

Manchester City Council

Report for Resolution

Report to: Licensing Subcommittee Hearing Panel – 30 May 2023

Subject: Didsbury Sports Ground, Ford Lane, Manchester, M20 2RU - App
ref: Premises Licence variation 286663

Report of: Director of Planning, Building Control & Licensing

Summary

Application for the variation of a premises licence which has attracted objections.

Recommendations

That the Committee determine the application.

Wards Affected: Didsbury West

Manchester Strategy Outcomes	Summary of the contribution to the strategy
A thriving and sustainable City: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Licensed premises provide a key role as an employer, in regeneration, and in attracting people to the city. The efficient processing of applications as well as effective decision making in respect of them, plays an essential role in enabling businesses to thrive and maximise contribution to the economy of the region and sub-region.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	An effective Licensing Policy and implementation will enable growth in our City by supporting businesses who promote the Licensing Objectives.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	The Licensing process provides for local residents and other interested parties to make representations in relation to licensing applications. Representations have to be directly related to the licensing objectives.
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit and work.	An effective licensing system supports and enables growth and employment in our City with neighbourhoods that provide amenities suitable to the surrounding communities.

A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	
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Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

Equal Opportunities Policy
Risk Management
Legal Considerations

Financial Consequences – Revenue

None

Financial Consequences – Capital

None

Contact Officers:

Name: Fraser Swift
Position: Principal Licensing Officer
Telephone: 0161 234 1176
E-mail: fraser.swift@manchester.gov.uk

Name: Patrick Ware
Position: Technical Licensing Officer
Telephone: 0161 234 4858
E-mail: premises.licensing@manchester.gov.uk

Background documents (available for public inspection):

- Manchester City Council Statement of Licensing Policy.
- Guidance issued under section 182 of the Licensing Act 2003.
- Any further documentary submissions by any party to the hearing

1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 On 04/04/2023, an application for the variation of an existing Premises Licence under s34 of the Licensing Act 2003 was made in respect of Didsbury Sports Ground, Ford Lane, Manchester, M20 2RU in the Didsbury West ward of Manchester. A location map of the premises is attached at **Appendix 1**.
- 1.2 A 28-day public consultation exercise was undertaken in accordance with Licensing Act 2003 regulations; requiring the application to be advertised by the displaying of a blue notice at or on the premises, a notice published in a newspaper or similar circulating in the local area, and details of the application published on the Council's website.
- 1.3 Representations may be made for or against an application during the consultation period. To be 'relevant' and, therefore, able to be taken into account in determining the application, they must be about the likely effect of the grant of the premises licence on the promotion of the licensing objectives. Where representations are made by persons who are not a responsible authority, they must not be frivolous or vexatious.
- 1.4 Relevant representations have been received in respect of this application and so it must be determined by a Licensing Hearing Panel in accordance with the Council's Constitution.

2. **Current Licence**

- 2.1 The premises licence holder is Didsbury Sports Ground Limited and a copy of the current licence is attached at **Appendix 2**.

3. **The Application**

- 3.1 A copy of the application is attached at **Appendix 3**.

- 3.2 The variation is to

The proposed variation is to extend the current permissions for licensable activity, to allow for one annual outdoor public event to be held on the playing fields of Didsbury Sports Ground during Summer months.

The application is for one annual event only in May, June or July. There are no other changes to current licence.

The permission will cover the 1st band of attendances up to a 4999 capacity.

Permission for the following licensable activities; - the sale or supply of alcohol - the provision of regulated entertainment.

The current premises license allows for the above activities, within the clubhouse only.

It is requested that those existing permissions are maintained; with the additional variation to approve sale of alcohol and provision of entertainment from 11:00 to 23:00 outdoors.

Alcohol is to be consumed on the premises only. Events are subject to provision of detailed Event Management Plans and ultimate sign-off by local authority departments and joint agencies via SAG meetings.

Organisers are committed to engaging local residents, neighbouring organisations and ensuring that events are professionally operated, safe and well-managed.

Proposed hours and licensable activities (timings for outdoor area are in addition to those already permitted indoors):

Provision of regulated entertainment (live music, recorded music) (to take place outdoors):

Current hours: Not applicable

Proposed hours: Mon 11am to 9pm, Fri to Sun 11am to 11pm

Provision of regulated entertainment (performances of dance) (to take place outdoors):

Current hours: Not applicable

Proposed hours: Mon 12 noon to 9pm, Fri to Sun 12 noon to 11pm

Supply of alcohol for consumption on the premises only:

Current hours: Not applicable

Proposed hours: Mon 12 noon to 9pm, Fri to Sun 12 noon to 11pm

Opening hours:

Current hours: Not applicable

Proposed hours: Mon 11am to 9pm, Fri to Sun 11am to 11pm

3.2.1 In accordance with the Live Music Act 2012 and Deregulation Act 2015, performances of Live Music and Recorded Music between the hours of 0800 and 2300 hours have been deregulated and so should not be regarded as licensable activities for the purposes of this application.

3.2.2 Any further details provided relating to any of the individual licensable activities are specified on the application form at **Appendix 3**.

3.3 **Activities unsuitable for children**

3.3.1 The applicant has not highlighted any adult entertainment or services, activities, other entertainment or matters ancillary to the use of the premises that may give rise to concern in respect of children.

3.4 **Steps to promote the licensing objectives**

3.4.1 The applicant proposes to promote the licensing objectives by taking the steps identified in the operating schedule.

3.4.2 These steps must be translated into conditions by the licensing authority to be included in any granted premises licence, unless the conditions are modified by the Panel following consideration of relevant representations. These conditions are set out in the Schedule of Conditions at **Appendix 6**.

3.5 **Further documentation accompanying the application**

3.5.1 The applicant has submitted the following documents in support of their application, which are included with the application form at **Appendix 4**:

- Plan of the premises

4. **Relevant Representations**

4.1 A total of 46 relevant representations were received in respect of the application (**Appendix 5**). The personal details of all members of the public have been redacted. Original copies of these representation will be available to the Committee at the hearing.

Responsible Authorities:

- MCC Licensing and Out of Hours Compliance Team;

Other Persons:

- Northenden & Didsbury West Ward Councillors (4);
- Residents (40).

4.2 Summary of the representations: AMEND AS NECESSARY

Party	Grounds of representation	Recommends
Licensing and Out of Hours Compliance	Concerns regarding the Prevention of Public Nuisance Licensing Objective with particular regard to noise disturbance to nearby neighbours and litter. Complaints have been received over the past year regarding loud music from the clubhouse and there are concerns that expansion of activities to the outside area without an Event Management Plan could exacerbate this	Refuse

	<p>problem. There are also concerns regarding the lack of clarity in what is being applied for.</p>	
<p>Northenden & Didsbury West Ward Councillors</p>	<p>Concerns regarding access to the site down the narrow Ford Lane; potential noise nuisance to nearby residential properties; the suitability of the location for a large event; site security; nuisance from large numbers of vehicles accessing the site and parking; and the management of numbers attending the event.</p>	<p>Refuse</p>
<p>Residents (x38)</p>	<p>The Prevention of Crime and Disorder: Concerns regarding large crowds arriving and leaving the site with a likelihood of drunk and disorderly behaviour; damage to vehicles and front gardens; public urination; and littering.</p> <p>Public Safety: Concerns about the access road not being suitable to cope with large numbers of vehicles and people arriving and leaving leading to people congregating in the roads of the neighbourhood; lack of two way access for vehicles; and the safety of pedestrians.</p> <p>The Prevention of Public Nuisance: Concerns about noise from the event being heard in nearby properties; noise from revellers who may have been drinking; and the lateness of the proposed terminal hour and the associated disturbance.</p> <p>The Protection of Children from Harm: Concerns that large crowds would put children at risk, especially if they met a large group who have been drinking; and the potential for inappropriate language from</p>	<p>Refuse</p>

	drunken customers	
Residents in support (x2)	Assertion that the grant of the application would help to keep the sports ground viable and that it is an asset to the area.	Grant

4.3 Any conditions proposed by objectors are set out in the Schedule of Conditions at **Appendix 6**.

4.4 No agreements on conditions have been reached with objectors.

5. **Key Policies and Considerations**

5.1 **Legal Considerations**

5.1.1 Hearings under the Licensing Act 2003 operate under the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005.

5.2 **New Information**

5.2.1 In accordance with Regulation 18 of the Licensing Act 2003 (Hearings) Regulations 2005, the authority may take into account documentary or other information produced by a party in support of their application, representations or notice either before the hearing or, with the consent of all parties, at the hearing.

5.3 **Hearsay Evidence**

5.3.1 The Panel may accept hearsay evidence and it will be a matter for the Panel to attach what weight to it that they consider appropriate. Hearsay evidence is evidence of something that a witness neither saw nor heard, but has heard or read about.

5.4 **The Secretary of State's Guidance to the Licensing Act 2003**

5.4.1 The Secretary of State's Guidance to the Licensing Act 2003 is provided for all parties involved in licensing. It is a key medium for promoting best practice, ensuring consistent application of licensing powers across England and Wales and for promoting fairness, equal treatment and proportionality.

5.4.2 Section 4 of the 2003 Act provides that, in carrying out its functions, a licensing authority must 'have regard to' guidance issued by the Secretary of State under section 182. The Guidance is therefore binding on all licensing authorities to that extent. However, the Guidance cannot anticipate every possible scenario or set of circumstances that may arise and, as long as licensing authorities have properly understood this Guidance, they may depart from it if they have good reason to do so and can provide full reasons.

5.4.3 Departure from the Guidance could give rise to an appeal or judicial review, and the reasons given will then be a key consideration for the courts when considering the lawfulness and merits of any decision taken.

5.5 **Manchester Statement of Licensing Policy**

5.5.1 Section 4 of the 2003 Act provides that, in carrying out its functions, a licensing authority must 'have regard to' its statement of licensing policy.

5.5.2 The Licensing Policy sets out the vision the licensing authority has for the regulation of licensed premises throughout Manchester and outlines the standards expected in order to ensure the promotion of the licensing objectives in the city. The Panel may depart from the policies should it consider doing so would benefit the promotion of the licensing objectives. Reasons are to be given for any such departure from the Policy.

5.5.3 Section 4 of the Policy (Operation of the Policy) sets out how the Licensing Policy is intended to be used in practice for licence applications and licensed premises.

5.5.4 Relevant to this application and the grounds of the representations made, the Panel are recommended to have regard to the following sections of the Policy:

Section 6: What we aim to encourage

This section identifies certain types of venues and initiatives the licensing authority aims to encourage in order to promote an inclusive evening and night-time economy not simply focused on the consumption of alcohol. We aim to encourage:

- Premises that will extend the diversity of entertainment and attract a wider range of participants
- Live music, especially original material, which will provide a range of live performances and styles of music, provided that such entertainment does not undermine the licensing objectives
- National cultural institutions, global sports events and cultural festivals
- Non-drink-led premises, including restaurants, cafes, theatres and cinemas
- Communication and integration with local residents and businesses through licensees consulting with those in the local area prior to an application
- Participation in Pubwatches, off licence forums and other crime-reduction partnerships
- Engagement with the NITENET radio scheme and DISC secure information sharing platform by city centre venues through the Cityco Manchester Business Crime Reduction Partnership
- Designing out crime in the layout of the premises

Section 7: Local factors

This section sets out key issues that applicants are expected to take into account relevant to the individual characteristics of the premises when

preparing their operating schedule and address any local factors relevant to their premises.

Having regard to the grounds of the representations made, the Panel are recommended to have regard to the following Factors:

- Evidence of pre-existing problems in the area
- The proximity of the premises to local residents and other local businesses, particularly in relation to the potential for nuisance
- The availability of transport to and from the premises
- Ability to clean and maintain the street scene

Section 8: Manchester's standards to promote the licensing objectives

This section identifies the standards that the licensing authority expects of licensed premises in Manchester. It is recognised that not all standards will be appropriate to apply in every situation to every premises, and applicants are not obliged to include all standards in their operating schedule. The degree to which standards would be appropriate is expected to be proportionate to the risk posed against the promotion of the licensing objectives having regard to the individual circumstances of the premises. The standards are not exhaustive and the licensing authority will have regard to any relevant issues raised in any representation that may fall outside them.

- MS1 Implement effective security measures at the premises
- MS2 Effective general management of the premises
- MS8 Prevent noise nuisance from the premises
- MS9 Effectively manage exterior spaces (e.g. beer gardens, smoking areas, table and chair areas on the highway)
- MS10 Operate effective cleansing arrangements, including ensuring the premises and surrounding area are kept clean and free of litter, and adequate arrangements for the secure and responsible storage of refuse
- MS11 Ensure the wellbeing of children on the premises
- MS12 Prevent underage sales of alcohol, including proxy sales

Section 12: Premises Licences for large-scale public events

This section sets out particular expectations regarding large scale public events, given the specific associated risks.

6. Conclusion

6.1 A licensing authority must carry out its functions under this Act ("licensing functions") with a view to promoting the licensing objectives:

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

6.2 In considering the matter, the Panel 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. In reaching the decision, regard must also

be had to relevant provisions of the national guidance and the Council's licensing policy statement.

- 6.3 The Panel must take such of the steps set out below that it considers appropriate for the promotion of the licensing objectives:
 - a) To grant the licence subject to the conditions consistent with the operating schedule accompanying the application, which the Panel may modify to such extent as they consider appropriate;
 - b) To reject the whole or part of the application
- 6.4 The conditions consistent with the operating schedule may be modified to alter or omit any of them or to add any new condition, including restricting the times at which licensable activities authorised by the licence can take place.
- 6.5 However, conditions should not be imposed on a licence which are unrelated to the variation sought.
- 6.6 All licensing determinations should be considered on the individual merits of the application.
- 6.7 The Panel'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. Findings on any issues of fact should be on the balance of probability.
- 6.8 It is important that a licensing authority should give comprehensive reasons for its decisions in anticipation of any appeals. Failure to give adequate reasons could itself give rise to grounds for an appeal.
- 6.9 **The Panel is asked to determine the application.**