

Witness Statement

(Criminal Justice Act 1967, Sect 9; Magistrates' Court Act 1980, ss.5A (3) (a) and 5B; M.C. Rules, 1981, r.70)

Statement of Mr Benjamin Wall

Occupation: Leisure Operator

1. My name is Ben Wall. I make this statement in respect of a licensing application which was submitted to Sunderland City Council for The Little Shop 313 High Street West, Sunderland, SR1 3ET. I am a Director of Holmeside Coffee Ltd t/a The Little Shop, the applicant in respect of a new premises licence application, and the proposed DPS. I run this company with my business partner, Joe Collins.

The Premises

2. The premises is located on High Street West between Mexico 70 and Church No.2 (both premises which I operate). At the end of the row of premises is Vesta Tilley's a pub/cocktail bar. At the other end of the Row, accessed via an alley by the side of the church is The Spice Empire. The premises is opposite The Dun Cow and diagonally opposite The Sunderland Empire Theatre. Please see attached photographs of the premises attached at **Appendix 1**. The Little Shop has traded at this location for the past 18 months, at the former JC Potts Newsagent site. The shop unit is 3.5 metres wide and 5 metres deep, and can accommodate maybe 6 customers (pre-Covid). It currently operates 1 in 1 out.
3. The Little Shop It trades as a coffee shop with a small snack menu, specializing in home made donuts and our own coffee blend. The purpose of the licensing application was to add an additional aspect to the business, using a product that I am passionate about; craft and specialty beer.

The Application

4. We initially applied for on and off sales of alcohol, but by agreement with the Police and Licensing we amended the application just to off sales, so long as they had no issue with our having tasting sessions at the premises. The premises licence application is now therefore in respect of off sales only from 11:00 to 23:00. No other licensable activities are applied for.

Temporary Events Notices

5. In the lead up to the submission of this application we have applied for 5 Temporary Events Notices ("TEN's") to allow us to sell alcohol in exactly the way we intend to, should this application be granted, as off sales. Although, since Mexico 70 has an on sales licence, these products were available to drink in. However, the products

really are so specialist that there was little take up. The TEN's we operated were on the following dates:

27th-31st May
3rd-7th June
10th -13th June
17th - 20th June
24th - 26th June

6. We received no objections to our TEN's when submitted. During the operation of the TEN's we received no complaints about the way in which we were operating, about our clientele or any detrimental impact as a result of the off sales of alcohol. We took the opportunity during that period to liaise with the Police, since we had the intention of applying for a premises licence. It was during the application period that our legal representative, Mr. Foster, liaised with Kim Berstow from Northumbria Police. The result of that interaction were some agreed conditions which now accompany the application, together with a more detailed operating schedule and a document which explains why the premises will not impact upon cumulative impact.

Alcoholic Product Range

7. I have attached at **Appendix 2** some details of products we have sold from the premises, together with some prices. This is generally reflective of the products and price range for products sold, but note this is for one can/bottle, not multiple products. I do not refer to our products as expensive, but rather premium products. It therefore can be easily seen why the products are just simply not attractive to the type of person who is just looking to get drunk on the streets of Sunderland, or in the local park. They would certainly not be the tipples of choice for under 18's.
8. It should be noted that since we have ran out of TEN's, and that licence has not been granted, we have made the decision to continue to sell the products from a nearby premises that I operate called Mexico 70. The licence at that premises permits off sales and allows us to continue with this new venture whilst we wait to see whether we will be successful with this current application. A sample of the products which would be available at The Little Shop, are current on offer in Mexico 70 if any of the parties to the hearing want to take a look.
9. Further to submission of the application we received an objection from [REDACTED] on behalf of the residents of the Jane Gibson Almshouses, which are located behind the premise. I was massively surprised to see this since I operate three premises here, and have never received any complaints. I note in the complaint reference is made to Vesta Tilley's and Spice Empire, but not to The Little Shop or either of Ben's premise. Perhaps that is an indication that we are doing something right.

Letter to residents

10. My business partner Joe sent a letter out to the residents, a copy of which is attached at **Appendix 3**. As a result of this letter one of the residents of the Alms Houses came to the shop. He explained that that it wasn't all of the residents who were objecting, but rather just one resident.

Feedback from [REDACTED] Provost of The Minster

11. Further to that letter, and the resident attending, [REDACTED] the Provost, also came into the shop. Joe and I have been in contact with [REDACTED] before. In fact, unconnected to this shop I was previously introduced to him by [REDACTED] a Chaplain at Sunderland University. I have organized a number of events in the Minster, working with his staff. When [REDACTED] came into the shop he spoke to Joe, and explained that [REDACTED] is a trustee of the Minster, and the first he knew of this objection was when he read our letter. He stated that the Minster were supportive of the business. He also said that he was trying to contact [REDACTED] so that he might try and mediate the objection. Unfortunately, he has not been able to contact her at all. He confirmed that the majority of the residents have no issue with our application

Waste Issues

12. I can see from the objection from [REDACTED] that there have been issues with Vesta Tilly's and Spice Empire, particularly in regard to waste. I can only comment in terms of our experience. We have also had waste issues at the back of the premises, particularly with Spice Empire who have been using our bins. In fact, they had to be threatened with legal action by the council's enforcement officer in order for that to stop. All of this will of course be a matter of public record. The Little Shop and my other premises, Mexico 70 and Church No.2, are all contracted with the council for waste collection. Perhaps that is why our premises present no issues. I would certainly be supportive of any actions to be taken which could resolve any ongoing waste issues, because they also disrupt our business.

Experience and Premises

13. I have worked in the leisure and hospitality sector in Sunderland for 15 years, and I am well known to the council, since I work with them on a regular basis. I also run one of the best known music venues in the North East, The Independent. I am sure if you were to ask around about me you would easily find out about my character, professionalism and reputation in Sunderland. I will, with my business partner, operate a responsibly managed and operated premises here, as I have for the past 18 months. I have attached a few letters of support at **Appendix 4**.

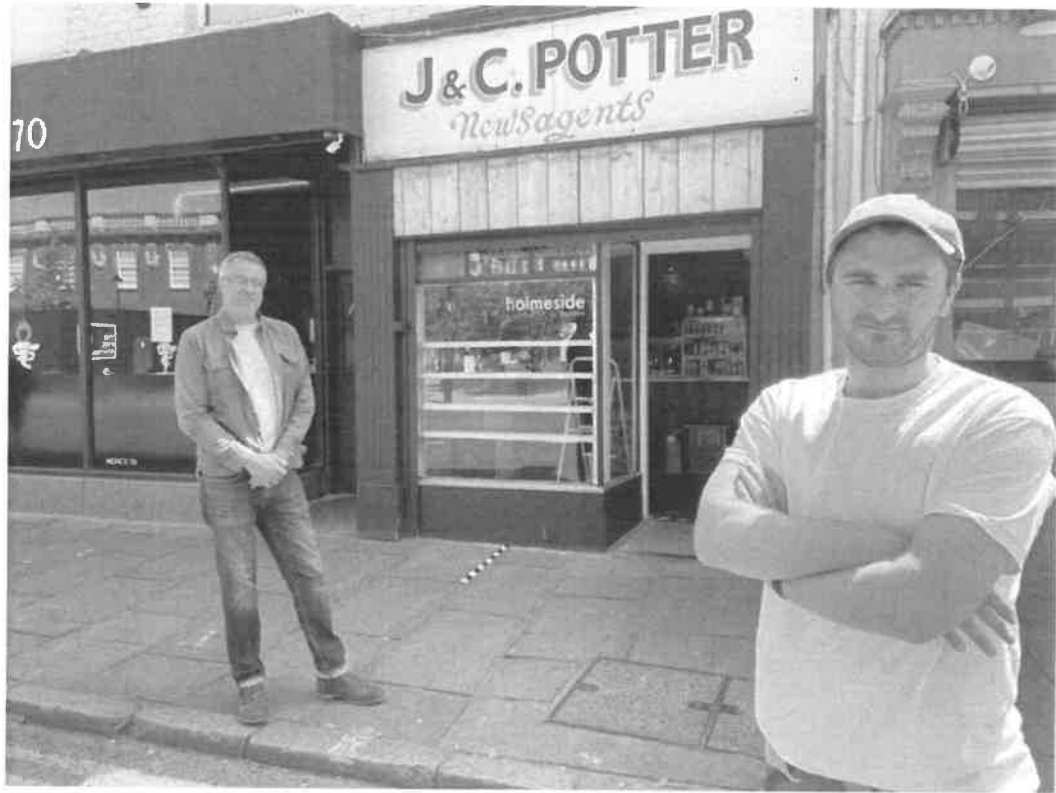
14. This statement is true. I have made it of my own free will.

Signed.....[REDACTED].....

10/8/20
Date.....

Appendix 1

Photographs of the Premises



Appendix 2

Product Range

**LITTLE
SHOP**

Beer Wine Cocktails
Coffee Food
Brewing Equipment Gift Card



Beer

A wide variety of craft beers from local favourites to international classics. Updated weekly with new additions and seasonal changes. We operate a challenge 25 policy. ID may be required on collection.

SORT BY Price, high to low ▾

208 products



**Boon Oude Geuze
BOON
£18.50**





3 Fonteinen - Oude Kriek

3 FONTEINEN

£11.95



3 Fonteinen - Cuvée Armand & Gaston

3 FONTEINEN

£11.95



Mucho Loco - Triple IPA

BASQUELAND

£8.95





Four years - Dinner Imperial Stout
BROUWERIJ DE MOERSLEUTEL
£8.95

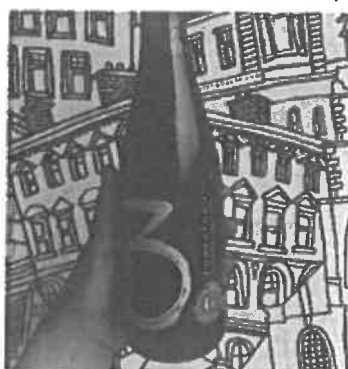


The Weight Of Brunch - Imperial Stout
BURNT MILL BREWERY
£8.95



OFYMD - Imperial Stout
WESTBROOK BREWING CO
£8.95





3 Fonteinen - Oude Geuze

3 FONTEINEN

£8.95



The Brewing Projekt - More Coffee Porter?

THE BREWING PROJEKT

£8.25



Fierce Very Big Moose

FIERCE

£7.95



Rain Shadow - Imperial Stout

BUXTON BREWERY

£7.50



The Brewing Projekt - Breakfast Buds Imperial Stout

THE BREWING PROJEKT

£7.50

SOLD OUT



Cantillon Gueuze
CANTILLON
£7.50



Bourbon V.B.M - Barrel Aged Imperial Stout
FIERCE
£7.25



Montage - Single Hop DDH IPA
NORTHERN MONK X LAURA SLATER
£6.95





Smeerolie Mexicake - Brouwerij De Moersleutel
BROUWERIJ DE MOERSLEUTEL

£6.95

SOLD OUT



Midnight Medusa - Double IPA
BASQUELAND

£6.95

SOLD OUT



Love At Midnight - DOH IPA
BASQUELAND

£6.50





Raisin Rain - Russian Imperial Stout

CIERZO BREWING

£6.50



Motorolie - Russian Imperial Stout

BROUWERIJ DE MOERSLEUTEL

£6.50



Resist - Strawberry Milkshake IPA

THE BREWING PROJEKT

£6.50

Appendix 3

Letter to Residents

Joseph Collins
The Little Shop
Holmeside Coffee Ltd
313 High Street West
SR1 3ET
29/07/2020

[REDACTED]
Jane Gibson Almshouses
Church Lane
Sunderland

Dear Residents,

I am writing to you on behalf of 'The Little Shop' 313 High Street West and our recent application for premises off-licence for the sale of retail alcohol.

My name is Joseph Collins and I have operated the little shop nestled between Mexico 70 and No 2 Church Lane for approximately two years now. My main business is located in the Sunderland Museum and Winter Gardens and this location acts as a takeaway cafe for workers and shoppers on the other side of town.

During the covid-19 pandemic we decided, with the main cafe closed, to open the small takeaway premises with the addition of premium, speciality beer and wines in order to diversify our business in such pressing times. Without rent relief and with the aid of temporary event licences we have managed to successfully trade for the last 3 months from Wednesday - Saturday each week during the hours of 11am - 5:30pm.

The response to our ever growing stock of high quality craft beer and natural wine has been especially promising and I am pleased to say we have traded without anti-social incidents or abuse. The majority of our sales (if not all) are for the purposes of home consumption. With customers not able to travel to surrounding cities and shops such as Fenwicks Newcastle, Rehills Jesmond or Nord Bottle Shop Whitley Bay, we quickly attracted these discerning customers looking for good quality products from a local outlet.

My main premises located inside the Museum and Mowbray Park, is frequently challenged by criminal damage and anti-social behaviour due to its location and surrounding housing. For this reason I am committed to not only deter any anti-social behaviour but also combat it.

We are open from 11am - 5:30pm from Wednesday - Saturday. I would like to invite you all along for a complimentary coffee or tea so that you can familiarise yourself with the shop and meet our fantastic staff.

Thank you for reading and I hope you can support us to be a vital improvement to the area.

Yours sincerely,
Joseph Collins

[REDACTED]

Appendix 4

Letters of Support


Hello,

I am writing in support of 'The Little Shop' and their licence application for sale of alcohol for off premises consumption. As a company Holmeside coffee has promoted natural and organic wines for the past two years. We have worked closely with Joe and the team in both training and quality control of our products.

'The Little Shop' will be the only outlet selling wines of this nature in the Sunderland city centre. Our wines come from small producers all over the world including Tillingham wines rooted in the East Sussex countryside. Without such shops we wouldn't be able to bring such exclusive and innovative products to the UK market.

We hope you can support them in their aim to diversify from craft coffee to craft wines and beers

Many thanks


Eden Fines Wines
Unit 7 Scandinavia Court,
Chain Bar Road, Cleckheaton,
West Yorkshire, BD19 3QW

Hello,

I am writing in support of 'The Little Shop' and their licence application for sale of alcohol for off premises consumption. As a company Holmeside coffee has promoted local craft beers for the past 7 years hosting large scale social events selling our beers by the glass.

The introduction of their small operation bottle shop in the new vibrant culture quarter can only be a positive for Sunderland and the surrounding areas and will act as an important outlet for both local and national breweries.

Yours sincerely,



Two by Two Brewing
Wallsend

To Whom it may concern,

My name is [REDACTED] and I am the [REDACTED] Wholesale Manager for Origin Coffee Roasters. I first started working with Holmeside Coffee two years ago at Sunderland Museum café, then expanding to the small takeaway now known as the Little Shop. I have a broad experience with small outlets like this one, selling high quality produce including food and alcohol alongside quality coffee. The whole ethos of Holmeside Coffee and the Little Shop is educating the general public in recognising the quality of different varieties of grapes, hops and coffee alike, developing palettes to a new way of buying and consuming. I have always found Holmeside to provide good quality staff training evoking passion within their employees for the service and products they provide. I feel with their consistent high standards that the move to sell a range of high spec, interesting alcoholic beverages to support and create a more sustainable business is a positive move for both Holmeside and Sunderland. For the High Street in Sunderland it will increase choice through providing an up market, diverse range of produce promoting a more educated choice for the buying and consuming of alcohol. In hand the customers which this type of business will attract will be those with an interest in growers and producers as a discerning choice.

I feel that being able to offer alcohol supports The Little Shops current offering without changing the integrity of the business or the street.

Feel free to contact me for any more information.

Kind Regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Wholesale Manager North East and South

origin coffee limited

the roastery | wheal vrose business park | helston | cornwall | tr13 0fg

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

origincoffee.co.uk



11 August 2020

To whom it may concern,

**Re - (HOM0000017/1) - Drafting of an operating schedule addressing
Cumulative Impact - 313 High Street West, Sunderland, SR1 3ET**

Sunderland Business Improvement District works on behalf of retail, leisure and professional services across the city centre, and as such has worked extensively for a number of years with Holmeside Coffee Ltd across a number of sites.

We have always found the company to be a responsible operator which has run venues in a professional manner, with no history of any kind of trouble.

We believe these high standards would be applied to their latest plans and that they would take very seriously the wellbeing of anyone living close to the site.

We would unreservedly support this application which we believe would be of huge benefit to the city centre as a whole and as such, beneficial to the local economy.

Sharon Appleby

Head of Business Operations, Sunderland BID.