

APPLICATION FOR NEW PREMISES LICENCE IN RESPECT OF 'THE ROYAL OAK HOTEL, SOUTH STREET, LEOMINSTER, HR6 8JA.' - LICENSING ACT 2003

Report By: Head Of Environmental Health And Trading Standards

Wards Affected:

Leominster

1 Purpose

To consider an application for a new premises licence in respect of 'The Royal Oak Hotel, South Street, Leominster, HR6 8JA.'

2 Background Information

Applicant	Venture Resource Ltd, Meriden House, 6 Great Cornbow, Halesowen, W.Midlands, B63 3AB.	
Solicitor	TA Matthews, 6 King Street, Hereford, HR4 9BS.	
Type of application:	Date received:	28 Days consultation:
Variation	24/01/09	20/02/09

The advertisement for the premises has been seen and has been accepted.

3 Summary of Application

The licensable activities applied for are: -

Live Music, Recorded Music, Provision of Facilities for Music and Dancing, Provision of Facilities of a similar nature, (*All Indoors*) and Sale by Retail of Alcohol – Extended Hours (On & Off premises). For the following hours: -

Monday – Thursday 09:00 – 23:30
 Friday – Saturday 09:00 – 01:30
 Sunday 09:00 – 00:00

4. The following hours have been applied for in respect of late night refreshment (*Indoors*): -

Monday – Thursday 23:00 – 23:30
 Friday – Saturday 23:00 – 01:30
 Sunday 23:00 – 00:00

5. The premises to be open to the public for a further 30 minutes after the times shown above.

6. Non Standard hours

There is an application for 'non-standard' hours in respect of all of the licensable activities: -

On Sundays before a Bank Holiday Monday the hours will be 09:00 – 01:30 with the premises closing 30 minutes later.

7. Removal of Existing Conditions

The application does not request the removal of any of the conditions shown on the licence.

8. Summary of Representations

Copies of the representations and suggested conditions can be found within the attached background papers.

West Mercia Police

West Mercia Police have made a representation and conditions have been agreed with the applicant.

Environmental Health

The Environmental Health Officer has also made a representation and recommends that the hours applied for be reduced to 01:00 hours on a Friday and Saturday with a closing time of 01:30.

They request four General Conditions, five conditions in relation to public nuisance and one condition regarding the protection of children from harm.

Fire Authority.

The fire authority has no comment to make in relation to the application.

Interested Parties.

The Local Authority has received four letters of representation in respect of the application, from interested parties.

These address all four of the Licensing Objectives.

9. Committee's Responsibility

The committee is responsible for promoting the four licensing objectives.

In determining the application with a view to promoting the licensing objectives in the overall interests of the local community, the licensing authority must give appropriate weight to:

- The steps that are necessary to promote the licensing objectives;
- The representations (including supporting information) presented by all parties;
- The Guidance issued to local authorities under Section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003;
- The Herefordshire Council Licensing Policy.

10. Options: -

It is for the committee to take such steps below as it considers necessary for the promotion of the licensing objectives:

- Grant the licence subject to conditions that are consistent with the operating schedule accompanying the application and the mandatory conditions set out in the Licensing Act 2003.
- Grant the licence subject to modified conditions to that of the operating schedule where the committee considers it necessary for the promotion of the licensing objectives and add mandatory condition set out in the Licensing Act 2003.
- To exclude from the scope of the licence any of the licensable activities to which the application relates.

- To refuse to specify a person in the licence as the premise supervisor.
- To reject the application.

11. Background Papers

- a. Application Form
- b. Letter from TA Matthews
- c. Police Comments
- d. Environmental Health & Trading Standards Comments
- e. Public Representations

Background papers are available for inspection in the Council Chamber, Brockington, 35 Hafod Road, Hereford, 30 minutes before the start of the hearing.

NOTES**RELEVANT, VEXATIOUS AND FRIVOLOUS REPRESENTATIONS**

9.8. A representation would only be “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 businessman which argued that his business would be commercially damaged by a new licensed premises would not be relevant. On the other hand, a representation that nuisance caused by the new premises would deter customers from entering the local area and the steps proposed by the applicant to control that nuisance were inadequate would be relevant. There is no requirement for an interested party or responsible authority to produce a recorded history of problems at a premises to support their representations, and in fact this would not be possible for new premises. Further information for interested parties about the process for making representations is available in “Guidance for interested parties: Making representations” which can be found on the DCMS website.

9.9 The “cumulative impact” on the licensing objectives of a concentration of multiple licensed premises may also give rise to a relevant representation when an application for the grant or variation of a premises licence is being considered, but not in relation to an application for review which must relate to an individual premises.

9.10 It is for the licensing authority to determine whether any representation by an interested party is frivolous or vexatious on the basis of what might ordinarily be considered to be vexatious or frivolous. Vexation may arise because of disputes between rival businesses and local knowledge will therefore be invaluable in considering such matters. Frivolous representations would be essentially categorised by a lack of seriousness. An interested party who is aggrieved by a rejection of their representations on these grounds may challenge the authority’s decision by way of judicial review.

9.11. Licensing authorities should not take decisions on whether representations are relevant on the basis of any political judgment. This may be difficult for ward councilors receiving 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 subcommittee before any decision is taken that necessitates a hearing. Any ward councilor who considers that their own interests are such that they are unable to consider the matter independently should disqualify themselves.

9.12 The Secretary of State recommends that in borderline cases, the benefit of the doubt should be given to the interested party making the representation. The subsequent hearing would then provide an opportunity for the person or body making the representation to amplify and clarify it. If it then emerged, for example, that the representation should not be supported, the licensing authority could decide not to take any action in respect of the application.

Licensing Authorities power to exercise substantive discretionary powers.**The British Beer and Pub Association (2) The Association of Licensed Multiple Retailers (3) The British Institute of Inn keeping V Canterbury City Council.**

Contesting the validity of the Licensing policy that asks for certain requirements before the application has been submitted. In the summing up the Judge states; The scheme of the legislation is to leave it to applicants to determine what to include in their applications, subject to the requirements of Section 17 and the Regulations as to the prescribed form and the inclusion of a statement of specified matters in the operating schedule. An applicant who makes the right judgement, so that the application gives rise to no relevant representations, is entitled to the grant of a licence without the imposition of conditions. The licensing authority has no power at all to lay down the contents of an application and has no power to assess an application, or exercise substantive discretionary powers in relation to it, unless there are relevant representations and the decision – making function under section 18 (3) is engaged.