



East Cambridgeshire District Council

Minutes of a Meeting of the Licensing (Statutory) Sub Committee

Held at The Grange, Nutholt Lane, Ely, CB7 4EE at 2:00 pm on Thursday 6 November 2025

Present

Councillor Lee Denney
Councillor Keith Horgan (Chair)
Councillor Julia Huffer

Officers

Maggie Camp – Director Legal & Monitoring Officer
Stewart Broome – Licensing Manager
Patrick Adams – Senior Democratic Services Officer
John-Paul Stephens – Licensing Administration Assistant (observing only)
Joe Barton – Licensing Administration Assistant (observing only)
Maddy Johnson – Licensing Administration Assistant (observing only)

Others present

Peter Conisbee (Director of PC Licensing Consultancy)
Duncan Craig (Applicant's legal representative)
Douglas Durrant (Applicant)
Richard Peters (Objector)

9. Apologies and Substitutions

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Charlotte Cane and Cllr Lavinia Edwards. Cllr Lee Denney substituted for Cllr Cane and Cllr Julia Huffer substituted for Cllr Edwards.

10. Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

11. Determination of an Application for a Variation of a Premises Licence at Land South of Franks Farm, Lode Fen, Lode

The Chair explained the procedure to be followed at the meeting and introduced the officers and members present.

The Licensing Manager presented the report, AA86, previously circulated, which invited the Sub-Committee to determine an application to vary a premises licence submitted by Lodestar Events Ltd in respect of TR Events, on land south of Franks Farm, Lode Fen, Lode.

The Licensing Manager reported that events had been held at the location for the last 20 years, with the number of attendees varying from a few hundred to 5,000. The current licence allowed events for four days in the winter at the venue for up to 5,000 customers. The application for a variation to the premises licence under section 17 of the Licensing Act 2003 was received on 22nd September 2025, to allow events to be held all year round and not just during the Christmas period. The application would also allow longer operating hours and more flexibility regarding the location of the stage on the site. Full details of the proposed variations were listed on page 7 of the agenda.

Additional papers had been sent to the Members of the Licensing Panel, which included the Event Management Plan, an incident report, a response to the mediation letter from the objector Mr Richard Peters, a response to the mediation letter from Thomas Pellegrini and a letter supporting the application from Phillip Robinson.

The Licensing Manager reported that during the consultation period no representations had been received from any of the responsible authorities and two valid objections had been received.

The Licensing Manager explained that the application had to be determined according to the following four licensing objectives:

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

It was noted that the applicant had the right to appeal the decision to the magistrates.

Members of the Panel asked the Licensing Manager questions and received the following responses:

- Usually if an event exceeded 500 attendees a Safety Advisory Group would be convened and they could then request a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) to manage the additional traffic.
- In the experience of the Licensing Manager, the applicant had been a responsible organiser of events.
- There had been an issue with traffic management for the event held on 15th December 2023 and lessons had been learnt.

Duncan Craig, the applicant's legal representative, addressed the Committee and made the following points:

Reasons for variation

- The proposal of the application was to spread the events throughout the year instead of over a five to six week period.
- Research showed that events held over a wider period of time were less intrusive than those held over a shorter period.

- The request for an extension of hours would allow the event to wind down and noise would be carefully monitored.
- The music's bass frequency would be reduced at midnight.

Mitigation

- A number of restrictions would be put in place, including event management plans, noise measurement and traffic management.
- A comprehensive event management plan was in place, addressing child safety, health and safety, noise control and traffic management.

Consultation

- Responsible authorities were experts in their particular field and they had not reported any concerns regarding this application.
- Highways were not a responsible authority but will be consulted.
- The application had been properly advertised and the request by the Licensing Officer for additional notices, in excess of the regulations, had been complied with.
- Only two objections had been received.
- Any commercially motivated objections were not relevant under licensing law.

In response to questions from Members of the Panel, the applicant and his representatives stated that:

Reasons for variation

- The purpose of the application was to give more commercial flexibility by having events throughout the year and not just at Christmas time.
- The stage was approximately half a mile from the nearest residential property.

Noise

- Whilst sound could be more of a nuisance in summer as residents were more likely to have their windows open, noise mitigation measures would be put in place.
- A festival had been held in August and the applicant's team understood that no noise complaints had been made to environmental health regarding this or any other event.
- Noise would be monitored every 30 minutes and loudspeakers would be directed towards the customers, not residents and adjusted for wind.
- Noise was monitored in multiple locations, including the entrance and the edge of the village, by a handheld device and digitally recorded.

Traffic

- There had been issues with traffic management in 2023, with cars stopping at the entrance and backing up onto the roads but lessons had been learnt from this and there had been no issues the following year.
- Lessons learnt included the introduction of a new roadway and letting traffic into the site before directing vehicles into parking places, which kept the roads clear.
- There had been three events in 2024 and traffic flow had been continuous for all events.
- The applicant did not accept the view of an objector that he had been stuck on his driveway for three hours during one of the events in 2024.

- More people arriving by bus from a Park and Ride site would also reduce the amount of traffic.
- It was expected that a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) would come into effect if there were more than 3,500 customers.
- If the Highways Agency and Safety Advisory Group stated that the event needed a TTRO and one was not in place, the event would have to be cancelled.
- The licensable events were ticketed and so the number of attendees would be controlled.

Consultation

- In future the parish council would be notified of events.
- Reference to amplified music ending at 2 am on page 38 of the draft Event Management Plan was a mistake, it should be 1:30 am.
- The draft Event Management Plan would be circulated to the Safety Advisory Group 14 days before the event and then finalised 7 days before the event.
- The incident report form needed to be amended to include a place for the date.
- Mediation had been attempted but it had become clear that no point of agreement with the objectors could be reached.

Mr Richard Peters made the following points as an objector:

Consultation

- The TR Events site at Quay Mill was a more suitable location for these events.
- Most people in Lode were unaware of this application.
- It was untrue to claim that there had been no complaints about the events held on the site.
- He and others had complained about the traffic and the noise.
- He had complained to Highways who had said that they were aware of traffic issues but that there was no mandatory requirement for them to be consulted.
- The distance between the closest property and the edge of the site was 240 metres and to the stage was 400 metres.

Traffic

- Lode had no through roads, it was a dead end with one road in and out.
- The road leading up to the site only had a single lane and people's private driveways being used by vehicles to pass each other.
- The road was in a poor condition and was not suitable for coaches.
- There were no passing places on the road, which made travel by coach dangerous, especially by the riverbank.
- In 2024 the village had been gridlocked for four hours with customers abandoning their vehicles and walking to the event.
- Emergency vehicles would have been unable to access the site.
- He was stuck on his driveway every time there was an event, as the road was only a single lane outside his house.
- There was less traffic in the winter months when events were currently held.

- Additional traffic in the summer will put children's lives at risk, as there were no footpaths by the road. There were fewer people on the roads in winter.
- In the summer months there was more traffic and a risk that the events in question could clash with harvesting, Cambridge Polo Club events or other village events.

Noise

- He ran a glamping site with his wife and the quiet period was in December.
- If events were held all year round this would detrimentally affect their business.
- Potentially 20 events could be held over the year.
- Those who lived in the village got no sleep when the large TR events were held.
- During events he could hear every word spoken by the DJ.
- Traffic noise continued until 4:30 am.

In response to questioning, Mr Peters stated that:

- He had complained to the Highways Authority, the Parish Council and District Council about the traffic and the noise.
- The District Council had sent out equipment to Mr Pellegrini's house to monitor the noise, following complaints.
- The Parish Council should have been present at this meeting, representing the community's interests.
- He had always lived in Lode and had resided at his current home for 13 years.
- There were ten other properties closer to the site than his home.
- He believed that he and his wife had run their glamping business for the last three years.

Duncan Craig made the following observations:

- E-mails about noise and traffic was not reliable evidence. The Highways Agency could have made submissions about the application.
- The application had been properly advertised.
- There were ten households who lived closer to the site than Mr Peters and they had made no objections.
- The responsible authorities had scrutinised events and the application.
- A Safety Advisory Group was consulted on any big events and could ultimately cancel the event if any concerns were not addressed.
- The applicant had been running events successfully for a number of years.
- Mr Durrant was prepared to limit the number of events with more than 2,500 customers to four a year.
- Mr Durrant was happy to inform the Parish Council of upcoming events.

The Chair explained that the Sub Committee would go into private session with the legal officer to discuss the application and come to its decision. All parties would be notified of the decision in 5 working days.

The public meeting concluded at 3:48 pm and the meeting then went into closed session.

The Committee **agreed** to:

Grant the application for a variation to a premises Licence to Mr Douglas Durrant in accordance with paras 3.4 and 3.5 of the Officer Report subject to:

(i) the conditions contained in the operating schedule accompanying the application, with the following additional conditions:

- Lode Parish Council should be informed of forthcoming events at the same time as the Safety Advisory Group are notified.
- To retain the condition that the terminal hour remains at 00:30.
- There should be no more than four events a year with over 2,500 customers attending.
- To retain the condition that for events over 500 customers Safety Advisory Group given notice no less than two months before the event.
- A Temporary Traffic Road Order to be applied for, no less than 12 weeks before all events with over 2,500 customers.
- Final Event Management Plan to the Licensing Authority no less than 7 days before the event.
- To retain the existing plan limiting events to one location with marquees.

(ii) any mandatory conditions that must be included in the licence.