

WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the
Licensing Panel

Held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Woodgreen, Witney, Oxfordshire OX28 1NB
at 11.00 am on **Thursday, 30 July 2026**

PRESENT

Councillors: Mark Walker, Sandra Simpson and Jack Treloar

Officers: Lorna McShane (Planning Solicitor), Laura Nieve (Paralegal), Andrea Thomas (ERS Officer, Professional Services), Ana Prelici (Senior Democratic Services Officer) and Matthew Taylor (Democratic Services Officer)

Other Councillors in attendance: None

31 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

32 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were received.

33 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The agenda had been published before the meeting of 21 July 2026. The minutes of 21 July 2026 and 30 July 2026 would be considered at the next licensing panel meeting.

34 I1am - Application for a new Premises Licence - The Double Red, Clanfield Limited for the premises located at The Duchess, Bampton Road, Clanfield.

The Chair, Councillor Mark Walker, welcomed everyone to the hearing and introduced the Panel in attendance, which consisted of Councillors Sandra Simpson and Jack Treloar.

The Chair, asked for the Officers in attendance to introduce themselves Andrea Thomas introduced herself as the Licensing Officer, Lorna McShane introduced herself as the Legal Officer, Ana Prelici introduced herself as the Senior Democratic Services Officer.

Others in attendance introduced themselves. Neil McCain, Solicitor representing the Applicant, Adam Smith, Assistant General Manager of the Double Red Duke, Councillor Alaric Smith, District Councillor for Bampton and Clanfield and Sally Owen a resident of Clanfield.

The Chair outlined the process the hearing would follow and explained that the Panel would be advised by the Council's Legal Adviser and Committee Clerk.

The Chair reminded all parties that they should only highlight issues that related to the Licensing Objectives, these were:

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

The Councils Licensing Officer presented the application and highlighted the following points:

- The application was for a new premises licence and was made by the Double Red Clanfield Ltd, for a premises located at a property known as The Duchess. The application was for the hours applied for sale of alcohol (on and off sales) and late-night refreshment.
- Sale of alcohol, opening Hours and off sales Monday to Sunday 24hrs for residents and bona fide guests.
- The matter was before the Licensing Panel due to representation from local residents and two ward members the detail of which could be seen in Annex C of the agenda pack.

The Licensing Officer brought the members attention to the licensing policy details that stated that the licensing authority would only apply terms and conditions to licences to promote one or more of the licensing objectives and were relevant to the application. The Panel would seek to balance community benefits against concerns of adverse impacts in making their decision.

The Panel were asked to consider the application and determine whether to:

- Grant the application as requested.
- Grant the application subject to such conditions that are necessary to promote the licensing objectives.
- Refuse to specify a person in the licence as the premises supervisor
- Refuse the application in whole or in part where it was necessary in order to promote the licensing objectives

The Licensing Officer advised that the West Oxfordshire District Council Statement of Licensing 2021 – 2025 was reviewed and updated every 5 years. This was in the process of being reviewed and until the publication the current policy remained in place to guide the process in this case.

The Applicant's Solicitor summarised the Applicant's case and made the following points:

- A meeting with the objector and the applicants representative had taken place. Following this meeting, two formal changes to the application had been made. Firstly, the removal of the late-night refreshment after 11:00pm. Secondly, the condition that limited bona fide guests had been narrowed to one per resident. This was felt to be a reasonable concession.
- The objectors requests around conditions on subjective noise constraints were not deemed enforceable and so had not been included.
- The photo on page. 34 of the Committee papers demonstrated thick existing foliage outside the objectors property and landscaping was not proposed on this and as such this sound buffer would remain.
- The Duchess already had permission to be used as hotel accommodation, and this was therefore not the decision to be made at this meeting.
- The application did not limit the consumption of alcohol brought by guests themselves on the property.
- The application was made as the premises was an up market offer. The licence was applied for to support the business revenue. Alcohol provision on site was preferable to it being delivered from the pub and made the process more enforceable.
- Reasons why the property would not become a party house causing public nuisance were explained. The cost of rooms and type of market means this would not be expected from the clientele the business was looking to attract. It is not in the interest of the business to have other residents disturbed by people staying at The Duchess. In addition there would always be a member of staff on call, and a number which members of the public and local residents could call to report issues.
- It was noted that the license could be reviewed by the objector, other residents, the Licensing Authority or Environmental Health and could be repealed if there was an issue. The police could also be contacted.

Responding to questions from the Panel the applicant's Solicitor clarified the following:

- The meeting with the Mrs Owen and Councillor Smith had been held on Tuesday 28 July 2026. Issues were still present but he felt that that these issues had been narrowed by concessions following the meeting.
- At present there were no mini bars in the hotel, but these were an option for the future.
- At present there was no restriction on people bringing their own alcohol to the premises.
- The kitchen provision would contain light bites and snacks and included an informal lounge area. This did not include food to be heated up by guests or any cooking facilities; guests would not cook their own meals.

- The application for late night refreshment to 5am had been removed. The 24-hour licence for drinks was required as the business could not prevent residents taking drinks on arrival.
- Bona fide guests would be recognisable to staff as the property was small. Key card access to The Duchess would also be required. In addition there would be no open bar in the property and finally there were two other premises to get drinks. The applicant therefore did not feel that there would be the appetite for additional people to access the property.
- The normal staffing levels were explained to be considered sufficient. The levels would be increased with this accommodation and increases at The Masons Arms. There would always be a member of staff available, and staffing would be commensurate with a boutique offering. The increase in staffing levels would make the enforcement of the condition for drinks not being consumed in the garden after 11pm achievable.
- To assist the consideration of the application the Applicant described the locations of the various adjacent premises and the Licensing Officer shared a map which showed the proximity to the objector's house and this was explored by the Panel. The Applicants representative also shared the plan submitted with the planning application which showed the proposed landscaping for The Duchess. The garden had been designed to be able to sit with drinks until a reasonable hour.
- A couple sharing a room could have a bona fide guest each.
- The proposed mini bars were for ease of operation and were for residents who arrive late. It was more likely that residents would visit the nearby pub than drink from this.

Responding to a question of clarity from the objectors the applicant's representative clarified that a continental breakfast was proposed to be offered on site. Cooked breakfast would be available at the applicant's other site The Double Red Duke. The Chair noted that this was not licensing issue.

Sally Owen spoke in objection to the application which raised the following points:

- The window of her lounge was very close to the boundary of The Duchess.
- Shrubbery on the boundary gave the impression that The Duchess was an isolated property however there were many properties in close proximity.
- The proposed orangery would have six doors which would allow noise to escape and was in direct line with her lounge and bedroom window.
- A recent example of a gathering during a period of hot weather had seen activity at 4:00am.
- Restrictions were for no drinks outside after 11pm and this could not be regulated. Even if glasses remain inside people can still be outside.
- There was ample provision for alcohol at The Double Red Duke and Masons Arms. Residents near to these pubs had already experienced noise from these establishments.

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- Application is for drinks on arrival and drinks at request with no time restrictions. This was a stepping stone application that could result in something much bigger.
- The definition of a Bone Fide guest was too vague.
- Disruption and noise could only be addressed after the event.

Councillor Alaric Smith, Ward member for Bampton and Clanfield, spoke in objection to the application which raised the following points:

- The property was a former residential dwelling and was very close to other residential dwellings.
- The change of use granted with the planning application was on the basis that it would provide more letting rooms for The Double Red Duke
- Any excessive noise would constitute public nuisance, the prevention of which was one of the four licencing objectives.
- The proposed license through night posed serious questions over how nuisance could be avoided and had not been addressed sufficiently in the application.
- Condition I was impossible to define and police and would require a permanent member of staff.
- It was suggested that what constituted a nuisance in Clanfield required a clearer definition. It should be noted that ambient noise level is low in Clanfield. Such a definition would help with questions of enforceability. If it was not possible to specify this then the licence should be refused.
- The application did not contain adequate safeguards.

Responding to questions of clarity from the panel the objectors clarified:

- It was not felt that the increased staffing proposed would address concerns around noise pollution as it would be difficult for the property to accommodate forty people without the clientele spilling out onto the garden creating noise. Councillor Treloar noted however that a refusal of this application did not change the capacity of the property. The objectors acknowledged this point but responded that the supply of alcohol would exacerbate the noise concern.
- The owners' intentions for this site may change at later date and therefore mitigation should be a consideration for deliberation of this licence. It was speculated that the venue may become a wedding venue in future however the Chair explained this was not an admissible point. The applicant's representative confirmed that The Double Red Duke did hold wedding receptions but did not intend to expand this to The Duchess. The Licencing Officer noted such events would need a further application.

The applicant's representative then summarised as follows:

- There had been no representations from other residents in regard to the application.
- There had been no representation from Environmental Health.
- The property was previously a family dwelling and as such no control could have been had over noise in that case.
- A breach of a licencing condition was a criminal offence.
- The representative urged the objector to contact him if there were any issues.
- Any further changes to another purpose would require a further application and involve the opportunity for representation.
- The definition of Bone Fide guests had been given to the Council and was a well-used definition in the trade. It was not likely that every occupant would have a guest and as such it was not likely forty people would be in the property at one time.
- The application could not be compared to other locations as it is what not a public bar.
- The noise nuisance condition had been used successfully in other applications and was enforceable.
- Examples given by the objectors of a successful prosecution was an example of the system working.

The Panel retired to determine the application.

The Panel returned at 12.20 and advised that they had considered all the documents relating to the application and taken into account what had been said during the hearing. They had listened carefully to the applicant and considered that local residents' comments and concerns. The Panel stated that they had also considered the Licensing Officer's presentation and the Council's licensing policy and statutory guidance.

The Panel accepted the submission of the Applicant and granted the application for a new premises licence as per the operating schedule. The Panel concluded that the Council has the power to review the licence should any issues arise in the terms of operations.

Resolved that the application be granted for a

1. New Premises Licence located at The Duchess, Bampton Road, Clanfield, Sale of alcohol (on and off sales) and late night refreshment. Sale of alcohol, opening Hours and off sales Monday to Sunday 24hrs for residents and bona fide guests. Late night refreshment 2300hrs to 0500hrs for residents and bona fide guests, 24hrs for residents and bona fide guests.
2. With the addition restricted to one guest per resident.

2pm - Application for a new Premises Licence - Budgens Store, Wincott Square, Woodstock

introduced the Panel in attendance which consisted of Councillors Jack Treloar and Sandra Simpson.

The Chair asked for the Officers in attendance to introduce themselves, Andrea Thomas introduced herself as the Licensing Officer, Lorna McShane as Councils Solicitor and Ana Prelici as Senior Democratic Services Officer.

The Chair asked those who wished to speak that were in attendance to introduce themselves.

Naga Rajesh, Licensing Consultant, (online) attended on behalf of the Applicant along with Applicant Jeyasothy Jeyaalan (online).

Christina Parry-Jones, Nina Becket, Bryn Parry-Jones, Karen Gibson, Karen Visser (online) and Sharone Parnes introduced themselves as objectors to the application. Mr Parnes advised that he was a Town Councillor in Woodstock however he was speaking as a resident at the hearing.

The Chair outlined the process the hearing would follow and explained that the Panel would be advised by the Council's Legal Adviser. The Chair noted that parties could not cross examine the other party, however questions could be asked through him as Chair.

The Councils Licensing Officer presented the application and highlighted the following points:

- The application was for a new premises licence and was submitted by Shun Retail Store Limited trading as Budgens.
- The premises was located at Wincott Square, Woodstock.
- The application was in front of the Panel due to representations objecting to the application that had been submitted by local residents and Woodstock Town Council. There was one representation of support.
- The applicant had made an amendment to the application. The trading and licensing hours proposed had been changed to 06:00 to 21:00 seven days a week.
- If the licence was granted the conditions in the operating schedule would form part of the license.
- The Licensing Policy stated that the Licensing Authority would only apply terms and conditions to licences to promote one or more of the Licensing Objectives. Conditions should be relevant, necessary, proportionate and reasonable and should avoid duplication of other legal requirements on the operator of the premises.
- The Authority should seek to balance the needs of the local community and commercial operations.
- The options open to the Committee could be seen in the recommendations section of the Officer Report.
- The Statement of Licensing Policy issued by The Council was being reviewed and therefore the current Policy would guide the process of the Panel.

The Applicant's representative summarised the Applicant's case and made the following points:

- The applicant had several years' experience in the licencing trade.
- The applicant had invested his life savings into the business and therefore would not wish to jeopardise this investment by undermining the Licencing Objectives.
- The premises had planning permission to operate as a retail business for the hours in the licence application and would rely on the local community and not on passing trade. Therefore, there was no intention to upset local residents as the business would be reliant on them
- The application had included a number of measures to promote Licensing Objectives that included staff training, CCTV systems, 31 days recording and incident record books.
- Staff would be trained to prevent nuisance behaviour.
- When the objections had been received these were taken seriously and had resulted in the reduction of hours to reflect the concerns,
- There had been no objections received from Responsible Authorities. Under the Licencing Act 2003 the Licencing Authority should look to the Police as the main source of advice on crime and disorder and the Police were not objecting.
- Such premises should be free to sell alcohol off premises at any time under the Licencing Act 2003, unless there was a good reason to restrict hours under the Licencing Objectives.
- There was no evidence to support the claims of the objectors.
- Alcohol sales would be a small proportion of sales as the premises was principally a convenience store.
- The premises licence could be reviewed to ensure compliance with objectives.

Responding to questions from the Panel the applicant's representative explained that the application was to open at 6:00 am to capture early morning trade. The opening and alcohol licence hours were proposed to match to avoid operational difficulty and potential breaches. Sales of alcohol in the morning were not expected to be significant. The applicant had little control over the waste collection times. Members queried the applicant's experience of resident feedback on operational hours and anti-social behaviour at a second site he was associated with in North Leigh. The applicant advised that residents had welcomed the early opening, not necessarily for alcohol purchases, but the hours had enabled shopping prior to work. The applicant had received no complaints from local residents or Local Authorities with regard to anti-social behaviour at that location.

Responding to questions of clarity from the objectors the applicant's representative clarified that deliveries were intended to take place around mid-day. He reiterated that waste collection was not in his control however, as this was commercial waste collection, he did not anticipate collection being early in the morning. The applicant's experience of running other sites was clarified and the applicant highlighted that he was also a Personal License Holder and qualified in the trade.

Five members of the public spoke in objection to the application which raised the following points:

- There was an absence of site-specific safeguards in relation to an alcohol licence. The generic measures proposed to safeguard would apply to any licence but did not address the specifics of the location.
- The location was a residential square in a compact environment and not necessarily comparable to North Leigh or Woodstock High Street.
- The duration of the licence proposed was exceptional for the location.
- The location had a nearby nursery, two playgrounds and the secondary school field in close proximity. It was also on the school walking routes.
- The applicant had not explained why the alcohol license should be available at the time of school runs.
- The hours and operating schedule were disproportionate for this premises.
- Conditions that may be helpful could be applied such as: single can only sales; more isolation of displays of alcohol; a limit on the percentage of alcohol; litter patrols; provision of a contact number for residents for issues out of hours; conditions that no external alcohol advertising should be allowed outside of the shop; incident logs made clearly available. It was suggested that such conditions would promote the Licensing Objectives.
- From 5:30am parking places would be used by staff and customers which would disturb nearby residents.
- Sleep deprivation directly affected mental and physical wellbeing. There was estimated to be sixty residents close to the site who would be directly affected by the noise.
- There had already been examples of anti-social behaviour and littering in the estate which had been reported to police. At present the incidents were the exception however it was foreseeable that the sale of alcohol could invite more.
- The cost of drinking in an establishment was expensive and therefore sales in a convenience store were more appealing.
- The proposed changes in hours was welcome.
- Woodstock Town Council had raised concerns, and this had been received by the Officer and noted by the Panel.
- Residents were entitled to peaceful enjoyment of their homes at 6:00am and the licence would prevent this.
- More could be done by the applicant to prevent nuisance which was a principal concern.
- Litter bins should be provided by the store.
- There was an issue with a lack of parking at the location. This could result in cars pulling up at unsociable hours which would disturb the residents locally. Therefore, the breadth of hours was excessive.
- The delivery lorries could be large which would result in dangers to residents and children. Further to this, the shop had resident's flats above and a small car park for those residents to the rear. The units were initially proposed to be small but were now

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to be extended and there were concerns that lorries would be larger and could block residents.

- The estate road was now a through road. This had increased traffic which was a concern. Some residents had found the road dangerous as there was no pedestrian crossing.
- There was only one Community Police Officer for the area to deal with anti-social behaviour.

The Licencing Officer clarified that the application was under the Licensing Act and matters such as traffic and planning were not for consideration by the Panel.

The Panel asked the objectors, given Thames Valley Police had raised no objections, what evidence there was for the claim that the licence would increase anti-social behaviour. The objectors responded that the bins were often full. It was proposed that the Police were constrained and this may influence their response. Officers advised that the Police had responded with “no objection” and were happy with the conditions detailed on the application, it was therefore incorrect to suggest that they had not responded. Objectors also noted that they regularly pick up alcohol related litter and this is reported to police. There was a bench with no lighting that had been the location of anti-social incidents which had been noted by residents.

The Panel explored the concerns around the hours in more detail. Objectors suggested that they felt 7:00am would be a more appropriate opening time.

The applicant’s representative then summarised as follows:

- The business was for the local community and was reliant on them. It was not the applicant’s intention to upset them as his trade would be reliant on them.
- There had been no objections from any Responsible Authorities.
- The premises did have planning permission to operate between 6 am and 9 pm, and therefore the consideration was for the alcohol licence and hours only.
- There was no evidence to support the objectors’ assertions that the licencing objectives would be undermined by the application.
- Any conditions applied to the licence should be proportionate and appropriate to support the Licencing Objectives.
- The Local Authority had the power to review the licence at any point should concerns be raised.
- It was not appropriate or proportionate to refuse the application on the basis of assumptions.

The Panel retired to determine the application.

The Panel returned and advised that they had considered all the case papers and had taken into account what had been said during the hearing.

The Panel granted the licence as per the schedules.

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In summarising the Chair noted that the Panel welcomed the reduction in hours to 21:00 and supported the steps taken by the applicant in section 18 of the application. The Panel encouraged ongoing community relations and dialogue between the applicant and residents. The Panel noted that some of the concerns were not related to the licencing application. Finally, it was reiterated that the licence could be reviewed at any time.

The Meeting closed at Time Not Specified

CHAIR