

Before the London Borough of Haringey's

Licensing Sub-Committee

Victoria Stakes

1 Muswell Hill, London N10 3TH

**1st WITNESS STATEMENT OF JAMES WATSON
ON BEHALF OF PREMISES LICENCE HOLDER**

1. I am the Finance Director of Premium Pubs 1 Ltd ("Premium"), the premises licence holder of The Victoria Stakes, 1 Muswell Hill, London N10 3TH (the "Premises"). Premium is principally owned by myself, my business partner Mr Peter McDonald and Mr Lewis Johnson. Mr McDonald would usually provide a witness statement as the Designated Premises Supervisor as well but, due to hospital commitments, he is unable to attend the licensing sub-committee hearing. I have read the review application of Ms Oonagh Shiel (the "Applicant"). Rather than repeat the observations in the witness statement of Lewis Johnson or the written submissions, this statement focuses upon the financial implications of adopting the entirety of the Applicant's requests.
2. The steps already carried out by Lewis Johnson and the further conditions proffered will have a financial impact on the business (as will, of course, the legal and professional fees incurred). That said, they are expenses which the business can (hopefully) absorb whilst staying solvent. As explained in the written submissions, it is financially crucial is to preserve the ability to have private functions in the backyard and first floor room in essentially the same form. This income makes up around a third of the total income of the business. The impact of cutting the hours of the backyard is more difficult to assess, but I would estimate that, even having to close an hour earlier would reduce turnover by £100,000 per annum, and at a time when the site is not current profit-making, this would be devastating.
3. In my opinion, Lewis Johnson and his staff have behaved in a professional manner and have done what they can to address the Applicant's concerns given that attempts to engage

further, until very recently, have been rebuffed. It is accepted that there have been occasional oversights, for example lights being left on, but given that the Applicant lives check-by-jowl to a pub which has existed for well over a hundred years I consider that any disturbance has been kept to a minimum.

4. I note that Lewis Johnson made numerous attempts to speak with the Applicant in person over the past few months before the review application was made. Had such a meeting, or meetings, taken place I believe that many of the Applicant's concerns could have been addressed and this review potentially avoided. That said, I am pleased that a Teams meeting took place just after Christmas between the Applicant, Councillor Brennan, our solicitor and Lewis Johnson. I look forward to seeing her comments on the proposed measures to be taken. Some of the requests made (for example boundary security improvements and fencing) potentially benefit both parties but are difficult discussions to have before a licensing sub-committee which has not necessarily been to the site and must make decisions in a legally enforceable way. For example, a condition cannot be added to the premises licence simply saying: 'boundary security improvements to be made' or 'fencing to be erected'.

5. I will be attending the hearing on 15 January 2026 to further assist the sub-committee.

STATEMENT OF TRUTH

I believe that the facts stated in this witness statement are true. I understand that proceedings for contempt of court may be brought against anyone who makes, or causes to be made, a false statement in a document verified by a statement of truth without an honest belief in its truth.

Signed:



James Watson

Dated: 05/01/26