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Dear Residents

Our client: Cricketers, Sturdee Avenue, Gillingham, ME7 3JR

Introduction

I act for the premises licence holder, Punch Taverns Limited, in relation to the variation of the premises licence. The premises licence holder and the operator of the premises, Mr Simon Mycock, would firstly like to thank you for engaging in the licensing process and for setting out your concerns in relation to the premises licence application.

Application

The application has a number of parts set out below:

1. Extension of the licensable area shown on the submitted plan to include the external area. This is to allow the use of an outside bar. In addition, the following conditions have been added in relation to this part of the variation:
 - The external bar servery will operate for the sale and supply of alcohol until 22:00 Sunday – Thursday and 23:30 Friday & Saturday.
 - When the sale of alcohol takes place within external area, regular checks of the garden will include the removal of empty glasses and bottles.
 - Whenever the external area is used for licensable activities, a sufficient number of staff members, which will be determined on a risk assessed basis, will operate, monitor and supervise the area for customer behavior and to monitor noise levels.
 - The garden bar will be supervised at all times when in use.
 - The garden bar will be inaccessible to customers when not in use to ensure they do not have access to any alcohol.
2. Extension to sale of alcohol and all regulated entertainment hours currently permitted on the licence as follows –
Sunday – Wednesday until 00:00 (currently 23:00 & 22:30 Sunday)
Thursday – Saturday until 01:00 (currently 00:00)
3. To extend late night refreshment
Thursday – Saturday until 01:00 (currently 00:00)
To add late night refreshments Sunday – Wednesday until 00:00

Additional conditions agreed with the police

During the consultation period, we have been in discussions with the police. Following these discussions the following conditions have been agreed to be added to the premises licence:



1. No glassware out the front after 9pm on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays. (for the avoidance of doubt this does not include the rear Garden)
2. For major sporting events, the DPS will risk assess the need for non-glass receptacles inside and outside as appropriate to the event.
3. For men's World Cup and Euros football tournaments, where over 250 customers are expected to attend, a minimum of two SIA doorstaff will be employed at least 1 hour prior to and 1 hour following any match shown at the premises involving the England national football team.
4. Incidents of serious crime and or serious disorder to be reported to the police and documented into the incident log with the time of report to the police included.

History of the premises

The Cricketers is a very long established pub that has had to weather significant recent challenges, firstly from Covid and then the economic downturn. Trading since then has been challenging for the premises, as it has been for pubs throughout the country. Simon and his son Edward took on the pub in February 2026. Around £50,000 was invested into the premises to bring it up to standard.

The premises currently employs 15 people. Staff are all local to the pub.

Under his stewardship the Cricketers has become a busy and successful pub again. This application was contemplated to build on that success.

World Cup

We appreciate that for anyone living near a pub, the recent World Cup has been challenging. In has been a 'perfect storm' in terms of timings of matches and the continuous hot weather.

The challenge of managing the games was exacerbated by last minute changes from the Government to the rules around pubs opening. Simon took the view early on that he would risk assess the games and put in place Temporary Event Notices to cover the additional hours needed. This was the sensible and pragmatic approach. However, with the Government introducing blanket later hours (including 2 days prior to an England match with a 1am kick off- which ended up kicking off at 2am) led to issues of people migrating between pubs and causing issues when they either couldn't get in or were turning up late and intoxicated from having been elsewhere.

Whilst it is appreciated and accepted that this has caused issues for residents, for which the operator and his team sought to minimise and deal with as best they could at the time, the tournament itself is not indicative of the ordinary operation of the Premises, or in any way a sign of what should be expected in the future. Both Punch and Simon would like to apologise for the disturbance caused during the tournament.

The next major football tournaments in 2028 and 2030 are scheduled to be held in Europe and therefore will not have the same late night issues as the World Cup just gone. You will see above that additional conditions have been agreed with the police in relation to these tournaments.

Representations

We understand that your principal concerns relate to:



- Existing noise from the pub garden, including music being audible late into the evening (we believe during the World Cup events held);
- Concerns that an extension of the permitted hours could result in additional noise and disturbance;
- Customers remaining at the premises after the expected closing time;
- Patrons leaving the premises and causing disturbance through shouting, screaming and loud conversations;
- The potential impact of these matters on the quality of life of nearby residents.

Bar in the garden

Having an external bar allows for a constant point of supervision for the pub garden whilst open. This has worked very successfully when it has been operated using Temporary Event Notices. It also prevents pinch points on sunny days around the doorways into and out of the garden.

Additional trading hours

The applicant is requesting the additional trading times predominantly to try to give more time to customers to leave when they are ready to do so. The operators have observed that currently at closing on busy nights, a large number of customers leave at closing time, some of whom are then waiting for limited taxi services, which means that groups tend to delay leaving the area and can be more likely to cause disturbance.

During the World Cup, Simon used Temporary Event Notices to extend his trading hours, not only for England match days, but also to cover days where there was no English football. This allowed him to observe that customer dispersal with the later hours was easier to manage and control, with customers drinking up more slowly and leaving in their own time. This in turn led to them leaving the area more quickly and quietly.

Without England playing in the World Cup, the premises is not ordinarily as busy later in the evening and as such, this will again reduce the likelihood of any disturbance from customers leaving.

Conclusion

The Premises Licence Holder and the operators fully appreciate that local residents are entitled to enjoy their homes without unreasonable disturbance and recognises the importance of balancing the operation of a successful community pub with the interests of those living nearby.

Both would like to assure you that it is not the intention of the proposed variation to create additional nuisance for residents- indeed the application is expected to assist in promoting the licensing objectives for the reasons set out above. The application has been submitted to provide greater flexibility in the operation of the premises and to support the long-term viability of the business, whilst continuing to promote the licensing objectives, including the prevention of public nuisance.

In response to the issues raised, the operators are committed to the following measures:

- Staff will actively monitor the external areas of the premises and remind customers to be considerate of nearby residents.
- Prominent notices will be displayed requesting patrons to leave the premises quietly and to respect neighbours.
- Any entertainment or music will be managed to ensure that noise breakout is minimised so as not to be a public nuisance.
- Staff will oversee the dispersal of customers at the end of trading and will intervene where necessary to address noisy behaviour.



- Regular reviews of the operation of the premises will be undertaken to identify and address any concerns raised by residents.

Simon is keen to maintain a positive relationship with local residents and would welcome constructive dialogue should any issues arise in the future. It is hoped that concerns can often be resolved quickly through direct communication and proactive management.

Thank you again for taking the time to submit your representation. We hope this letter reassures you that both Punch, Simon and Edward take your concerns seriously and are committed to operating the premises in a responsible manner that is respectful of its neighbours.

Yours sincerely

Piers Warne

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