

Overview

The Swimming Pig will operate as a combination of shop and taproom. The reason why I have chosen to refer to it as a taproom, is that it puts an emphasis on promoting beer from independent breweries and where a customer might choose to go if they have an interest in craft beer.

Craft beer has been on the rise in London for the last ten years, with an increased interest emerging during lockdown. Its ethos is to produce an alternative to cheap mass produced lagers and produce a product that is created in smaller batches with an emphasis on quality and variety, which I believe is part of its appeal. This puts it in a premium category, putting it at a higher price point and therefore does not promote or encourage cheap pints and excessive drinking.

The premises will differ from a traditional pub in that the space will accommodate a small number of customers, 25 at the most with 15-20 being the average number anticipated at one time and all seated. In order for the business to succeed and operate as intended, the hours of operation and the option for both on and off sales are essential.

The reason behind the business and why I feel passionately about it, is not only to support and promote independent producers but to provide an alternative to the traditional pub, offering high quality products in a venue that I myself would feel safe drinking in. There will be an emphasis on selling products that are not readily available elsewhere and to educate customers on their origins, which will include meet the brewer and winemaker events and a focus on selling products that are as local as possible.

It is my belief that The Swimming Pig would provide a unique alternative to other drinking establishments in the near vicinity. There are excellent venues such as The Harwood Arms and Vagabond Wines, the former which I personally feel leans more towards a restaurant and the latter focusing on wine, which I would be delighted to be in the company of.

The Swimming Pig also intends to be a family and dog friendly venue.

Choice of location

Finding a suitable location has been challenging. I have been looking since 2019 when I left my job to pursue this which was obviously put on hold due to Covid. Taking on a bar or restaurant with an existing licence, almost always requires a premium, usually in the tens of thousands of pounds, which would make starting this business impossible. The venue will operate as a shop as well as a bar meaning that taking on an existing shop does make sense and is often the route that similar businesses have gone down. The criteria was also to find somewhere on the smaller side, as it creates a more welcoming atmosphere and also allows for more manageable numbers. It is also important to be in an area with a strong sense of community.

I live in Wandsworth which is in South West London. I am aware that only a handful of similar premises exist in South West and West London, so my focus was on finding

somewhere in one of those areas. There has been mention that the business will not fit within the existing businesses on the street but I believe the look and character of the premises will fit well within an attractive mixed use terrace and offer something different to what is already there.

When applying for my licence, it came as a complete surprise that the location fell within a football footfall area and that this would be something that I would have to take into consideration. This has created extra challenges and was definitely not something that I was purposefully seeking out.

After meeting with the police, I understood that there is an issue with street drinking that they do take very seriously and have imposed restrictions on the business as a result which I fully understand and have agreed to.

Representations

I have thoroughly reviewed the representations received and note that the following concerns have been the most common-

- Noise and Nuisance
- Increase in Crime
- Child Safety
- Traffic and parking
- Football match days
- Outside drinking
- Smell pollution

I have addressed these points below under the relevant licensing conditions where applicable.

Noise/ Public Nuisance

<p>Concerns raised by residents mainly centre around the fact that they anticipate an increase in antisocial behaviour</p>	<p>Alcohol related antisocial behaviours are largely due to being able to obtain low cost alcohol that is then only able to be consumed outside of a licensed premises.</p> <p>Craft beer is a premium product, meaning that the price point will be considerably higher than supermarkets and typical off licence prices. As a result the premises will not appeal to customers wanting to buy or consume large amounts of low cost beer.</p> <p>The Swimming Pig intends to operate equally as both a shop and bar meaning that the focus is not specifically on off sales. However both elements of the business are</p>
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	<p>required for it to operate as intended.</p> <p>I met with PCs Kristen Cardwell and Dan Evans on 19th January to discuss concerns over antisocial behaviour in the form of street drinking and how to manage match days. I agreed to the proposed conditions to tackle the above, which prevents off sales of alcohol for two hours preceding a match and that alcohol can only be served in plastic cups before and after matches.</p>
<p>Noise from premises/Customers drinking outside</p>	<p>The premises will only be able to accommodate up to around 25 people at one time and any music played (recorded) will be at an ambient/background level. Therefore it is not expected that noise from the premises will spill onto the street.</p> <p>However noise assessments will be carried out periodically by a responsible member of staff at the boundary of the nearest residential property during the licensable activities and take any necessary remedial action.</p> <p>A noise assessment of the property has also been requested separately by the planning department.</p> <p>There is currently no space for customers to drink outside the venue so this is not a relevant concern at this time</p>
<p>Trouble on match days</p>	<p>The premises will not be aimed at football goers and there are already several establishments dedicated to football fans. As previously mentioned, drinks will be at a higher price point and the business will not be selling mass produced lagers/beers at cheap prices.</p> <p>The business will be restricted from any off sales two hours prior to matches on match days which means that this will not attract people wanting to buy beers to drink on the streets before a match.</p> <p>The premises will be seated with hardly, if any room for people standing.</p>

	If on opening, football crowds are seen to be an issue, I will be looking into the possibility of employing an SIA at the premises as discussed with PCs Kristen Cardwell and Daniel Evans
Rubbish	All rubbish will be disposed of in the bins provided and during the times stated in the licensing conditions. Sales are anticipated to be predominantly beer, which will be served in a beer glass or in cans. Therefore I will not be disposing of high volumes of glass at a late hour.

Child Safety

Strict implementation of Challenge 25 will be enforced and promoted through the prominent display of posters, to ensure underage drinking does not occur. All members of staff will be trained in this.

As I expect the average age of my customers to be around 35 years and over, it will make it easier to manage those that appear under 25 and also, underage drinkers are more likely to seek out other forms of alcohol that won't be on offer here and at a lower price point. As an example, the average price of one can at the premises will be around £6.

Prevention of Crime and Disorder

Concerns that the existence of the premises will result in an increase in Crime and Disorder	<p>The assumption is that The Swimming Pig will operate as a typical pub and as a result encourage antisocial behaviour which would lead to crime.</p> <p>Although the hours of operation requested do match those of a pub with regular hours (not extended ones) it is not expected that customers will spend several hours here at one time. Partly because the food on offer will be cold as there are no kitchen facilities and because the price of beer on tap will be higher than in other establishments. During the day it is expected that most transactions will be for off sales.</p> <p>Given the size of the venue, the number of customers that the premises will be able to accommodate and the premium products</p>
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	<p>on offer, it is not anticipated that the business will attract large crowds of rowdy customers. This is also not what the business wants to achieve.</p> <p>As there is no space for outside drinking, large numbers of customers will not be drinking outside the venue. This will also ensure that litter and glass are kept inside the venue.</p> <p>There have also been some concerns related to the belief that there are already enough pubs and licensed premises in the area which I believe would be a consideration for planning and not licensing.</p> <p>The business may incur some challenges on match days which have been discussed with the local police and I have agreed to all of their proposed conditions. This includes no off sales two hours prior to a match and serving drinks in plastic cups only before and after a match. If any issues do occur then I will look at employing an SIA at the premises as discussed with PCs Kristen Cardwell and Daniel Evans</p> <p>CCTV will be installed and operated both inside and outside the property during all times of licensable activity.</p>
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Additional concerns

<p>Concern regarding smells from flues/extractor fans</p>	<p>The premises will not be serving hot food and there are no kitchen facilities therefore this will not be an issue.</p>
<p>Increase in traffic and parking</p>	<p>It is anticipated that the majority of customers would arrive on foot especially as the road is resident parking only for most of the day. Stock deliveries will not occur daily and drivers will use the designated loading bay. Again as the venue will not be serving food there will not be an increase in food delivery mopeds and/or traffic related to this.</p>

Conclusion

A large part of the ethos of bottle shops and taprooms is focusing very much on the customer and the products being served, i.e from independent breweries, winemakers and suppliers, rather than encouraging excessive drinking and antisocial behaviour. Community and inclusivity are also very important factors.

I understand the concerns of the local residents with regards to what is anticipated the business will be and I hope that I have outlined above that this is not the case. I will take noise and safety concerns very seriously and take any necessary actions to ensure this.

I was passed on details of one resident who I contacted to address her concerns regarding off sales and explain more about the business and I fully intend to contact all local residents and involve them but I do not currently have any other contact details at this stage.

I think that I can offer local residents a positive alternative to what already exists in the area and that I can contribute in a positive way to the existing community.