

Restaurants



Terrorism threat to restaurants

- It is likely that terrorist actors in the UK would have the intent to conduct attacks against restaurants 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 restaurant 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 restaurant in the UK. E.g., Improvised Explosive Devices (IED), Person Borne Improvised Explosive Devices (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 high footfall at restaurants almost certainly provides an attractive target for indiscriminate terrorist attacks. As such, it is likely that any terrorist attack against a restaurant 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 restaurants in the UK

- It is highly likely that there would be an increased terrorism threat to restaurants in major cities and those in proximity to iconic sites and/or major transport hubs. There is a realistic possibility that restaurants 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 restaurants in the UK and overseas

- Terrorist actors have previously demonstrated the intent to conduct attacks against restaurants in the UK..
 - **2017 London;** On 03 June 2017, Khuram Butt, Rachid Redouane, and Youssef Zagbba conducted a Marauding Terrorist Attack. The small cell first conducted a Vehicle as a Weapon attack against civilians on London Bridge before conducting a Marauding Bladed Weapons attack against civilians in proximity to Borough Market. There were 8 fatalities and 48 others were injured. Multiple hospitality sites in proximity to the attack site were affected. The perpetrators were inspired by an Islamist ideology.¹
 - **2008 Exeter;** In October 2008, Nicky Reilly, 22, pleaded guilty to plotting a Person-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (PBIED) attack against a Giraffe restaurant in Exeter city centre on 22 May 2008. Reilly had converted to Islam between 2002 and 2003 and was inspired by an Islamist ideology. Reilly attempted to assemble three homemade liquid bombs while in the toilet cubicle of the restaurant when one of the devices detonated prematurely in his hands. He was later arrested.²
- Terrorist actors have previously demonstrated the intent and capability to conduct attacks against restaurants globally, including:
 - **2025 Australia;** On 04 July 2025, 20 individuals allegedly forcibly entered an Israeli restaurant in Melbourne and caused damage to the site. Three individuals have since been charged with assault and criminal damage among other offences. The incident has not been designated as terrorism.³
 - **2025 USA;** On 01 January 2025 at approximately 03:15 local time, Shamsud-Din Jabbar, 42, 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.⁴
 - **2023 Greece;** In March 2023, two men accused of planning a terrorist attack against a Jewish restaurant in central Athens were arrested and charged with membership in a terrorist organisation.⁵
 - **2021 Democratic Republic of Congo;** On 25 December 2021, an individual reportedly from the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) – a militant group linked to Islamic State – conducted a Person-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (PBIED) attack against a crowded restaurant. Although police prevented the individual from entering the restaurant, he detonated the device at the entrance. There were five fatalities, and 13 others were injured.⁶
 - **2016 USA;** On 11 February 2016, Mohamed Barry, 30, conducted a Bladed Weapons attack against diners in a restaurant in central Ohio. Barry was later found to have links to Islamic State. Four individuals were injured, and the attacker was killed by police. The attack was designated as terrorism by the White House in 2017.⁷

Continued

- **2015 France;** During a complex, high-sophistication Islamic State attack in Paris on 13 November 2015, several restaurants were targeted by three individuals conducting a Marauding Firearms attack. Another individual later conducted a Person Borne Improvised Explosive Device (PBIED) attack at a separate restaurant. Approximately 20 individuals were killed in the restaurant attacks and several others were injured.⁸
- **2001 Israel;** On 09 August 2001, Izz al-Din Shuheil al-Masri conducted a Person-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (PBIED) attack against a pizza restaurant in Israel. Masri was reportedly a member of Hamas. There were 15 fatalities, including seven children.⁹

Other potential threats to restaurants in the UK

- It is almost certain that any terrorist actor with the intent to conduct an attack against a restaurant 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 restaurants in the UK. .
- There is a realistic possibility that the nature of events held at a restaurant could alter the intent of terrorist actors in the UK to target any given site. E.g. A restaurant hosting an LGBTQIA+ event could face a heightened threat from individuals motivated by an Extreme Right-Wing or Islamist ideology..
- There is a realistic possibility that there could be a heightened threat to restaurants associated with a specific minority community. For example, an Extreme Right-Wing terrorist could have the intent to conduct an attack against a Middle Eastern Restaurant.

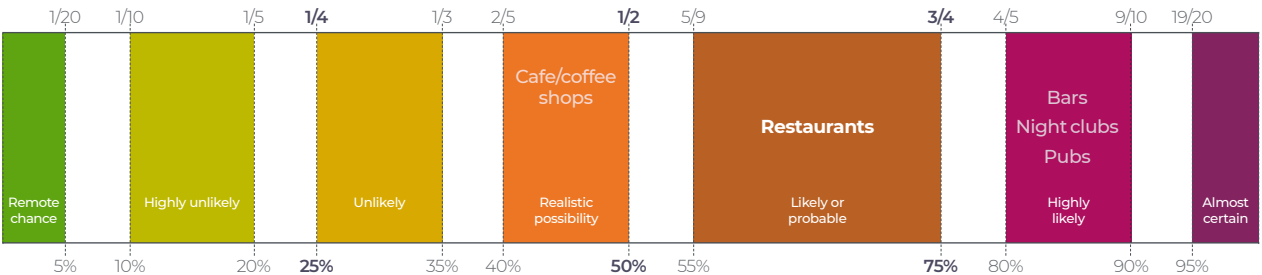
Threat visualisation

The diagram below outlines the intent of terrorist actors in the UK to conduct attacks against restaurants 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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