

**LICENSING ACT 2003 HEARING THURSDAY 01 FEBRUARY 2024 @ 0930HRS**  
**APPLICATION FOR THE GRANT OF A PREMISES LICENCE**

**1. Premises:**

Stories in the Park  
Palmer Park  
Wokingham Road  
Reading

**2. Applicant:**

T & M Leisure Reading Ltd

**3. Background:**

There is currently a premises licence in force for this event (LP2002994, issued 02.06.2023). The applicant previously applied for, and was granted, a licence, valid for 8 days per calendar year only. 4 days in June and 4 days in September. The dates of the events shall be notified to Reading Borough Council's Licensing Team and Thames Valley Police at least 90 days before the first date in June and September respectively. The licence is attached for information as **Appendix LIC-8**

The application has been submitted by T & M Leisure Reading Ltd for a new premises licence to replace the current premises licence number LP2002994.

Summary:

- a) The capacity of the event(s) will increase from 4999 to 9999.
- b) Increase to hours on a Sunday for licensable activities/hours open to the public.
- c) This includes that the licence is only valid for 8 days per year with the dates of the events being notified to the council's Licensing team and Thames Valley Police at least 60 days (amended to 90 days) before the event.
- d) Boxing to be permitted on a Thursday of an event period. (remove reference to June)
- e) EMP to be provided at least 90 days before an event period. (remove reference to June/September)
- f) Final EMP to be provided at least 14 days before an event period. (ditto)

(An Event Management Plan EMP is a written statement of how an event organiser will run their event. It incorporates such areas as risk assessment, traffic and transport planning, first aid, stewarding, site layout, audience profiles, temporary structures, barriers, emergency planning and evacuation plans, noise management, litter disposal and communication protocols).

The application (with additional information) is attached at **Appendix LIC-1.**

The Licensing team have proposed conditions to the applicant that they believe will promote the four licensing objectives. These conditions have been agreed by the applicant. These are attached at **Appendix LIC-2**.

If a new licence is granted by Committee, the premises licence holder will surrender their current licence.

#### **4. Proposed licensable activities and hours:**

The application is for the grant of a premises licence for the following activities:

Sale by Retail of Alcohol (On the Premises)

Monday to Sunday from 1200hrs until 2200hrs

Indoor Sporting Events

Thursday from 1200hrs until 2230hrs

Provision of Boxing or Wrestling Entertainments (Indoors and Outdoors)

Thursday from 1200hrs until 2230hrs

Live Music – Recorded Music – Performances of Dance – Anything Similar To These three (Indoors and Outdoors)

Monday to Sunday from 1200hrs until 2230hrs

Hours Open to the Public

Monday to Sunday from 1200hrs until 2300hrs

(The licence that will be valid for 8 days per calendar year only, with the dates of the events being notified to the Council's Licensing team and Thames Valley Police at least 90 days before the event.)

(The capacity of the event(s) will be 9999).

#### **5. Temporary Event Notices**

In considering any application the Licensing Authority should be aware of the possible use of Temporary Event Notices (if applicable) 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 calendar year (pending government update).

**6. Date of receipt of application:** 06.12.2023

**7. Date of closure of period for representations:** 03.01.2024

## **8. Representations received:**

During the 28 day consultation period for the application, representations were received from:

Caroline Hearst - local resident – (attached as **Appendix LIC-3**)

Dr. M Marselle - local resident – (attached as **Appendix LIC-4**)

Kevin Bjork - local resident – (attached as **Appendix LIC-5**)

██████████ - local resident – (attached as **Appendix LIC-6**)

Justin Milward and Andrew Hignett - local resident – (attached as **Appendix LIC-7**)

The Licensing team – Conditions agreed with applicant, representation withdrawn.

## **9. Powers of the Authority in determining an application for the grant of a premises licence**

The Licensing authority, when determining an application for the grant of a premises licence may:

- Grant the application as applied for
- Grant the application with modifications
- Refuse the application

## **10. 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.

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.

In determining this application, the Licensing Authority must also have regard to the representations received, the Licensing Authority's statement of licensing policy and any relevant section of the statutory guidance to licensing authorities.

## **11. Amended Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003 (December 2023)**

### Licensing Objectives and Aims:

1.2 The legislation provides a clear focus on the promotion of four statutory objectives which must be addressed when licensing functions are undertaken.

1.3 The licensing objectives are:

- The Prevention of Crime and Disorder
- Public Safety
- The Prevention of Public Nuisance
- The Protection of Children from Harm

1.4 Each objective is of equal importance. There are no other statutory licensing objectives, so that the promotion of the four objectives is a paramount consideration at all times.

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.

8.44 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.

#### The role of responsible authorities

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 area<sup>5</sup>. 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.

## **Hearings**

9.39 The licensing authority should give its decision within five working days of the conclusion of the hearing (or immediately in certain specified cases) and provide reasons to support it. This will be important if there is an appeal by any of the parties. Notification of a decision must be accompanied by information on the right of the party to appeal. After considering all the relevant issues, the licensing authority may grant the application subject to such conditions that are consistent with the operating schedule. Any conditions imposed must be appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives; there is no power for the licensing authority to attach a condition that is merely aspirational. For example, conditions may not be attached which relate solely to the health of customers rather than their direct physical safety. Any conditions added to the licence must be those imposed at the hearing or those agreed when a hearing has not been necessary.

9.40 Alternatively, the licensing authority may refuse the application on the grounds that this is appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives. It may also refuse to specify a designated premises supervisor and/or only allow certain requested licensable activities. In the interests of transparency, the licensing authority should publish hearings procedures in full on its website to ensure that those involved have the most current information.

## **Determining actions that are appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives**

9.42 Licensing authorities are best placed to determine what actions are appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives in their areas. All licensing determinations should be considered on a case-by-case basis. They should take into account any representations or objections that have been received from responsible authorities or other persons, and representations made by the applicant or premises user as the case may be.

9.43 The authority's determination should be evidence-based, justified as being appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives and proportionate to what it is intended to achieve.

## **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.

## **The Council's Licensing Policy Statement (2023):**

1.6 The predominantly urban nature of Reading as a town means that an appropriate balance needs to be struck between the needs of local business and the needs of local residents. This licensing policy seeks to encourage all stakeholders to engage in the licensing process so that the needs of all can be taken into account and issues dealt with in a spirit of partnership and cooperation.

### **3. Licensing and integration with other legislation**

3.1 Many other pieces of legislation impact directly or indirectly on the licensing regime. The Licensing Authority must have regard to the following when it discharges its responsibilities under the Licensing Act 2003 and in relation to the promotion of the four licensing objectives:

#### **Crime and Disorder Act 1998**

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 it 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.

### **5. Licensing Applications**

#### **Grant and Full Variations**

5.4 It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that any application for the grant or full variation of a licence advertise the application in accordance with the relevant Licensing regulations. A blue notice should be placed on, at or near the premises to advertise the application for 28 days starting with the day after the application is served. A newspaper advert doing the same must be placed in a newspaper circulating in the Borough of Reading within 10 working days. Failure to do either of these things or to put inaccurate information in them will invalidate an application.

5.5 The Licensing Authority will advertise any valid applications on the Council's website for the same period of 28 days starting with the day after the application was received.

5.6 During the 28 day consultation period, the authority will scrutinise the application along with all of the other Responsible Authorities to judge whether it undermines the promotion of the licensing objectives. The application will be made available to any person who requests to see it. As per Section 18 (6) of the Licensing Act 2003, it will consider the likely effect of granting any licence on the promotion of the licensing objectives. The authority will expect all applicants to have taken cognisance of the Secretary of State's Guidance; local strategies and initiatives; this policy and any other known local issues before submitting their application and that these matters are addressed within the operating schedule of the application.

5.7 Whilst many applications will be resolved without the need for a committee hearing, any matters or representations that are not resolved will trigger a hearing before the properly constituted Licensing Applications Committee for determination.

5.51 The promotion and the organisation of live musical and similar entertainment in the open air or in temporary structures like marquees etc. can provide opportunities for community involvement, civic pride and can attract visitors to the district. However, the success of such events by way of contribution to the Reading's culture and tourism depends upon the quality, levels of safety and consideration for the rights of people who live or work in the vicinity and the standard of provision of facilities for those coming to enjoy the event.

## **6. Licensing Conditions**

### **General Approach**

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.

6.5 Any conditions imposed upon a premises licence or club premises certificate will be tailored to that type of premises and the style of operation. Consideration will also be given to the locality of the premises; issues in the locality; the issues set out in the Guidance and any policy, initiative or other matter the licensing authority wishes to take into account in order to promote the four licensing objectives.

### **Mandatory Conditions**

6.7 There are conditions that are imposed on all premises licences and club premises certificates. These are mandatory conditions and will apply to all licences and certificates that authorise the sale or supply of alcohol. These conditions will apply even if they are not contained on the physical copy of any licence.

6.8 The mandatory conditions are laid out in the Secretary of State's guidance. Licence holders must ensure, for example, that irresponsible drink promotions do not take place on the premises. Licence holders must also ensure that any drink measurement is



compliant and that all sales meet the minimum permitted pricing. Licences that permit alcohol to be sold and consumed on the premises must also provide free potable water to customers. The licensing authority considers irresponsible drinks promotions and alcohol being sold below the permitted minimum price as extremely serious offences that only promote excessive and irresponsible alcohol consumption and which then go on to cause alcohol related crime; anti-social behaviour and poor health outcomes. Any premises found engaging in such activity is likely to face appropriate enforcement action for undermining the promotion of the licensing objectives.

6.9 The mandatory conditions stipulate that no sale of alcohol may be made under a premises licence at any time when there is no Designated Premises Supervisor or when the proposed Designated Premises Supervisor does not have a valid Personal licence. Every supply of alcohol made under the premises licence must be made or authorised by a person who holds a personal licence. Any premises found to be in breach of this is likely to face appropriate enforcement action for conducting unlicensed activity and undermining the promotion of the licensing objectives.

6.10 The mandatory conditions also stipulate that the holder of any premises licence or club premises certificate must ensure that a suitable age verification policy is adopted at the premises in respect to the sale or supply of alcohol. All sales must then be carried out in relation to that policy and only then when suitable photographic identification is produced. Any premises found operating without a valid policy is likely to face appropriate enforcement action for conducting unlicensed activity and undermining the promotion of the licensing objectives.

## **7. Licensing Hours**

### **General Approach**

7.2 When an application receives representations, the authority may consider reducing the opening hours and times for licensable activities if it considers it appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives.

7.3 As part of the operating schedule submitted with any application, the applicant is expected to take cognisance of the guidance, this policy and any other available data pertaining to their prospective locality and the potential impact their operation may have on that area.

7.4 Where it is deemed appropriate and proportionate to do so, the authority may seek to reduce the hours for licensable activities in order to promote an orderly and gradual dispersal from a certain area or certain premises.

### **Licensed Premises in Residential Areas**

7.6 When dealing with applications and issuing licences, the authority is likely to impose stricter conditions on premises operating in residential areas if it considers it appropriate and proportionate to do so. This will apply to all premises types.

7.8 Premises that wish to provide regulated entertainment may be subject to additional conditions to ensure that residents are not disturbed. This may include the use of

sound limiters; keeping doors and windows closed and restricting the hours when music is played.

7.11 Premises that are planning to put on events that involve regulated entertainment may be required to provide the authority with a detailed event management plan of that event which may include a detailed noise risk assessment.

7.12 The licensing authority will seek the input of the Council's Environmental Protection and Nuisance team when looking at measures that may be appropriate for the prevention of public nuisance. This will include taking cognisance of any representations that are submitted as part of the application process or any enforcement action they have taken under their own legislation – such as noise abatement notices.

## **8. Children in Licensed Premises**

8.6 The Authority will expect all licence holders or premises that wish to allow children on to their premises to ensure that access is restricted where appropriate. This would include, ensuring that all children are accompanied and that they do not have access to or sight of alcohol.

8.16 The Licensing Authority expects all applicants for grants or variations of their premises licence or club premises certificate to outline robust measures to protect children from harm. This can include appropriate staff training as well as a Challenge 25 age verification policy for the sale of alcohol and any other measure which is deemed appropriate for the style of premises.

### General Principles

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 its 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.

9.4 Reading Borough Council and Thames Valley Police work in partnership when carrying out work that involves licensed premises and any matter that undermines the licensing objectives. The Authority and Thames Valley Police also work in partnership with colleagues in the Home Office Immigration Enforcement team and Trading Standards on a variety of issues including the prevention and detection of illegal working in licensed premises and issues surrounding super strength alcoholic products

and responsible alcohol retailing.

9.5 The Licensing Authority, Trading Standards and Thames Valley Police have established a regular partnership group to discuss and identify issues arising from licensed premises and to decide what, if any, enforcement action should be taken against any such premises. The partnership group is often attended by other colleagues so as to provide the widest possible, joined up approach to tackling issues in relation to licensed premises. It is the authority's view that issues are best tackled, whenever practicable, through this joined up approach as it provides consistency and a best practice approach to dealing with licensing issues.

#### 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.

#### Enforcement Approach

9.12 Where offences are found to have been carried out on licensed premises, the Authority has a number of enforcement options available to it. The Authority will work with partner agencies to determine which enforcement option is appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives. The seriousness of the offences found will be taken into consideration as well as any previous issues of non compliance or criminality that have taken place at the licensed premises.

### **10. Administration, Exercise and Delegation of Functions**

10.1 The powers of the Licensing Authority under the Licensing Act 2003 may be carried out by the Licensing Committee; by a Sub Committee or by one or more officers acting under delegated authority. The Licensing Committee will consist of between 10-15 members and the committee may establish one or more sub-committees consisting of two or three members.

10.3 A Licensing Sub-Committee shall hear all applications where relevant representations have been received and applications for the review of a premises licence that may have been submitted by Responsible Authorities or any other persons.

### **11. Relevant Case law for consideration:**

(R) on the application of Hope and Glory Public House v Westminster City Council (2011) EWCA Civ31

(R) (on application of Daniel Thwaites plc) v Wirral Magistrates' Court and Others (2008) EWHC 838 (Admin)

East Lindsey District Council v Abu Hanif (t/a Zara's Restaurant) (2016)

## **12. Appendices**

**Appendix LIC-1: Application Form (with additional information)**

**Appendix LIC-2: Premises Licence Conditions agreed between Reading Borough Council's Team & The Applicant**

**Appendix LIC-3: Representation from Local Resident**

**Appendix LIC-4: Representation from Local Resident**

**Appendix LIC-5: Representation from Local Resident**

**Appendix LIC-6: Representation from Local Resident**

**Appendix LIC-7: Representation from Local Resident**

**Appendix LIC-8: Current Premises licence**