

LICENSING CONSULTATION INTERNAL MEMO

To : **Lorna Mckenna**
From : **Adrian Overton**
Date : **10th February 2025**
Premises : **MG Food & Wine, 143 Askew Road, W12 9AU**
CAPS Ref : **2024/02120/LAPR**
Application : **Premises Licence Application**

I am the Licensing Team Manager for the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. I am also able to act as the responsible authority for the Licensing Authority of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham.

I have considered the above application and wish to make a representation against this application on the basis of past adverse enforcement history at this premises.

The Application

On the 24th December 2024 a new premises licence application was submitted by Manpreet Singh Kapoor of Personal Licence Courses UK on behalf of Mandeep Singh Bhatia ("the applicant") for the premises known as MG Food & Wine, 143 Askew Road, London, W12 9AU.

The following licensable activities were applied for:

Sale by Retail of Alcohol - Off the Premises

Monday to Sunday 08:00 to 23:00

Proposed Opening Hours:

Monday to Sunday 08:00 to 23:00

Supporting Information - Enforcement Summary

At the end of October 2024, the Licensing Team were made aware that a group of underage girls managed to purchase two bottles of vodka and some vapes from this premises. At the time 4 of the girls were 14 and 1 was 13. They then consumed the vodka, used the vapes, and were later found passed out on a family members floor. Three of the girls were subsequently taken to hospital, with two of them requiring urgent medical attention on route. They all regained consciousness early the next morning.

The Licensing and Trading Standards teams worked together to interview the licence holder (Subir Singh Bhatia) under caution at the end of last year. A further test purchase was arranged in November 2024 and the premises again sold a vape pen to a 16 year old. Various breaches of licensing conditions were also witnessed including issues with the CCTV system not being fully operational. The Licensing Team submitted a review , asking for revocation of the licence on the 23rd December 2024.

As a result of the afore mentioned review being submitted, a new premises licence application was made the following day (24th December 2024) with the proposed licence holder being named as Mandeep Singh Bhatia.

Officers from the Council's Licensing Team, Trading Standards Team and the Police Licensing team arranged to meet with the proposed licence holder, and their agent, in early January 2025.

The officers conducting the meeting raised concerns with Mr Mandeep Bhatia's lack of experience. It was noted that as he was currently 19 years old, his licensing experience had been limited to previously stacking shelves in another licensed premises in Reading. He was unable to provide any other experience relevant to the sale of alcohol, or explain how he was going to manage the shop. He was also unaware of how the age related till prompt system worked when asked, which would be key to ensuring that further underage sales did not take place. During the meeting officers were not given any assurances that further underage sales would not take place again.

At the meeting no explanation was given as to why the business was being sold whilst a review of the existing licence was ongoing. It was however confirmed that the proposed licence holder (Mr Mandeep Singh Bhatia) was a distant relative of the current licence holder (Subir Singh Bhatia).

Given officers concerns with the new licence holders lack of experience, Mr Mandeep Singh Bhatia did say that he was happy to attend an age verification training session which was run by Mr Doug Love (Trading Standards Officer) for local businesses on the 12th February 2025. Despite three chaser emails from Mr Love, Mr Bhatia did not attend this training, and at the time this representation was written he had not responded to any follow up emails.

Conclusion

This licence has very recently been reviewed due to a number of underage sales at the premises. The sales of alcohol which occurred on the premises in October 2024

could very easily have had fatal consequences if the victims were not taken to hospital so quickly.

We have serious concerns that there is a direct link between the current licence holder at this premises (Mr Subir Singh Bhatia) and the proposed licence holder (Mr Mandeep Singh Bhatia), and that the application has only been made in an attempt to continue licensable activities at the premises

We don't believe that the proposed licence holder has the required knowledge, skills or experience to ensure that the licensing objectives are upheld in such a problematic premises. We are also concerned that the new licence holder has made no effort to try and attend an age verification course run by the Council's trading team despite promises that he would do so.

We feel that the irresponsible management of this premises will continue as normal if a new licence is granted to Mr Mandeep Singh Bhatia, and that there is a real chance that further under age sales of alcohol could take place in such an environment.

With all of the above in mind we would respectfully suggest that this licence application is refused

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Overton', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Adrian Overton
Licensing Team Manager
London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham