

LICENSING ACT 2003 HEARING THURSDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2019 @ 0930 HOURS

APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF A PREMISES LICENCE

1. Premises:

Union Food and Wine
11b Union Street
Reading
RG1 1EU

2. Applicant:

Mr Ajeet Singh Chopra
■ Denbigh Drive
Hayes
UB3 1QF

3. Premises Licence:

There is currently no premises licence in place and the premises are located within Councils' Cumulative Impact Area.

The application was submitted on behalf of Mr Ajeet Singh Chopra and seeks to apply for the licensable activity and opening hours to the times stated below.

A plan showing the location of the premises and surrounding area is shown at Appendix LIC-5

4. Proposed licensable activities and hours:

The application is for the increase in hours for the following activities:

Sale of Alcohol (On and Off the premises)

Monday to Sunday from 0700hrs until 0000hrs (Midnight)

Hours open to the public

Monday to Sunday from 0700hrs until 0000hrs (Midnight)

5. Temporary Event Notices

In considering any application the Licensing Authority should be aware of the possible use of Temporary Event Notices to extend entertainment activities or hours of operation. A premises may extend the hours or scope of their operation by the use of Temporary Event Notices. Up to 15 events per year can be held under this provision at a particular premises. These events may last for up to 168 hours provided less than 500 people are accommodated and provided the total number of days used for these events does not exceed 21 per year.

6. Date of receipt of application: 18 December 2018

A copy of the application form is attached as Appendix LIC-1

7. Date of closure of period for representations: 21 January 2019

8. Representations received:

During the 28 day consultation process for the application, representations were

received from:

Reading Borough Council Licensing Team. A copy of the conditions is attached at Appendix LIC-2

Thames Valley Police. A copy is attached at Appendix LIC-3

Interested party - Mr Graham Bates. A copy is attached at Appendix LIC-4

9. Licensing Objectives and Reading Borough Council's Licensing Policy Statement

In considering representations received the Licensing Authority has a duty to carry out its functions with a view to promoting the four licensing objectives, which are as follows:

- the prevention of crime and disorder;
- public safety
- the prevention of public nuisance
- the protection of children from harm

Any conditions that are placed on a premises licence should be appropriate and proportionate with a view to promoting the licensing objectives. The Licensing Authority can amend, alter or refuse an application should it be deemed appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives.

The Council's licensing policy also places an onus on applicant's who wish to open past 11pm to demonstrate how they will mitigate the issues of crime and disorder and potential public nuisance

Amended Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 (April 2018)

Licensing Objectives and Aims:

1.5 However, the legislation also supports a number of other key aims and purposes. These are vitally important and should be principal aims for everyone involved in licensing work. They include:

- protecting the public and local residents from crime, anti-social behaviour and noise nuisance caused by irresponsible licensed premises

Steps to promote the licensing objectives:

8.41 In completing an operating schedule, applicants are expected to have regard to the statement of licensing policy for their area. They must also be aware of the expectations of the licensing authority and the responsible authorities as to the steps that are appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives, and to demonstrate knowledge of their local area when describing the steps they propose to take to promote the licensing objectives. Licensing authorities and responsible authorities are expected to publish information about what is meant by the promotion of the licensing objectives and to ensure that applicants can readily access advice about these matters. However, applicants are also expected to undertake their own enquiries about the area in which the premises are situated to

inform the content of the application.

8.42 Applicants are, in particular, expected to obtain sufficient information to enable them to demonstrate, when setting out the steps they propose to take to promote the licensing objectives, that they understand:

- the layout of the local area and physical environment including crime and disorder hotspots, proximity to residential premises and proximity to areas where children may congregate;
- any risk posed to the local area by the applicants' proposed licensable activities; and
- any local initiatives (for example, local crime reduction initiatives or voluntary schemes including local taxi-marshalling schemes, street pastors and other schemes) which may help to mitigate potential risks.

8.43 Applicants are expected to include positive proposals in their application on how they will manage any potential risks. Where specific policies apply in the area (for example, a cumulative impact policy), applicants are also expected to demonstrate an understanding of how the policy impacts on their application; any measures they will take to mitigate the impact; and why they consider the application should be an exception to the policy.

8.44 It is expected that enquiries about the locality will assist applicants when determining the steps that are appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives. For example, premises with close proximity to residential premises should consider what effect this will have on their smoking, noise management and dispersal policies to ensure the promotion of the public nuisance objective. Applicants must consider all factors which may be relevant to the promotion of the licensing objectives, and where there are no known concerns, acknowledge this in their application.

8.45 The majority of information which applicants will require should be available in the licensing policy statement in the area. Other publicly available sources which may be of use to applicants include:

- the Crime Mapping website;
- Neighbourhood Statistics websites;
- websites or publications by local responsible authorities;
- websites or publications by local voluntary schemes and initiatives; and
- on-line mapping tools.

8.46 While applicants are not required to seek the views of responsible authorities before formally submitting their application, they may find them to be a useful source of expert advice on local issues that should be taken into consideration when making an application. Licensing authorities may wish to encourage co-operation between applicants, responsible authorities and, where relevant, local residents and businesses before applications are submitted in order to minimise the scope for disputes to arise.

8.47 Applicants are expected to provide licensing authorities with sufficient information in this section to determine the extent to which their proposed steps are appropriate to promote the licensing objectives in the local area. Applications must not be based on providing a set of standard conditions to promote the licensing objectives and applicants are expected to make it clear why the steps they are proposing are appropriate for the premises.

8.48 All parties are expected to work together in partnership to ensure that the licensing objectives are promoted collectively. Where there are no disputes, the steps that applicants propose to take to promote the licensing objectives, as set out in the operating schedule, will very often translate directly into conditions that will be attached to premises licences with the minimum of fuss.

8.49 For some premises, it is possible that no measures will be appropriate to promote one or more of the licensing objectives, for example, because they are adequately covered by other existing legislation. It is however important that all operating schedules should be precise and clear about the measures that are proposed to promote each of the licensing objectives.

Relevant, vexatious and frivolous representations

9.4 A representation is “relevant” if it relates to the likely effect of the grant of the licence on the promotion of at least one of the licensing objectives. For example, a representation from a local businessperson about the commercial damage caused by competition from new licensed premises would not be relevant. On the other hand, a representation by a businessperson that nuisance caused by new premises would deter customers from entering the local area, and the steps proposed by the applicant to prevent that nuisance were inadequate, would be relevant. In other words, representations should relate to the impact of licensable activities carried on from premises on the objectives. For representations in relation to variations to be relevant, they should be confined to the subject matter of the variation. There is no requirement for a responsible authority or other person to produce a recorded history of problems at premises to support their representations, and in fact this would not be possible for new premises.

9.5 It is for the licensing authority to determine whether a representation (other than a representation from responsible authority) is frivolous or vexatious on the basis of what might ordinarily be considered to be vexatious or frivolous. A representation may be considered to be vexatious if it appears to be intended to cause aggravation or annoyance, whether to a competitor or other person, without reasonable cause or justification. Vexatious circumstances may arise because of disputes between rival businesses and local knowledge will therefore be invaluable in considering such matters. Licensing authorities can consider the main effect of the representation, and whether any inconvenience or expense caused by it could reasonably be considered to be proportionate.

9.6 Frivolous representations would be essentially categorised by a lack of seriousness. Frivolous representations would concern issues which, at most, are minor and in relation to which no remedial steps would be warranted or proportionate.

9.7 Any person who is aggrieved by a rejection of their representations on either of these grounds may lodge a complaint through the local authority’s corporate complaints procedure. A person may also challenge the authority’s decision by way of judicial review.

9.8 Licensing authorities should not take decisions about whether representations are frivolous, vexatious or relevant to the licensing objectives on the basis of any political judgement. This may be difficult for councillors who receive complaints from residents within their own wards. If consideration is not to be delegated, contrary to the recommendation in this Guidance, an assessment should be prepared by officials for consideration by the sub-committee before any decision

is taken that necessitates a hearing. Anyiders that their own interests are such that they are unable to consider the matter independently should disqualify themselves.

9.9 It is recommended that, in borderline cases, the benefit of the doubt about any aspect of a representation should be given to the person making that representation. The subsequent hearing would then provide an opportunity for the person or body making the representation to amplify and clarify it.

9.10 Licensing authorities should consider providing advice on their websites about how any person can make representations to them.

The role of responsible authorities

9.11 Responsible authorities under the 2003 Act are automatically notified of all new applications. While all responsible authorities may make representations regarding applications for licences and club premises certificates and full variation applications, it is the responsibility of each responsible authority to determine when they have appropriate grounds to do so.

9.12 Each responsible authority will be an expert in their respective field, and in some cases it is likely that a particular responsible authority will be the licensing authority's main source of advice in relation to a particular licensing objective. For example, the police have a key role in managing the night-time economy and should have good working relationships with those operating in their local areas. The police should usually therefore be the licensing authority's main source of advice on matters relating to the promotion of the crime and disorder licensing objective. However, any responsible authority under the 2003 Act may make representations with regard to any of the licensing objectives if they have evidence to support such representations. Licensing authorities must therefore consider all relevant representations from responsible authorities carefully, even where the reason for a particular responsible authority's interest or expertise in the promotion of a particular objective may not be immediately apparent. However, it remains incumbent on all responsible authorities to ensure that their representations can withstand the scrutiny to which they would be subject at a hearing.

Licensing authorities acting as responsible authorities

9.13 Licensing authorities are included in the list of responsible authorities. A similar framework exists in the Gambling Act 2005. The 2003 Act does not require responsible authorities to make representations about applications for the grant of premises licences or to take any other steps in respect of different licensing processes. It is, therefore, for the licensing authority to determine when it considers it appropriate to act in its capacity as a responsible authority; the licensing authority should make this decision in accordance with its duties under section 4 of the 2003 Act.

Hours of trading

10.15 Shops, stores and supermarkets should normally be free to provide sales of alcohol for consumption off the premises at any times when the retail outlet is open for shopping unless there are good reasons, based on the licensing objectives, for restricting those hours.

Integrating strategies

14.63 It is recommended that statements of licensing policy should provide clear

indications of how the licensing authority will secure the proper integration of its licensing policy with local crime prevention, planning, transport, tourism, equality schemes, cultural strategies and any other plans introduced for the management of town centres and the night-time economy. Many of these strategies are not directly related to the promotion of the licensing objectives, but, indirectly, impact upon them. Co-ordination and integration of such policies, strategies and initiatives are therefore important.

Planning and Building Control

14.64 The statement of licensing policy should indicate that planning permission, building control approval and licensing regimes will be properly separated to avoid duplication and inefficiency. The planning and licensing regimes involve consideration of different (albeit related) matters. Licensing committees are not bound by decisions made by a planning committee, and vice versa. However, as set out in chapter 9, licensing committees and officers should consider discussions with their planning counterparts prior to determination with the aim of agreeing mutually acceptable operating hours and scheme designs.

Licensing Act 2003

The Licensing Act 2003 under Section 18 (6) also states that any relevant representation should be considered in the context of:

(a) the likely effect of the grant of the premises licence on the promotion of the licensing objectives.

Therefore in the context of the grant of a licence, it is reasonable for the Licensing Authority to base its decision on an application on what the likely effects of granting a licence would have on the promotion of the licensing objectives.

Reading Borough Council Statement of Licensing Policy 2018

2. Integrating Strategies

2.1 The Secretary of State's Guidance to the Licensing Act 2003 states that the licensing authority should outline how it will secure proper integration between its licensing policy with policies and strategies concerned with local crime prevention, planning, transport, tourism, equality schemes, cultural strategies and any other policy or plan introduced for the management of town centres and night time economies. The Licensing Authority agree that such co-ordination and integration is crucial to achieve the Council's aims for a safe and vibrant night time economy.

Licensing and Planning integration

2.2 The planning authority of Reading Borough Council is a responsible authority under the Licensing Act 2003. It can make representations on applications or call for reviews of existing licences based upon any of the four licensing objectives. The prevention of crime and disorder and prevention of public nuisance are shared concerns of the planning and licensing authorities.

2.3 The planning authority have a number of policies that impact on Reading's night time economy. The Licensing authority recognises that licensing applications should not be a rerun of the planning application process. The planning authority remains the regime that is directed at development of land and the use of premises

upon it. The licensing authority remains the regime that is directed at the licensable activities and responsible management of said premises upon that land.

2.4 Whilst there is a clear distinction and separation between the licensing authority and planning authority in terms of their remit, there are times when there are overlapping considerations. In order to secure proper integration across the Council's range of policies, the Licensing authority will expect applicants to demonstrate that their proposed use of a premises is lawful in planning terms, including complying with any conditions and timings that may be imposed upon a planning consent prior to any application being submitted under the Licensing Act.

2.5 Where the planning authority has granted planning consent to a specific time, the Licensing authority would expect any applicants under the Licensing Act to not exceed that time within any application.

2.6 Where the planning authority has granted a planning consent that contains conditions that may undermine the promotion of the licensing objectives (such as a restriction in the opening hours based on potential public nuisance issues), the licensing authority would expect applicants to demonstrate how they will mitigate those issues within any application. Failure to do so could lead to representations being made against an application.

2.7 Whilst acknowledging that planning and licensing are separate regimes and that licensing authorities are not bound by the decisions of planning committees (and vice versa), the licensing authority shall aim for the proper integration between licensing and all other Council policies, strategies and initiatives in order to actively promote the licensing objectives.

2.11 The Council recognises the link between high strength alcohol products, anti social behaviour and poor health outcomes. In 2017, the Licensing Authority in conjunction with partners at Thames Valley Police and the Community Alcohol Partnership launched a voluntary initiative to try and reduce the availability and sale of high strength beers and cider above 6.5% ABV.

2.12 There is a significant issue in the town centre and Oxford Road with persons identified as street drinkers purchasing single cans of high strength beers and ciders from licensed off licences. This has led to issues of anti social behaviour in local communities. Most off licences in the town centre and Oxford Road areas have voluntarily agreed to stop selling single cans of high strength beers and ciders. Some have agreed to only sell packs of four whilst others have agreed not to sell these products at all. This has led to a reduction in the number of incidents of street drinking.

2.13 We would expect all licence holders and potential applicants to have regard to this initiative and include measures to restrict the sale of high strength products in single quantities or to not sell them at all. Failure to do so could lead to representations being made against applications for licences or applications to review licences that may be undermining the licensing objectives by selling these products in an irresponsible way.

2.14 The Licensing authority, in conjunction with relevant partners, will be expanding this initiative to include all off licences in Reading and would expect all applicants and current licence holders to take cognisance of this fact. Current licence holders are also expected to take steps to prevent any irresponsible

retailing of these products.

3.2 This Act requires local authorities and other bodies to consider crime and disorder reduction. Section 17 of the Act states that it shall be the duty of each authority, to exercise its various functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that is reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area (including anti social and other behaviour adversely affecting the local environment). This links specifically with the licensing objective of prevention of crime and disorder and the licensing authority will take into account all reasonable measures that actively promote this licensing objective.

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014

3.3 This Act gives a wide range of powers to local authorities and the police to tackle incidents of crime, disorder and nuisance that may be impacting on residents. The Act introduced public spaces protection orders which allows the local authority to designate areas in the borough where anti social behaviour such as street drinking will be prohibited. The Council has designated areas where street drinking is prohibited and is in the process of introducing a new public space protection order. The Act also gives powers to the local authority and police to close licensed premises where nuisance and anti social behaviour is taking place or likely to take place. This Act therefore clearly supports and actively promotes the licensing objectives contained within the Licensing Act 2003.3.4 The Council's Licensing policy is therefore clear and unchallenged on the matter of the planning permission - particularly when it impacts on the promotion of the four licensing objectives - in this case, the prevention of public nuisance. It should also be noted that the planning authority is a named responsible authority in the Licensing Act 2003 and can make representations in relation to applications and call review of licences if it believes it is necessary to do so.

6.1 Conditions shall be appropriate and proportionate for the promotion of the licensing objectives and shall be unambiguous and clear in their stated aims. Conditions will also be tailored to the type, location and characteristics of the particular premises and the relevant licensable activities. Any condition imposed by the Authority shall also aim to avoid duplication of other legislation unless there is a requirement to impose such a condition in order to promote the licensing objectives (for example, a capacity limit for public safety reasons). This shall apply to all relevant applications (grant/variation of a premises licence or club premises certificate).

6.2 The operating schedule within an application should contain an assessment from the proposed licence holder of what they believe are appropriate and proportionate measures to enable them to carry out their proposed licensable activities. This assessment should be arrived at by taking cognisance of this policy and the Secretary of State's guidance which outlines the matters that an applicant should take into account such as issues in the locality and why their proposed measures are suitable for their proposed operation.

Off Licences and Conditions - General Approach

6.11 Shops selling alcohol for consumption off the premises can be the focus of antisocial behaviour, crime and disorder and public disturbance. In the town centre and Oxford Road area, for example, there are significant issues with street drinking and the associated anti- social behaviour this causes.

6.12 Any applications for off licences shall be considered in the light of all relevant matters that may undermine the licensing objectives such as street drinking in that locality as well as the availability of high strength beers, lagers and ciders and the detrimental effect those products have on health outcomes. This approach will apply to the whole Borough of Reading and the authority will seriously consider any representation made to it by Thames Valley Police, Public Health or other responsible authorities which indicate that the availability or sale of high strength beers, lagers and cider are likely to be detrimental to the promotion of the four licensing objectives.

6.13 When considering applications for off licences, the authority would expect applicants to acknowledge the above issues within their operating schedule.

6.16 All licence holders will be expected to actively participate in initiatives set up in Reading which aim to tackle the issues of alcohol related anti social behaviour and the proliferation of high strength beers, lagers and ciders above 6.5%. Initiatives such as 'Reducing the Strength' are proven to reduce alcohol related anti social behaviour in the Borough.

9. Enforcement

9.1 It is the responsibility under the Act for all responsible authorities; licence holders and prospective licence holders to actively promote the four licensing objectives. The Council along with partner agencies, has a wider responsibility to protect the public as a whole and prevent crime, harm or nuisance from taking place.

9.2 The Authority will carry out it's licensing functions with a view to actively promoting the licensing objectives and maintaining public safety. This applies to the dual role the licensing authority has both as the administrator of the process and as a responsible authority.

9.3 The Licensing Authority has previously and will continue to work with other responsible authorities and partner agencies in order to ensure that the licensing objectives are promoted and that a consistent and joined up approach is taken to enforcement across Reading.

Inspections

9.6 The Authority will carry out inspections at all premises where a premises licence is in force. Additionally, an inspection may also be carried out where an application for a grant, variation or review is received by the Authority to ascertain the likely effect of granting any application on the promotion of the licensing objectives. Inspections may also be carried out if the Authority or one of our partner agencies/responsible authorities are made aware of complaints or other incidents that undermine the promotion of the licensing objectives.

9.7 Inspections will be carried out solely by the Licensing Authority or in conjunction with other partners such as Thames Valley Police, Home Office Immigration Enforcement and Trading Standards.

Cumulative Impact Assessment

12 Cumulative Impact Assessment for the Town Centre

NB: The Licensing Authority, when publishing it's licensing policy, is required to have regard to the Cumulative Impact Assessment in the forthcoming pages. The

licensing policy and the statements, provisions and aims contained within it, are consistent with the approach laid out in the Cumulative Impact Assessment for the Town Centre Cumulative Impact Area. The statements within the policy are aimed at encouraging best practice; a safe environment for all and, most importantly, to actively promote the four licensing objectives. The statements in the licensing policy including the approaches to conditions; hours; enforcement and all other matters will also apply to the premises designated within the Town Centre Cumulative Impact Area. The Licensing Authority is also required to publish, within the licensing policy, a summary of the Cumulative Impact Assessment. However, by including the full rationale for the Cumulative Impact Assessment and supporting evidence, as standalone chapters within the licensing policy document, we believe that this would make a summary unnecessary and would only serve to duplicate the information provided in the forthcoming pages. It is acknowledged that the Cumulative Impact Assessment (Chapters 12 and 13) must be reviewed every three years whilst the licensing policy (Chapters 1 to 11) must be reviewed every five years.

Cumulative Impact Assessments - Background

12.1 The concept of Cumulative Impact has been described within the Secretary of State's Guidance since the commencement of the 2003 Act. It has been part of the Council's licensing policy since 2010 and is a proper matter for the Authority to consider when discharging its licensing functions and developing its licensing policy. It is also consistent with the Authority's obligations to prevent crime and disorder as outlined in Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. However, this assessment shall not relate to the demand for a certain types of premises (need). The issue of 'need' is not a proper matter for the Authority to consider within the licensing policy statement.

12.2 Cumulative Impact for the purposes of this policy means the potential impact on the promotion of the licensing objectives of a significant number of licensed premises concentrated in one area. For example, this may include the potential impact on crime and disorder or public nuisance on an area that a large concentration of licensed premises may have.

12.3 The Policing and Crime Act 2017 amended the Licensing Act 2003 to place 'Cumulative Impact Assessments' on a statutory footing by introducing paragraph 5A of the Licensing Act. This amendment came into force on 6th April 2018.

12.6 The assessment will relate to all premises within the specified area that have a premises licence or a club premises certificate which will be carrying on or proposing to carry on the following licensable activities:

- The sale or supply of alcohol on or off the premises
- The provision of late night refreshment on or off the premises
- The provision of any regulated entertainment

Whilst this Cumulative Impact Assessment does not apply directly to Temporary Event Notices, the Secretary of State's Guidance to the Licensing Act 2003 states that it is open to the police and Environmental Health officers to refer to this assessment and the evidence contained within it when objecting to a TEN. The Authority believes this is a right and proper approach as extension of hours within the Cumulative Impact Area can have a direct impact on the promotion of the licensing objectives.

12.7 This assessment is being published because the authority is of the opinion that the number of licensed premises and club premises certificates within the

town centre area is such that it is likely that granting further licences or variations to licences would be inconsistent with the authority's duty to promote the licensing objectives. This opinion has been reached after careful consideration of evidence showing high levels of crime and disorder within the town centre; the nature of those offences - which include violent and sexual offences - which are and the comparable data between the Reading night time economies and other night time economies in the Thames Valley area.

12.8 The content of this Assessment does not change the fundamental way that decisions are made under the 2003 Act. The Authority will make all decisions on applications within the Town Centre Cumulative Impact Area on a case by case basis with a view on how best to promote the licensing objectives. It also does not remove the requirement for a relevant representation to be submitted by a responsible authority or a member of the public (defined as 'any other person' within the Act) against an application for it to be considered by the Licensing Sub-Committee. An application that does not receive relevant representations is deemed granted under the Act.

12.10 This assessment will apply to all applications for the grant or variation of a premises licence or club premises certificate and all premises that may benefit from a premises licence or club premises certificate. This includes material variations for increased hours for licensable activity; increased capacity and any other matter that may add to cumulative impact in the Town Centre Cumulative Impact Area. Section 5A of the Licensing Act 2003 uses the phrase 'to grant any further relevant authorisations' in relation to Cumulative Impact Assessments. The Authority interprets that to mean all grant and variation applications in the relevant area. A material variation to increase the scope of a licence - whether that be for extended licensable activities; extended hours or an increase of capacity - is, by all definition, a grant of a new relevant authorisation in the area as it replaces the currently existing one. This is consistent with the Secretary of State's Guidance and the explanatory notes to the Policing and Crime Act 2017 which was the legislation that inserted Cumulative Impact Assessments into the Licensing Act 2003. The Home Office have also confirmed that this is the intent of the legislation.

12.11 The Authority has considered in formulating this assessment - in close consultation with Thames Valley Police - that significant concerns do exist over the high concentration of licensed premises within the town centre area. The high concentration of licensed premises is already causing a negative cumulative impact on one or more of the licensing objectives. Therefore granting further licences or certificates or variations to licences and certificates may be inconsistent with the Authority's duty to promote the licensing objectives and protect the public as a whole.

12.12 Concerns do exist about the concentration of premises in parts of the town centre, particularly in Friar Street, Gun Street, St Mary's Butts and adjoining roads, together with the impact these premises are having upon the licensing objectives. These concerns and the associated impact on the crime and disorder licensing objective are underpinned by the evidence in this assessment.

12.13 The effect of the Cumulative Impact Assessment is to create a presumption that applications for the grant of a premises licence or club premises certificate or material variations within the stated area will be refused if relevant representations are received. This is because of the high concentration of licensed

premises already in existence in the town centre and the further undermining of the licensing objectives that is likely to occur if further licences are granted.

12.14 Applications will be considered on a case by case basis. Any application which is unlikely to have a negative effect on the promotion of the licensing objectives may be granted subject to it being consistent with the provisions and aims set out in this assessment and the licensing policy as a whole. Applicants for a premises licence or club premises certificate within the Town Centre Cumulative Impact Area should address issues of cumulative impact within their applications. Failure to do this will likely lead to representations being submitted with a recommendation that the application is refused by the licensing committee.

12.15 Where during the application for the grant or variation of a premises licence or club premises certificate within the Town Centre Cumulative Impact Area, responsible authorities are concerned that the licensing objectives will be impacted on or undermined, or that the application undermines the ability of the Authority to actively promote the licensing objectives or aims of the licensing policy statement, then relevant representations are likely to be made. The application will then proceed to a hearing. If during the hearing to determine the application, an applicant is able to demonstrate that there will be no negative impact on the authority's duty to promote the licensing objectives and there will be no increase in the cumulative impact, a licence may be granted. However, if it cannot be demonstrated that an application will not undermine the licensing objectives; will not increase the cumulative impact within the town and will not impact on crime and disorder and public nuisance within the town then it shall be the policy of this authority to refuse the application. The onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that the Council should overturn its own policy in relation to Cumulative Impact.

12.18 This assessment shall set out the approach the Authority shall take when dealing with certain types of premises and the associated licensable activities. Each application will be assessed on a case by case basis. However, the onus is on the applicant to address the issue of cumulative impact within their application along with how they plan to promote the licensing objectives and aims stated within the Authority's licensing policy.

12.19 The 2003 Act gives the authority power to set appropriate licensing hours that are consistent with the promotion of the licensing objectives. The licensing authority cannot set predetermined hours of operation and must take decisions on a case by case basis.

12.20 However, the evidence within this assessment clearly shows crime levels significantly increase after 0000hrs. Therefore any applicant who wishes to operate past 0000hrs must demonstrate how their operation will not negatively impact the promotion of the licensing objectives in an area which is already under stress from a high concentration of licensed premises.

12.21 Applications for the grant or variation of a premises licence or club premises certificate who wish to operate up to 0000hrs must also demonstrate how their operation is consistent with the provisions and aims laid out in this assessment and the statements within the main body of the licensing policy. For example, an off licence would have to demonstrate how their operation is consistent with the Authority's ambition to reduce the sale of super strength alcohol and to reduce incidents of street drinking. If an application for the grant or variation of a

premises licence or club premises certificate within the Town Centre Cumulative Impact Area is unable to demonstrate how it will promote the licensing objectives and is inconsistent with the aims within the Council's licensing policy, then it is likely to attract representations. The likely recommendation of that representation is for the application to be refused.

Application of the policy by premises type.

12.23 As already stated in paragraph 12.13, it is the general policy of the Authority to refuse applications for the grant or variation of a premises licence or club premises certificate in the Town Centre Cumulative Impact Area. This general policy refers to all licensable activities specifically the sale of alcohol on or off the premises; the provision of late night refreshment on or off the premises and regulated entertainment. It also applies to material variations for the increase in capacity; the increase in opening hours and any other matter the Authority considers relevant.

12.24 However, the policy stated in 12.13 and 12.23 is not absolute and applicants will have the opportunity to address matters affecting Cumulative Impact within their application. Applicants will have to demonstrate that their application and proposed operation is not inconsistent with the Authority's licensing policy; this assessment and the Authority's ability to be able to promote the licensing objectives.

12.32 Off Licences: Premises that wish to sell alcohol for the consumption off the premises have and continue to cause issues within the town centre. Applications for the sale of alcohol for consumption off the premises will likely be refused if the Authority is satisfied that granting such a licence would undermine the promotion of the licensing objectives.

Applications for off sales may be granted subject to certain caveats. Any application that wishes to sell alcohol for consumption off of the premises up until 0000hrs should familiarise themselves with the contents of the Council's Licensing Policy - particularly the concerns around the sale of high strength beers, ales and ciders. Any application for an off licence should familiarise themselves with the Council's 'Reducing the Strength' initiative and the concerns around selling single cans to street drinkers. The Authority is of the view that street drinking is a major contributor to anti-social behaviour within the town centre and elsewhere.

It is expected that any applicant for an off licence will put forward robust measures within their application that mitigates such issues. Applications that put forward measures such as not selling high strength products; robust staff training and an age verification policy of at least Challenge 25 as well as other crime prevention measures such as CCTV covering the entire licensable area, are less likely to attract representations.

Applications for an off licence looking to sell alcohol past 0000hrs are likely to attract representations as it is likely that granting such licences will undermine the ability of the Authority to promote the licensing objectives. Therefore any application will be refused unless it can be shown by the applicant that there will be a no negative cumulative impact by granting such a licence.

Other Initiatives within the Town Centre Cumulative Impact Area

12.35 Prospective applicants and current licence holders should also familiarise themselves with the other initiatives that the Authority - in conjunction with it's

partners - have instigated the below initiatives to assist in reducing instances of crime and disorder within the town - particularly during the night time economy - which also aim to provide a safer environment for those frequenting the town:

- The town centre Pubwatch
- The use of street wardens
- Public Space Protection Order
- First Stop Centre at the Minster Church
- Reducing the Strength Initiative
- Test purchasing
- Regular routine inspections
- Purple Flag
- Best Bar None

Applicants who wish to operate in the Town Centre Cumulative Impact Area will be expected to make use of all of the above and participate fully with the Authority and it's partner agencies to maintain a cohesive and best practice approach to promoting a safe environment in the town.

Summary

The Responsible Authorities and interested party object to the grant of a premises licence for Union Food and Wine, 11b Union Street Reading, as the application is contrary to the Council's Cumulative Impact Assessment; does not seem to take cognisance of the Council's Licensing policy; does not appear to have been made in line with the Secretary of State's Guidance and does not reference Cumulative Impact or provide any mitigation towards rebutting the presumption of refusal within the application.

Therefore granting this grant will be inconsistent with the Authority's duty to actively promote the licensing objectives.

Case Law

East Lindsey DC v Abu Hanif (2016)

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