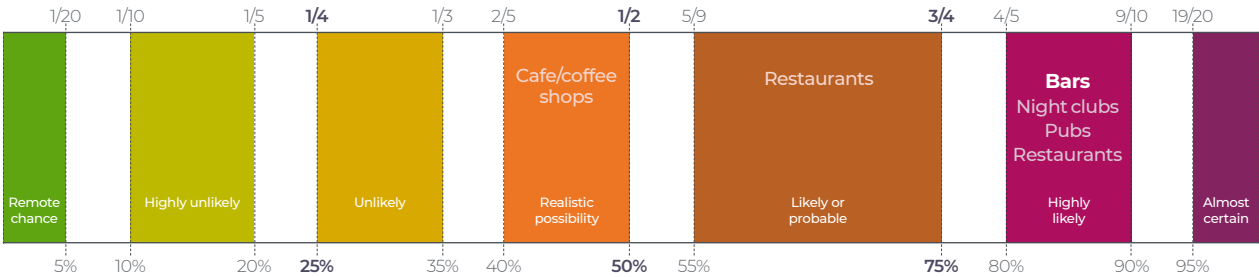
Threat visualisation

The diagram below outlines the intent of terrorist actors in the UK to conduct attacks against bars within the hospitality sector.

Terrorist intent can be defined as the desire and/or determination of an individual to conduct an attack against any given site.

The intent of terrorist actors to conduct an attack against the hospitality sector in the UK is subject to change based on the assessments outlined in this report.

Note: The terrorism threat to any given site is not based solely on intent, but also the capability of terrorist actors in the UK as outlined in this report. Terrorism threat is also mitigated by the UK’s countrywide terrorism risk mitigation infrastructure including both public and private security and safety capabilities.



Assessment Methodology

The assessments made in this report have been made using the Professional Head of Intelligence’s “Probability Yardstick” (above). The Probability Yardstick is a standardised instrument used to provide a professional standard for intelligence assessment.

- **Almost certain:** An event has a greater than 90% chance of occurring.
- **Highly likely:** An event has a 76% to 90% chance of occurring.
- **Likely:** An event has a 55% to 75% chance of occurring.
- **Realistic possibility:** An event has a 40% to 54% chance of occurring.
- **Unlikely:** An event has a 25% to 39% chance of occurring.
- **Highly unlikely:** An event has an 10% to 24% chance of occurring.
- **Remote chance:** An event has a less than 10% chance of occurring.

Time spans

- **Short Term:** 0 – 6 Months.
- **In the next 12 months.**
- **Medium Term:** 12 months – 5 Years.
- **Long Term:** 5+ Years.

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Intelligence cut-off date: 23 July 2025

For more information please contact solutions@poolre.co.uk

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Pool Re Solutions Limited

Equitable House 47 King William Street London EC4R 9AF

poolre.co.uk

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