

## LICENSING ACT 2003

### APPLICATION FOR A NEW PREMISES LICENCE: SHEAFHOUSE FARM, DRAYCOTT ROAD, BLOCKLEY

#### STATEMENT FROM MR & MRS TIM & TANYA SPITTLE

This statement is a true and correct statement of fact relating to our forthcoming application for a Premises License at Sheaf House Farm, Blockley.

We feel it is important to offer some clarification and additional information to support our application as it is essential and necessary for the continuation of our family business and farm. It is also important to correct the slanderous and inaccurate comments presented by the three households in Blockley.

#### **Background:**

Over 5 years ago we started thinking how we might continue the sustainability of our farm which has been in our family for over 50 years. We have developed an excellent health and fitness business as a form of diversification (enjoyed by over 300 local members and pay as you go clients), as well as planning permission for glamping on the farm as well as a café. We're an active farm which supports over 600 sheep and in the last 3 years we have been developing Black Lion Vodka; Europe's first Sheep's Milk Vodka....never done before!

We decided to use a by-product from the cheese-making process (whey) and use that in the distilling process to create a premium spirit. This is not only creating a totally unique product from what was a waste product but also incorporating some rare and very unusual breeds of sheep nurtured on our farm.

We work with two Cotswold-based businesses to produce our vodka (a dairy milker and distiller). Evidence of this can be provided on request by the authority. **NB: Production is conducted off-site.** The vodka can be purchased via our website ([blacklionvodka.co.uk](http://blacklionvodka.co.uk)) or local stockists (listings available on our website) but the fulfilment is managed by a licensed third-party provider. Again, evidence of this can be provided on request. We DO NOT and HAVE NEVER sold our spirit from Sheaf House Farm, other than at our launch event at the end of July 2021 for which we had a TENs license (Temporary Event Notice).

#### **Licenses:**

Both Mr & Mrs Spittle have attained their **Personal Alcohol Licenses**. We have also been granted our **AWRS (Alcohol Wholesaler Registration Scheme) license** from HMRC (XKAW 000 0011 6902) which allows us to sell directly to other businesses. As the licensing committee is fully aware, all background checks have been conducted and **no Responsible Authorities have objected to our Premises License application.**

#### **Response to Objections:**

The three households responsible for these objections are known to us and have been involved with strong lobbying and objection to everything we try and do to diversify and extend the continuance of our family farm. As you will know from reading all three letters of objection, they are in close contact with each other ('collaborating') to the point we feel it is harassment as many of the points raised are purely speculative and written to cast doubt on our application. We are now seeking legal representation and have instructed our lawyer to take the matters in hand accordingly.

For ease, it makes sense to address each of the main points raised:

### 1. Planning Permission

We are accused of many things relating to planning and strongly accused of being 'significantly in breach of planning permission for an outside gym'. This IS NOT a matter for Licensing. However, for the record this accusation is not an accurate representation of our correspondence with the Planning Team.

Please note we have been GRANTED planning permission for a café which stipulates a condition not to sell alcohol as currently we are not licensed to. In the event of successfully obtaining our Premises License, we can then discuss that amendment with the Planners.

### 2. Illegal Sales

We have been accused of selling alcohol from the farm without the appropriate license and quote 'as evidenced on the following website....blacklionvodka.co.uk'. As previously stated, this is totally incorrect and speculative. In layman's terms this may be as it seems, but once the online order is received, our licensed third-party provider conducts any online order fulfilment. We have fully researched and understand our responsibilities and duties as producers of alcohol.

### 3. TENs (Temporary Event Notice)

Within the three objections raised, we are accused of holding numerous events and gatherings in the past with the sale of alcohol without a TENs license. This is totally UNTRUE and we have never held any event where we have sold alcohol to members of the public without a license. We did recently hold a launch event for Black Lion Vodka at the end of July 2021 for which a TENs license was approved for 6pm til 10pm. Our event ended at 10pm and all alcohol was removed and not at '12am' as Mr Henderson slanderously stated. Evidence of this can be provided by contractors who arrived on site to dismantle the trade stand and lighting.

### 4. The Licensing Act

There are a number of concerns raised by the three households relating to elements of the Licensing Act, which as BIIAB (British Institute of Innkeeping Awarding Body) Personal License Holders we are responsible to promote at all times. They include:

- Prevention of Crime and Disorder
- Public Safety
- Prevention of public nuisance
- Protection of children from harm

We have an operating schedule of how we will be promoting each of the Licensing objectives and most importantly, CCTV is being installed on the farm. Looking specifically at the concerns raised, please note there have been NO RECORDS of nuisance or anti-social behaviour whatsoever, and even with our most recent launch event attended by up to 300 people from Blockley and surrounding villages, our events run very smoothly.

To conclude, it is important to keep perspective of what we are applying to the Council for and what that is - to be licensed to promote and sell our produce from our farm. We should highlight that both Blockley Café and The Great Western Arms pub in Blockley have both expressed an interest in the product and would like to work with us. In this day and age of promoting diversification and provenance, we would respectfully ask the Council to grant us permission to sell a locally produced and British farm product with the confidence that we will adhere to the Licensing Act and Cotswold District Council at all times.

Yours sincerely

Tim & Tanya Spittle