

7 March 2021

Dear Sir/Madam

APPLICATION FOR A PREMISES LICENCE STORE/POST OFFICE AT 8 MAIN AVENUE, MOOR PARK.

I hope you are keeping safe and well.

I am contacting you on behalf of my client, Mr Sasikumar Rathinasingam (known as Sasi) in respect of the above application.

The Council have sent me a copy of your recent representations and I thought I would contact you to outline this application further, and to explain the steps that would be taken by the shop to promote the licensing objectives. Hopefully we may be able to reach a suitable compromise in this matter.

As you know, this is a well-established shop and post office serving the the local community selling a range of goods including, bread, milk, sweets, snacks, dairy goods, cigarettes, soft drinks, household goods etc, and offering the usual office services.

The focus of the shop will continue as a general convenience store and post office. The proposed alcohol sales would just be a part of the overall business to help it develop and offer customers an improved convenience service. Sasi is keen to co-operate and work with the local community and he doesn't want to cause any problems in the area. He is a responsible person with plenty of retail experience and he knows how to run licensed convenience stores.

Please note that after considering the views of the community, Sasi has decided to reduce the proposed times for alcohol sales to 8am to 8pm daily.

The shop would open at 6am for the sale of other goods including newspapers, and would close at 8pm. The shop would then like to open for just an hour later until 9pm on various 'special' days such as New Years Eve, Christmas Eve, and bank holidays - again to offer/provide a good service.

The Post Office is of course a valuable asset to the local community and that will continue here. Sasi has taken over the business (including the Post office part) and he plans on extending the opening hours for the Post Office to provide a better service - the Post Office would be open when the shop is open. I understand that the Post Office may have previously just been open for around 4 hours a day.

The licence application includes a document called an Operating Schedule. This is a really important document submitted by an applicant which outlines the steps to be taken at the shop to promote the licensing objectives. Each of the steps on an operating schedule become legally enforceable licence conditions should the application be approved. The shop would sell alcohol in a responsible manner and the proposals for this shop are pretty comprehensive including;

A good quality CCTV camera system covering the inside and the area immediately outside the shop;

the challenge 25 under age policy to ensure that no one under 18 is able to buy alcohol,;

a strict alcohol refusals policy;

regular staff training;

staff to monitor outside the shop to check that youths aren't congregating causing a nuisance;

staff to check for and dispose of any litter from the shop.

Every new licence application involves an extensive consultation exercise carried out by the Council with the responsible authorities including the Police, the Councils Licensing Authority, Trading Standards, Environmental Health, Public Health, Child Protection, Planning, etc

All of these authorities have assessed this application and none of them have submitted any representations – they are all satisfied that the application can be granted.

In particular, the Police are crucial in terms of new licence applications as they are the Council's main source of information regarding local crime and disorder. The Police are satisfied that this application would not impact on crime and disorder, and that the licence can be granted. We spoke to the Police in advance of submitting the application and they were fine with this shop being granted a licence.

Many of the representations from local residents refer to the initial proposed closing time of 11pm, saying that this could lead to the increased likelihood of trouble, noise and general anti social behaviour in the area. The new proposed closing time of 8pm should hopefully alleviate these concerns and I can assure you that Sasi will do everything within his control to ensure that the shop continues to run well and not cause any problems for the local community.

I understand that there is a nearby shop selling alcohol and that their licence allows alcohol sales Monday to Saturday 8am to 11pm, and 10am to 10.30pm on Sundays (although I am aware that it closes earlier at around 6 to 7pm). However, please note that the 'need' for licensed premises isn't something that can be taken into account under the Licensing Act 2003.

Licensed premises are very well-regulated and they must, by law, promote the licensing objectives or they can have action taken against them. This includes prosecution, a licence review, losing the licence - the Police and the Council will target any 'problem premises' and can take action against them. So if this shop (or indeed any licensed premises) ever caused a problem with a licence then action can be taken. This allows the well-run shops to continue trading whilst problem premises can lose their licence.

The shop has a till system which prompts staff to check the age of anyone trying to purchase an age-restricted product. This would include alcohol, plus other goods such as cigarettes, etc. Anyone underage will not be able to purchase alcohol (or other age restricted goods) from this shop.

I hope the above information is helpful and informative and I ask you to consider the matter further. If you are agreeable to the updated hours, I would be grateful if you could let me know (and also please let the Council know).

Please give the shop a chance to demonstrate that it will continue to be well run - with a licence - and not cause any problems. I'd be happy to speak to you on the phone about this matter - please call me on the number below if you would like to discuss anything about this application.

I look forward to hearing from you and please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries.

Yours sincerely

JL Licence and Retail