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Application for the variation of a premises licence under the Licensing Act 2003

Report summary:

The report summarises an application for the variation of a premises licence to be considered by the sub-committee.

Is the proposed decision in accordance with:

Budget Yes No

Policy Framework Yes No

Recommendation:

That members consider an application for the variation of an existing premises licence PLWA0275 at Kilmington Cross Service Station, A35 Gammons Hill, Kilmington, Axminster EX13 7RB.

Reason for recommendation:

To comply with statutory processes.

Officer: Licensing Officer Lesley Barber, lesley.barber@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action and Emergency Response
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Council and Corporate Co-ordination
- Democracy, Transparency and Communications
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities
- Tourism, Sports, Leisure and Culture

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Low Risk;

Links to background information:

[EDDC Statement of Licensing Policy 2021-2026](#)

[Licensing Act 2003 Guidance issued under Section 182](#)

- APPENDIX A – Licensing application
- APPENDIX B – Existing licence
- APPENDIX C – Premises plan & location
- APPENDIX D – Representations received
- APPENDIX E – Responses to Notice of Hearing
- APPENDIX F – Conditions

Link to [Council Plan](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Better homes and communities for all
 - A greener East Devon
 - A resilient economy
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Report in full

1 Description of Application

- 1.1 An application has been received from Motor Fuel Limited for a variation to the current premises licence PLWA0275 at Kilmington Cross Service Station.
- 1.2 The application is provided at **APPENDIX A**.
- 1.3 The existing premises licence (PLWA0275) is provided at **APPENDIX B**.
- 1.4 The premises plan is provided at **APPENDIX C** along with a location plan. The variation does not include any changes to the premises plan.
- 1.5 The proposed variation seeks to:
 - extend the sale of alcohol for consumption OFF the premises to 24 hours each day
 - extend the opening hours of the premises to 24 hours each day
 - provide late night refreshment (23:00 - 05:00 daily)
 - amend the licence conditions
- 1.6 The current permitted hours for the sale of alcohol are:
 - Monday to Saturday 08:00 – 22:00
 - Sunday 10:00 – 22:00
- 1.7 Late night refreshment is defined within the Act as the supply of hot food or hot drink to the public between the hours of 23:00 and 05:00. Sale of hot food and/or drink outside of these hours is not a licensable activity.
- 1.8 The proposed amendments to the licence conditions are set out at Part 4 of this report and included at **APPENDIX F**.

2 Statutory Bodies' Response

- 2.1 Devon & Cornwall Police

Representation received seeking additional conditions. Agreed position reached with the applicant.

- 2.2 Devon & Somerset Fire & Rescue Service
No representations.
- 2.3 Area Child Protection Committee and Local Safeguarding Children Board
No representations.
- 2.4 Devon Trading Standards
No representations.
- 2.5 East Devon District Council, Environmental Health Service
No representations.
- 2.6 East Devon District Council, Planning & Countryside Service
No representations.
- 2.7 Primary Care Trust
No representations.
- 2.8 Home Office
No representations.

3 Representations and Responses to Notices of Hearing

- 3.1 A representations has been received from Devon & Cornwall Police, seeking the addition of further conditions. An agreement has been received between the Police and the applicant, with slight amendments being agreed on the wording of the conditions proposed by Police. Details of the agreement are included within the representations list at **APPENDIX D**.
- 3.2 Six further representations have been received, including a representation from Kilmington Parish Council. Representations are included at **APPENDIX D**.
- 3.3 Details of the responses to the statutory Notice of Hearing are attached at **APPENDIX E**.
- 3.4 The committee are asked to note two sets of responses to Notices of Hearing are included within **APPENDIX E**, due to the hearing being rescheduled at the request of the applicant's representative.

4 Proposed Operating Schedule and Mediation

- 4.1 The existing premises licence contains a number of conditions under Annexe 2. As part of this variation the applicant proposed to remove these conditions, replacing them with a number of alternative conditions.
- 4.2 The applicant has reached an agreed position with the Police who are seeking additional conditions relating to staff training, an incident book and a refusal register.
- 4.3 The existing conditions, along with the proposed conditions, including the Police agreed conditions are set out in full at **APPENDIX F**.
- 4.4 The applicant's representative has advised there has been discussion between the Licence Holder and Kilmington Parish Council. The following information has been provided:

- Our client wishes to apply for the 24/7 variation. It will, however, undertake to the Parish Council that it will not sell alcohol outside of agreed hours of 0500 to 2400 for a trial period of 6 months.
- Our client will contact the Parish Council towards the end of the 6-month period to assess the trial with a view to going 24/7.
- I also understand that there is to be work undertaken to the lighting and this formed part of the discussion with the Parish Council.

5 Relevant Licensing Policy Considerations

Licensing Objectives

5.1 Section 3.1.1 of the Policy states: 'The Licensing Authority has a duty under the Act to carry out its licensing functions with a view to promoting the four licensing objectives.'

These are:-

- The prevention of crime and disorder
- Public safety
- The prevention of public nuisance
- The protection of children from harm

5.2 Section 3.1.2 of the policy states: These objectives are the only matters to be taken into account in determining the application and any conditions attached must be appropriate in achieving the licensing objectives.

5.3 Section 3.1.3 of the Policy states: A licence will only be granted where the Licensing Authority is satisfied that these objectives have been met.

Conditions

5.4 Section 6 of the policy sets out what the Sub Committee should consider before imposing conditions on a licence.

5.5 Section 6.3 of the policy states: Generally it is recognised that the licensing function is not to be seen as a mechanism for the general control of anti-social behaviour by individuals/groups once they are beyond the direct control of the licence holder of any premises concerned. But the Licensing Authority's discretion may be engaged if relevant representations are made and there is an evidential link between the disturbance and the licensed venue.

Licensing Hours

5.6 Section 10.1 of the Policy states: The licensing authority will deal with the issue of licensing hours on the individual merits of each application. When the Authority's discretion is engaged consideration will be given to the individual merits of an application but the presumption will be to grant the hours requested unless there are objections to those hours raised by Responsible Authorities or any other person on the basis of the licensing objectives. However, when issuing a licence with hours beyond midnight higher standards of control will generally need to be included in operating schedules to promote the licensing objectives especially for premises which are situated near residential areas.

5.7 Section 10.4 of the Policy states: The terminal hours will normally be approved where the applicant can show that the proposal would not adversely affect the licensing objectives unless, after hearing relevant representation the licensing authority believe it necessary, proportionate and reasonable to restrict the hours required.

Nuisance

5.8 Section 16.1 of the Policy states: To promote the licensing objectives, applicants for licences for licensable activities will be required to demonstrate the measures they have in place for the prevention of public nuisance. The impact of the licensable activities on people living in the vicinity should not be disproportionate or unreasonable. The issues will mainly concern noise nuisance, light pollution, noxious smells and litter. The prevention of public nuisance can include low-level nuisance affecting a few people living locally as well as a major disturbance affecting the whole community. It may also include the prevention of the reduction of the living and working amenity and environment of interested parties.

6 Guidance issued under Section 182 Licensing Act 2003 (issued December 2022):

6.1 Public Nuisance

Section 2.15 of the Guidance states: The 2003 Act enables licensing authorities and responsible authorities, through representations, to consider what constitutes public nuisance and what is appropriate to prevent it in terms of conditions attached to specific premises licences and club premises certificates. It is therefore important that in considering the promotion of this licensing objective, licensing authorities and responsible authorities focus on the effect of the licensable activities at the specific premises on persons living and working (including those carrying on business) in the area around the premises which may be disproportionate and unreasonable. The issues will mainly concern noise nuisance, light pollution, noxious smells and litter.

Representations

6.2 Section 9.4 of the Guidance states: 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. 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.

6.3 Section 9.9 of the Guidance states: 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.

The Role of Responsible Authorities

6.4 Section 9.12 of the Guidance states: 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. 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.

Imposing conditions

6.5 Section 10.8 of the Guidance states: The licensing authority may not impose any conditions unless its discretion has been exercised following receipt of relevant representations and it is satisfied as a result of a hearing (unless all parties agree a hearing is not necessary) that it is appropriate to impose conditions to promote one or more of the four licensing objectives.

6.6 Section 10.9 of the Guidance states: It is possible that in some cases no additional conditions will be appropriate to promote the licensing objectives.

6.7 **Proportionality**

Section 10.10 of the Guidance states: The 2003 Act requires that licensing conditions should be tailored to the size, type, location and characteristics and activities taking place at the premises concerned. Conditions should be determined on a case-by-case basis and standardised conditions which ignore these individual aspects should be avoided.

6.8 **Hours of Trading**

Section 10.13 of the Guidance states: The Government acknowledges that different licensing strategies may be appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives in different areas. The 2003 Act gives the licensing authority power to make decisions about the hours during which premises can conduct licensable activities as part of the implementation of its licensing policy statement. Licensing authorities are best placed to make decisions about appropriate opening hours in their areas based on their local knowledge and in consultation with responsible authorities. However, licensing authorities must always consider each application and must not impose predetermined licensed opening hours, without giving individual consideration to the merits of each application.

6.9 Section 10.14 of the Guidance states: Where there are objections to an application to extend the hours during which licensable activities are to be carried on and the licensing authority determines that this would undermine the licensing objectives, it may reject the application or grant it with appropriate conditions and/or different hours from those requested.

The need for licensed premises

6.10 Section 14.19 of the Guidance states: There can be confusion about the difference between the “need” for premises and the “cumulative impact” of premises on the licensing objectives, for example, on crime and disorder. “Need” concerns the commercial demand for another pub or restaurant or hotel and is a matter for the planning authority and for the market. This is not a matter for a licensing authority in discharging its licensing functions or for its statement of licensing policy.

7. Observations

7.1 Following the implementation of the first set of regulations under the Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act on 25 April 2012 a new provision relating to the ‘test’ that Licensing Committees should consider when deciding on licensing applications was introduced. The evidential level for Licensing Committees has been lowered so that the test now is that their decisions need only be ‘appropriate’ and no longer ‘necessary’.

7.2 Although no response has been received from a number of the outstanding objectors their original written representations are to be considered by the committee (**APPENDIX D**).

7.3 The Sub Committee will now need to consider whether to grant this application as it stands or in the light of the representations to refuse the application or grant it in a different form.

Legal Advice

1. As relevant representations have been made in respect of the application, this hearing must be held. (Relevant representations are about the likely effect of the grant of the application on the promotion of the licensing objectives, by any person, bodies representing them or responsible authorities). The sub-committee must disregard any information or evidence not relevant to the licensing objectives.

2. The sub-committee must consider this application in accordance with Section 4 of the Licensing Act 2003, which requires that licensing functions must be carried out with a view to promoting the four licensing objectives. The licensing authority must also have regard to its own licensing policy and the Secretary of State's guidance, but may depart from both if it has good reason to do so. Those reasons should be stated.
3. Section 18 of the Act requires the licensing authority to grant a premises licence unless it considers additional steps are needed for the promotion of the licensing objectives having regard to any relevant representations.

The steps are:

- (a) to grant the licence subject to:
 - (i) the conditions in the operating schedule modified to such extent as members consider necessary for the promotion of the licensing objectives, and
 - (ii) any condition which must under sections 19, 20 or 21 be included in the licence;
- (b) to exclude from the scope of the licence any of the licensable activities to which the application relates
- (c) to refuse to specify a person in the licence as the premises supervisor
- (d) to reject the application.

The conditions of the licence are modified if any are altered or omitted or any new condition is added. Different conditions may be applied to different parts of the premises, and to different licensable activities. The sub-committee must give its reasons for its decision to take any of these steps. Similarly, if any part of an application is rejected, the sub-committee must give its reasons.

4. The Act requires mandatory conditions to be imposed where supplying alcohol or exhibiting films are approved as licensed activities. It also requires a mandatory condition to be imposed where door supervisors or other individuals carrying out security activities are conditions on the licence.
5. The sub-committee will need to consider the hours of operation proposed in relation to the licensable activities in the light of the promotion of the licensing objectives, the effectiveness of the operating schedule proposed by the applicant, the representations received, the location of the premises in relation to residential and other commercial properties including other licensed premises, the history of the management of the premises and how it is proposed to be run in the future, the evidence produced of any problems in the past, and the likely impact of any extension of hours and activities. These issues, and any other relevant ones, may be explored at the hearing.

6. Human Rights Act 1998

- 6.1 The sub-committee must also have regard to the provisions of the Human Rights Act 1998 when determining this application. The 1998 Act made the European Convention of Human Rights directly enforceable in British courts. The relevant provisions are Article 6 (right to a fair trial), Article 8 (right to respect for private and family life), Article 11 (freedom of association) and Article 1 of the First Protocol (right to peaceful enjoyment of one's possessions). These provisions are explained below. Essentially, they require the sub-committee to identify correctly the competing interests, give each appropriate weight in the circumstances of the case, and balance them against each other in order to arrive at a fair and reasonable decision.

- 6.2 Under Article 6, "everyone is entitled to a fair and public hearing within a reasonable time by an independent and impartial tribunal established by law". The procedures established by this Council for hearings under the Licensing Act 2003 are compliant with Article 6.

- 6.3 Under Article 8, “everyone has the right to respect for his private and family life, his home and his correspondence”. This right may not be interfered with except in accordance with the law and as may be “necessary in a democratic society in the interests of national security, public safety or the economic well-being of the country, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others”. In Licensing Act cases this means that the sub-committee must have regard to the effect of its decisions on local residents, and balance their interests against those of the public at large (e.g. the customers of the premises under consideration) and the people operating the business from the premises.
- 6.4 Under Article 11, “everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and to freedom of association with others” except where it is lawful to restrict that freedom in the interests of national security or public safety, for the prevention of disorder or crime, for the protection of health or morals or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others”. In Licensing Act cases this means, for example, that the sub-committee is entitled to impose conditions to ensure that patrons of licensed premises do not unreasonably disturb others living or working nearby. Again, the sub-committee should balance the competing interests.
- 6.5 Article 1 of the First Protocol (that is, the first amendment to the Convention) says that every natural or legal person (meaning a human being or a company) is entitled to peaceful enjoyment of his possessions, except where the law provides for restrictions on that right in the public interest. This means, for example, that it is compliant with the Convention to impose restrictions, such as those provided in the Licensing Act 2003, upon business premises where it is in the public interest to do so. On the other hand the same applies to the owners and occupiers of neighbouring premises.

7. Appeals

If the sub-committee imposes conditions on the licence with which the applicant disagrees, or modifies the licensable activities permitted or refuses to specify a person as a designated premises supervisor, he or she may appeal within 21 days of notification of the decision to the Magistrates’ Court. The applicant may also appeal if an application for a premises licence is rejected. Those making relevant representations may appeal if they believe that the licence should not have been granted, or that, when granting the licence, the licensing authority ought to have imposed different or additional conditions or excluded a licensable activity or refused to specify a person as designated premises supervisor. The magistrates’ court may dismiss the appeal, or substitute its own decision, or send back the case to the licensing authority with directions as to how the case is to be dealt with. The magistrates’ court may make any costs order it thinks fit.

8. Review Provisions

If extended hours/licensable activities are granted, the Licensing Act contains review provisions which enable any person, bodies representing them or any of the responsible authorities to apply to this licensing authority for a review of the licence. A hearing follows which enables the sub-committee to use the normal powers at a hearing (set out above) but also to suspend the licence for a period of up to three months or to revoke it.

9. Police Closure

A senior police officer may close any premises for 24 hours (this can be extended) where s/he reasonably believes there is or is likely imminently to be disorder on, or in or in the vicinity of the premises and their closure is necessary in the interests of public safety. Closure can also be affected if public nuisance is being caused by noise coming from the premises and closure of the premises is necessary to prevent that nuisance

10. Surveillance Camera Code of Guidance-June 2013

Where a relevant authority has licensing functions and considers the use of surveillance camera systems as part of the conditions attached to a licence or certificate, it must in particular have regard to guiding principle one in this code. Any proposed imposition of a blanket requirement to attach surveillance camera conditions as part of the conditions attached to a licence or certificate is likely to give rise to concerns about the proportionality of such an approach and will require an appropriately strong justification and must be kept under regular review. Applications in relation to licensed premises must take into account the circumstances surrounding that application and whether a requirement to have a surveillance camera system is appropriate in that particular case. For example, it is unlikely that a trouble-free community pub would present a pressing need such that a surveillance camera condition would be justified. In such circumstances where a licence or certificate is granted subject to surveillance camera system conditions, the consideration of all other guiding principles in this code is a matter for the licensee as the system operator.

Guiding principle one states:

Use of a surveillance camera system must always be for a specified purpose which is in pursuit of a legitimate aim and necessary to meet an identified pressing need.

Legitimate aim and necessity are considered in relation to the four licensing objectives which are set out elsewhere within this report if the Committee is considering conditioning any premises licence with the installation of a CCTV surveillance system.

Financial implications:

The only financial implication is if the applicant appeals against the decision made, with the possibility of court costs.

Legal implications:

Legal implications are included within the report.