

APPENDIX A - Statement from applicant about variation

I am seeking to extend the current licensing hours from closure at 20:00 to 22:00 hours on every day of the week. We would like to persuade you that we are an extremely responsible retailer of alcoholic products and our drinks are high end, craft products and so do not appeal to anyone seeking to drink on the streets, we feel strongly that by requesting this extension of hours we would not add to any additional stress on the special area which we are a part of and so this exceptional request to be granted permanently extended hours should be given.

Additionally, Currently, the licence states that we cannot sell any single cans of beer. Whilst I can agree on paper, it looks as though this is a good idea to curb any potential street drinking, my view is that it is unnecessary in view of my particular premises as we do not have any problems with street drinking and I'd like to explain why.

I raise the following supporting points but first acknowledge council and police concerns surrounding alcohol abuse and 'street drinking' where high strength beer and cider is being consumed. In no way do we want to burden these realities.

The type of product that is potentially being used and abused and which provides the catalyst for anti-social behaviour is not a product type we stock or have any intention of stocking. There are some clear differences around the 'craft' beers we currently sell in can and other mass produced canned alcoholic products – regardless of how many cans we sell. There are also clear differences in the types of consumers.

1. The type of products we sell

Small production, organic, biodynamic and sustainable, eco wines. These wines range in price from £8 - 185.00 the sort of customer seeking to cause trouble is not someone who comes into the shop to buy our wine.

Craft beer production predominantly concerns ales – pale ales, bitters, Indian pale ales, stouts etc. An ale and a lager differ but both fall under the moniker of 'beer', though they are made differently, resulting in a different end product. An ale (or craft beer) houses more aroma, flavour and variability of style for the consumer. To enjoy properly the customer needs to pour into a glass, it is not meant to be drunk from the can or bottle. To do so would also be a waste of money for what is a premium priced product.

Mass produced canned lagers (or cider for that matter) would more likely be present where there is outdoor drinking and / or anti-social behaviour taking place as they are readily consumed from the can. We do not sell any of these products at all.

As it stands we sell approximately 150 speciality bottled and canned ales (or beers as people refer to them) most of which are in 330ml formats.

2. Price

This is a key point. Craft beer cans are 330ml and 440ml n size (or 335ml if a US imported beer). The price will be in the region of £3 to in excess of £5 or £6 for a higher ABV product or if it's a limited edition beer or if they are a very small micro-brewery soaking up greater overheads.

An example product we currently sell is an ale called Clawtrack from a brewery called Buxton. This comes in a 440ml can and costs £5.05 per can.

Surely an individual drinking with the intention to become intoxicated and drinking in the street will take the cheapest route to achieve that. These beers are not made to be consumed from the can. They are artisanal products, meant to be consumed in the right way, from the correct glassware, at the right temperature, and certainly not directly from a can.

We have customers in our shop being forced to buy two products with a high average price despite only wanting to buy one can to be consumed at home. I hope you can recognise the difference between our products and an ordinary off-licence selling cheap mass produced beers.

3. Consumer audience

Over the past 6 or 7 years the UK craft beer market has boomed and in the past year or so many breweries through a combination of production economics and consumer desire have started to can their product. Many speciality beers that breweries first bottled are now canned.

From experience I have worked in the industry for the past 7 years and the buying audience for these premium priced speciality products are predominantly, though by no means exclusively, males in their mid-twenties to 40 yrs and upwards with some disposable income and whom you might say

are relatively affluent. They are buying these products to consume at home or at a friend's; much like you would a decent bottle of wine. It is wholly insufficient to insist these people buy more than one can of beer when they are in the shop, and looking to enjoy the product at home after a long day at work. Insisting on them buying 2 cans is very annoying to the customer when they are buying one can as a treat.

To summarise, we are wholly committed to selling every single product we stock in a responsible manner and by no means are we interested in selling what I honestly view as poor quality products for consumption on the street. The current stipulations around purchasing more than one canned products is making life difficult for us and I believe unnecessarily so. There are absolutely no macro canned products in the shop. There is not one single can of Carling, fosters, Stella, and certainly nothing that can be described as a "scrumpy-jack style canned super strength cider". We simply don't sell it. We will never sell these "macro products".

It's not the quantity of cans that should be the focus here but acknowledgement of the contrast in products we sell as opposed to a pile it high, sell it cheap off-licence and the different markets they appeal to.

We are a small business and it's a critical time for us. Having received an overwhelmingly positive response from the local community our outlook is focused on quality over quantity and with that goes responsible drinking.