

**Description** Noise arising from the Royal Oak Public House – Walkern Road, Stevenage

**Date** 26 September 2018

**Issued by** [REDACTED] BSc (Hons) MIOA  
Senior Consultant

**Issued to** McMullen & Sons Limited

**Ref No** RK2581/18230

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The Royal Oak Public House host amplified events at their premises located at 24 Walkern Road in Stevenage. Recently there have been a number of complaints from a nearby resident made to the Local Authority regarding noise levels from these events.

McMullen & Sons Limited have attempted to mitigate the levels of noise emanating from the premises by installing secondary glazing, monitoring noise levels and employing security to manage patrons entering and leaving, as well as patrons in the external smoking area. The Local Authority have subsequently visited the nearby resident’s property whilst music events have been taking place. The Local Authority have advised the levels of noise emanating from the premises are not necessarily significant, but should be investigated so that any further mitigation measures may be incorporated where practicable.

Accordingly, McMullen & Sons Limited have instructed Spectrum Acoustic Consultants to measure noise levels whilst a music event takes place and provide outline mitigation advice. This technical note details the results and observations taken from a noise measurement survey carried out on Friday 14 September 2018.

**2. SITE DESCRIPTION**

The Royal Oak is located off Walkern Road in Stevenage. The Public House is a long established business which has operated for many years. The general area surrounding the Public House primarily consists of residential properties. Walkern Road runs along the northern boundary of the site. The site consists of a two-storey high building which has two bar areas. The largest of the bar areas hosts music events on Friday and Saturday evenings. Entrance to the main bar is gained via a lobby off the car park on the east side of the building. A small smoking area is located in the vicinity of the main entrance next to the car park. Entrance to the smaller sports bar is gained via Walkern Road

The premises operates between 12:00 and 23:00, Sunday to Thursday, and between 12:00 and 00:00 on Fridays and Saturdays. Amplified music events take place between 21:00 and 00:00 on Fridays, and between 20:00 and 00:00 on Saturdays. The events currently taking place at the premises include DJs and live bands. Acts generally utilise the in-house amplification system. There is a noise limiter installed at the premises in which all acts must use. It was advised that this has previously been calibrated by a suitably qualified person.

It is understood the complainant resides at No. 35 Walkern Road (Glenhurst). This property has direct line of sight to the smoking area and eastern façade of the Public House where the music events take place. The eastern façade of the Public House consists of large areas of glazing. However, secondary glazing was incorporated earlier in 2018 following a renovation to the premises.

Figure 1 below shows the site location plan.



Figure 1: Site location plan

### 3. NOISE CRITERIA

There are no directly applicable standards that relate to the assessment of noise from amplified music in pubs and clubs. However, guidance given by the Institute of Acoustics<sup>1</sup> on amplified music advises:

*For premises where entertainment takes place on a regular basis, music and associated sources should not be audible inside noise-sensitive properties at any time.*

When noise disturbance is occurring from existing premises, Section 7 of the same document<sup>1</sup> suggests the following measures should be considered:

- *The provision of well-sealed acoustic doors on emergency exits;*
- *The provision of sound insulated windows;*
- *The installation of visual or audible alarms to alert staff that doors or windows that should be kept close, are open. Alternatively, a manual checking system may be adopted;*
- *The control of music noise at source, either by reducing the overall sound level of the music, or by reducing the sound level at individual frequencies which are causing, or have the potential to cause disturbance;*
- *The playing of more calming types of music towards the end of an event;*

<sup>1</sup> Good Practice Guide on the Control of Noise from Pubs and Clubs, Institute of Acoustics, March 2003

- *The installation of sound level regulatory devices (noise limiters), connected to all permanent music and public address equipment and all available mains power sockets within the area around a stage, within a performance area, or near to a control desk. However, in very noise-sensitive situations, it may be found that such devices have to be set so low that music events are not viable;*
- *Alterations to the number, location and mounting of loudspeakers so that internal music levels can be kept as low as possible and the transmission of structure-borne noise is minimised.*

The Noise Act 1996 as amended by the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 provides guidance to Local Authorities in England on the powers available to them to deal with night noise emanating from dwellings and licensed premises which exceed the "permitted level" of noise. Most Local Authorities do not need to adopt this guidance, though it may be useful here.

The document states that the permitted level is determined by reference to the underlying level of noise. The underlying level of noise is indicative of the level of noise that would otherwise be present in the absence of the noise causing complaint. The measurement of the noise must be made from within the complainant's dwelling using an approved measuring device.

The permitted level is set at 34dB(A) if the underlying level of noise is no more than 24dB(A), or 10dB(A) above the underlying level of noise where this exceeds 24dB(A). If the permitted level exceeds this criteria, the Local Authority have the right to enforce a fixed penalty notice.

The document also states that "The permitted level for the night noise offence should not be taken as an indicator of whether or not the noise may also constitute a statutory nuisance. It is possible that a noise which is not an offence under the Noise Act 1996 may nevertheless be a Statutory Nuisance. It is also possible that noise which is an offence under the Noise Act 1996 may not be a statutory nuisance."

There is no published guidance which details the objective measures which do or do not constitute a noise nuisance. Normally, the level, duration, frequency, character and time of day are all factors that help establish whether statutory noise nuisance exists.

#### 4. SITE NOISE MEASUREMENT SURVEY

Noise levels were not able to be measured inside the complainant's property. However, attended measurements were carried out in front of the residential property (35 Walkem Road). Measurements consisted of ambient noise levels whilst a DJ led event was taking place at the premises during the evening on Friday 14 September 2018. The event focused on soul music, which is one of the most popular monthly events held at the Royal Oak. Throughout the survey, the Public House was very busy, with a number of patrons outside in the smoking area at any given time.

In order to determine noise levels specifically attributable to the Public House activities, road traffic movements, aircraft movements and other spurious events were paused out from the measurements. Reverberant noise measurements at a number of locations inside the Public House were also carried out for reference.

To provide a baseline for the assessment, measurements of ambient noise levels in the absence of amplified music and noise from patrons during the evening of Monday 17 September were also carried out.

The following instrumentation was used to measure noise levels during the survey:

- Bruel & Kjaer Type 2260 Sound Level Meter s/n 2027587
- Bruel & Kjaer Type 4189 Microphone s/n 2906873
- Bruel & Kjaer Type 4231 Acoustic Calibrator s/n 2229825
- Bruel & Kjaer Type ZC 0026 Preamplifier s/n 4130

Before and after the survey, the sound level meter was field-calibrated in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines, and no significant drift was observed. The meter, microphone and field calibrator are laboratory calibrated biennially in accordance with UKAS procedures or to traceable National Standards.

Environmental noise record sheets detailing the full breakdown of results from the attended noise measurements are included in Appendix A.

**5. NOISE SURVEY RESULTS AND ANALYSIS**

Measured ambient noise levels in the absence of amplified music and patron noise at the premises, as well as whilst music was being played and patrons were in the smoking area, at the nearby residential receptor location, are summarised in Table 1.

Location	Period	Amplified Music & Patron Noise <i>L<sub>Aeq</sub></i> (dB)	Ambient noise levels in the Absence of Amplified Music & Patron Noise <i>L<sub>Aeq</sub></i> (dB)
Outside No. 35 Walkern Road	22:00-22:30	50	-
	22:30-23:00	50	55
	23:00-23:30	50	50
	23:30-00:00	49	48

**Table 1:** Summary of measured external ambient noise levels

Subsequent analysis of the noise measurement results was undertaken. The Guidelines for Community Noise – World Health Organization, 1999 (WHO) provides absolute noise limits for outside and inside bedrooms during the night time. A difference of 15dB(A) is stated by WHO between external and internal noise levels for partially open windows. Therefore based on the measured external noise levels outside of the nearby complainant's property, internal noise levels may be estimated. Table 2 below shows the estimated noise levels inside the nearest residential property.

Location	Period	Amplified Music & Patron Noise <i>L<sub>Aeq</sub></i> (dB)	Ambient noise levels in the Absence of Amplified Music & Patron Noise <i>L<sub>Aeq</sub></i> (dB)
Inside No. 35 Walkern Road	22:00-22:30	35	-
	22:30-23:00	35	40
	23:00-23:30	35	35
	23:30-00:00	34	33

**Table 2:** Summary of estimated internal ambient noise levels

Internal noise levels in the absence of music events are higher than the lowest underlying noise level of 24dB(A) given by the Noise Act 1996. Therefore, in line with the Noise Act 1996 guidance, the permitted level from music events should be no more than 10dB(A) above the underlying noise level. Table 3 below compares the estimated underlying noise level with the estimated noise levels from each of the music events likely to occur inside the nearest residential property.

Location	Period	Amplified Music & Patron Noise <i>L</i> <sub>Aeq</sub> (dB)	Estimated Underlying LAeq Noise Level dB(A)	Excess dB(A)
inside No. 35 Walkern Road	22:30-23:00	35	40	-5
	23:00-23:30	35	35	-
	23:30-00:00	34	33	+1

**Table 3:** Comparison of estimated amplified music & patron noise with the underlying noise level likely to occur inside of the nearest residential property.

For much of the time, noise levels associated with amplified music and patrons in the smoking area are lower than the underlying ambient noise levels inside No. 35 Walkern Road. Between 23:30 and 00:00, noise levels from the Royal Oak marginally exceed the underlying level by 1dB. However, throughout the monitoring period, noise levels were comfortably lower than the permitted level, as defined by the Noise Act 1996. Therefore, the noise impact is low. It should also be noted that the Public House is a long established business, which has operated at this location for many years.

Observations during the survey suggest noise associated with patrons is more audible than the amplified music emanating from the main bar outside of No. 35 Walkern Road. Low frequency noise associated with the music is generally low, nor does it have any other significant characteristics. In order to reduce noise levels from patrons when entering and leaving, as well as in the external smoking area, door security has recently been employed during the weekend periods when music events take place. Furthermore, after 22:00, patrons are not permitted to congregate externally at the front of the premises along Walkern Road.

**6. CONCLUSIONS**

The assessment has shown that noise levels from the Royal Oak are comfortably lower than the permitted level, as defined by the Noise Act 1996, inside the nearby complainant's property whilst a music event is taking place. Therefore, the overall noise impact is low and no further mitigation measures are required.

## ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE RECORD SHEET

**Location:** Main Dancefloor      **Project:** The Royal Oak, Staveage  
**Date:** 14 September 2018      **Instrumentation:** Bruel & Kjaer 2260/2  
**Calibration Times:** 21:35, 01:00      **Plant Operating Condition:** n/a

Date	Time Start	Time Dur'n (Min)	Wind Speed m/s	Weather Wind Dir'n	Cloud (%)	Noise Level dB(A)					Comments (Including description of noise (eg whine, hiss, rumble, impact, vehicle rain, vegetation, or animal noise).)	
						L10	L50	L90	LMAX	LMIN		L <sub>Aeq</sub>
14/09/18	21:47	00:42	n/a	n/a	n/a	98	94	92	103	88	95	Music from DJ dominant, patrons on dancefloor, patrons at bar.
14/09/18	21:48	00:34	n/a	n/a	n/a	96	94	91	101	83	94	Music from DJ dominant, patrons on dancefloor, patrons at bar.
14/09/18	21:49	00:50	n/a	n/a	n/a	97	94	91	102	86	95	Music from DJ dominant, patrons on dancefloor, patrons at bar.
14/09/18	22:47	00:33	n/a	n/a	n/a	98	96	93	101	87	96	Music from DJ dominant, patrons on dancefloor, patrons at bar.

Date	Time	L <sub>Aeq</sub> dB(A)	Leq Octave Band Pressure Level								Comments	
			31	63	125	250	500	1k	2k	4k		8k
14/09/18	21:47	95	63	92	95	87	90	93	85	79	68	Music from DJ dominant, patrons on dancefloor, patrons at bar.
14/09/18	21:48	94	62	88	92	90	93	86	82	73	Music from DJ dominant, patrons on dancefloor, patrons at bar.	
14/09/18	21:49	95	68	89	94	91	86	81	76	Music from DJ dominant, patrons on dancefloor, patrons at bar.		
14/09/18	22:47	96	73	89	92	90	87	82	75	Music from DJ dominant, patrons on dancefloor, patrons at bar. Stayed more towards the back and middle sections of the dancefloor away from speakers.		



# ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE RECORD SHEET

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**Location:** Main Dancefloor

**Project:** The Royal Oak, Stevenage

**Date:** 14 September 2018

**Instrumentation:** Bruel & Kjaer 2260/2

**Calibration Times:** 21:35 01:00

**Plant Operating Condition:** n/a

Date	Time Start	Time Dur'n (Min)	Wind Speed m/s	Weather Wind Dir'n	Cloud (%)	L10	L50	Noise Level dB(A)			L <sub>Aeq</sub>	Comments (including description of noise (eg whine, hiss, rumble, impact, vehicle rain, vegetation, or animal noise))
								L <sub>90</sub>	L <sub>MAX</sub>	L <sub>MIN</sub>		
14/09/18	22:50	00:38	n/a	n/a	n/a	103	99	93	108	83	100	Measurement taken while moving around busy dancefloor while music was playing, more towards the front of the dancefloor, by the speakers. Measurement taken while moving around busy dancefloor while music was playing, more into the middle of the dancefloor. By large windows next to dancefloor.
14/09/18	22:51	01:00	n/a	n/a	n/a	100	97	106	89	98		
14/09/18	22:54	00:51	n/a	n/a	n/a	96	94	90	100	83		

Date	Time	L <sub>Aeq</sub> dB(A)	Leq Octave Band Pressure Level								Comments	
			31	63	125	250	500	1k	2k	4k		8k
14/09/18	22:50	100	74	92	93	98	98	96	91	87	78	Measurement taken while moving around busy dancefloor while music was playing, more towards the front of the dancefloor, by the speakers. Measurement taken while moving around busy dancefloor while music was playing, more into the middle of the dancefloor. By large windows next to dancefloor.
14/09/18	22:51	98	65	91	93	93	95	93	91	87	77	
14/09/18	22:54	94	70	96	98	94	91	89	86	83	76	

## ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE RECORD SHEET

**Location:** Top end of bar, by north facing window looking onto Walkem Rd  
**Date:** 14 September 2018  
**Calibration Times:** 21:35, 01:00

**Project:** The Royal Oak, Stevenage  
**Instrumentation:** Bruel & Kjaer 2280/2  
**Plant Operating Condition:** n/a

Date	Time Start	Time Dur'n (Min)	Wind Speed m/s	Weather Wind Dir'n	Cloud (%)	L10	L50	Noise Level dB(A)				L <sub>Aeq</sub>	Comments (Including description of noise (eg whine, hiss, rumble, impact, vehicle rain, vegetation, or animal noise).
								L <sub>90</sub>	L <sub>MAX</sub>	L <sub>MIN</sub>	L <sub>Aeq</sub>		
14/09/18	21:52	00:38	n/a	n/a	n/a	90	86	83	103	80	88	Music from dancefloor dominant, patrons at bar, patrons seated around position.	
14/09/18	21:55	00:46	n/a	n/a	n/a	88	85	83	92	81	86	Music from dancefloor dominant, patrons at bar, patrons seated around position.	
14/09/18	21:57	00:18	n/a	n/a	n/a	93	87	84	98	79	89	Music from dancefloor dominant, patrons at bar, patrons seated around position.	
14/09/18	22:59	01:12	n/a	n/a	n/a	88	85	82	94	78	86	Music from dancefloor dominant, patrons at bar, patrons seated around position.	

Date	Time	L <sub>Aeq</sub> dB(A)	Leq Octave Band Pressure Level								Comments	
			31	63	125	250	500	1k	2k	4k		8k
14/09/18	21:52	88	62	81	86	81	86	84	80	71	62	Music from dancefloor dominant, patrons at bar, patrons seated around position.
14/09/18	21:55	86	60	82	82	79	84	82	77	69	56	Music from dancefloor dominant, patrons at bar, patrons seated around position.
14/09/18	21:57	89	67	82	79	82	86	86	82	73	60	Music from dancefloor dominant, patrons at bar, patrons seated around position.
14/09/18	22:59	86	69	84	86	85	84	81	76	69	62	Music from dancefloor dominant, patrons at bar, patrons seated around position.



# ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE RECORD SHEET

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**Location:** Top end of bar, by east facing window looking onto car park

**Date:** 14 September 2018

**Calibration Times:** 21:35 01:00

**Project:** The Royal Oak, Stevenage

**Instrumentation:** Bruel & Kjaer 2260/2

**Plant Operating Condition:** n/a

Date	Time Start	Time Dur'n (Min)	Wind Speed m/s	Weather		Cloud (%)	L10	L50	Noise Level dB(A)			L <sub>Aeq</sub>	Comments (Including description of noise (eg whine, hiss, rumble, impact, vehicle rain, vegetation, or animal noise).
				Wind Dir'n	Wind Dir'n				L <sub>90</sub>	L <sub>MAX</sub>	L <sub>MIN</sub>		
14/09/18	23:02	00:40	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	88	85	82	93	79	86	Music from dancefloor dominant, patrons at bar, patrons seated around position.

Date	Time	L <sub>Aeq</sub> dB(A)	Leq Octave Band Pressure Level								Comments	
			31	63	125	250	500	1k	2k	4k		8k
14/09/18	23:02	86	68	80	80	79	83	82	78	70	59	Music from dancefloor dominant, patrons at bar, patrons seated around position.

### ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE RECORD SHEET

Location: Car Park, 10m from public house entrance, 16m from Walkern Rd  
 Date: 14 September 2018  
 Calibration Times: 21:35, 01:00

Project: The Royal Oak, Stevenage  
 Instrumentation: Bruel & Kjaer 2260/2  
 Plant Operating Condition: n/a

Date	Time Start	Time Dur'n (Min)	Wind Speed m/s	Weather		Cloud (%)	Noise Level dB(A)					Comments (Including description of noise (eg whine, hiss, rumble, impact, vehicle rain, vegetation, or animal noise).	
				Wind Dir'n	Wind		L10	L50	L90	LMAX	LMIN		L <sub>Aeq</sub>
14/09/18	22:03	00:58	0-1	-		20	64	58	51	70	47	60	Patrons outside smoking and talking, music from inside.

Date	Time	L <sub>Aeq</sub> dB(A)	Leq Octave Band Pressure Level								Comments	
			31	63	125	250	500	1k	2k	4k		8k
14/09/18	22:03	60	61	69	61	54	60	55	51	42	-	Patrons outside smoking and talking, music from inside.

# ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE RECORD SHEET

Sheet 6 of 9  
RNS/18230

**Location:** Outside No. 35 Walkern Road (Glenhurst)

**Date:** 14 September 2018

**Calibration Times:** 21:35, 01:00

**Project:** The Royal Oak, Stevenage

**Instrumentation:** Bruel & Kjaer 2260/2

**Plant Operating Condition:** n/a

Date	Time Start	Time Dur'n (Min)	Weather Wind Speed m/s	Wind Dir'n	Cloud (%)	Noise Level dB(A)					L <sub>Aeq</sub>	Comments (including description of noise (eg whine, hiss, rumble, impact, vehicle rain, vegetation, or animal noise))
						L <sub>10</sub>	L <sub>50</sub>	L <sub>90</sub>	L <sub>MAX</sub>	L <sub>MIN</sub>		
14/09/18	22:07	04:12	0-1	-	20	53	49	45	61	43	50	Noise from patrons outside, music from inside.
14/09/18	22:27	03:05	0-1	-	20	52	48	45	69	43	50	Noise from patrons outside, music from inside.
14/09/18	22:43	00:13	0-1	-	20	51	47	44	52	43	48	Noise from patrons outside, music from inside.
14/09/18	23:22	08:04	0-1	-	20	54	48	45	62	41	50	Noise from patrons outside, music from inside.
14/09/18	23:37	07:23	0-1	-	20	51	47	45	63	42	49	Noise from patrons outside, music from inside.
14/09/18	23:59	05:31	0-1	-	20	50	46	43	64	40	48	Noise from patrons outside, music from inside.
15/09/18	00:09	06:09	0-1	-	20	56	50	45	67	40	52	Noise from patrons leaving.
15/09/18	00:23	30:00	0-1	-	20	56	45	42	91	39	62	6 patrons still outside public house until 00:48.

Date	Time	L <sub>Aeq</sub> dB(A)	Leq Octave Band Pressure Level								Comments
			31	63	125	250	500	1k	2k	4k	
14/09/18	22:07	50	55	52	46	47	41	34	21	Noise from patrons outside, music from inside.	
14/09/18	22:27	50	60	55	46	48	41	34	25	Noise from patrons outside, music from inside.	
14/09/18	22:43	48	50	53	44	46	37	25	-	Noise from patrons outside, music from inside.	
14/09/18	23:22	50	58	56	49	48	41	34	24	Noise from patrons outside, music from inside.	
14/09/18	23:37	49	51	54	42	46	40	32	23	Noise from patrons outside, music from inside.	
14/09/18	23:59	48	53	48	41	46	40	31	23	Noise from patrons outside, music from inside.	
15/09/18	00:09	52	59	48	44	51	44	37	27	Noise from patrons leaving.	
15/09/18	00:23	62	59	57	54	55	53	48	40	6 patrons still outside public house until 00:48.	

**ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE RECORD SHEET**

Location: Outside No. 26 Walkern Road  
 Date: 14 September 2018  
 Calibration Times: 21:35, 01:00

Project: The Royal Oak, Stevenage  
 Instrumentation: Bruel & Kjaer 2260/2  
 Plant Operating Condition: n/a

Date	Time Start	Time Dur'n (Min)	Wind Speed m/s	Weather Wind Dir'n	Cloud (%)	Noise Level dB(A)					Comments (Including description of noise (eg whine, hiss, rumble, impact, vehicle rain, vegetation, or animal noise).	
						L10	L50	L90	LMAX	LMIN		LAEQ
14/09/18	23:06	03:09	0-1	-	20	51	48	46	58	43	49	Noise from patrons outside, music from inside.

Date	Time	L <sub>Aeq</sub> dB(A)	Leq Octave Band Pressure Level							Comments				
			500	1k	2k	4k	8k	125	250					
14/09/18	23:06	49	47	45	39	32	22	46	46	55	57	31	53	Noise from patrons outside, music from inside.

# ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE RECORD SHEET

Sheet 8 of 9  
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**Location:** Outside No. 35 Walkern Road (Glenhurst)

**Date:** 17 September 2018

**Calibration Times:** 22:40 00:20

**Project:** The Royal Oak, Stevenage

**Instrumentation:** Bruel & Kjaer 2260/2

**Plant Operating Condition:** n/a

Date	Time		Wind Speed m/s	Weather Wind Dir'n	CLOUD (%)	Noise Level dB(A)				L <sub>Aeq</sub>	Comments (including description of noise (eg whine, hiss, rumble, impact, vehicle rain, vegetation, or animal noise)).	
	Start	Dur'n (Min)				L <sub>10</sub>	L <sub>50</sub>	L <sub>50</sub>	L <sub>MAX</sub>			L <sub>MIN</sub>
17/09/2018	22:42:30	5	Low	W	10	47	44	42	70	41	51	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	22:48:57	5	Low	W	10	45	44	42	67	41	48	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	22:55:27	5	Low	W	10	58	47	43	81	42	58	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic, motorbike.
17/09/2018	23:00:27	5	Low	W	10	50	44	42	68	40	49	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:05:58	5	Low	W	10	48	44	42	70	40	50	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:11:49	5	Low	W	10	46	43	41	67	40	47	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:16:49	5	Low	W	10	50	43	41	72	39	52	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:21:49	5	Low	W	10	45	42	41	69	39	49	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:26:49	5	Low	W	10	43	42	41	56	39	42	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:31:49	5	Low	W	10	45	43	41	48	40	43	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:36:49	5	Low	W	10	46	42	41	63	39	46	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:41:49	5	Low	W	10	45	43	42	49	39	44	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:46:49	5	Low	W	10	51	44	42	71	40	52	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:51:49	5	Low	W	10	44	43	42	51	40	43	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:56:49	5	Low	W	10	52	43	41	65	39	50	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
18/09/2018	00:01:49	5	Low	W	10	44	42	41	48	39	43	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
18/09/2018	00:06:49	5	Low	W	10	46	42	41	67	39	48	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
18/09/2018	00:11:49	5	Low	W	10	62	44	42	71	39	56	Occasional car on Walkern Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.

## ENVIRONMENTAL NOISE RECORD SHEET

**Location:** Outside No. 35 Walkem Road (Glenhurst)  
**Date:** 17 September 2018  
**Calibration Times:** 22:40, 00:20

**Project:** The Royal Oak, Stevenage  
**Instrumentation:** Bruel & Kjaer 2260/2  
**Plant Operating Condition:** n/a

Date	Time	L <sub>eq</sub> dB(A)	Leq Octave Band Pressure Level										Comments
			31	63	125	250	500	1k	2k	4k	8k		
17/09/2018	22:42:30	51	55	54	47	47	47	47	48	42	34	26	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	22:48:57	48	54	47	46	44	45	45	45	40	30	23	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	22:55:27	58	58	56	58	57	53	57	53	50	46	44	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic, motorcycle.
17/09/2018	23:00:27	49	55	49	49	45	46	45	46	41	30	20	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:05:58	50	61	53	48	45	47	45	47	44	34	27	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:11:49	47	59	47	45	43	44	43	44	39	32	24	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:16:49	52	54	48	47	47	49	47	49	46	35	26	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:21:49	49	53	46	45	45	47	45	47	40	31	24	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:26:49	42	45	43	40	39	39	39	39	31	20	16	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:31:49	43	50	46	42	41	41	41	41	30	19	15	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:36:49	46	50	46	44	42	44	42	43	38	30	23	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:41:49	44	46	45	42	41	41	41	41	30	22	18	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:46:49	52	57	49	47	47	49	47	49	45	36	28	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:51:49	43	46	44	42	41	40	41	40	29	20	15	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
17/09/2018	23:56:49	50	49	49	51	49	46	49	46	36	22	17	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
18/09/2018	00:01:49	43	45	45	41	41	40	41	40	28	18	14	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
18/09/2018	00:06:49	48	51	52	51	47	42	47	42	30	18	14	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.
18/09/2018	00:11:49	56	60	59	60	55	51	55	51	43	34	28	Occasional car on Walkem Rd, occasional plane, distant road traffic.



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RE: [External] Re: Complaint re noise

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From [REDACTED]  
Date Thu 26/08/2021 11:53  
To [REDACTED]  
Cc [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
Midday is good for me. I'll see you there.  
[REDACTED]

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 26 August 2021 08:35  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [External] Re: Complaint re noise

Good afternoon,

Nice to speak to you, it will be good to put a face to the name.

I have had a complaint myself reference ref noise but not a complaint of music, infact they were at pains to say, "well done, you have sorted the music situation". Equally, all the pre Covid agreements are in place that where laid out with [REDACTED] and the various EHO officers. As well as our own checks, to date not once have we gone above the accepted government guidelines and our own licence stating it should not go beyond our boundary edges.

I am sure you would have read the files and noted that even with noise recording equipment being put in place, to date we have not been in violation of breaking any sound requirements as laid out in law.

I understand from [REDACTED] (number 26), that the issue is people outside at 1 - 1.30am in the morning. We have been at pains to say historically that unfortunately Walkern Road is a walk through for many people who finish on the high street and use the road to walk home.

We are aware our outside area is only licenced until 9pm and continually make our customers aware of that. There is a smoking shelter to the front of the building, which we obviously can not stop people using.

I have spoken to my management team on site and discussed what we can do further to help the situation.

We have come up with the following points:

- 1) Moving the smoking shelter to the rear of the car park
- 2) Putting stackable chairs and tables at the front of the premises, which can be removed to the existing smoking shelter at 9pm.
- 3) We have tried in vain to get door security since the start of the Euros, however having spoken to several security companies, they are not taking on any new venues at this point due to a severe shortage of staff since the start of the pandemic/Brexit, meaning many people have returned to main land Europe. We are placing a member of our own management team on the door and



patrolling the perimeter through out this weekend.

I would like to point however that we are not responsible for the general public once they have left our premises. Equally we can not be held responsible for noise levels at 12.30/1/1.30 in the morning, which is being suggested, which makes up part of the complaint made to my management team. People are asked to move on repeatedly and have general notices up to that effect.

I am free to discuss these points and any others brought up from the complaints that have been made on Friday, can I suggest midday? I have meetings in the morning.

Many Thanks, [REDACTED]

On Aug 25, 2021 5:06 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

I'm one of the Licensing Officers at Stevenage Council. I've had a couple of complaints about loud music and other nuisance from the Royal Oak. I've tried phoning but haven't been able to get through to you. I'd like to meet you at the pub on Friday afternoon to discuss the matter. When would be a suitable time to meet?

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Licensing Officer, Stevenage Council.

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Environmental Health and Licensing

Assistant Director of Planning and Regulation: [REDACTED]

**Stevenage**  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage SG1 1HN • Tel: 01438 242242 • Textphone: 01438 242555 • Fax: 01438 242566 • stevenage.gov.uk

[REDACTED]

Via email - [REDACTED]

Our Ref: 240425

Contact: [REDACTED]

Direct Line: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Date: 25 April 2024

Dear [REDACTED]

### **YOURSAY COMPLAINT – Interventions at the Royal Oak**

I refer to your complaint dated 27 February 2024 regarding environmental health intervention at The Royal Oak, Walkem Road, Stevenage. I also met with you on this date to discuss the issues.

I have raised this complaint as a Stage 1 complaint against the Service. You will receive a confirmation of this shortly under separate cover.

I have identified the following comments and questions.

1. You consider the abatement notice unjust.
2. Multiple events over various nights, one complaint
3. Previous interactions with Environmental Health Officers
4. Lack of historic evidence
5. TENS Notices
6. Officer on site monitoring visits
7. Bullying complaint
8. Measures introduced at premises cost
9. Video Evidence

I write to answer your queries and questions in order numbered above.

#### **The service of an abatement notice**

An abatement notice in accordance with Section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (EPA) has been served as the investigating officer has grounds to suspect that a statutory noise nuisance is likely to recur.

The investigating officer is duty-bound to serve a notice should their investigation reveal that there is the probability of a statutory nuisance being caused.



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The notice requires that a statutory nuisance is not allowed to occur or recur.

An abatement notice must be served whenever there is a statutory nuisance witnessed or where there is a likely recurrence. The requirement to serve does not have regard for previous compliance or where historical nuisances are not established to be statutory as the regime does not take into account any previous actions or inactions which may have resulted in no nuisance arising.

In the period leading to the service of the abatement notice, the Council received numerous complaints from five different households. This included sound recordings submitted by two different households. The investigating officer gathered witness statements indicating that a long-standing nuisance was caused by loud music emanating from the premises. Further investigations were undertaken at the premises, which identified that the noise limiting device was faulty and not operating as required. The officer considered that the premises was likely to cause a nuisance to recur and as such, was required to serve an abatement notice.

In determining the likelihood of a statutory nuisance, the officer takes into account

- the time that the noise occurs
- how long it goes on for
- how often it happens
- how loud it is.

There is no fixed level of noise which the law says is a statutory nuisance; it is an assessment by an objective, competent person.

You have quoted your premises licence condition; 'The sound limiting device shall be set to control the sound level so that any noise resulting from amplified Public Entertainments is inaudible at any point beyond the boundary of the premises known as: 'The Royal Oak Public House, ■ Walkern Road, Stevenage'. The licence condition has no bearing on the decision to serve an abatement notice. The noise limiting device was identified as faulty enabling a nuisance likely to recur as the device was not capable of stopping the volume of sound escaping and affecting residential neighbours.

Whilst I appreciate that you are aggrieved that the Officer served the notice, the Officer was undertaking her duty fully and in accordance with the legislation that the Council enforces.

In the meeting on 27 February 2024, you stated that you wanted the Notice withdrawn. I advised that the Notice remains and can only be withdrawn for specific reasons; the Notice was served in error, the Notice is defective or there is no evidence to service the Notice. I am unable to state that any of these issues are in play to enable the Council to withdraw the Notice.

### **Multiple events over various nights, one complaint**

There are factors as to why the same complaint investigated throughout a long period of time produces different outcomes. Historically, residents complaining did not fully co-operate with the Council; the level of music emanating from the venue varied at different events, especially the events involving a live band. Furthermore, there have been new

complainants voicing the same complaint about the same event, which was linked to the Royal Oak. Please see the recent complaints received regarding the Royal Oak; the complaints have intensified since September 2023.

Complainant 1	Complainant 2	Complainant 3	Complainant 4	Complainant 5
15/12/23 at 22:40	29/09/23 at 22:57	23/12/2023 at 22:12	23/12/23 at 22:42	26/11/23 at 21:43
23/12/23 at 21:46	06/10/23 at 23:43			
05/01/24 at 21:23	07/10/23 at 22:59			
06/01/24 at 19:28	25/11/23 at 22:17			
25/01/24 at 23:07	25/11/23 at 23:21			
22/02/24 at 22:39	01/12/23 at 23:35			
23/02/23 at 21:40, 21:58, 22:14	23/12/23 at 22:08			
09/03/24 at 15:34	01/01/24 at 00:46			

The multiple complaint from 23 December 2023 was investigated on 8 January 2024 and following this investigation, the Officer considered that this incident was likely to recur and served the Abatement Notice. During the investigation, it was established that the noise limiting device was not operating correctly which permitted excessive sound to be played within the premises. It has not been established how long the noise limiting device was faulty.

**Previous interactions with Environmental Health Officers**

Previous interactions with officers have been informal. As such, the advice they have provided was to attempt to assist you in preventing a recurrence of complaints. They were suggested with the best of intent.

In regard to the fire exit facing Walkern Road, I am unable to identify when you were advised to lock this door. In the application for a licence in 2005, the licence holder required that this door remain closed but unlocked and this advice meets the minimum legal standards for fire safety in commercial premises.

You have commented that you were unaware of the need to vary the licence once the stage had been fitted. I am aware that the licensing officer has raised this with the licensee and this will be addressed by way of a minor variation.

I am unable to provide evidence to support a previous Abatement Notice or Licence Review. This is because the Service has not served an Abatement Notice prior or launched a review of the Licence. Monitoring, using the Council’s noise monitoring equipment has not

provided evidence of a statutory nuisance; the alleged manipulation by a resident using the equipment did not assist any resident's motives to obtain an outcome of their preference.

The monitoring undertaken by officers on 20 May 2022 until 6 June 2022 is held by this Service. However, I am unable to provide you with this data as the data is interpreted using individualised software which the Council uses under a software licence. You will be unable to access this data and draw any meaningful conclusions. This monitoring was undertaken to fulfil the Service's duty to investigate a complaint in accordance with the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

You have commented in regard to [REDACTED] intervention being fabricated when the 'band was too loud' ('Zero evidence in 12 years' paragraph). I have investigated and established that the officers did not go inside the premise to establish how the noise was generated, whether a live band or a DJ. Notwithstanding the source of the sound, the sound was escaping from the premises and as such was not fabricated.

### **Temporary Event Notices (TENs)**

As a tenant, you are able to request a maximum number of temporary event notices each year. As part of the Licensing Act 2003, a TEN is automatically granted unless there is an objection from a relevant responsible authority.

When a TEN is granted, the premise's licence conditions are not applied during the period the TEN is operational and the Notice does not have conditions attached to it. I am unable, therefore to provide evidence of your premises breaking the terms of a TEN. I do not doubt that you adhere to your licensing hours strictly.

### **Officer on-site monitoring visits**

Over the timeframe of an on-going complaint regarding the Royal Oak, there have been numerous monitoring visits to investigate the complaint.

Officers have been clear and transparent in providing feedback to house staff regarding the outcome of monitoring, particularly where a statutory nuisance was not determined at the time of monitoring. Your team have been approachable and engaged during visits by officers enabling discussion regarding the management of nuisance.

You have requested that I determine whether there was an acoustician employed by the premises before. In working through the case file, I have identified that a contractor was employed from January 2017 to provide advice. I cannot determine who engaged the contractor. I am restricted in providing this information to you as you were not the recipient. I would be able to send this to you, following a Freedom of Information request submitted to the Council, outlining the information wanted.

### **Bullying complaints**

I have discussed this concern raised by you with the officer.

In response to [REDACTED] statement, the officer does not recall being rude and dismissive to [REDACTED]. The officer recalls advising that the cut-out threshold on the limiter



could be increased as the measured level was 3dB lower and this would assist the business.

The officer remembers that the intervention to recalibrate the sound limiting device on 21 February 2024 was challenging. From both accounts (the officer and [REDACTED] statement), I suspect that actions and comments were misinterpreted inadvertently from both individuals.

In reading [REDACTED] resignation, I am unable to ascertain that his resignation is due to the sole actions of the Service. I wish [REDACTED] the best in his wellbeing and future positions. Should your staff suffer harassment from complainants, I strongly recommend that these instances are reported to the Police, in the first instance. I understand that [REDACTED] has also recommended a similar course of action by making a complaint in accordance with the Anti-Social Behaviour Act.

### **Measures Introduced at premises cost**

Whilst the upkeep of the premises has been maintained, you have advised that measures were introduced. One of the measures you have referred to was put forward as a licence condition when the licence was adopted by the current Licensing Act regime in 2005;

- The licence holder required that windows and doors remain closed and ventilation be provided via an extract system.

The premises licence holder has a responsibility to ensure that the premises meets the four licensing objectives; I would presume that the fencing to the rear of the premises perimeter was made good to manage the risk of public nuisance. I am unable to identify that changes to the fencing were required by this Service.

In working through the case file, I am unable to ascertain whether external sound curtains were required to be fitted by this Service.

### **Video Evidence**

You have queried the measurements taken by the officer for calibration of the new noise limiting device. In discussion with the Officer, I understand that the test was conducted with the sound level meter being at least 1.5 m away from the floor, walls or a ceiling using a 'spatial average' method. This means that the measurement is taken at more than one point in space to obtain the average reading. Therefore, being at some point during one measurement period (30 seconds) closer to the speaker has no significant influence on the average reading as there were multiple readings. These multiple readings create one average reading over a period of 30 seconds. Taking into account that the measurement was taken from an enclosed space with several reflective surfaces suggests that even when taking the measurement further away (for example more in the middle or at the back of the area marked in red (Acoustic certificate, figure 1, page no 2) using the spatial average method, the margin of error (if any) would be insignificant as the sound would be reflected from multiple reflective surfaces in the room, providing representative level of amplification throughout the whole area.

### **Report of Intervention**

Please see the Report of Intervention from [REDACTED] following her visit on 8 January 2024. The report identifies her actions in investigating the complaints from the residential neighbours regarding the escape of noise. I acknowledge that this report does not identify next actions from the Service. As a result, I have advised the officer to ensure that next actions are clearly identified on reports left to recipients.

### **Appealing the Abatement Notice**

The Notice served provided all the details to appeal a Notice at the Magistrate's Court. The Notes provided all the relevant and necessary information to launch an appeal within a 21-day period from date of service.

### **Working with the Council in future**

I am unable to meet your expectations regarding future work with [REDACTED] and she remains the case officer dealing with noise complaints from the Royal Oak. The case officer can change with varying operational priorities in the Service however, there are no immediate changes anticipated.

Following the calibration of the new sound limiting device, complaints were received on 22 and 23 February 2024. The case officer assessed recordings made and did not consider the complaints as a breach of the Abatement Notice. These are the most recent complaints. The case officer has received initial positive feedback from complainants subsequently that they are undisturbed. I, and the case officer would like to take the opportunity to thank you for your efforts in preventing sound escapes.

I trust I have explained [REDACTED] actions and the duties she is required to fulfil.

I trust this letter addresses your questions. If you are dissatisfied with my response, you may ask for your complaint to be considered at Stage Two of our process. If you decide to do this, please contact the Customer Insight Team at [REDACTED] or on [REDACTED], within fifteen working days of receipt of this letter, quoting the above reference number. You must explain why you remain dissatisfied and what you want from Stage Two of the process that has not already been provided or provide any new information that you would like considered. You can find more information about the procedure at <https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/have-your-say/compliments-and-complaints>

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Commercial & Licensing Manager





 Outlook

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**Re: Royal Oak noise complaints**

---

**From** [REDACTED]  
**Date** Sat 21/05/2022 16:02  
**To** [REDACTED]

Good Afternoon [REDACTED]

I hope this finds you well?

This is a follow up email regarding the points I made and questions I raised in my emails dated the 13th May and 20th April, I am still waiting on a response.

Following on from your last email my door staff during their routine perimeter checks noted our neighbors at number 26 with what looked like a black box pointed at the pub yesterday evening. It's my understanding that if indeed you have supplied people with noise recording equipment that they are used inside their premises and not over the wall inside our car park area?

Can you please tell me how these noise monitors are used and what are the legal requirements when using them to record noise levels?

Many Thanks,  
[REDACTED]

On 13 May 2022 2:05 pm, [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear [REDACTED] [REDACTED]

Please find attached letter confirming two complaints have been made to Environmental Health regarding noise issues.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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RE: Royal Oak Noise Complaints

From [Redacted]  
Date Wed 31/01/2024 12:55  
To [Redacted]

Good afternoon [Redacted]

Thank you for your email.  
I am available next week on the following days – Tuesday and Thursday afternoon and Wednesday morning.

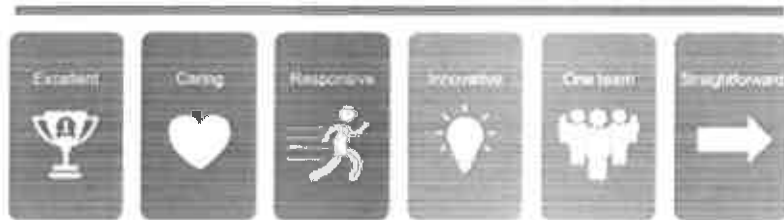
Please advise of your preferred day and time; shall I come to you?

In regard to your Freedom of Information request, you submit your request to <https://www.stevenage.gov.uk/about-the-council/access-to-information/freedom-of-information/freedom-of-information-act>

I look forward to hearing from you with a date, time and preferred venue.

With kind regards,

[Redacted] | Commercial and Licensing Manager | Environmental Health and Licensing | Stevenage Borough Council | Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage, Herts., SG1 1HN  
Tel: 01438 242247 | 07702916912 | Email: [Redacted] Web: [www.stevenage.gov.uk](http://www.stevenage.gov.uk)



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**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 31 January 2024 11:06  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** [External] Royal Oak Noise Complaints

Good morning [REDACTED]

I hope this finds you well?

I am writing to you concerning the ongoing issue at the Royal Oak, Walkern Road. I would like to have a meeting with yourself at your convenience next week.

I am not interested at this point in discussing this matter any further with [REDACTED] to say that I am annoyed and disappointed at the recent action taken by her regarding the noise abatement order is an understatement.

To date she has failed to provide any evidence other than the series of complaints that justify her actions. I would have thought with everything that we are currently doing and have done over the last 12 years with various EHO and licencing officers including yourself that this course of action will only alienate the two parties further, We have organised a meeting with a legal team to take this further as I have now had a second resignation from the house manager within 8 months - both stating that they feel like they are being bullied and harassed by your department (essentially during [REDACTED] tenure)

McMullen's are also telling me that the required actions that are currently being requested are over and above anything they've dealt with in their 200 Years of history. (such as pictures of screws on the sound limiting device)

We are currently formulating a full schedule of events to include all correspondence between your department and ourselves for our legal team. [REDACTED] advised us that on a previous occasion that we could have full access as per freedom of information to any follow up visits regarding any investigation carried out by your department regarding The Royal Oak. Please can you forward this to us at your convenience as our legal team will require it.

I look forward to meeting you next week.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

---

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 31 January 2024 11:05  
**To:** [REDACTED]  
**Subject:** Royal Oak Noise Complaints

Good morning [REDACTED]

I hope this finds you well?

I am writing to you concerning the ongoing issue at the Royal Oak, Walkern Road. I would like to have a meeting with yourself at your convenience next week.

I am not interested at this point in discussing this matter any further with [REDACTED] o say that I am annoyed and disappointed at the recent action taken by her regarding the noise abatement order is an understatement.

To date she has failed to provide any evidence other than the series of complaints that justify her actions. I would have thought with everything that we are currently doing and have done over the last 12 years with various EHO and licencing officers including yourself that this course of action will only alienate the two parties further, We have organised a meeting with a legal team to take this further as I have now had a second resignation from the house manager within 8 months - both stating that they feel like they are being bullied and harassed by your department (essentially during [REDACTED] tenure)

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I look forward to meeting you next week.

Many thanks

[REDACTED]

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# Planning And Regulation

Assistant Director, Planning & Regulation



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Email:

012662

Via email - [contact@mcmullens.co.uk](mailto:contact@mcmullens.co.uk)

Date: 19 November 2021

Dear Sirs

Licensing Act 2003  
The Royal Oak, 24 Walkern Road, Stevenage. SG1 3RA

I write in regard to the above premises and recent complaints to the Council regarding the non-adherence to the Licensing conditions as stated on the premises licence SBCL0076.

The licensing conditions applied to the licence are in place to ensure the premises maintains the four licensing objectives of the Licensing Act 2003.

As a result of complaints received, Officers have investigated the alleged issues and witnessed licence conditions not being met on 3 September and 29 October. An inspection was carried out of the premises on 16 & 17 November in accordance with the above Act. Identified below are the following conditions that are not being met;

- Annex 2, 1(b); the front entrance door is unable to be used as fire escape as this door is blocked by furniture to prevent its use, during public entertainments
- Annex 2, 1(e); the sound level from amplified public entertainments is audible beyond the boundary of the premises
- Annex 2, 1(g); the management of the premises are unable to demonstrate that the permitted occupancy is being monitored and not exceeded

This was communicated to the management team of Oak Pioneer Pub Company on 17 November 2021.

Other concerns have been raised by complainants regarding further licence conditions, however these have yet to be determined;

- Annex 2, 8; Music being played in or transmitted to the outside drinking area
- Annex 2, 9; Children under 18 years of age on the premises after 22:00hrs

As the licence holder, you have a duty to ensure the licensing objectives are upheld through the licensing conditions. The conditions listed above are clear and unequivocal.



co-operative councils  
Working together to make a difference



The premises is a tenanted house, operated by Oak Pioneer Pub Company; you must introduce measures and undertake monitoring that allow you to be confident that the licence conditions are consistently operational as required.

I anticipate that you will strengthen your management/monitoring of this premises to satisfy McMullen & Sons Limited obligations to meet the licence conditions as required and as necessary on a day to day basis.

The Licensing Authority will also be assessing compliance with the licence conditions during events .

Where the tenants are unable to meet the licence conditions, the Licensing Authority will consider taking action in the form of a criminal prosecution under the Licensing Act 2003 or instigate a review of the licence.

Yours faithfully,

[Redacted signature]

[Redacted name]

[Redacted title]

[Redacted contact information]







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**E-H-O & Licensing Officer Visit**

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From Royal Oak [REDACTED]

Date Tue 04/02/2025 12:53

To [REDACTED]

Cc [REDACTED]

Around 10:15pm on Friday 31st January 2025, we had a visit from [REDACTED] {E-H-O} & [REDACTED] {Licensing Officer}

I first spoke with [REDACTED] as did not see [REDACTED] [REDACTED] said they were in the area and thought they would pop in to see how things are going due to the noise complaints we have had at the Royal Oak.

[REDACTED] came over and introduced himself & asked if there was somewhere quieter we could go to talk, at this point we had no one in our sports bar so i took them through to that bar, They stated they were here to check everything's going ok, & that we are doing whats expected of us in regards to the sound levels.

They noticed the meter level was on red, and i explained they were plugged in to the sound monitoring system because they had cut it off earlier on in the evening, [REDACTED] then spoke about how bands dont like to plug in to the monitoring system as when it trips them out it can seriously damage thousands of pounds worth of equipment.

i did mention that on nights we have had people singing has before tripped the monitor.

I showed them our paperwork that has a breakdown of our monitoring, this includes Day, Date, Event, Time, Issues if any, Resolution if any, Where we monitored, Sound meter levels & Who did the monitoring. [REDACTED] asked if she could take some photos of the paperwork & i also showed her the sheet for the day we were on.

I showed them both where it is we monitor from - Dancefloor, Garden, Car park, Boundary {Entrance to the car park}

They went onto saying that the music levels seemed ok but there was a group of 5 people talking whilst having a smoke. that they thought was too loud for the neighbours, so i went and had a word with them asking them to keep it down a bit. they then went indoors.

[REDACTED] then stated the noise was fine as so was the music.

they were happy with what we are doing - Curtains, Sound foam & boards, Monitoring etc. i said we try to monitor through the night and visually monitor outside hourly for customer noise, but obviously cant be outside the whole time.

they said 1 of the sockets needs checking over as may not be linked up to the monitor.

They took down my name and position in the company, said thanks & again stated it was just a flying in the area visit & not to worry but to keep doing what im doing.







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**RE: [EXTERNAL] Royal Oak - Warning Letters**

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**From** [REDACTED]**Date** Thu 01/06/2023 09:28**To** [REDACTED]**Cc** [REDACTED]**Dear** [REDACTED]

Thank you for your email and apologies for responding so late, but I was on a sick leave and returned to a very busy schedule!

I appreciate all the efforts you have already made regarding sound proofing/noise control. However the noise is still escaping and from what I gather the main problem is with low frequencies (bass).

In regards to the sound proofing, i.e. the external curtains – I noted that they are not covering the entire windows and hence may not be that effective in insulating the noise. As you know the lobby door system was already identified as a possible leakage of sound. I do not know how this lobby door system operates, but you have to ensure that the first door (from inside the venue) are always fully shut before the second doors (leading to outside area) are open. They must also be acoustically constructed and sealed to prevent noise leak – do you know if that is the case? Do they have self-closing devices? Insulating against sound is a very difficult, technical task and its quality will depend on number of factors, such as design, type of materials used, construction and workmanship.

You advised that during the night of 29/04 your sound limiter device was in operation. I wanted to ask what tamper proof measures have you applied to ensure the sound limiter device is not bypassed? How certain you are that all amplification is always routed through this device? If this was the case, why on 29/04 I heard such a significant difference in music volume between 22:05 and 22:30 (when you had your DJ on). I also did not note anyone from the pub to monitor the external music levels at that time. However I would be interested to hear and see the recordings and noise levels measured by the staff. Would you mind emailing that through? Once I receive this data I will be able to comment on its relevancy.

You asked me if I recorded and/or measured the sound on 29/04 – the answer is no, as this would be completely irrelevant in the absence of other data such as prevailing background noise level.

Finally I am happy to read that you are in contact with acoustic company and I hope that by this time you will be able to provide further update regarding the sound insulation/recalibration and suitability of your sound limiter device and when we can all meet up to carry out the recalibration.

I am looking forward to hearing from you soon.

Best wishes

Good evening [REDACTED]

I have read over the attached and acknowledge the content in the letter.

The Royal Oak has been working under TENs notices throughout April/May, as have a large amount of other establishments in the hospitality industry due to the extra bank holiday. It provided an opportunity to generate some extra revenue against substantial losses pubs have and continue to make with rising energy prices, staff wages and supplier costs, driving severe cases of unsustainability proven by 12.6 permanent pub closures on average a day in 2022 (over 4,500 pubs gone!).

I have only been with McMullen for 10 months but I have been made aware that we have already substantially invested in the improvement of noise nuisance and sound proofing of The Royal Oak including installing noise monitoring equipment, secondary window glazing, sound proofing external curtains, relocation of smoking shelter and others. On top of this our tenant [REDACTED] and his team have a strict protocol/check sheet that must be completed every live music event which was presented at our recent meeting with licencing and the local councillor. These checks include recording noise from the boundary during events with a decibel reader to ensure excessive noise isn't present. [REDACTED] has sent these recordings through of the dates in question showing decibel readings of 40 and the majority of that is traffic noise.

In regards to the comments in your letter "Specifically, on Saturday 29/04/23 at approximately 22:05 and 22:30 hrs officers observed that live music was much louder than the recorded music." [REDACTED] didn't have any live music on that evening as it was cancelled but they did have a DJ who's equipment was linked into the noise monitoring equipment. Can you provide recordings for this date and time confirming the noise/decibels escaping over the boundary? This would be great for our records and further conversations with [REDACTED] our tenant.

We are waiting to hear back from an acoustician to organise a meeting between themselves and [REDACTED] (or his manager) on a suitable date to look to monitor what is in place and see where possible improvements can be made. You also noted "The music and bass breakout were most prominent when the side lobby door (facing the car park) was open to allow patrons ingress and egress." This is the main exit to allow customers in and out of the pub for a cigarette or fresh air during an event as this is where the smoking shelter is now located after EHO/licencing requested we move it from the front of the pub to this position. We are not allowed to keep these doors open permanently so they are closed unless access is required which means we cannot stop our customers walking in and out these doors, they will only be open for a second or two whilst a customer enters or exits and will never be a prolonged period of time.

[REDACTED] and his team continue to work hard trying to make The Royal Oak a friendly, welcoming, successful and sustainable business and it was agreed at our meeting that once we have had the equipment checked and an acoustician in, alternative avenues were to be explored. I hope to hear back from the acoustic company this week and we can organise a date for them to visit The Royal Oak team so we can plan appropriately moving forward.

Many thanks

[REDACTED] | Tenancy Operations Manager

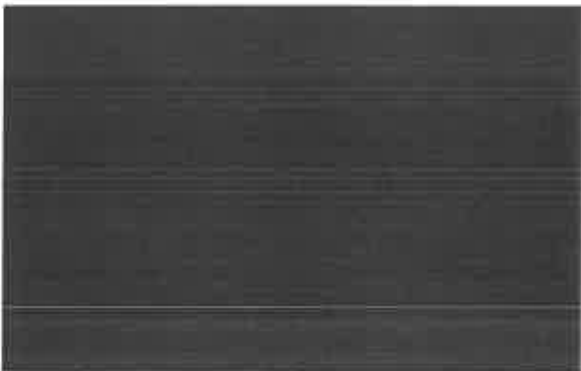


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Dear All,

Please find the letters attached.

Kind Regards



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RE: Meeting 27/02/24 11am Royal Oak

From [redacted]  
Date Wed 13/03/2024 10:15  
To [redacted]

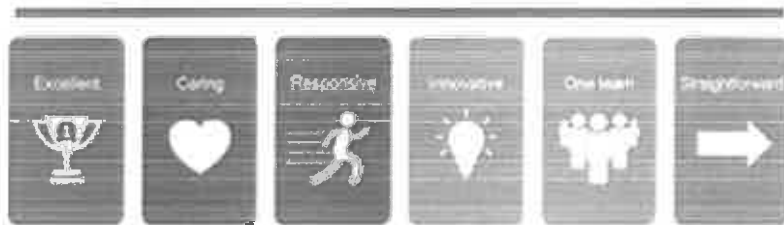
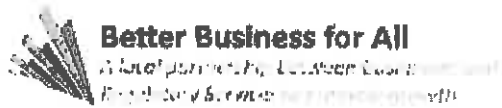
Good morning [redacted]

I write to thank you for your time on 27 February.  
Due to unexpected circumstances, I have not been at work last week; hence I have not yet confirmed our discussion nor answered your queries. Please accept my apologies.

I will register your complaint as a formal complaint (Stage 1) and provide you with a response in the short term.

Many thanks and kind regards,  
Christine

[redacted signature block]



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[redacted footer text]

**Subject:** [External] Meeting 27/02/24 11am Royal Oak

Good afternoon [REDACTED]

Outlined in this email are the failing of the EHO and licencing departments throughout the last 12 years. and my reasoning for no longer dealing or responding to [REDACTED].

### **Unjust abatement order**

Can you please provide me with the evidence I've requested as to why the noise abatement order was served? It's my belief that you have had numerous complaints throughout my 13 year tenure, to date to my knowledge because no evidence has been produced otherwise has a EHO officer ever been able to produce evidence of us breaking the government guidelines regarding what is deemed to be a noise nuisance.

For the past 12 years prior to this EHO officer being involved it has always been the guidelines used by your department for us to adhere to which was laid out the las time we followed this process through, with [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] where they set up the noise monitor. Only when this EHO officer gets involved has this single line come into question **'The sound limiting device shall be set to control the sound level so that any noise resulting from amplified Public Entertainments is inaudible at any point beyond the boundary of the premises known as : 'The Royal Oak Public House, [REDACTED] Walkern Road, Stevenage'** all previous EHO officers have no deemed this to be a nuisance including [REDACTED] who still works in your department.

Every previously EHO officer, licencing officer from Stevenage Borough Council has stated zero noise would never be achievable and therefore have used those government guidelines.

I am sure you would be able to produce on numerous occasions where you've had multiple noise complaints for the Oak on the same night?

Do you think therefore when you're essentially sat down in peace talks to remedy the situation and somebody "drops the bomb" that all parties are not going to leave the table, because that's where we now stand. I will not deal with [REDACTED] again.

### **20 nights of music 1 complaint**

During December we had 20 different music events running. However there was only one which ended getting a complaint against it. This event was the first live music event after [REDACTED] had informed the neighbours about her findings and that were had done nothing wrong, this is clearly retaliation against us, which we have stated will continue to happen until we 'Are a carpark'.

### **Multiple EHO offers all different stories**

During our tenure we have dealt with at least 7 different people from your department all of which have there own "whims". For example; at our expense we were requested to get sound curtains installed. Only for this currently process to tell us that we've wasted our money we don't need them. Or [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] requesting we move the smoking shelter from its position that had been in place since the smoking ban in 2007 to the rear of the building. Only for [REDACTED] to request we move it AGAIN.

Another occasion was the fire exit in the main bar facing Walkern road, we were originally told by Licencing and EHO that the door must remain locked at all times during live music to prevent the

escape of sound only to be told its against the law and must remain open. Another example is the stage, it was originally asked for my EHO to absorb the bass coming from DJs yet, basic acoustics tell you that the stage would amplify bass resonance. Why can I ask then why the licencing officer and EHO officer did not advise us that we would need to put a variation in place because of the floor layout?

### **Zero evidence in 12 years**

To date, neither EHO or licencing can provide any evidence to back up a noise abatement order or licence review, even though we have requested this multiple times through [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. The previous time "evidence" was attempted to be used against us it was from the noise measuring device in the neighbours house. This was found to be fabricated as staff witnessed him holding it up over his fence on a busy Friday night in an attempt to gain a higher reading. This device was installed by [REDACTED] to take internal readings only.

Please can you product as requested by us via several EHO officers, the results of all previous tests carried out by either EH or Licencing. Please see attached email to [REDACTED] for one example.

I would also like to bring to your attention the complaint we received last year regarding a band we booked in, we'd advertised all over social media however at the last minute the band cancelled and we had to replace with a DJ, [REDACTED] allegedly attended the site that evening and reported the 'band' was too loud and the bass drum was escaping the boundary, this is impossible as it was not a band but was our house DJ on the Saturday. Please see attached email highlighting this event. We have video which we will present in court to confirm no band was present, so this breach was fabricated.

### **TENS notices**

At various points in 2023 we put in TEN notices for events we never intended to carry out, this was a ploy by us because we knew that our social media was being watched the neighbour, he took the bait and promptly complained to [REDACTED], the TEN in question was for Old Town Live. The complaint outlined that he could still hear music from us at 12.30am. Please see attached video Evidence showing the band packing up at 12.02am. knowing this, I am staggered that I am still receiving emails from [REDACTED] suggesting that she is going to oppose out latest TEN application. Please provide the evidence where we've used a tens notice previously and you are able to prove that we broke the terms of that TEN licence. Please note that we stay well within our licencing hours, in fact we stop service at 12am even though our licence deems we can go later.

### **Licencing officers come in on Friday night, no issues**

To date that no one from your department has come in on a music event and been able to prove that we are causing a nuisance in any capacity with a profession noise measuring device over the last 13 years of our tenure. We have however had multiple EHO officers come in to the site on music events and say "I will let [REDACTED] know, you are doing nothing wrong" I can provide a statement from the management team at that time that Iain - [REDACTED] predecessor entered the premises after doing a Friday night scouting mission stated this quote.

### **Visits to neighbours no proof**

Can you confirm that there is no record of the previous time that a acoustician was employed by us on [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] request? As I have asked for the evidence on numerous occasions throughout the past 3 years.

### **Neighbour statements**



We have collected ourselves statements from neighbouring houses which clearly state there is zero noise audible in neighbouring houses. Some neighbours didn't even know we had live music every week!

### **Neighbour abuse**

As you can see from the resignation letter from the current house manager, the neighbour is abusive towards the pub. I have had this myself previously where I spoke with him on the phone and he used phrases such as "turn the fucking music off" bare in mind, this was at 5.30 on a bank holiday and the DJ had only just started. Another occasion was when he complained before the music had even started as we'd had technical issues and started an hour later.

### **Parking permits**

During our tenure SBC implemented a parking permit system along Walkern road which obviously affected us with the only 'Free' car park nearby.

We had multiple neighbours parking in the car park until we had to introduce parking controls ourselves (ANPR) this affected one neighbour in particular, [REDACTED]. He had three vehicles which we refused permits for which started this who complaint process off. We have signed statements, which give evidence that nick would not stop complaining until "the pub is a car park"

### **2 x Manager resignation**

to be disclosed at the meeting.

### **Bully complaints**

I am now in receipt of two managers resignation letters. Both highlighting as part of their resignation [REDACTED] attitude towards them.

### **Measures we've put in place at our expense.**

#### **Air con**

This was installed To prevent the congregation of customers outside the premises it was recommended that we install air conditioning to keep the customers inside and prevent them from making noise outside due to being in a large crowd.

#### **Fence**

Back fence line put in place to prevent customers using it a throughfare and creating noise as they left the premises.

#### **Sound curtains (Pointless)**

Installed and used on every music event for the past 7 year until the meeting with EHO and the acoustician deemed them pointless. But requested by previous EHO officers.

#### **Sound recording**

Every time we have a music event, our protocol is that every few hours, a video is taken on the boundary edge along with our decibel meter. To provide evidence that we are controlling any noise that may escape the building. And to prove that cars and pedestrians completely drown out any escaped noise on all occasions. The same device that we used on the 22<sup>nd</sup> December

2023, and had used throughout December 2023 to record the noise levels generated from the pub, I highlight this date because your EHO officer has ignored our video evidence instead using a phone app. That can be easily manipulated. With this in mind, can I please request any and all certification regarding this app.

Moving smoking shelter

Previously mentioned

Removing extraction vents and sound proofing the cavities.

Please see [REDACTED] email for further listings.

### **Staff Expenditure**

Due to the additional measures we've had to put in place upon the request of licencing and EHO our staff costs on every Friday and Saturday night have gone up due to the actions of the neighbour. Because the neighbour couldn't see the member of staff, we have patrolling the outside of the pub every Friday and Saturday night we had to require them to wear a Highvis jacket so it kept the neighbour happy. This is completely ridiculous. We also have to employ an extra member of staff so we can have someone leave the premises and gather the video recordings and sound measurements which is included in our extensive and 'overkill' weekend procedures.

### **Video evidence**

Upon [REDACTED] request we employed a acoustician ([REDACTED], ScotchPartners) it was requested to put in place a certificate of calibration and conformance, that includes a diagram of the dance floor area which was agreed by all parties would be the measured area for the agreed upon limited of 98dB. Please see the video evidence of the CCTV taken on the day that clearly shows [REDACTED] neglected the entire dance floor area and elected to walk approximately 2m2 in front of the speaker, ignoring therefore the certified area on the relevant certificate that she requested at our expense. When prompted by the persons present that the noise levels would differ around the entire dance floor, she elected to ignore the advice and carry out her own test.

Her demeanour throughout this process was dismissive of any advice given she seemed as if she was on a mission to get this case of her desk by any means, including but not limited to reducing the limiter even further by not carrying out the tests in the agreed area.

This will be able to be viewed at the meeting, the file is too large to send.

**All of this would have been over with by now as 9 people sat around a table to draw out the licence amendment, including [REDACTED], to which (with 2 days remaining on the public notice) decided to raise a complaint about it. what was the point in that meeting?**

**Can you confirm you have WhatsApp? as the video with [REDACTED] not following the guidelines on the calibration certificate is too large to send on here.**

**You stated we should have received a form when licencing and EHO came out to us, can you confirm what this form is and send us a copy?**

**You mentioned today there is a 21 day window for us to appeal the noise abatement order, please note the first email i sent to you was on the 31<sup>st</sup> Jan, to discuss this and the failings of your department, and why it should be lifted, however this is the first date that we could both attend.**

All evidence will be provided at the meeting on Tuesday. to include, witness statements, neighbour statements, video evidence, CCTV evidence and anything else we deem relevant.

Many thanks



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RE: [EXTERNAL] Royal oak Stevenage

From [REDACTED]

Date Fri 23/02/2024 12:10

To [REDACTED]

Good morning [REDACTED]

I have been in the hospitality industry dealing with Leased and Tenanted pubs now for a decade and the experience I have seen at The Royal Oak in regards to noise complaints, procedures and restrictions is above anything I have seen before. The procedures and checklists you have in place with your staff are brilliant, which was acknowledged by the certified acoustician [REDACTED], that [REDACTED] demanded we hire for the meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> December, so much so he advised some of your protocol was overkill and could be removed from the extensive checklist.

As you know this has been going on for a considerable amount of time but I would just pass notes on the most recent situation since trying to make the appropriate licence amendment that was agreed and requested by [REDACTED] (Licensing Officer). It was requested that we change the wording in the licence as we all agreed including EHO and Licencing that the current wording was unfair, unreasonable and almost impossible to achieve if we are to be a sustainable pub. **'The sound limiting device shall be set to control the sound level so that any noise resulting from amplified Public Entertainments is inaudible at any point beyond the boundary of the premises known as : 'The Royal Oak Public House, [REDACTED] Walkern Road, Stevenage'**. When we made the initial amendment request to change this wording with the support and guidance from licensing, [REDACTED] rejected it and wanted it replaced with 7 conditions.

- 1. All electronic equipment used at events where there is amplified, recorded and live music shall be routed through the sound limiter device and only via the four dedicated stage power sockets. The sound limiter device shall be set to a level which will not cause a public noise nuisance to the nearest noise sensitive receptors.**
- 2. The maximum sound level must be agreed with the EH officers and set with their supervision by a suitably qualified acoustic consultant who is a member of the Institute of Acoustics or Association of Noise Consultants before regulated entertainment takes place on the premises.**
- 3. The setting of the sound limiter device must be followed by the sound limiter calibration certificate which must demonstrate the calibration methodology and agreed total music sound level along with maximum sound levels at low frequencies in the range between 63Hz to 250 Hz.**
- 4. The window acoustic infills shall be installed to the flat window nearest to the stage and also the bay window nearest to the stage at all times during events involving amplified, live and recorded music as outlined in the acoustic certificate dated 05/02/24.**
- 5. The sound limiter calibration certificate must be approved by the EH Team and the sound limiter device must operate according to the approved certificate at all times.**
- 6. The operational panel of the noise limiter device shall be secured to the satisfaction of the EH officer or Licensing Officer of SBC. The keys or the password securing the access to the sound limiter device's operational panel must only be held or known by a responsible person nominated by the Licensee and shall not be accessed by any other person. The limiter shall not be altered without prior agreement of an EHO from SBC.**
- 7. The premises licence holder shall ensure that the sound limiter device is recalibrated annually to ensure its continual satisfactory operation. Environmental Health must be advised once completed and limits checked to ensure the parameters outlined in the**

acoustic certificate are maintained.

You have videos and proof of every weekend showing that the Dbl level on the boundary was quieter than a conversation and cars passing by which would suggest the noise inside the neighbouring properties would be considerably lower, thus not being a nuisance.

When we attended the meeting on the morning of 8<sup>th</sup> December, we played music to the limit of the 2000W speakers capacity, which [REDACTED] stated was louder than a normal event. This means the noise externally on that day would be louder than on a live event as there were no customers in the pub to soak up some of the sound which would give us a good indication on what the levels were in the neighbouring properties at its worst possible position. That being said noise could escape when the doors open for customers to go in and out the pub during an event but you have strict protocol to stop that from happening regularly but it's not possible to stop customers leaving the premises completely. We took readings internally where [REDACTED] requested that you should purchase a state of the art noise monitor to the level of [REDACTED] as yours was reading 2 Dbls lower consistently, which he advised was unreasonable but to just ensure when you are taking your readings you always monitor 2 Dbls lower. As you will see from the noise certificate issued by [REDACTED], that once again [REDACTED] demanded was done, shows that the levels in both houses were minimal, so much so, in the closest house we had to ask him to turn his fridge off to hear anything. We moved out into the garden where you could hear the music slightly but birds cheeping would cover the noise of the music. After visiting the second property where no noise was detected, it was declared by [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] that the noise coming out of The Royal Oak was not a nuisance. What this shows is with or without a sound limiter in place, music being played at the maximum limit without blowing the equipment wasn't deemed a nuisance at the neighbouring properties, meaning if the sound limiter was working or not this shouldn't travel into neighbouring properties.

We were asked to replace the existing sound limiter to a more up to date model which we have now done, with tamper proof screws and set to the level requested by [REDACTED], but despite doing this we have had to provide further information and images. To provide images of the limiter, its tamper proof screws, serial numbers and for tamper proof stickers to be placed over a number of areas of the limiter which in my opinion seems a little overkill. During the most recent visit on 21<sup>st</sup> February the Dbl reading average taken by [REDACTED] wasn't inline with what was agreed on the 8<sup>th</sup> with [REDACTED] by taking an average around the entire dancefloor. Instead the reading was taken within a square meter directly in front of the speaker would provide a much higher Dbl reading than if the entirety of the dancefloor was measured. In my opinion this would mean her reading on the 21<sup>st</sup> February wasn't accurate or fair.

The disappointing thing for me was the noise abatement notice delivered to us early into the new year against your manager, yourself as the occupier and the pub itself. As you saw in the meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> February I questioned this again, why after everything we have done and planned for over the previous months, whilst working towards hard towards an imminent resolution she felt it was right to push an abatement notice. The response of there being a number of complaints on New Years eve didn't seem fair especially when provided with no facts or proof of it being a nuisance, this was solely going on neighbours' complaints who have expressed their dissatisfaction living next door to a pub historically. We have spent a lot of time and money working to a resolution and to be hit with this is unreasonable in my opinion, especially so close to the finish line.

Both you and McMullens have gone over and above in regards to these complaints and at great expense. Below is the list I have of things that have been done to prevent noise nuisance.

- Multiple onsite meetings
- Secondary glazing
- Sound proof curtains (since been removed under recommendation of Jason)
- Sound proof stage
- Filled in and covered vent to rear of stage
- Foam glazing inserts
- Relocation of smoking shelter
- Installation of air conditioning units
- Extensive 'Event Checklist' that includes regular boundary recordings (boundary recordings were

recommended to be removed by Jason and it just needed to be done internally)

- Sound limiter
- Acoustician

Likely to be some more and detail I have missed that you have done on top of this but all the above items have come at a costs, be it physical equipment, hiring acousticians or through staff costs having extra members for monitoring.

I feel the fair resolution here is to keep the above parameters in place to work with licensing and EHO to prevent the possibility of nuisance for our neighbours, but the abatement order should be removed and checks should be taken by EHO/Licensing in the neighbours housing during an event. If the Dbl levels measured in the neighbouring properties are above what is in the noise certificate and is deemed to be a nuisance then we set the limiter appropriately. We can't continue to be punished and bullied by complaints being made by neighbours who have been vocal about not stopping until the pub is no longer!

Please continue yours and your teams hard work to support the local community and preventing noise nuisance through your self-implemented extensive checklist and protocols. They are best in class and this is proven by external parties such as the police, acousticians and sound technicians acknowledging it.

If you have any questions on the above please do give me a call.

Many thanks



This email came from outside of the organisation. Take care when opening links and attachments

Good morning [REDACTED]

I am currently carrying out an investigation into complaints from various suppliers and staff members including two house managers. (who have resigned in the last 6 months) all indicating that they are victims of an overzealous, bullying & confrontational EHO officer.

Can I take this opportunity to request a statement for how you felt we have been treated, and your own personal opinion as well as representing McMullen's on the actions of EHO Officer [REDACTED] throughout our recent licencing issues.

We are now at a point where we are going to seek legal advice can I ask you forward on phone numbers of both the engineers who installed the sound limited device as we as the acoustician.

Many thanks



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**DRAFT**

**The Royal Oak ■ Walkern Road Stevenage SG1 3RA**

**Application for a new Premises Licence to replace existing Premises Licence reference ■■■■■**

**DPS: TBC**

**Premises Description**

Existing Public House licensed under Premises Licence reference ■■■■■

The application follows consultation with Stevenage Environmental Health Officer. The applicant proposes a new updated Premises Licence to replace existing Premises Licence reference ■■■■■.

The application proposes a new Premises Licence with new conditions to promote the Prevention of Public Nuisance Licensing Objective.

**Proposed Licensable Activities**

	Films Sporting Events LNR	Live Music Recorded Music Performance of Dance Anything Similar Making Music Facilities for Dancing Facilities for Entertainment	Alcohol (on & off)	Opening
Sun – Thu	10:00 – 00:00	10:00 – 23:00	10:00 – 23:30	10:00 – 00:00
Fri - Sat	10:00 – 01:00	10:00 – 00:00	10:00 – 12:30	10:00 – 01:00

Patio/Outside Seating: Mon – Sun: 10:00 – 23:00 [Supervised smokers only after 22:00 no drinks]

From the end of permitted hours on New Years' Eve to 05:00 on New Years' Day

**Proposed Conditions**

1. When the licensed premises are being used for the purpose of public dancing, music and other public entertainment of the like kind:
  - a. The maximum number of persons to be allowed at any one time in the premises shall not exceed 130 persons.
  - b. During Public Entertainment, both the front entrance and car park elevation entrance inner lobby door, shall remain closed but unlocked and usable as a fire escape.



- c. During Public Entertainments, both the external exit/entrance doors to the front entrance and car park elevation entrances, shall be allowed to return to the fully closed position when not being used.
  - d. The rear fire escape route, (via the female toilets) doors shall be maintained in a closed position but not locked and shall not be held back or fastened in an open position.
  - e. Noise or vibration shall not emanate from the premises so as to cause a public nuisance.
  - f. All electronic equipment used at events where there is amplified, recorded and live music shall be routed through the sound limiter device and only via the four dedicated stage power sockets. The sound limiter device shall be set to a level which will not cause a public noise nuisance to the noise sensitive receptors.
  - g. The maximum sound level must be agreed with the EH officers and set with their supervision by the operating tenant/manager before regulated entertainment takes place on the premises.
  - h. The setting of the sound limiter device must be followed by a sound limiter calibration certificate which must demonstrate the calibration methodology and agreed total music sound level along with maximum sound levels at low frequencies in the range between 63Hz to 250 Hz.
  - i. The sound limiter calibration certificate must be approved by the EH Team and the sound limiter device must operate according to the approved certificate at all times.
  - j. The operational panel of the noise limiter device shall be secured to the satisfaction of the EH officer or Licensing Officer of SBC. The keys or the password securing the access to the sound limiter device's operational panel must only be held or known by a responsible person nominated by the Licensee and shall not be accessed by any other person. The limiter shall not be altered without prior agreement of an EHO from SBC.
  - k. The noise limiter control sockets must be clearly visible from the adjacent bar area and not be obstructed in anyway.
  - l. The window acoustic infills shall be installed to the flat window nearest to the stage and also the bay window nearest to the stage at all times during events involving amplified, live and recorded music as outlined in the acoustic certificate dated 05/02/2024.
  - m. During Public Entertainments the management of the premises shall ensure that the windows in the lounge bar area remain closed, ventilation is to be provided via the extract ventilation system.
2. Disruptive customers, known drug users/dealer entering the premises will be refused service and will be asked to leave.
3. There will be no serving to drunks.

4. The premises will always have a range of soft drinks on sale.
5. The premises licence holder will ensure all bar staff are trained in relation to the legislation relating to the sale of alcohol to drunken persons.
6. The pub will be a member of local Pubwatch scheme.
7. The DPS or his/her deputies will ensure that tables are cleared of glassware regularly and will monitor customers to ensure glasses/bottles are not taken from the premises.
8. No music shall be played in or transmitted to any outside area.
9. Children under 18 years will not be allowed into the premises after 22:00hrs.
- ~~10. All AWP's and cigarette machines will be sited in view of the bar, so that their usage can be monitored and controlled. Signs on the machines will indicate that children under the age of 18 years are forbidden to use them.~~
11. Between Sundays and Thursdays (Inclusive) the following hours shall apply:
  - a. live and recorded music to cease at 23.00 hours
  - b. supply of alcohol to cease at 23.30 hours
  - c. premises to close at midnight
12. The Designated Premises Supervisor shall post notices at all exits reminding customers to respect the neighbours and leave the premises promptly and quietly.
13. The Designated Premises Supervisor shall encourage patrons to leave the car park within 15 minutes of closing time.
14. Except for patrons leaving the premises temporarily to smoke, the external area shall close at 22:00. Patrons leaving the premises temporarily to smoke after 22:00 shall not be permitted to take drinks outside with them. Adequate notices shall be displayed in appropriate locations to ensure that this information is brought to the attention of patrons.
15. Records of any complaints, incidents and meetings in relation to the four licensing objectives made by local residents/neighbours shall be kept by the applicant for a period of 6 years, and shall be made available at all times for inspection by Licensing Officers.
16. Notices shall be prominently displayed at any area used for smoking, requesting patrons to respect the needs to local residents and use the area quietly.
17. Where patrons congregate outside after 21:00 a member of staff shall be situated outside until the premises is empty of patrons and maintain order and control noise at all times.



 Outlook

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**FW: The Royal Oak, Stevenage - Premises Licence**

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**From** [REDACTED]  
**Date** Fri 19/11/2021 11:56  
**To** [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

 1 attachment (133 KB)  
211118 The Royal Oak.pdf;

Good morning

Would you be able to provide me of evidence of the below points as this would be of concern to me. The only children on site I would hope would be that of the managers children who reside there.

- **Annex 2, 1(b); the front entrance door is unable to be used as fire escape as this door is blocked by furniture to prevent its use, during public entertainments - This was done at the request of licencing to prevent multiple doors open at the same time.**

We have previously been instructed to only use one door to limit noise escaping from the building ( albeit we have set a sound monitor level with the EHO, used acoustic curtains and introduced air conditioning into the building, lobby exits to diffuse sound and a singular doorman to address customer talking volumes outside).

Yet to be determined:

- **Annex 2, 8; Music being played in or transmitted to the outside drinking area**
- **Annex 2, 9; Children under 18 years of age on the premises after 22:00hrs**

I would welcome a meeting on site to understand better how you can help us reach compliance on some of these points, bearing in mind some of them appear to be in contradiction with what we have previously been advised.

I look forward to hearing from you

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Good morning [REDACTED]

Please find attached the letter I discussed with you on Thursday, sent to the premises licence holder, McMullens & Sons Ltd and copied to you.  
The letter outlines findings from recent complaint investigations and an inspection regarding compliance with licence conditions.

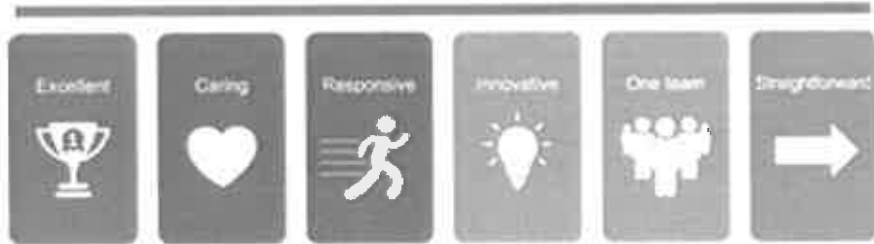
Following your request for a copy of the licence, I am pleased that the company and its on-site management are fully aware of the licence conditions, as Jemma was not familiar with the conditions when I met her on 16 November.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

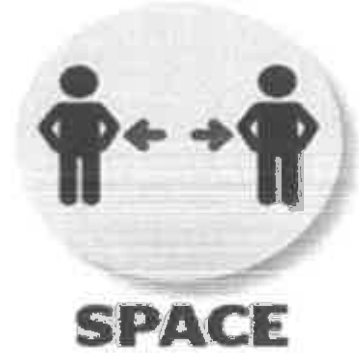
With kind regards,



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 Outlook

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**Re: Complaint re The Royal Oak pub**

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**From** [REDACTED]**Date** Wed 30/03/2022 04:30**To** [REDACTED]

Good morning,

Thank you for your recent visit, I refer you to the reply that you was copied into to [REDACTED] yesterday.

In addition I can confirm what the member of staff has said that there is no external CCTV at the Oak is correct. Again never been a requirement of any conditions laid out in the licence, however to show continued full support we will have cameras installed.

We keep a video phone log of our nightly perimeter sound checks. Which we will use in the event that any further action was taken. These recordings will now include the external seating areas. Equally I have instructed staff that I will purchase body cams, that will further enforce our defence when and if required.

It's my belief that the calls are now coming from a single source. The house besides the Oaks car park.

Following discussions with yourself, your preddessors, EHO, we moved the smoking area to the rear of the building. All tables are removed from the front of the building. Equally we closed the entrance from the front of the building, allowing access from the car park at your departments request.

So the queues, smoking, access, are all along one side.

This also happens to be the neighbor that made the threats when we denied him access to the car park.

I hope you will see I am jumping through every hoop continually put in front of us and putting in further deterents that you have neither requested or are required as per our licence conditions.

Many thanks,  
[REDACTED]

On 30 Mar 2022 12:09 am, [REDACTED] wrote:



Dear [REDACTED]

I visited The Royal Oak pub, Stevenage, this afternoon to investigate a complaint made against the pub. Please see the attached letter, addressed to yourself, which I believe is self-explanatory.

Yours sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Licensing Enforcement Officer,

Stevenage Borough Council.

**From:** [REDACTED]

**Sent:** 29 March 2022 18:00

**To:** [REDACTED]

**Subject:** Your scanned document

The document scanned by [REDACTED] on 2022-03-29 is attached in this e-mail.

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 Outlook

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**Re: The Royal Oak, Stevenage - Premises Licence**

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From [REDACTED]

Date Sat 20/11/2021 11:31

To [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

Good Morning [REDACTED],

Thank you for taking time out to talk to me during your visit to The Royal Oak on the 17th November.

I note things have developed since this email and I am extremely happy that [REDACTED], (Licensing Officer) visited the site on the 19th during a live performance. Leaving vindicating my observation on the situation and left pleased that we was indeed following the protocols outlined in the licence.

Further adding that "[REDACTED] should be happy and confident that I am happy that you are doing as you should." "Having spent 3 hours in your car park, on your premises, around the boundaries, his ([REDACTED]) words have been vindicated".

This of course underlines the previous visits carried out by EHO and licensing officers prior to your time in your current role. As well as the previous two times sound recording equipment has been put in place to check our limits.

Can I thank you for acknowledging the fact [REDACTED] is now fully understanding of the licence restrictions. As you aware I am in fact the DPS of the site and I am more than aware of our licence restrictions. I am currently away on annual leave and happy [REDACTED] has been brought up to speed as the house manager and future licensee.

I find your email to be very contradicting of previous visits to the site by your predecessors.

Example: Annex 2, 1(b): We was asked by your Predecessors [REDACTED], [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] to in fact isolate the front door. You state in your email that it's a "fire escape". It's not a Fire escape and no where is it marked up as such. For this reason the previous team requested we block it off during live performances. We checked with the Fire officer and he is happy that there are 3 other actual fire escapes from the building and therefore sufficient exits not to alter our licenced numbers.

Annex 2, 1(e) Your predecessors set up the sound level box, not us. They took the time to then visit the site on numerous occasions during live performances and were happy that not only could it not be heard in the neighbours homes but also not beyond the boundary edges. Which I am Happy to hear that [REDACTED] visit has further confirmed their findings.

Annex 2, 1(g) Head counts are carried out throughout our weekends. We are not at liberty to have door security but on nights we know are busier we make them ticketed events to control the numbers. It's my understanding you was shown the spreadsheets permitting no more than 120 people. Licensed for 130 however we have to consider staff numbers. There is a current shortage of licensed Doormen nationally, however when we know we require one to control the numbers, the doormen would have a counter in place.

In the event however the head count reaches numbers exceeding 100 a member of staff would be and has always been placed on the door to hold numbers. In 10 licensed years at the premises your predecessors have indicated this is sufficient. So [REDACTED] did demonstrate the permitted numbers are being monitored.

Up on your request the maximum head count numbers are now being placed in the diary.

Annex 2, 8: Can you please confirm to me that you did indeed have the opportunity to confirm if the music was being transmitted externally, as you had our music system maxed out? It's my understanding therefore you

would know that there are not external speakers being used?

Annex2, 9: Children under the age of 18 - I believe this complaint stems from a pre Uni leaving party being held on 28th August of this year. Whilst a number of the patrons that night looked younger, we did in fact have doormen on that night and NO ONE was deemed to be under the age of 18. The only other time would be when my own children or grandchildren are on site.

As you can see by my responses as the license holder I am fully aware of the licensing conditions. The conditions listed in your letter are clear as per your predecessors understanding of the licence and as such mine also. Maybe not however unequivocal as demonstrated by the points outlined above?

I am hoping now finally that yet a further visit by a licensed officer where we have been vindicated in our words, that like your predecessors you can see why I get aggrieved by this "band of vigilantes" can continue to harass us.

The resident of number 26 made his feelings very clear after we recently had installed the parking solution stating "You have no idea what problems this is going to cause you now". Please note it has not gone un noted that the car parking solution was in place and live from the 23rd October. Two days prior to him making the threats. My guess is it was him that made the complaint on the 29th that you was investigating.

I am sorry that you have picked up this poisoned chalice, but I hope now it has gone some way in showing you why I voiced my concerns so vehemently in our conversation.

I am tired of continuously jumping through hoops, addressing issues before we are even requested to by your team. Like the parking solution, after a complaint that people were loitering in their cars long after we closed. This allows them a 3 minute turn around. Extinguishing the issues.

Or People congregating in the rear alleyway (not on our premises), Macs have elected to put up a fence at the rear of the car park.

Or moving the smoking solution away from the front the building and to the rear of the car park. Or putting in place stackable chairs at the front the building, discouraging people from staying there after licensed hours. Or the numerous blackboards and posters asking patrons to leave quietly, respecting our neighbours. This after McMullens put in Sound Curtains, Double glazing, Air conditioning units, Sound Mats, Annual checks of sound equipment, all at considerable costs.

I look forward to speaking to you further and would request that when meeting with a representative of McMullens that I am included via telephone facetime link, as the current licence holder and Managing Director of the tenanted company at The Royal Oak?

Many thanks

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From: [REDACTED]  
Sent: 19 November 2021 10:58  
To: [REDACTED]  
Subject: The Royal Oak, Stevenage - Premises Licence

Good morning [REDACTED].

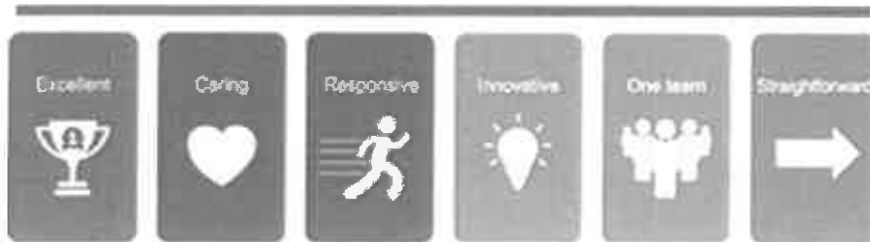
Please find attached the letter I discussed with you on Thursday, sent to the premises licence holder, McMullens & Sons Ltd and copied to you.

The letter outlines findings from recent complaint investigations and an inspection regarding compliance with licence conditions.

Following your request for a copy of the licence, I am pleased that the company and its on-site management are fully aware of the licence conditions, as Gemma was not familiar with the conditions when I met her on 16 November.

Should you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With kind regards,



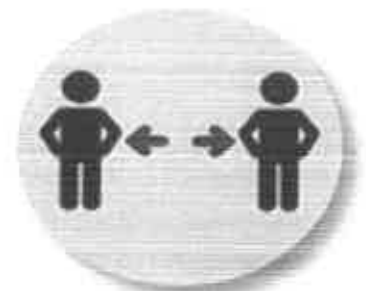
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# Planning And Regulation

Assistant Director, Planning & Regulation - [REDACTED]



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The Licensee  
McMullens & Sons Ltd  
26 Old Cross,  
Hertford,  
Hertfordshire,  
SG14 1RD

Our Ref: 23/00332/NOIMUS  
Contact: [REDACTED]  
Direct Line: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

Date: 22/05/2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1990, S79 – NOISE NUISANCE  
LICENSING ACT 2003 – PREVENTION OF PUBLIC NUISANCE  
ADDRESS: Royal Oak, 24 Walkern Road, Stevenage, SG1 3RA.**

I am writing to advise that the Environmental Health Team at Stevenage Borough Council continues to receive multiple complaints alleging a noise nuisance from loud music and loud patrons emanating from the above premises.

These complaints were received regarding the following dates: 29/04 (multiple complaint regarding loud, thumping music and patrons' noise), 06/05 (noise from drunken customers' fight).

Officers monitored the external areas on Friday 28/04, Saturday 29/04 and Friday 5/05. On all occasions the music and the bass could have been clearly heard on the street level and at the facades of the nearest noise sensitive premises. Specifically, on Saturday 29/04/23 at approximately 22:05 and 22:30 hrs officers observed that live music was much louder than the recorded music. Officers could clearly hear the lyrics of the song and patrons singing along. The music and bass breakout were most prominent when the side lobby door (facing the car park) was open to allow patrons ingress and egress. The music break out was also prominent via the glazing at the front façade which is facing several residential premises.

You as the Licensee have been informed about the complaints and the noise break out many times. Your tenant has met with the officers of this Team and agreed several actions that could help alleviate the problem. You have been informed about these actions in the email dated: 23/03/23. I reiterate these actions below:

1. That your tenant will continue to monitor for entertainment-noise at the boundary of your property to ensure that it will not disturb residents; It was agreed that staff will ensure that music-noise cannot be heard at this position. This applies to all events.
2. That you will arrange for an acoustician to visit the premises to re-set the settings on the noise limiter to prevent music noise being audible beyond the boundary, and to survey the premises to identify any 'weak spots' which could lead to noise break-out.
3. The lobby door system was identified as a possible cause of noise break-out which will also be looked at by the acoustician, as was the ventilation unit and grille behind the stage area.

4. Your tenant's on-site staff will also ensure that close supervision of the outside areas takes place, and action is taken immediately if customers' behaviour is likely to disturb local residents.

Officers' observations indicate that the above agreement is not being implemented and that you are in breach of your premises' licence condition Annex 2, 1 e):

*"The sound limiting device shall be set to control the sound level so that any noise resulting from amplified Public Entertainments, is inaudible at any point beyond the boundary of the premises known as: 'The Royal Oak Public House', 24 Walkern Road, Stevenage".*

I expect your soonest response as to when you going to implement the actions agreed and how you plan to fix the lobby door system and insulate the ventilation unit and the grill behind the stage.

I am also disappointed that there has been no further development on your side as to recalibration of the sound limiting device which as identified by your engineer, currently operates at 98dB. In the email dated 29/03/23, you advised that the site have had complaints from neighbours about the noise levels and that you wanted to set the cut off limit down to a lower dB level with an EHO present. However, I am yet to receive a response from you as to the date of the recalibration. Despite this the tenant continues with the usual regulated entertainment and live music events.

If, within 7 days from the date of this letter, I have not received a response from you as to the arrangements for the qualified acoustician to carry out the works as agreed above, I will have no alternative but to consider formal action. This may involve a service of an Abatement Notice under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Section 80. The Abatement Notice can be served for **illegally occurrence, recurrence or existence of a noise nuisance**.

The Notice will require that the noise nuisance be abated immediately, and not recur. Failure to comply with the Notice may result in prosecution and an unlimited fine imposed by the Magistrate's Court upon conviction.

As your premises is licensed you may also be failing to comply with one of the objectives of the Licensing Act 2003, i.e., Prevention of Public Nuisance.

You are warned that if the problem persists and enforcement action for statutory nuisance is taken, Officers will object to any future Temporary Event Notices and may seek to bring a Review of the premises licence which may result in a revocation.

I look forward to your co-operation and trust that further action will not be necessary. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



Environmental Health Officer

# Planning And Regulation

Assistant Director, Planning & Regulation - [REDACTED]



Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage SG1 1HN • Tel: 01438 242242 • Textphone: 01438 242555 • Fax: 01438 242566 • [stevenage.gov.uk](http://stevenage.gov.uk)

The Licensee  
McMullens & Sons Ltd  
26 Old Cross,  
Hertford,  
Hertfordshire,  
SG14 1RD

Our Ref: 23/00332/NOIMUS  
Contact: [REDACTED]  
Direct Line: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

Date: 22/05/2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1990, S79 – NOISE NUISANCE  
LICENSING ACT 2003 – PREVENTION OF PUBLIC NUISANCE  
ADDRESS: Royal Oak, 24 Walkern Road, Stevenage, SG1 3RA.**

I am writing to advise that the Environmental Health Team at Stevenage Borough Council continues to receive multiple complaints alleging a noise nuisance from loud music and loud patrons emanating from the above premises.

These complaints were received regarding the following dates: 29/04 (multiple complaint regarding loud, thumping music and patrons' noise), 06/05 (noise from drunken customers' fight).

Officers monitored the external areas on Friday 28/04, Saturday 29/04 and Friday 5/05. On all occasions the music and the bass could have been clearly heard on the street level and at the facades of the nearest noise sensitive premises. Specifically, on Saturday 29/04/23 at approximately 22:05 and 22:30 hrs officers observed that live music was much louder than the recorded music. Officers could clearly hear the lyrics of the song and patrons singing along. The music and bass breakout were most prominent when the side lobby door (facing the car park) was open to allow patrons ingress and egress. The music break out was also prominent via the glazing at the front façade which is facing several residential premises.

You as the Licensee have been informed about the complaints and the noise break out many times. Your tenant has met with the officers of this Team and agreed several actions that could help alleviate the problem. You have been informed about these actions in the email dated: 23/03/23. I reiterate these actions below:

1. That your tenant will continue to monitor for entertainment-noise at the boundary of your property to ensure that it will not disturb residents; It was agreed that staff will ensure that music-noise cannot be heard at this position. This applies to all events.
2. That you will arrange for an acoustician to visit the premises to re-set the settings on the noise limiter to prevent music noise being audible beyond the boundary, and to survey the premises to identify any 'weak spots' which could lead to noise break-out.
3. The lobby door system was identified as a possible cause of noise break-out which will also be looked at by the acoustician, as was the ventilation unit and grille behind the stage area.



4. Your tenant's on-site staff will also ensure that close supervision of the outside areas takes place, and action is taken immediately if customers' behaviour is likely to disturb local residents.

Officers' observations indicate that the above agreement is not being implemented and that you are in breach of your premises' licence condition Annex 2, 1 e):

*"The sound limiting device shall be set to control the sound level so that any noise resulting from amplified Public Entertainments, is inaudible at any point beyond the boundary of the premises known as: 'The Royal Oak Public House', 24 Walkern Road, Stevenage".*

I expect your soonest response as to when you going to implement the actions agreed and how you plan to fix the lobby door system and insulate the ventilation unit and the grill behind the stage.

I am also disappointed that there has been no further development on your side as to recalibration of the sound limiting device which as identified by your engineer, currently operates at 98dB. In the email dated 29/03/23, you advised that the site have had complaints from neighbours about the noise levels and that you wanted to set the cut off limit down to a lower dB level with an EHO present. However, I am yet to receive a response from you as to the date of the recalibration. Despite this the tenant continues with the usual regulated entertainment and live music events.

If, within 7 days from the date of this letter, I have not received a response from you as to the arrangements for the qualified acoustician to carry out the works as agreed above, I will have no alternative but to consider formal action. This may involve a service of an Abatement Notice under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Section 80. The Abatement Notice can be served for **likely occurrence, recurrence or existence of a noise nuisance**.

The Notice will require that the noise nuisance be abated immediately, and not recur. Failure to comply with the Notice may result in prosecution and an unlimited fine imposed by the Magistrate's Court upon conviction.

As your premises is licensed you may also be failing to comply with one of the objectives of the Licensing Act 2003, i.e., Prevention of Public Nuisance.

You are warned that if the problem persists and enforcement action for statutory nuisance is taken, Officers will object to any future Temporary Event Notices and may seek to bring a Review of the premises licence which may result in a revocation.

I look forward to your co-operation and trust that further action will not be necessary. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



Environmental Health Officer

## Introduction

Scotch Partners attended The Royal Oak pub in Stevenage on 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023 to undertake noise level measurements within the pub when amplified music was playing. Additional measurements were taken just outside the pub as well as in two nearby residential properties.

The purpose of the site visit was to provide baseline noise levels that the pub can check their operational noise levels against, as well as set down the noise mitigation strategy being employed. This note can be used to verify future operations, should concerns be raised over noise emitted by the pub owing to amplified music.

This note should be read alongside the latest Licensing requirements applicable to the pub.

## Description of Current Operations

The pub presents music events every week, which comprises mostly a DJ playing amplified music, but with live bands playing occasionally. The pub uses an in-house sound system for DJ events; live bands would usually bring their sound reproduction equipment. So, the majority of music is played via an amplified system, with bands often including a live drummer to compliment their own amplified music.

The pub management currently use a Curconsa SL720 sound level meter to review sound levels in and outside the pub during music events. This is a relatively simple sound level meter without a formal Class rating (to IEC 61672 or BS EN 61672-1) and is intended to be used by event managers rather than acoustic practitioners. It comprises a condenser microphone and has a measurement range of 30 – 130 dB with an accuracy of  $\pm 2$  dB. It presents the Fast (125ms) or Slow (1000ms) measurements visually on screen, and is not able to report the time-averaged ambient ( $L_{Aeq,T}$ ) or statistical noise levels (e.g.  $L_{A90,T}$ ).

A sound limiter is installed and set by the manufacturer to 98 dBA. The limiter has an in-built microphone that monitors noise levels in real time. Occasional peaks are permitted but should sustained noise levels go above 98 dBA for a period of time, then the limiter will activate. The limiter is connected to the power sockets that are used for the music equipment (both DJ and live band equipment). During a limiter activation, power is cut from the sockets and so any equipment connected will be turned off.

The pub management are unable to automatically control the live drummer. During a limiter activation, all other equipment of a live band will turn off and so the drummer would tend to stop playing. The pub management also intervenes at this point and ensures the drummer stops playing.

The limiter has a VDU meter that is clearly visible to the management, DJ and live band. This is a simple green, amber, red VDU which provides clear and quick feedback of how close music is to activating the limiter. The limiter is locked with the only key being stored off-site; therefore management, staff, DJs or live bands are unable to tamper with the limiter during an event.

A significant amount of noise control measures are currently being applied by the pub management, and these are discussed further in a later section of this note. Some of the current measures are considered unnecessary.

## Measurements

Two sets of measurements were conducted on the main floor area just in front of the DJ / stage area of the pub. These were conducted using a “spatial average” method, whereby the sound level meter was slowly walked around the space for a duration of 30 seconds each. A particularly energetic and heavy ska song was selected for the tests, which contained energy at all frequencies, including a heavy bass element. The area of the pub measured is shown below; this was selected as being the noisiest area within the pub during music events.

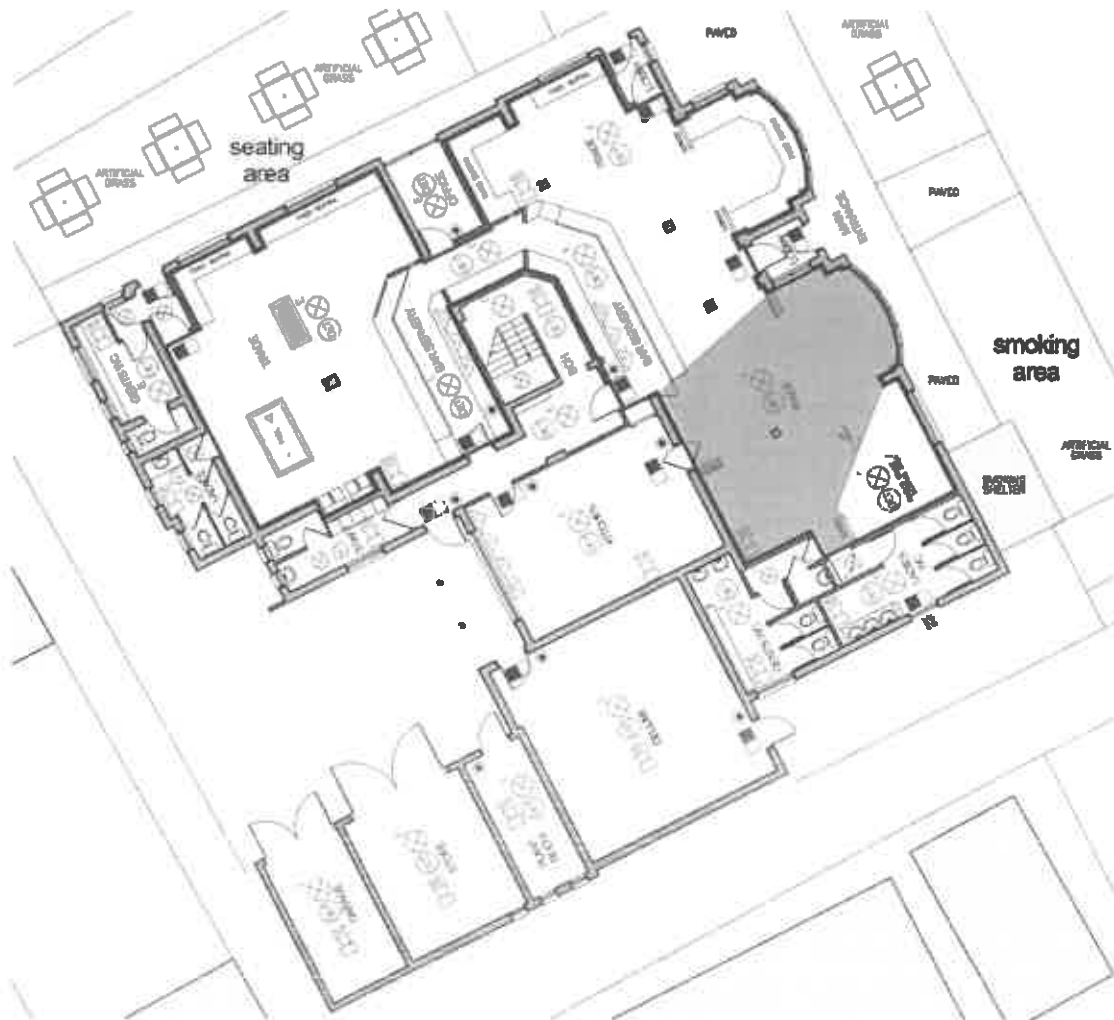


Figure 1: Area where spatial measurements were conducted

The spatial measurements were conducted taking care to ensure the microphone was always at least 1.5m away from the floor, walls and ceiling. The results are therefore considered to represent the time-averaged reverberant sound pressure level.

A Norsonic 131 sound level meter was used for all measurements, which achieves a Class 1 rating in accordance with BS EN IEC 61672-1:2003. The calibration certificates for the equipment used are presented in Appendix A.

During measurements, the levels measured by Scotch were simultaneously compared with those reported by the pub managements' Curconsa SL720 meter. It was found that the pub's meter was reading consistently 2 dB lower than the meter used by Scotch. This should be noted for future reference, but is within the specification of the Curconsa meter, so it is operating as expected. It is not considered reasonable to expect the pub to purchase a Class 1 meter (prohibitively expensive) and measurements with the pub meter are considered relevant so long as a -2 dB correction is applied to the results.

The highest one-third octave band centre frequency values measured within the pub are presented in Figure 2, and the single-figure values presented in Table 1.

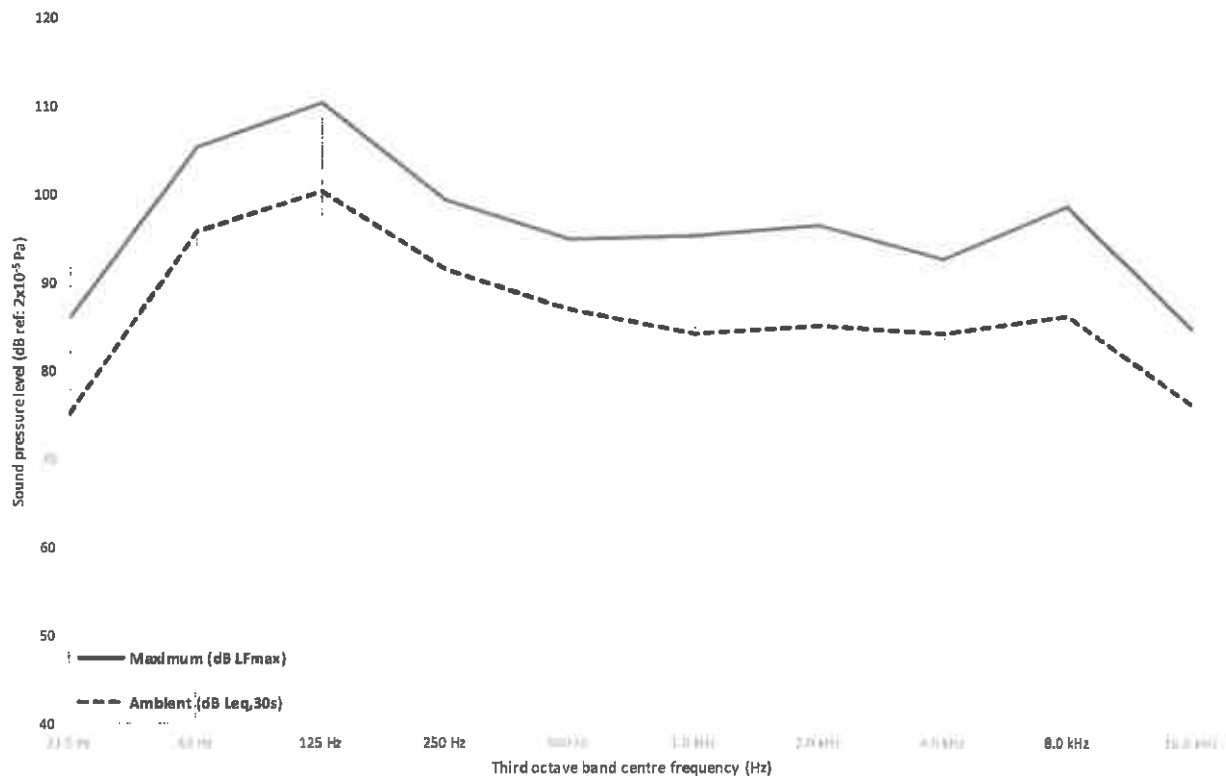


Figure 2: Frequency noise levels measured within the pub during music playback

Ambient	Maximum
93 dB $L_{Aeq,30s}$	100 dB $L_{AFmax}$

Table 1: Single-figure noise levels measured within the pub during music playback

It is understood that music would rarely be played at this level during normal music events; instead, the music was played as loud as the system would allow without becoming distorted. The management reported that this was unusual, and music would normally be played at a lesser volume. Subjectively, the level of music was relatively uncomfortable and would make communication between patrons difficult. The measurements are therefore considered to be a normal worst-case scenario.

The limiter was showing a live visual reading on the VU meter during measurements, and frequently just peaked at the highest red LED on the meter. The maximum music noise level measured was marginally over the cut-off limit programmed into the limiter (by 2 dB) although it is noted that music would need to be

sustained at this level for some time for the limiter to activate and cut-off power. The maximum noise level presented is over a 125ms period and so was only achieved for an extremely short duration during the measurement. Therefore, if music noise is controlled to the levels measured during this survey, a limiter activation would be unlikely to occur. This way the management can control the levels via monitoring with their sound level meter, and the limiter would provide a hard backup to cut-off the sound in the event that noise levels go above the managed levels.

The ambient noise levels in adjacent residential properties were measured during the survey, with music playing at the same level as presented in the measurement results above, and just after the music was turned off. Care was taken to avoid extraneous sources of noise affecting the results; internal equipment within the dwellings that created noise was turned off, and measurements were paused during vehicle passbys. The results are presented in the following figures / table.

The residential properties selected were as advised by the Local Authority as those having raised concerns about music noise in the past. The rooms selected were those advised by the residents as the rooms considered to be most affected by music noise.

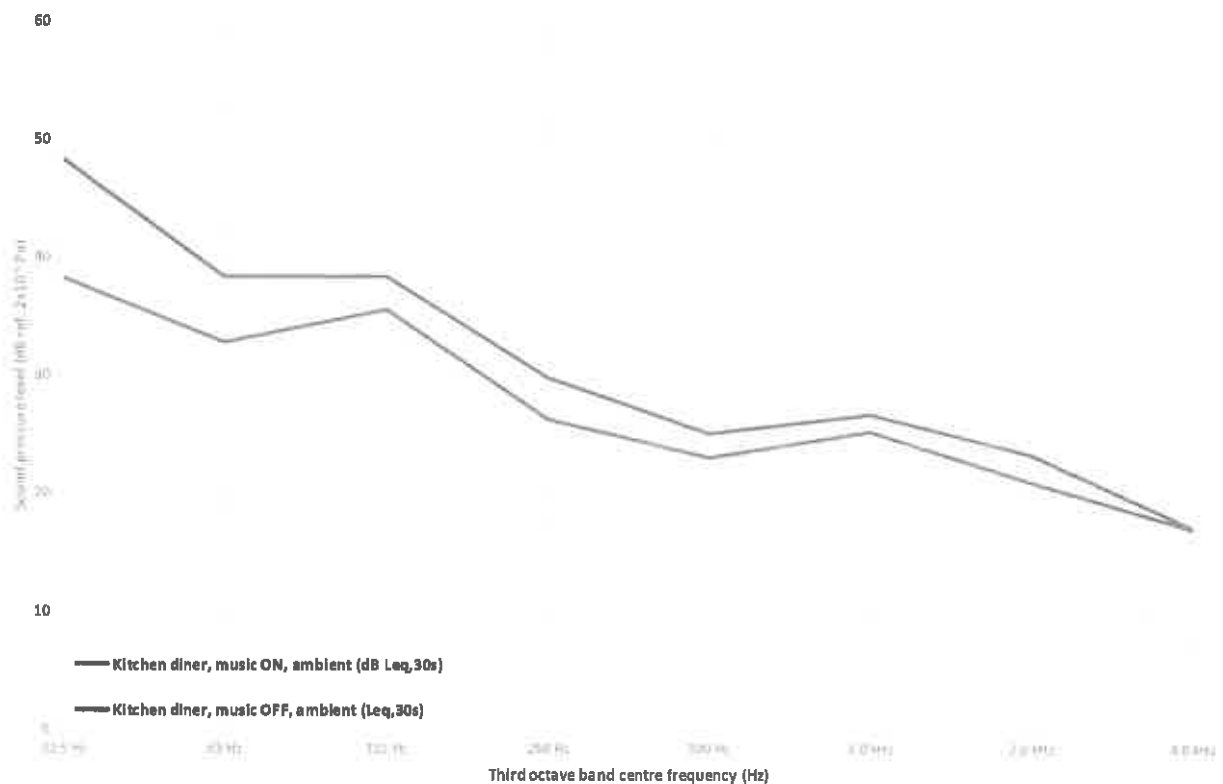


Figure 3: 26 Walkern Road kitchen diner

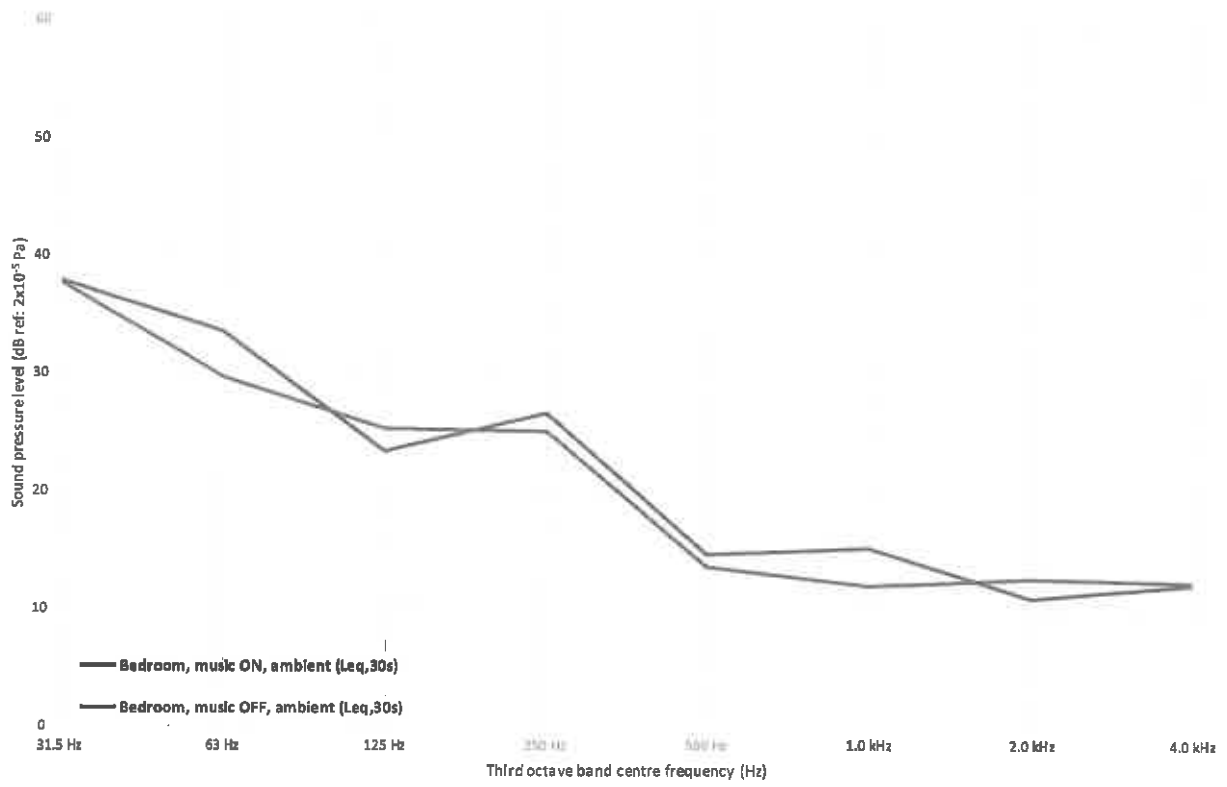


Figure 4: 26 Walkern Road bedroom

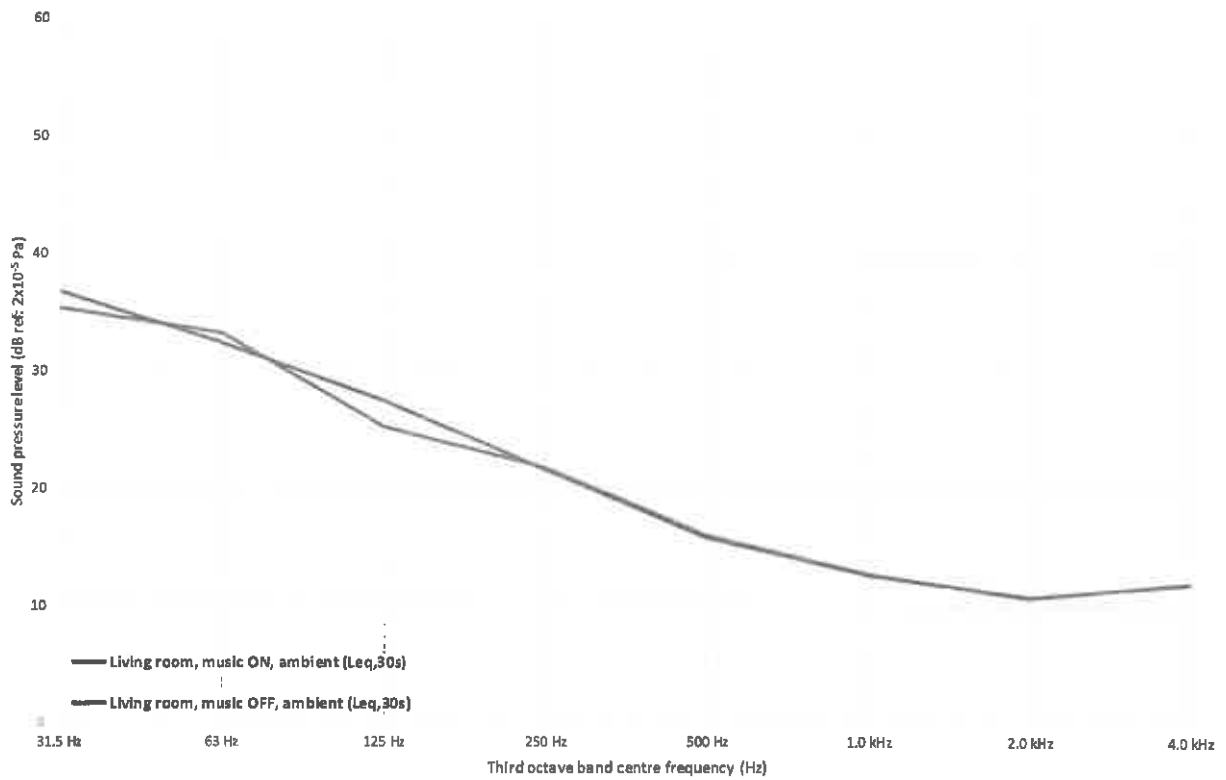


Figure 5: 43 Walkern Road living room

Room	Ambient with music on	Ambient with music off
26 Walkern Road kitchen diner	29 dB $L_{Aeq,30s}$	31 dB $L_{Aeq,30s}$
26 Walkern Road bedroom	21 dB $L_{Aeq,30s}$	22 $L_{Aeq,30s}$
43 Walkern Road living room	21 dB $L_{Aeq,30s}$	21 dB $L_{Aeq,30s}$

Table 2: Single-figure noise levels measured within nearby residential properties

There are some differences in the measured noise levels, although the levels measured were mostly marginally higher with music off than when music was playing inside the pub. This is not an uncommon occurrence at very low levels of noise and is an indicator that music noise intrusion is not contributing towards a material increase in noise levels within the residential properties.

The subjective impressions of the music noise intrusion were also noted during the visit, with the following observations taken by the Scotch Partners site engineer:

Room	Observation of music noise intrusion
26 Walkern Road kitchen diner	Music noise was just perceptible within this space. It was audible as a very distant noise and not immediately discernible but could be identified as music during focussed listening. Ordinary noise sources not associated with the pub readily masked the music noise.
26 Walkern Road bedroom	Music noise was barely audible, even under focussed listening.
43 Walkern Road living room	Music noise was imperceptible.

Table 3: Subjective impression of music noise intrusion within nearby residential properties

It is understood that if the pub were to control music noise levels to those measured during the survey, then that would be considered acceptable and would not represent a noise nuisance to neighbouring properties.

Additional measurements were carried out to establish if the “EchoBarrier” external window coverings were having any meaningful benefit to noise emission. These are shown installed in the following picture. The results of measurements with them in place, and then removed are presented in Figure 6.



Figure 6: EchoBarrier window coverings in place

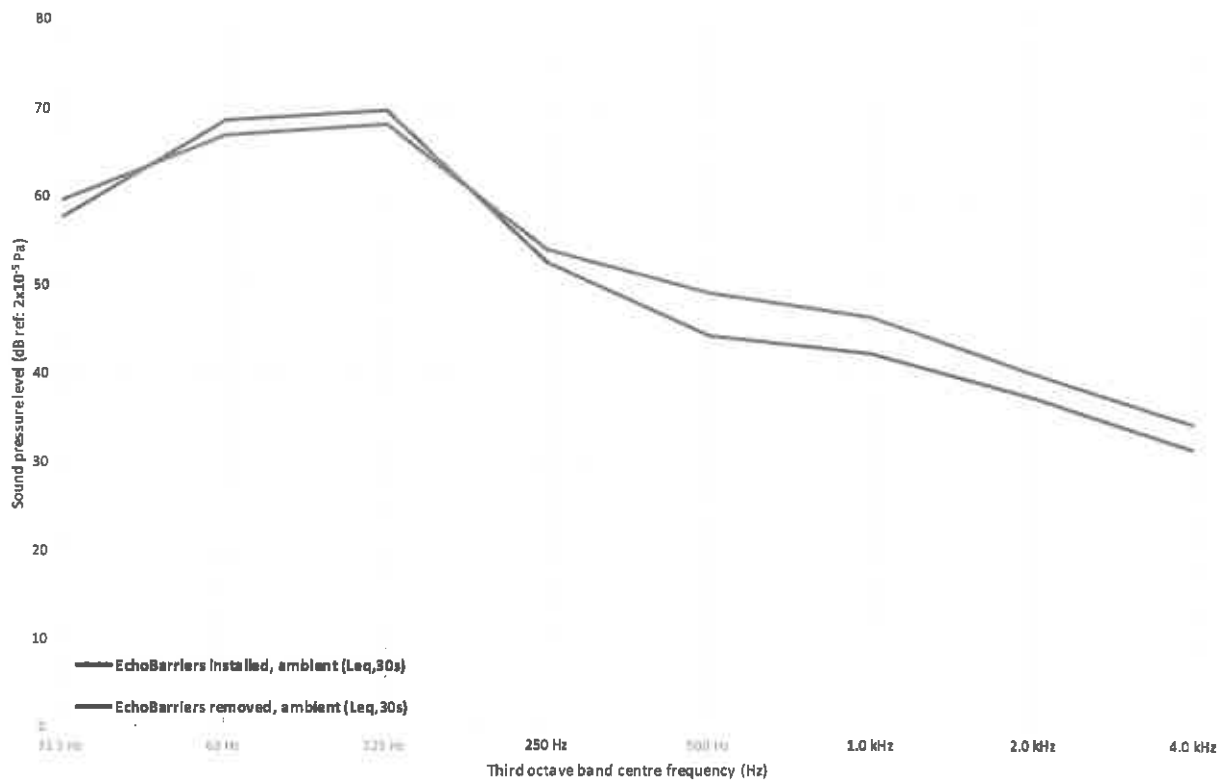


Figure 7: Measurements of EchoBarrier window coverings

There was no appreciable difference with noise emitted from the pub with the EchoBarriers in place. The differences are considered to be within margins of measurement variations over time; only a 1 dB improvement was measured at the low frequencies, which is considered meaningless. It is therefore recommended that EchoBarriers are not installed during music events as they offer no significant benefit.

### Calibration Requirements

The pub will need to manage music events in the following ways so that levels of noise emitted to neighbouring properties is no higher than those measured during this survey.

- Access to the noise limiter to be restricted so that only management can gain access (using a key that is ordinarily stored off-site). Staff, DJs and band members are not to have access to the key during a music event.
- The music noise limiter shall not in any other way be tampered with and should be maintained at the level set by the manufacturer (98 dBA). The limiter shall be regularly maintained to ensure correct operation.
- All electronic music equipment to be routed via the power sockets controlled by the noise limiter. These are the sockets in proximity to the stage area within the pub. An extension cable (to sockets not controlled by the limiter) shall not be used to circumvent this requirement.
- The pub shall monitor music noise levels inside the pub in real time during an event. Levels shall be monitored with the microphone moved around the area shown in Figure 1; making sure that the microphone is always at least 1.5m away from the floor, ceiling, and any wall.
- The music noise levels shall be monitored using the pub managements' Curconsa SL720 meter; this should show a reading of no more than 96 dB  $L_{AFmax}$ . The operator of the meter should verify that the



meter is shown as measuring in the "Fast" time constant and A-weighting; this shall be confirmed by ensuring that "Fast" is shown in the upper left of the LCD display, and "A" in the lower left.

- All external lobby doorsets (both the external door and internal lobby door) shall be kept closed during a music event. It is appreciated that they will need to open with patron movement, but at no time shall the doors be left open.
- The lobby door closers shall be regularly maintained to ensure efficient operation. Where a possible fault is identified (such as closers sticking, closing slowly etc) then this shall be resolved at the earliest possible opportunity; staff shall manually ensure all doors are closed after patrons using them, in the event of a closer malfunction.
- The window acoustic infills shall be installed to the flat window nearest the stage, and bay window nearest the stage at all times during an event. These are to be Instasoft 40mm thick insulation or similar achieving an equivalent acoustic performance ( $\Delta R_w$  9 dB).
- The internal secondary glazing to the same windows as the acoustic infills shall be closed at all times during an event. Care shall be taken when closing these prior to an event to ensure that the closing mechanism fully latches closed. The closing mechanisms shall be regularly reviewed to ensure adequate closing and shall be serviced in the event of any issues with closing.

The locations of windows for the acoustic infills and secondary glazing are shown below for clarity.

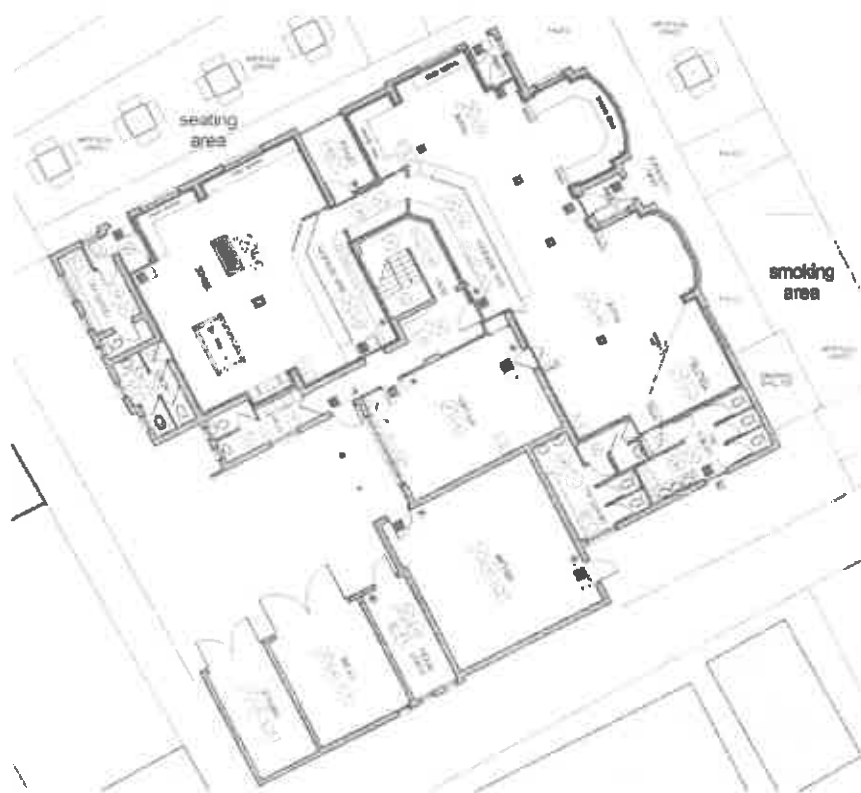


Figure 8: Windows to receive acoustic infills and secondary glazing (marked red)

It is expected that the above can be used as a verification checklist in the event of any further noise issues.

Appendix A: Measurement Equipment Calibration Certificates

Laboratory Location

**Campbell Associates Ltd**



## Certificate of Calibration and Conformance

Certificate number: **39673**

**Test Object:** Sound Level Meter, BS EN IEC 61672-1:2003 Class 1  
Associated Frequency Analyser to BS EN IEC 61280:1996 Class 1

**Producer:** Norsonic AS.  
**Type:** 131  
**Serial number:** 1312786  
**Customer:** Scotch Partners LLP  
**Address:** 90 High Holborn,  
London, WC1V 8LJ.

**Contact Person:** [Redacted]

**Order No:** [Redacted]

### Introduction:

Calibration has been performed as set out in CA Technical Procedures which are based on the procedures for periodic verification of sound level meters as per the Test Object listed above. Results and conformance statement are overleaf and detailed results, where appropriate, are provided in the attached Measurement Report

Tested:	Producer	Type	Serial No	Certificate No
Microphone	Norsonic	1227	170606	38872
Calibrator*	Norsonic	1251	31313	U37309
Preamplifier	Norsonic	1207	12160	Included

\* The calibrator was complete with any required coupler for the microphone specified

### Additional items that have also been submitted for verification:

Wind shield -  
Attenuator -  
Extension cable -

These items have been taken into account wherever appropriate.

Instruction Manual: Im131\_1Ed3R0Ea Firmware Version: 3.1.984 The test object is a single channel instrument

Conditions	Pressure kPa	Temperature °C	Humidity %RH
Reference conditions	101.325	23	50
Measurement conditions	98.21 ±0.07	21.78 ±0.2	35.93 ±2.45

### Calibration Dates:

Received date: 29/11/2021 Reviewed date: 08/12/2021  
Calibration date: 08/12/2021 Issued date: 08/12/2021

### Technicians: (Electronic certificate)

Calibrated by: [Redacted]

Reviewed by: [Redacted]

This certificate is issued in accordance with the CA Quality Management system. It provides traceability of measurement to recognized national standards, and to the units of measurement realized at the National Physical Laboratory or other recognized national standards laboratories. This certificate may not be reproduced other than in full, except with the prior written approval of the issuing laboratory.

## Certificate of Calibration and Conformance

Continuation of Certificate number: 39673

The statements of conformance and observation notes detailed in this certificate are made with reference to the following standards in respect of the calibration of the test object.

Manufactured:	BS EN IEC 61672-1:2003
Periodic Tests:	BS EN IEC 61672-3:2006
Pattern Evaluation:	BS EN IEC 61672-2:2003
Filter Evaluation:	BS EN IEC 81260:1996 Class 1

### Conformance:

From markings on the sound level meter or by reference to the manufacturer's published literature it has been determined that the instrument submitted for verification was originally manufactured to the listed standard and similarly that the associated sound calibrator conforms to the BS EN IEC 60942 standard.

### Measurement Summary:

Indication at the calibration check frequency - IEC61672-3 Ed.1 #9	Passed
Self-generated noise - IEC 61672-3 Ed.1 #10.2	Passed
Acoustical signal tests of a frequency weighting - IEC 61672-3 Ed.1 #11	Passed
Electrical signal tests of frequency weightings - IEC 61672-3 Ed.1 #12	Passed
Frequency weightings: A Network - IEC 61672-3 Ed.1 #12.3	Passed
Frequency weightings: C Network - IEC 61672-3 Ed.1 #12.3	Passed
Frequency weightings: Z Network - IEC 61672-3 Ed.1 #12.3	Passed
Frequency and time weightings at 1 kHz IEC 61672-3 Ed.1 #13	Passed
Level linearity on the reference level range - IEC 61672-3 Ed.1 #14	Passed
Toneburst response - IEC 61672-3 Ed.1 #16	Passed
Peak C sound level - IEC 61672-3 Ed.1 #17	Passed
Overrided indication - IEC 61672-3 Ed.1 #18	Passed
1/1octave: Relative attenuation - IEC 81260, #4.4 & #5.3	Passed
1/3octave: Relative attenuation - IEC 81260, #4.4 & #5.3	Passed

### Comments:

Correct level with associated calibrator is 113.8dB(A).

### Statement of Conformance

The sound level meter submitted has successfully completed the periodic tests of the standard listed for the environmental conditions under which the tests were performed. As public evidence(1) was available, from an independent testing organisation responsible for approving the results of pattern evaluation tests performed in accordance with the manufacturer's standard to demonstrate that the model of sound level meter fully conformed to the requirements of the said standard, the sound level meter submitted for testing conforms to the relevant class of the said standard.

(1 - evidence is held on file at the calibration laboratory)

### Filter Calibration

The filter functions have been found to conform, by electrical testing, to the relative attenuation requirement of the standard noted over the range of frequencies shown in the attached test report.

### Observations

This certificate relates only to the items tested above.

“ End of Certificate ”

Laboratory Location  
**Campbell Associates Ltd**



## Certificate of Calibration

Certificate number: **39672**

Test Object: **Measurement Microphone**

Producer: **Norsonic AS.**  
Type: **1227**  
Serial number: **170606**  
Customer: **Scotch Partners LLP**  
Address: **99 High Holborn,  
London. WC1V 6LJ.**

Contact Person:  
Order No:

Measurement Results	Sensitivity (dB re 1V/Pa)	Sensitivity (mV/Pa)	Capacitance (pF)
Measurement 1	-25.06	55.86	13.26
Measurement 2	-25.05	55.93	13.25
Measurement 3	-25.05	55.89	13.25
Result (Average):	-25.05	55.88	13.25
Expanded Uncertainty:	0.10		1.00
Degree of Freedom:	>100		>100
Coverage Factor:	2		2

The stated sensitivity is the pressure sensitivity at 250Hz, S<sub>250</sub>, and is valid at reference conditions. The following correction factors have been applied during the measurement:

Pressure:uncertainty dB/kPa Temperature:0.005 dB/°C Humidity:0 dB/%RH

Conditions	Pressure kPa	Temperature °C	Humidity %RH
Reference conditions	101.325	23	50
Measurement conditions	98.076 ± 0.047	22.4 ± 0.1	35.5 ± 1.0

The calibration test report shown on the next page gives details of the response at other frequencies relative to this 250 Hz reference sensitivity. Results ≥100 Hz are obtained using an electrostatic actuator as described in BS EN 61064-6 and those below 100 Hz are obtained in a reference pressure chamber. Detailed results are available from the calibration laboratory upon request.

The reported expanded uncertainty of measurements is based on a standard uncertainty multiplied by the coverage factor of k=2, providing a coverage probability of approximately 95%. Where the degrees of freedom are insufficient to maintain this confidence level, the coverage factor is increased to maintain this confidence level.

### Calibration Dates:

Received date: 29/11/2021 Reviewed date: 07/12/2021  
Calibration date: 07/12/2021 Issued date: 07/12/2021

Technicians: (Electronic certificate)

Calibrated by:  
Reviewed by:

This certificate is issued in accordance with the CA Quality Management system. It provides traceability of measurement to recognized national standards, and to the units of measurement realized at the National Physics Laboratory or other recognized national standards laboratories. This certificate may not be reproduced other than in full, except with the prior written approval of the issuing laboratory.

## Certificate of Calibration

Continuation of Certificate number: 39872

Reference Calibrator: WSC1 - Nor1253-24269  
Measurement Record: K:\C A\Calibration\Nor-1504\Nor-1017 MicCa\NOR1227\_170606\_M1.nmf

### Preconditioning

The equipment was preconditioned for more than 12 hours at the specified calibration temperature and humidity.

### Instruments and Program

A complete list of instruments, hardware and software that have been used for this calibration is available from the calibration laboratory

### Traceability

The measured values for sound pressure, frequency, voltage, capacitance, temperature, humidity and ambient pressure are traceable to an accredited national physical laboratory.

### Observations

The differences between the two results at 100 Hz are within normal limits bearing in mind the different test methods and are taken into account in arriving at the uncertainties of measurement.

### Method of Calibration

The open circuit sensitivity of the microphone has been determined at 250 Hz against a reference laboratory standard measurement microphone by insert voltage techniques using a laboratory standard sound calibrator as a transfer standard. The electrostatic actuator frequency response was then obtained for frequencies above 100 Hz as described in BS EN IEC 61094-8. In addition, where requested the optional free field frequency response over the range 2 – 100 Hz has been obtained using a pressure chamber. In this case the reference frequency is 100 Hz. All of these results and their associated uncertainties are detailed in the table on page 3 of this certificate. See the observations field below for details of any discrepancies between the 100 Hz results obtained via the electrostatic actuator and pressure chamber.

The overall uncertainty at any frequency  $\sigma_{\text{Combined},F_n}$  may be obtained by combining the uncertainty of the open circuit sensitivity  $\sigma_{S250}$  with the uncertainty of the actuator / or LF pressure response at any other frequency  $\sigma_{\text{Act},F_n}$  where  $F_n$  is the uncertainty at the frequency of interest using the relationship:

$$\sigma_{\text{Combined},F_n} = 2\sqrt{\sigma_{S250}^2 + \sigma_{\text{Act},F_n}^2}$$

### Appendix to this certificate

Where data is available from the microphone manufacturer to correct the actuator / pressure frequency response to obtain the random incidence and / or free field response it is shown in the appendix to this certificate. The uncertainty information relating to these corrections is the responsibility of the microphone manufacturer and when it is available the total uncertainty for the corrected frequency response at each point may then be obtained by including the correction uncertainty in the root-sum-square formula given above. These responses are outside the UKAS accredited scope, but are provided for information.

### Observations

# Certificate of Calibration

Continuation of Certificate number: 39672

## Numerical Results for Relative Frequency Response

Actuator Results					
Freq	Actuator	Uncert.	Freq	Actuator	Uncert.
Hz	dB re 250 Hz	dB	Hz	dB re 250 Hz	dB
100.0	0.02	0.21	5010.70	-1.39	0.24
112.2	0.01	0.21	5622.00	-1.67	0.24
123.0	0.01	0.21	6307.90	-1.98	0.24
141.3	0.01	0.21	7077.80	-2.31	0.24
159.5	0.00	0.21	7940.80	-2.68	0.24
177.9	0.00	0.21	8809.70	-3.37	0.48
199.6	0.00	0.21	9896.70	-4.27	0.48
223.0	-0.01	0.21	11119	-5.17	0.48
261.2	Ref	0.21	12598	-5.73	0.48
281.8	-0.01	0.21	14120	-6.36	0.48
316.3	-0.02	0.21	15843	-7.08	0.48
354.8	-0.02	0.21	17776	-8.40	0.70
398.2	-0.03	0.21	19944	-10.30	0.70
448.7	-0.03	0.21	22377		0.80
501.2	-0.03	0.21	25107		0.80
562.4	-0.04	0.21	28170		0.80
631.6	-0.05	0.21	31607		0.80
708.0	-0.06	0.21	35481		0.80
784.4	-0.07	0.21	39780		0.80
881.2	-0.08	0.21	44544		0.80
1000.0	-0.10	0.21	50081		0.80
1122.0	-0.11	0.21	56202		1.20
1259.0	-0.14	0.21	63068		1.20
1412.5	-0.17	0.21	70782		1.20
1584.8	-0.20	0.21	79383		1.20
1778.1	-0.24	0.21	89068		1.20
1996.1	-0.28	0.21	99934		1.20
2238.5	-0.36	0.21	112126		
2511.6	-0.44	0.21	125808		
2811.0	-0.53	0.21	141164		
3161.8	-0.65	0.21	158375		
3547.5	-0.79	0.21	177698		
3980.8	-0.98	0.21	199375		
4485.8	-1.15	0.24			

Low Frequency		
Freq	dB re	Uncert.
Hz	100 Hz	dB
2.0		0.7
2.2		0.7
2.5		0.7
2.8		0.7
3.2		0.7
3.8		0.7
4.0		0.7
4.5		0.7
5.0		0.7
5.8		0.7
6.3		0.7
7.1		0.7
8.0		0.7
8.9		0.7
10.0		0.7
11.2		0.7
12.8		0.7
14.1		0.7
15.9		0.7
17.8		0.7
20.0		0.7
22.4		0.7
25.1		0.7
28.2		0.7
31.6		0.7
35.5		0.7
39.8		0.7
44.7		0.7
50.1		0.7
56.3		0.7
63.1		0.7
70.8		0.7
79.5		0.7
89.2		0.7
100.0	Ref	0.7

## Certificate of Calibration

Continuation of Certificate number: 39672

### Appendix to certificate (not accredited). Random and Free Field Corrected Data

Corrected results, dB re 250 Hz					
Freq Hz	Random incidence corrected	Free field corrected	Freq Hz	Random incidence corrected	Free field corrected
100	0.02	0.02	5,010.70	-1.26	-0.17
112.2	0.01	0.01	5,622.00	-1.50	-0.17
126.0	0.01	0.01	6,307.90	-1.78	-0.13
141.3	0.01	0.01	7,077.50	-2.05	-0.01
158.5	0.00	0.00	7,940.00	-2.28	0.12
177.9	0.00	0.00	8,904.70	-2.63	0.08
199.8	0.00	0.00	9,986.70	-3.04	-0.17
223.9	-0.01	-0.01	11,216	-3.23	-0.27
251.2	-0.01	-0.01	12,585	-3.58	0.07
281.9	-0.01	-0.01	14,120	-3.87	0.50
316.3	-0.02	-0.02	15,843	-4.21	0.87
354.9	-0.02	-0.02	17,775	-4.65	0.90
398.2	-0.03	-0.03	19,944	-5.16	0.20
446.7	-0.03	-0.03	22,377		
501.2	-0.03	-0.03	25,107		
562.4	-0.04	-0.04	28,170		
631	-0.05	-0.05	31,607		
708	-0.06	-0.04	35,483		
794.4	-0.07	-0.03	39,790		
891.3	-0.08	-0.02	44,644		
1,000.00	-0.10	-0.01	50,001		
1,122.00	-0.11	0.00	56,202		
1,258.90	-0.14	-0.01	63,058		
1,412.50	-0.17	-0.02	70,762		
1,584.80	-0.20	-0.04	79,363		
1,778.10	-0.24	-0.08	89,086		
1,995.10	-0.29	-0.09	99,934		
2,238.50	-0.36	-0.11	112,128		
2,511.90	-0.42	-0.15	125,805		
2,818.00	-0.49	-0.18	141,154		
3,161.90	-0.56	-0.19	158,375		
3,547.50	-0.71	-0.18	177,695		
3,980.30	-0.86	-0.16	199,375		
4,466.90	-1.05	-0.15			

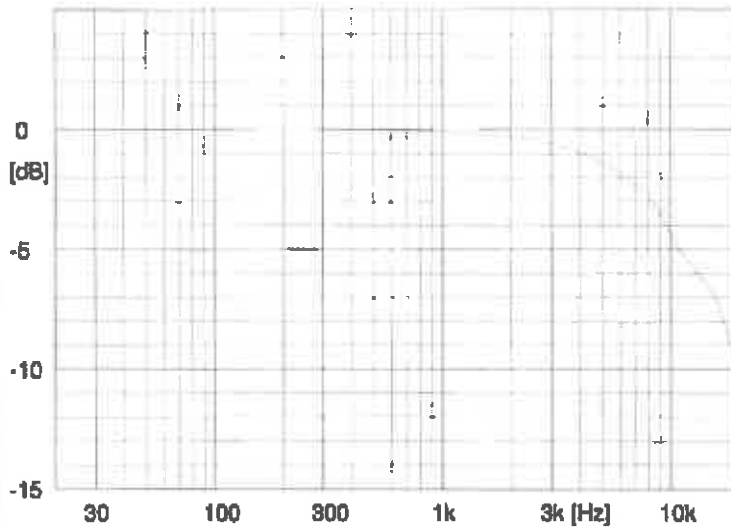
The corrections used to produce these random and free field responses are published by the manufacturer and they are responsible for the accuracy of the data and for the associated uncertainties to be applied. Campbell Associates Limited use their best endeavours to ensure the accuracy of this data but are not responsible for any errors, omissions or for ensuring that the data is of the current issue.

If the actuator response was not measured for any frequency, then the corresponding cell in the above table will be blank; similarly, if correction data is not available from the manufacturer the cell will also be blank. Correction data for frequencies below 100 Hz are not required

\*\* End of Table Section \*\*



### Microphone Calibration Certificate



**Norsonic**  
**Type: 1227**

Serial no: 170806

Sensitivity: 55.89 mV/Pa  
-25.05 ±0.10 dB re. 1 V/Pa  
Capacitance: 13.3 ±1.0 pF  
Date: 07/12/2021

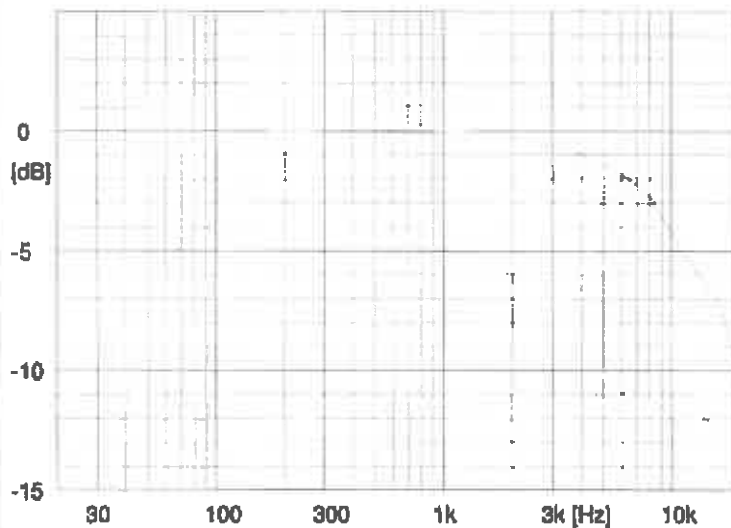
Signature:

Measurement conditions:  
Polarisation voltage: 0.0 V  
Pressure: 98.08 ±0.05 kPa  
Temperature: 22.4 ±0.1 °C  
Relative humidity: 35.5 ±1.0 %RH  
Results are normalized to  
the reference conditions

Pressure (Actuator) response:

**Campbell Associates**  
www.campbell-associates.co.uk

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Pressure (Actuator) response:

**Campbell Associates**  
www.campbell-associates.co.uk

Comment:

 Outlook

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**Re: TEN objection Royal Oak Stevenage 5-7 August 2022**

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**From** [REDACTED]**Date** Thu 07/07/2022 20:09**To** [REDACTED]**Cc** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Why do you keep saying it's a requirement of our licence to have doormen, when it's not?

The event I question is for Old Town Live, which the whole of the high street is involved.

Equally I messaged you last week regarding the noise complaint that is currently under investigation, which you have failed to respond to. When can we expect a response?

My understanding is therefore you are objecting to a TENs notice, that is for 12 years of your department, licensing department having monitored to date not being able to substantiate at any point. When will this persicussion of our premises end?

Many Thanks,

On 7 Jul 2022 7:34 pm, [REDACTED] wrote:

Dear [REDACTED]

Please find attached my objection to the TEN for the 5-7 August 2022.

This premises is in a noise sensitive location, with current noise complaints that are being investigated. The condition to the premises licence to have no music outside must remain in place to prevent public nuisance. Registered door supervisors are required to manage the door and the outside drinking area.

Kind regards

[REDACTED]

Chartered Environmental Health Practitioner

Stevenage Borough Council. Daneshill House. Danestrete, Stevenage. Herts. SG1 1HN

[REDACTED] [REDACTED]



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**DRAFT**

**The Royal Oak ■ Walkern Road Stevenage SG1 3RA**

**Application for a new Premises Licence to replace existing Premises Licence reference ■■■■■**

**DPS: TBC**

**Premises Description**

Existing Public House licensed under Premises Licence reference ■■■■■

The application follows consultation with Stevenage Environmental Health Officer. The applicant proposes a new updated Premises Licence to replace existing Premises Licence reference SBCL0076.

The application proposes a new Premises Licence with new conditions to promote the Prevention of Public Nuisance Licensing Objective.

**Proposed Licensable Activities**

	Films Sporting Events LNR	Live Music Recorded Music Performance of Dance Anything Similar Making Music Facilities for Dancing Facilities for Entertainment	Alcohol (on & off)	Opening
Sun – Thu	10:00 – 00:00	10:00 – 23:00	10:00 – 23:30	10:00 – 00:00
Fri - Sat	10:00 – 01:00	10:00 – 00:00	10:00 – 12:30	10:00 – 01:00

Patio/Outside Seating: Mon – Sun: 10:00 – 23:00 [Supervised smokers only after 22:00 no drinks]

From the end of permitted hours on New Years' Eve to 05:00 on New Years' Day

**Proposed Conditions**

1. When the licensed premises are being used for the purpose of public dancing, music and other public entertainment of the like kind:
  - a. The maximum number of persons to be allowed at any one time in the premises shall not exceed 130 persons.
  - b. During Public Entertainments, both the front entrance and car park elevation entrance inner lobby door, shall remain closed but unlocked and usable as a fire escape.

- c. During Public Entertainments, both the external exit/entrance doors to the front entrance and car park elevation entrances, shall be allowed to return to the fully closed position when not being used.
  - d. The rear fire escape route, (via the female toilets) doors shall be maintained in a closed position but not locked and shall not be held back or fastened in an open position.
  - e. Noise or vibration shall not emanate from the premises so as to cause a public nuisance.
  - f. All electronic equipment used at events where there is amplified, recorded and live music shall be routed through the sound limiter device and only via the four dedicated stage power sockets. The sound limiter device shall be set to a level which will not cause a public noise nuisance to the noise sensitive receptors.
  - g. The maximum sound level must be agreed with the EH officers and set with their supervision by the operating tenant/manager before regulated entertainment takes place on the premises.
  - h. The setting of the sound limiter device must be followed by a sound limiter calibration certificate which must demonstrate the calibration methodology and agreed total music sound level along with maximum sound levels at low frequencies in the range between 63Hz to 250 Hz.
  - i. The sound limiter calibration certificate must be approved by the EH Team and the sound limiter device must operate according to the approved certificate at all times.
  - j. The operational panel of the noise limiter device shall be secured to the satisfaction of the EH officer or Licensing Officer of SBC. The keys or the password securing the access to the sound limiter device's operational panel must only be held or known by a responsible person nominated by the Licensee and shall not be accessed by any other person. The limiter shall not be altered without prior agreement of an EHO from SBC.
  - k. The noise limiter control sockets must be clearly visible from the adjacent bar area and not be obstructed in anyway.
  - l. The window acoustic infills shall be installed to the flat window nearest to the stage and also the bay window nearest to the stage at all times during events involving amplified, live and recorded music as outlined in the acoustic certificate dated 05/02/2024.
  - m. During Public Entertainments the management of the premises shall ensure that the windows in the lounge bar area remain closed, ventilation is to be provided via the extract ventilation system.
2. Disruptive customers, known drug users/dealer entering the premises will be refused service and will be asked to leave.
  3. There will be no serving to drunks.

4. The premises will always have a range of soft drinks on sale.
5. The premises licence holder will ensure all bar staff are trained in relation to the legislation relating to the sale of alcohol to drunken persons.
6. The pub will be a member of local Pubwatch scheme.
7. The DPS or his/her deputies will ensure that tables are cleared of glassware regularly and will monitor customers to ensure glasses/bottles are not taken from the premises.
8. No music shall be played in or transmitted to any outside area.
9. Children under 18 years will not be allowed into the premises after 22:00hrs.
- ~~10. All AWP's and cigarette machines will be sited in view of the bar, so that their usage can be monitored and controlled. Signs on the machines will indicate that children under the age of 18 years are forbidden to use them.~~
11. Between Sundays and Thursdays (inclusive) the following hours shall apply:
  - a. live and recorded music to cease at 23.00 hours
  - b. supply of alcohol to cease at 23.30 hours
  - c. premises to close at midnight
12. The Designated Premises Supervisor shall post notices at all exits reminding customers to respect the neighbours and leave the premises promptly and quietly.
13. The Designated Premises Supervisor shall encourage patrons to leave the car park within 15 minutes of closing time.
14. Except for patrons leaving the premises temporarily to smoke, the external area shall close at 22:00. Patrons leaving the premises temporarily to smoke after 22:00 shall not be permitted to take drinks outside with them. Adequate notices shall be displayed in appropriate locations to ensure that this information is brought to the attention of patrons.
15. Records of any complaints, incidents and meetings in relation to the four licensing objectives made by local residents/neighbours shall be kept by the applicant for a period of 6 years, and shall be made available at all times for inspection by Licensing Officers.
16. Notices shall be prominently displayed at any area used for smoking, requesting patrons to respect the needs to local residents and use the area quietly.
17. Where patrons congregate outside after 21:00 a member of staff shall be situated outside until the premises is empty of patrons and maintain order and control noise at all times.



## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

### Pre-statement:

We are aware that over the previous 14 years of our tenure at the Royal Oak numerous complaints have been made from local residents some with and some without merit.

We have previously stated in emails to EHO and licencing all of the below points, however due to the revolving door system Stevenage Borough Council employ, most emails are with ex-licencing offers and ex-EHO officers.

We are fully aware that most of the complaints are from [REDACTED]. An immediate neighbour who used to be an avid user of the premises. This changed when SBC brought in parking restrictions on Walkern road, and Nick had three cars. He requested if he could park all three cars in our car park to save him money, unfortunately we declined as we only have limited spaces.

This has created hell for us. [REDACTED] openly stated that he would not stop complaining about the pub until it was a car park. He also created a WhatsApp group with local residents urging them to complain even when no nuisance has occurred.

We have implemented every reasonable action brought to us through countless EHO & licencing meetings to prevent further 'nuisance' coming from the premises.

Below is an outline of what we have been through and the evidence of the failings of EHO and licencing's constant changes of personnel.

### July 2016:

Complaint made against Royal Oak regarding the noise pollution from a live band [REDACTED] from McMullen's immediately requested the following actions to be taken from head of property

- Secondary glazing to the road facing windows and bay window
- Automatic closure of side door to be put in place and removal of hold back
- Ease and adjust side door and remove hold backs as catching on carpet
- Potentially looking to either add diffusers( mushrooms etc. ) to some of the vaulted ceilings or lowering some of the ceilings to limit the spread of the sound

**All actions undertaken other than the lowering of the ceilings as this wasn't deemed to make enough of an impact.**

### Jan 2017

Frist complaint regarding the timeslot we had been allocated for our glass bins to be emptied.

**This was immediately resolved with Biffa who were very understanding**

[REDACTED] contacted us regarding the sound limiter levels, advised that herself, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would attend site to set limiter to a reasonable level, [REDACTED] had previously visited site to create a report and sent to licencing officer [REDACTED] via email on 24 January 2017 at 20:55.

[REDACTED] agreed the visit and requested the sound limiter checks be carried out ASAP (31/1/17 at 15:45)



## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

██████████ and ██████████ organised a visit to the complainants house to view the levels of the music however ██████████ is unavailable meaning the sound limiter calibration is pushed back further. The meeting goes ahead with ██████████

Meeting in complainants house finally agreed for Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> Feb 2017 with ██████████ arranging the music to be reviewed in the complainants house to determine whether a it is considered to be a nuisance.

On 13<sup>th</sup> Feb 2017 ██████████ requests ██████████ produce the previous recordings of 'nuisance music' to be provided.

██████████ doesn't send the recordings but stats in email *"We have the previous recordings downloaded and if you really wanted to hear it you could come in and listen. However, it probably wouldn't be that helpful now. Hopefully on Wednesday we can set a level that everyone is happy with."* – This is deemed inappropriate from our end.

Unfortunately the DJ who's equipment we were due to borrow let us down last minute.

## April 2017

██████████ reported that a letter had been received from "A concerned resident" however parts of the complaint are open to interpretation – as well as some liability cannot be explicitly expressed on The Royal Oak.

As quoted from the letter (reference 3362\_001.pdf from ██████████)

*"We were greeted by a overspill of cars in the car park causing the road to be blocked"* This cannot be included in the complaint due to this being a rare occasion, customers are within their rights to be picked up and we are within our rights to allow parking.

*"customers"* – Multiple references to "Customers" in this letter however due to the proximity of the Old Town to the premises, can anyone actually confirm they are our customers and not patrons of other sites in the Old Town walking home and seeing someone they know at The Royal Oak?

*"Easter Sunday"* – We can not be held accountable for SBC issuing a TENs for a "Religious Holiday"

## July 2017

██████████ reinstates a meeting that was previously cancelled due to illness on the ██████████ representative to 10<sup>th</sup> July 2017, ██████████ confirms actions previously outlined have been undertaken:

(27/06/2017 15:09) from ██████████

*"Everything has now been done in our power. Everything is plugged into the allocated sockets. The noise monitor is in full swing, set to their agreed levels.*

*Doors/windows are being closed. Benches removed from the front. External perimeter checks. Matting supplied for under the speakers to minimise the bass. Air Con in full operation."*

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

██████████ notes in her email dated 12/07/2017 that the sound recordings taken from a complaint on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July **Did not** constitute a nuisance from licencing's point of view.

### August 2017

Frist complaint from ██████████ directly to ██████████ email address;

██████████ stated that customers were making a loud noise during the Floyd Mayweather Jr. vs Conor McGregor boxing match. This had a TEN in operation and was limited to the sports bar (opposite side of the premises to ██████████ house), two members of staff were employed and only 15 customers purchased tickets to this event.

### November 2017

██████████ contacts us regarding a complaint from 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017 and determines the following:

- "1. There would be a further visit by the original sound engineer who set the noise limiter up in February of this year to ensure that the agreed levels have not been changed.***
- 2. Staff engaged in the dispersal of customers leaving the pub at the end of the evening following these events will wear high visibility jackets to ensure that they are clearly visible to all"***

### December 2017

Complaint from ██████████ on 20/12/17 regarding noise over the 15-16th December 2017. Attached is a audio file (attachment 1.m4a) stating that the *"bass levels are both excessive and intrusive"* however we deem this not to be the case and the multiple people we have requested to review this footage cannot even hear the bass. ██████████ replied to this email on the same day stating:

*"Morning ██████████"*

*Thanks for this. Could you please tell me what we are trying to listen for? We can hear a couple voices and a short 2 second bit of music that is barely audible, when we assume a door is opened to gain access but unfortunately we can't hear anything else over the traffic noise.*

*Not sure leaning out of an open window falls with any noise control remit that we are legally meant to be adhering too? When the noise of the traffic is quiet clearly the loudest thing on the recording. This really does strike me as desperation from the complainant.*

*Incidentally our neighbour has just been turned down again on his insurance claim last week.*

*Noise monitors were checked again after your previous visits and nothing had been tampered with. Perhaps you could send me the date of this recording, so I can send you a copy of our recording for the same date? Music 3 nights a week through out December, so really need some clarity on dates.*

*Many Thanks, ██████████"*

We have explicitly stated within this email that the noise limiters have been checked and verified by SBC and are at the same levels as agreed. Incidentally this email also shows the neighbour has bias against us due to the failed insurance claim against the premises.

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

██████████ also states in subsequent email that he played the audio file through "External Speakers" to detect the bass, However without knowing the specific brand, model and set up of the speakers, this could be misconstrued that any audio file could have a bass line depending on the configuration.

### Feb 2018

Within an email thread from ██████████ he states that the audio recording form ██████████ dated 20<sup>th</sup> December 2025 is a "Cause for concern" however our standpoint remains the same that this audio recording should be null and void unless it was obtained by calibrated equipment and can be heard on a normal PC without additional speakers.

██████████ emails ██████████ and ██████████ on 20/02/2018 stating : "I have recorded that on reaching the "too loud" level the machine is still working and that the music is cut off after 10 seconds in the red and requires the reset button to be pressed before music can start again." Showing that the sound limited device is working and cut off within 10 seconds. He also states that the "The box cannot be changed without an engineer accessing the unit."

██████████ requests further guidance on where we go from here as our and McMullen's view point is the equipment SBC pushed for us to have installed, calibrated and used every event is working correctly.

### March 2018

██████████ notifies us of yet another complaint from 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2018 but gives no further information.

### April 2018

██████████ suggests a residents meeting to get to the bottom of the complaints. And notifies us of another complaint regarding the owner being aggressive on the phone and fights taking place outside the pub. ██████████ responds denying the allegations and I'm sure ██████████ can confirm if a fight took place as it is company policy for all fights to be reported to the police instantly.

Residents meeting penned into the diary for Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> April 10am.

### May 2018

We received an email from ██████████ notifying us of the acoustic measures in place at a different bar in Hitchin (Club 85) and suggested we talk to them about the measures they have put in place in an attempt to limit the noise pollution from our premises. After talking to the manager it was decided we had put in place mostly all or their measures and nothing further could be implemented as they have.

██████████ also acknowledged no residents came to the meeting at the Royal Oak on the 28<sup>th</sup> April at 10am. ██████████ rebooks the residents meeting for 26<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at 10.30am. He also outlines the new sound limiting measures going in place during the planned refurbishment.

On 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018 ██████████ recommends the sound limiting device be checked due to its age, however as stated in ██████████ response the same day, it was checked in Feb 2018 by SBC themselves as well as it being added to a annual inspection routine. ██████████ also agrees to have the sound limited moved during the refurbishment if SBC require so.

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

23<sup>rd</sup> May 2018 [REDACTED] notifies [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] that they wish to have a meeting on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 to discuss points raised in [REDACTED] previous email.

25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 [REDACTED] makes the following points;

1. *I have emailed our estates team to chase the re-siting of the noise limiter and to arrange an engineer certificate*
2. *I will await a meeting date from you after the 7<sup>th</sup> June with the neighbour and an acoustic specialist but have begun the process with our interior designer [REDACTED] today who is now costing acoustic curtains into the scheme*
3. [REDACTED] – *to make immediate inroads into external drinking and use door staff to monitor on Friday and Saturday nights*
4. *TENS/day events – I guess we see how the applications go and the neighbours are with the improvements”*

McMullen’s have now invested thousands of pounds into the prevention of public nuisance by erecting a fence to prevent nuisance to the rear neighbours.

[REDACTED] requests SBC invest in additional lighting and CCTV to prevent the ‘back alley’ from being used for antisocial behaviour. – SBC never acknowledged this request.

### June 2018

[REDACTED] arranges for an Acoustician to attend the site and give an expert opinion on the noise pollution issues. (“ [REDACTED] form Spectrum Acoustic”)

### August 2018

Acoustician is present on the weekend of 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> August to investigate.

[REDACTED] reports two further complaints one of which is not appropriate and contains threats of violence. *“As you would imagine I wanted to go out and hit someone with the shovel.”*

One complaint reports no door staff could be seen however [REDACTED] confirmed that door supervisor was present those nights. And also reports *“The bass levels were very high Friday night and people were loud outside after 9pm”* unless this happened after 11pm, it’s not against the law or our licence.

[REDACTED] requests video evidence of the events taking place to ensure they can be dealt with correctly and to corroborate any complaints.

Complaints have started to become abusive, [REDACTED] responds to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] the following:

*“Good morning,*

*Unfortunately my staff are not paid to take abusive complaints from customers. They have been instructed to hang up on anyone using abusive language.*

*These “complaints” are now being recorded along with regular recordings through out the night, monitoring noise from outside. The one in question your complainant made on Saturday night and was “hung up on”, again was using extra colourful language. He unfortunately should have taken time out to lean out of his window before complaining. As the member of staff was outside*

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

*recording at the time of his call. Which we have a time record of, that would match his phones call log. I say unfortunately because as you can quiet clearly see on the recordings there is no one outside and no audible noise can be heard leaving the building.*

*We are also purchasing a body cam to record any incidence that may occur or not as the case maybe going forward.*

*At the last meeting (and at previous meetings) we was promised a full log and results of your last noise monitoring. Please note nothing to date. Equally we asked [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for copies of the previous 2/3 occasions that recordings where made with your "faulty" equipment. We are still waiting on all of these also.*

*Equally please provide us with Police records of their call outs to the pub over the last 4 years. To further enhance your groups previous emails regarding the behaviour and constant nuisance coming from the pubs patrons.*

*The Consultant will be present again this Saturday before forwarding on a report. As to will the non-existent doormen your complainant refers to.*

*To date our staff equally have not seen any police presence at the rear of the property, after me making it clear in the previous meetings that it has become a haven for youths.*

*To date, to my knowledge as I have not had any reports back reference to your "faulty" equipment or the subsequent visit to the property from two of your staff on the nights in question, I am not aware of us breaking any laws regarding acceptable noise pollution. Other than from your "group" of complainants. Please correct me if I am wrong. The "noise" from these complainants has escalated since your "group" meeting. Now that they feel they have your attention.*

*Equally I am happy to meet anyone of your team at the venue on a Friday or Saturday night to record all these issues for yourselves. "*

### September 2018

[REDACTED] notified us that yet again we have received another complaint. This time the complainant has attached a video ("Video.MOV") which is taken from outside his property.

We can barely hear anything from the video file and are confused how this is a complaint.

The complainant states that he has contacted the site and the site state they are doing everything they have been told to do to mitigate the noise, the sound limiter is in use and it hasn't tripped. Yet again, this sound limiter was set up by SBC and is to their approved levels.

05/09/18

[REDACTED] notifies us of two futher complaints, one at 22.24 and one at 22.32 on the 31.08.18, prior to 23:00 when noise can be considered a nuisance.

26/09/18 – Acoustician report comes back showing that the Royal Oak is operating completely within the Noise Act 1996 ("Acoustician Report.pdf)

### December 2018

Complaint arose due to noise from customers outside the premises, as per our policy, it got heated and police were called. This situation was out of our control.

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

### May 2019

█ requests sound curtains are put up earlier to prevent them being forgotten during busy nights.

█ contacts █ regarding a noise complaint at 22:00. This is before 'Quiet Hours' of 11pm-7am.

### Jan 2020

We get a friendly email from █ requesting the use of our car park for a skip for his building works. We agree in an attempt to get him back on our side.

█ notifies of a further complaint stating there was a group of people outside the pub disturbing a resident, but gives no information regarding the location of 'outside the pub'

### August 2021

Another email from █ this time telling us about issues with people out the front and rear of his house, unfortunately we are not liable for passersby. The rear of the pub has an alley way which is frequented by un-favourable people but The Royal Oak has no jurisdiction here, nor do we on Walkern Road itself outside of our property boundaries.

We have another EHO officer involved (█) notifying us that we have had another complaint. █ gives a detailed explanation (█ █ response █.PDF")

### November 2021

Another licencing officer is involved now, █ outlines her findings on multiple visits to the Royal Oak and States *"the front entrance door is unable to be used as fire escape as this door is blocked by furniture to prevent its use, during public entertainments"*

However we have been told multiple times to prevent people from using this as an entrance/exit during live music to prevent sound escaping to the immediate neighbours by █ and █. In addition they recommended the 'Fire Exit' sign be removed immediately. █ raises this point in his email (█.pdf")

*"the sound level from amplified public entertainments is audible beyond the boundary of the premises"* The noise limited was set and agreed by all parties (Myself, EHO, Licencing and McMullen's) and is in use on all event nights, how can the noise be classed as a nuisance when the agreed levels are considered adequate? ("EHO Findings.pdf")

█ follows up with █ on 20/11/21 (█.pdf") and notifies her that Door supervisors are not listed in our licence and will be not legally required to have them.

### March – April 2022

█ constantly objects to our TEN notices continuously citing door supervisors, we have explained time and time again this is not in our licence and at no point has █ requested a minor variation to the licence to put an additional annex in there.

We receive a Warning letter from █ stating we have breached the condition of the licence even though he states himself there is no evidence confirming this. (Warning Letter.pdf)

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

█ responds to █ explaining the situation ("█.pdf")

### April 2022

█ pushes again for door supervisors, █ Agrees stating they will be on the door from 20:00-00:00

### May 2022

We notice one of the neighbours adjoining to our car park holding up a black box on one of the event nights recently complained about, upon speaking with members of the licencing team we are made aware that this is a noise monitoring device which has been removed from their house and is being used incorrectly to inflate the audio levels recorded. ("Complaint Black Box.pdf")

### July 2022

█ objects to another TEN for 'Old Town Live' citing again that registered door supervisors are required and stating there is still an open complaint to which we have had no information regarding. ("█ Complaint.pdf")

### August 2022

█ requests a meeting either 7/9/22 or 8/9/22 to discuss the outcome of her investigations. █ requests her findings ahead of time to discuss it with a legal team.

█ does not sent the evidence even after a further reminder, then goes onto annual leave until September.

### September 2022

█ leaves McMullen's and █ takes his place as head of tenancy.

### February 2023

We are notified by █ that █ has lodged yet another complaint about audible music in his house at 21:50. He then states he can still hear it at 22:30, both prior to the 11pm 'Quiet time'

█ advised █ this is yet again another complaint on the back of the parking restrictions on Walkern Road and █ abuse of the single permit he was given for our car park.

We now have another EHO officer █

### March 2023

█ advises █ that an acoustician has attended the premises and verified the sound limiting device is still fully functional

### May 2023

We have another EHO officer █ who immediately sends us a Warning letter ("Warning Letter █.pdf") citing the same allegation ""*The sound limiting device shall be set to control the sound level so that any noise resulting from amplified Public Entertainments, is inaudible at any point beyond the boundary of the premises known as: 'The Royal Oak Public*

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

House, █ Walkern Road, Stevenage" The device is still set at the same level as █ and myself agreed upon years ago.

█ responds to the complaint ("█.pdf")

### June 2023

We contacted █ and Partners for legal advice on these issues. They stated to us that even though this is a complex issue with very little real evidence, complaints before 11pm are open to interpretation and are not easily 'convicted'

We receive another Warning letter ("Warning Letter █.pdf") stating further breaches, however they clearly state in the warning letter that the sound limiting device was in use. Essentially contradicting their own departments calibration of the machine and previous EHO officer visits.

During this time a meeting was called with the following representatives; EHO (█), Licencing (█), Stevenage Councillor, Publican Representative (█), Acoustician (█), and McMullen's (█) to deliberate on new wording for the premise licence. We had all agreed on the wording and the minor variation was being prepared for submission by █. This would have removed the grey area of interpretation of the licence and made everyone's lives easier.

The day before the consultation period ended █ objected to the variation leaving us dead in the water.

### January 2024

█ notifies us that a noise abatement notice has been issued against the pub, once again for a complaint prior to 23:00.

█ confirms the agreed level set out in a meeting in December 2023 with the acoustician as 91dB LAeq (30sec) during the meeting with the acoustician he takes readings from all areas of the premises and notifies EHO, Licencing and ourselves that the area to be measured around the dance floor area.

We receive a acoustic report on 15/1/2024 ("soundcert.pdf")

█ recommends a new sound limiter. To be installed Monday 29<sup>th</sup> Jan 2024

█ requests a picture of the new limiter in situ with specific screws installed. (anti tamper Torx screws)

Due to the constant stress and the harassment of the unfound complaints our manager hands in his resignation on 31/01/2024.

█ contacts █ reference to the measures we are having to go through to appease █. ("█ complaint.pdf")

### Feb 2024

█ arranges a meeting for 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 2024 to calibrate the new meter to the required levels.

█ rejects a TEN for the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024 for music to carry until 1am.

█ and █ arrange a meeting for Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 11am.



## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

██████████ emails ██████████ with the wording she recommends for the minor variation.

██████████ starts investigating allegations of bullying by ██████████. Requests statements from multiple parties. ("██████████.pdf")

██████████ notifies us of two further complaints.

██████████ (DPS) is notified he could lose his personal licence due to the unjust abatement notice against him.

██████████ submits an official complaint against EHO and licencing due to the years of failings of the departments and the hostility of ██████████. ("official complaint.pdf")

### March 2024

██████████ responds to ██████████ complaint and registers it as a "Formal complaint (Stage 1)" and will provide a response in the short term,

██████████ notifies ██████████ that the minor variation cannot go ahead due to the failure of accurately setting the noise limiting device. The acoustician's report clearly states that the average reading of the noise level should be taken 'around the area of the dance floor' however the CCTV we have clearly shows ██████████ only walking around the vicinity of the speaker, inflating the average reading on her decibel meter. ("EHO CCTV.mp4")

### April 2024

DPS of the Royal Oak is changed from ██████████ to ██████████ due to ██████████ resignation.

Multiple emails are sent to ██████████ with zero response.

██████████ finally responds to ██████████ who requested an update on the complaint. She advises she will respond in full by Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2024

██████████ finally responds to the complaint on Thursday 25/04/2024 ("Complaint response.pdf") however her responses are inadequate and dismissed most of our comments.

We received an email from SBC regarding our complaint (Ref CU609322980) 26/04/2024

### May 2024

██████████ and ██████████ visited the site and notified us that the noise could be heard at the boundary edge, the noise limited had already been set to the approved levels as outlined by ██████████ previously. This is yet another failing of their department and it was still clearly incorrect. ██████████ contacted us to clarify that the complaints will have no further action taken.

██████████ emails ██████████ after he chased any action still to be taken after ██████████ response to his complaint. ██████████ recommended yet another recalibration of the equipment which was only initially done Feb 2024.

We contact SBC to raise our complaint from Stage 1 to Stage 2.

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

### June 2024

We receive a complaint through [REDACTED] regarding issues irrespective of the premises licence, noting the police had to be called that night which is our policy and right if we have trouble.

[REDACTED] contacts [REDACTED] to set up a meeting regarding 3 complaints and a 'sound recording' of the incidents, this sound recording app is not an official SBC designed application meaning it is completely unregulated and therefore cannot be used as evidence against us.

[REDACTED] also wishes for [REDACTED] to be present however [REDACTED] declines due to the ongoing complaint regarding her actions.

[REDACTED] receives a complaint from neighbours regarding cigarette butts and broken glass at the side and rear of the pub. As [REDACTED] mentions in his email there is no possible way to prove this was caused by our customers especially with our proximity to the Old Town.

We installed acoustic grade sound proof curtains to prevent additional noise nuisance escaping the premises, these curtains are rated for up to 21dB difference.

A freedom of information request is submitted to SBC (FOI24/106) for all of the previous investigations and evidence against the Royal Oak.

[REDACTED] notifies [REDACTED] that following on from a complaint regarding 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024 [REDACTED] had offered to show [REDACTED] (on an unrelated visit to the Pear Tree) the video recordings of the night, which she declined. The Videos are sent to [REDACTED] via WhatsApp by [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is contacted again and is annual leave.

FOI request comes back rejected due to an ongoing investigation.

[REDACTED] notifies us of a further breach of licence, [REDACTED] submitted recordings of the night to her to show we are doing everything we have been told to do.

[REDACTED] notifies us that a resident has praised the premises for the lack of noise over the weekend. She puts this down to the new internal sound curtains.

[REDACTED] responds to her notifying her of 3 ignored emails to her line manager [REDACTED]

### July 2024

[REDACTED] chases [REDACTED] again regarding his email with no response, [REDACTED] is also away. Without [REDACTED] response we cannot continue with the minor variation.

### October 2024

After months of zero correspondence from SBC we receive an email from [REDACTED] requesting a meeting reviewing the improvements that have been implemented. She also notifies us of 3 further complaints spanning 3 months.

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

### December 2024

We are notified that [REDACTED] has left the business, as she was a main point of contact for us this is incredibly unprofessional.

### Jan 2025

[REDACTED] attempts to arrange a meeting at the premises to agreed the level on the sound limited once again. However due to the noise abatement order in place and the active complaint regarding [REDACTED] actions have made the situation frustrating for both parties.

A meeting is agreed with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on 28<sup>th</sup> Jan

### February 2025

We are allocated another EHO officer in place of [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] is an expert in the field of acoustics. And wishes to set up a meeting ASAP

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] visited the pub and did some general checks, paperwork was checked and photographed, the sound limiter was in use, and they stated the music level 'seemed ok'.

They were happy with what we were doing which was no different to any other event night. ("EHO and Licencing visit.pdf")

[REDACTED] arranges a meeting with [REDACTED] to get to the bottom of the situation for Monday 17<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025

[REDACTED] notifies us of a breach at 22.15 on 31<sup>st</sup> Jan

[REDACTED] sends a breakdown of what was discussed at the meeting with [REDACTED], mostly noting that the sound curtains are ineffective even though there is a clear difference in the number of complaints since they were installed. Also noting that the smoking solution needs to be looked at again, this is now the 3<sup>rd</sup> EHO officer who has determined that the smoking solution needs to be moved. The meeting overall is deemed to be positive.

### July 2025

McMullen's solicitors get involved and explain the situation after a meeting with EHO. (" [REDACTED] pdf")

McMullen's recommend getting letters from the locals and local residents in support of the pub and to show the site as a community asset.

McMullen's submit a minor variation to the premises licence without consultation with the tenant, McMullen's informed the tenant that the variation was to be submitted but not the contents. ("Minor variation") The tenant presumed these changes would be the ones stated in previous emails with [REDACTED]

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

### September 2025

██████████ requests another sound check to ensure that the noise limiter is working correctly on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025 alongside ██████████

### October 2025

Minor variation is finally submitted on the 17<sup>th</sup> October after receiving no objections from licencing and EHO regarding the proposed changes.

### *Conclusion:*

As you can see from the countless incidents we have had over the last 14 years, I would hope you agree that the situation the Royal Oak as well as McMullen's have been put it is unfair and unjust.

Countless EHO officers and Licencing officers over the years have skewed the lines on what we are actually meant to be doing. When EHO officers email us stating we are doing a great job only for a different one to email us the following week saying the opposite creates a level of distrust for the licencing and EHO departments.

The level of investment for both ██████████ and McMullen's is excessive especially when it's a constant back and forth on what actually needs to be done, three times the smoking shelter was moved depending on what EHO officer that week had ordered us to do.

### McMullen's investment:

- Air conditioning to prevent doors and windows from being opened
- Re insulating of the stage area
- Two sound monitors over 12 years
- Multiple engineer visits to recalibrate due to EHO error
- Internal specialist sound curtains
- External specialist sound curtains
- Acoustician reports
- Secondary glazing throughout the premises
- Multiple on site meetings

### Tenant investment

- Extra staffing costs due to additional monitoring needs (inside and out)
- Internal specialist sound curtains
- External specialist sound curtains
- Specialist foam inserts to windows
- Specialist foam inserts to old vents
- Door supervisors
- Specialist sound monitoring equipment
- Multiple on site meetings

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

During the course of these issues at the request of McMullen's we have sought legal advice from our BII membership. The solicitors at our disposal have stated contradictory information compared to EHO and Licencing, mainly that you cannot have a noise abatement notice for something that happened before 23:00.

We have entertained every EHO and Licencing officer who has requested a meeting with us to finally get to the bottom of the problem.

We are aware that most of the complaints are coming from [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] Walkern road due to the parking restrictions we were unable to appease him with. We are also aware of the WhatsApp group some of the residents have shown us where he is trying to get the residents to complain for no reason other than to destroy this business.

We have previously submitted resident statements from immediate neighbours who didn't even know we have live music most weekends. These were ignored and brushed aside.

Previously we set a honey trap to prove to EHO and Licencing that the nuisance allegations are false by advertising a live band but not actually booking them. This caused an influx of complaints about noise that night however no music was actually played. We have also provided evidence on countless occasions that complaints are baseless and untrue.

We do accept that sometimes noise does escape which is why we have implemented so many policies and procedures to ensure this does not happen often. The residents were given an opportunity to voice their concerns to us and they chose not to take it.

These TENs have been denied due to interpretation by [REDACTED], historically no EHO or licencing officer has denied us a TEN on these grounds. [REDACTED] has interpreted them as a complete blanket over the current premises licence, however the TEN for 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Dec all only state extending the licencing hours and not a complete voiding of the premises licence conditions. The only TEN that stated we were voiding 2 conditions was one dated 5<sup>th</sup> Dec 2025. We would like this explained fully.

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

### Pre-statement:

We are aware that over the previous 14 years of our tenure at the Royal Oak numerous complaints have been made from local residents some with and some without merit.

We have previously stated in emails to EHO and licencing all of the below points, however due to the revolving door system Stevenage Borough Council employ, most emails are with ex-licencing offers and ex-EHO officers.

We are fully aware that most of the complaints are from [REDACTED]. An immediate neighbour who used to be an avid user of the premises. This changed when SBC brought in parking restrictions on Walkern road, and Nick had three cars. He requested if he could park all three cars in our car park to save him money, unfortunately we declined as we only have limited spaces.

This has created hell for us. [REDACTED] openly stated that he would not stop complaining about the pub until it was a car park. He also created a WhatsApp group with local residents urging them to complain even when no nuisance has occurred.

We have implemented every reasonable action brought to us through countless EHO & licencing meetings to prevent further 'nuisance' coming from the premises.

Below is an outline of what we have been through and the evidence of the failings of EHO and licencing's constant changes of personnel.

### July 2016:

Complaint made against Royal Oak regarding the noise pollution from a live band [REDACTED] from McMullen's immediately requested the following actions to be taken from head of property

- Secondary glazing to the road facing windows and bay window
- Automatic closure of side door to be put in place and removal of hold back
- Ease and adjust side door and remove hold backs as catching on carpet
- Potentially looking to either add diffusers( mushrooms etc. ) to some of the vaulted ceilings or lowering some of the ceilings to limit the spread of the sound

**All actions undertaken other than the lowering of the ceilings as this wasn't deemed to make enough of an impact.**

### Jan 2017

Frist complaint regarding the timeslot we had been allocated for our glass bins to be emptied.

**This was immediately resolved with Biffa who were very understanding**

[REDACTED] contacted us regarding the sound limiter levels, advised that herself, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] would attend site to set limiter to a reasonable level, [REDACTED] had previously visited site to create a report and sent to licencing officer [REDACTED] via email on 24 January 2017 at 20:55.

[REDACTED] agreed the visit and requested the sound limiter checks be carried out ASAP (31/1/17 at 15:45)

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

██████████ and ██████████ organised a visit to the complainants house to view the levels of the music however ██████████ is unavailable meaning the sound limiter calibration is pushed back further. The meeting goes ahead with ██████████

Meeting in complainants house finally agreed for Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> Feb 2017 with ██████████ arranging the music to be reviewed in the complainants house to determine whether it is considered to be a nuisance.

On 13<sup>th</sup> Feb 2017 ██████████ requests ██████████ produce the previous recordings of 'nuisance music' to be provided.

██████████ doesn't send the recordings but stats in email *"We have the previous recordings downloaded and if you really wanted to hear it you could come in and listen. However, it probably wouldn't be that helpful now. Hopefully on Wednesday we can set a level that everyone is happy with."* – This is deemed inappropriate from our end.

Unfortunately the DJ who's equipment we were due to borrow let us down last minute.

## April 2017

██████████ reported that a letter had been received from "A concerned resident" however parts of the complaint are open to interpretation – as well as some liability cannot be explicitly expressed on The Royal Oak.

As quoted from the letter (reference 3362\_001.pdf from ██████████)

*"We were greeted by a overspill of cars in the car park causing the road to be blocked"* This cannot be included in the complaint due to this being a rare occasion, customers are within their rights to be picked up and we are within our rights to allow parking.

*"customers"* – Multiple references to "Customers" in this letter however due to the proximity of the Old Town to the premises, can anyone actually confirm they are our customers and not patrons of other sites in the Old Town walking home and seeing someone they know at The Royal Oak?

*"Easter Sunday"* – We can not be held accountable for SBC issuing a TENs for a "Religious Holiday"

## July 2017

██████████ reinstates a meeting that was previously cancelled due to illness on the ██████████ representative to 10<sup>th</sup> July 2017, ██████████ confirms actions previously outlined have been undertaken:

(27/06/2017 15:09) from ██████████

*"Everything has now been done in our power. Everything is plugged into the allocated sockets. The noise monitor is in full swing, set to their agreed levels.*

*Doors/windows are being closed. Benches removed from the front. External perimeter checks. Matting supplied for under the speakers to minimise the bass. Air Con in full operation."*

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

██████████ notes in her email dated 12/07/2017 that the sound recordings taken from a complaint on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> July **Did not** constitute a nuisance from licencing's point of view.

### August 2017

Frist complaint from ██████████ directly to ██████████ email address;

██████████ stated that customers were making a loud noise during the Floyd Mayweather Jr. vs Conor McGregor boxing match. This had a TEN in operation and was limited to the sports bar (opposite side of the premises to ██████████ house), two members of staff were employed and only 15 customers purchased tickets to this event.

### November 2017

██████████ contacts us regarding a complaint from 17<sup>th</sup> October 2017 and determines the following:

- "1. There would be a further visit by the original sound engineer who set the noise limiter up in February of this year to ensure that the agreed levels have not been changed.***
- 2. Staff engaged in the dispersal of customers leaving the pub at the end of the evening following these events will wear high visibility jackets to ensure that they are clearly visible to all"***

### December 2017

Complaint from ██████████ on 20/12/17 regarding noise over the 15-16th December 2017. Attached is a audio file (attachment 1.m4a) stating that the *"bass levels are both excessive and intrusive"* however we deem this not to be the case and the multiple people we have requested to review this footage cannot even hear the bass. ██████████ replied to this email on the same day stating:

*"Morning ██████████"*

*Thanks for this. Could you please tell me what we are trying to listen for? We can hear a couple voices and a short 2 second bit of music that is barely audible, when we assume a door is opened to gain access but unfortunately we can't hear anything else over the traffic noise.*

*Not sure leaning out of an a open window falls with any noise control remit that we are legally meant to be adhering too? When the noise of the traffic is quiet clearly the loudest thing on the recording. This really does strike me as desperation from the complainant.*

*Incidentally our neighbour has just been turned down again on his insurance claim last week.*

*Noise monitors were checked again after your previous visits and nothing had been tampered with. Perhaps you could send me the date of this recording, so I can send you a copy of our recording for the same date? Music 3 nights a week through out December, so really need some clarity on dates.*

*Many Thanks, ██████████"*

We have explicitly stated within this email that the noise limiters have been checked and verified by SBC and are at the same levels as agreed. Incidentally this email also shows the neighbour has bias against us due to the failed insurance claim against the premises.



## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

██████████ also states in subsequent email that he played the audio file through "External Speakers" to detect the bass, However without knowing the specific brand, model and set up of the speakers, this could be misconstrued that any audio file could have a bass line depending on the configuration.

### Feb 2018

Within an email thread from ██████████ he states that the audio recording form ██████████ dated 20<sup>th</sup> December 2025 is a "Cause for concern" however our standpoint remains the same that this audio recording should be null and void unless it was obtained by calibrated equipment and can be heard on a normal PC without additional speakers.

██████████ emails ██████████ and ██████████ on 20/02/2018 stating : *"I have recorded that on reaching the "too loud" level the machine is still working and that the music is cut off after 10 seconds in the red and requires the reset button to be pressed before music can start again."* Showing that the sound limited device is working and cut off within 10 seconds. He also states that the *"The box cannot be changed without an engineer accessing the unit."*

██████████ requests further guidance on where we go from here as our and McMullen's view point is the equipment SBC pushed for us to have installed, calibrated and used every event is working correctly.

### March 2018

██████████ notifies us of yet another complaint from 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2018 but gives no further information.

### April 2018

██████████ suggests a residents meeting to get to the bottom of the complaints. And notifies us of another complaint regarding the owner being aggressive on the phone and fights taking place outside the pub. ██████████ responds denying the allegations and I'm sure ██████████ can confirm if a fight took place as it is company policy for all fights to be reported to the police instantly.

Residents meeting penned into the diary for Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> April 10am.

### May 2018

We received an email from ██████████ notifying us of the acoustic measures in place at a different bar in Hitchin (Club 85) and suggested we talk to them about the measures they have put in place in an attempt to limit the noise pollution from our premises. After talking to the manager it was decided we had put in place mostly all or their measures and nothing further could be implemented as they have.

██████████ also acknowledged no residents came to the meeting at the Royal Oak on the 28<sup>th</sup> April at 10am. ██████████ rebooks the residents meeting for 26<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at 10.30am. He also outlines the new sound limiting measures going in place during the planned refurbishment.

On 17<sup>th</sup> May 2018 ██████████ recommends the sound limiting device be checked due to its age, however as stated in ██████████ response the same day, it was checked in Feb 2018 by SBC themselves as well as it being added to a annual inspection routine. ██████████ also agrees to have the sound limited moved during the refurbishment if SBC require so.

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

23<sup>rd</sup> May 2018 [REDACTED] notifies [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] that they wish to have a meeting on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 to discuss points raised in [REDACTED] previous email.

25<sup>th</sup> May 2018 [REDACTED] makes the following points;

1. *I have emailed our estates team to chase the re-siting of the noise limiter and to arrange an engineer certificate*
2. *I will await a meeting date from you after the 7<sup>th</sup> June with the neighbour and an acoustic specialist but have begun the process with our interior designer [REDACTED] today who is now costing acoustic curtains into the scheme*
3. [REDACTED] – *to make immediate inroads into external drinking and use door staff to monitor on Friday and Saturday nights*
4. *TENS/day events – I guess we see how the applications go and the neighbours are with the improvements”*

McMullen's have now invested thousands of pounds into the prevention of public nuisance by erecting a fence to prevent nuisance to the rear neighbours.

[REDACTED] requests SBC invest in additional lighting and CCTV to prevent the 'back alley' from being used for antisocial behaviour. – SBC never acknowledged this request.

### June 2018

[REDACTED] arranges for an Acoustician to attend the site and give an expert opinion on the noise pollution issues. (“ [REDACTED] form Spectrum Acoustic”)

### August 2018

Acoustician is present on the weekend of 25<sup>th</sup>/26<sup>th</sup> August to investigate.

[REDACTED] reports two further complaints one of which is not appropriate and contains threats of violence. *“As you would imagine I wanted to go out and hit someone with the shovel.”*

One complaint reports no door staff could be seen however [REDACTED] confirmed that door supervisor was present those nights. And also reports *“The bass levels were very high Friday night and people were loud outside after 9pm”* unless this happened after 11pm, it's not against the law or our licence.

[REDACTED] requests video evidence of the events taking place to ensure they can be dealt with correctly and to corroborate any complaints.

Complaints have started to become abusive, [REDACTED] responds to [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] the following:

*“Good morning,*

*Unfortunately my staff are not paid to take abusive complaints from customers. They have been instructed to hang up on anyone using abusive language.*

*These "complaints" are now being recorded along with regular recordings through out the night, monitoring noise from outside. The one in question your complainant made on Saturday night and was "hung up on", again was using extra colourful language. He unfortunately should have taken time out to lean out of his window before complaining. As the member of staff was outside*

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

*recording at the time of his call. Which we have a time record of, that would match his phones call log. I say unfortunately because as you can quiet clearly see on the recordings there is no one outside and no audible noise can be heard leaving the building.*

*We are also purchasing a body cam to record any incidence that may occur or not as the case maybe going forward.*

*At the last meeting (and at previous meetings) we was promised a full log and results of your last noise monitoring. Please note nothing to date. Equally we asked [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] for copies of the previous 2/3 occasions that recordings where made with your "faulty" equipment. We are still waiting on all of these also.*

*Equally please provide us with Police records of their call outs to the pub over the last 4 years. To further enhance your groups previous emails regarding the behaviour and constant nuisance coming from the pubs patrons.*

*The Consultant will be present again this Saturday before forwarding on a report. As to will the non-existent doormen your complainant refers to.*

*To date our staff equally have not seen any police presence at the rear of the property, after me making it clear in the previous meetings that it has become a haven for youths.*

*To date, to my knowledge as I have not had any reports back reference to your "faulty" equipment or the subsequent visit to the property from two of your staff on the nights in question, I am not aware of us breaking any laws regarding acceptable noise pollution. Other than from your "group" of complainants. Please correct me if I am wrong. The "noise" from these complainants has escalated since your "group" meeting. Now that they feel they have your attention.*

*Equally I am happy to meet anyone of your team at the venue on a Friday or Saturday night to record all these issues for yourselves. "*

### **September 2018**

[REDACTED] notified us that yet again we have received another complaint. This time the complainant has attached a video ("Video.MOV") which is taken from outside his property.

We can barely hear anything from the video file and are confused how this is a complaint.

The complainant states that he has contacted the site and the site state they are doing everything they have been told to do to mitigate the noise, the sound limiter is in use and it hasn't tripped. Yet again, this sound limiter was set up by SBC and is to their approved levels.

05/09/18

[REDACTED] notifies us of two futher complaints, one at 22.24 and one at 22.32 on the 31.08.18, prior to 23:00 when noise can be considered a nuisance.

26/09/18 – Acoustician report comes back showing that the Royal Oak is operating completely within the Noise Act 1996 ("Acoustician Report.pdf)

### **December 2018**

Complaint arose due to noise from customers outside the premises, as per our policy, it got heated and police were called. This situation was out of our control.

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

### May 2019

█ requests sound curtains are put up earlier to prevent them being forgotten during busy nights.

█ contacts █ regarding a noise complaint at 22:00. This is before 'Quiet Hours' of 11pm-7am.

### Jan 2020

We get a friendly email from █ requesting the use of our car park for a skip for his building works. We agree in an attempt to get him back on our side.

█ notifies of a further complaint stating there was a group of people outside the pub disturbing a resident, but gives no information regarding the location of 'outside the pub'

### August 2021

Another email from █ this time telling us about issues with people out the front and rear of his house, unfortunately we are not liable for passersby. The rear of the pub has an alley way which is frequented by un-favourable people but The Royal Oak has no jurisdiction here, nor do we on Walkern Road itself outside of our property boundaries.

We have another EHO officer involved (█) notifying us that we have had another complaint. █ gives a detailed explanation (█ response █.PDF)

### November 2021

Another licencing officer is involved now, █ outlines her findings on multiple visits to the Royal Oak and States *"; the front entrance door is unable to be used as fire escape as this door is blocked by furniture to prevent its use, during public entertainments"*

However we have been told multiple times to prevent people from using this as an entrance/exit during live music to prevent sound escaping to the immediate neighbours by █ and █. In addition they recommended the 'Fire Exit' sign be removed immediately. █ raises this point in his email (█.pdf)

*"the sound level from amplified public entertainments is audible beyond the boundary of the premises"* The noise limited was set and agreed by all parties (Myself, EHO, Licencing and McMullen's) and is in use on all event nights, how can the noise be classed as a nuisance when the agreed levels are considered adequate? (EHO Findings.pdf)

█ follows up with █ on 20/11/21 (█.pdf) and notifies her that Door supervisors are not listed in our licence and will be not legally required to have them.

### March – April 2022

█ constantly objects to our TEN notices continuously citing door supervisors, we have explained time and time again this is not in our licence and at no point has █ requested a minor variation to the licence to put an additional annex in there.

We receive a Warning letter from █ stating we have breached the condition of the licence even though he states himself there is no evidence confirming this. (Warning Letter.pdf)

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

█ responds to █ explaining the situation ("█.pdf")

### April 2022

█ pushes again for door supervisors, █ Agrees stating they will be on the door from 20:00-00:00

### May 2022

We notice one of the neighbours adjoining to our car park holding up a black box on one of the event nights recently complained about, upon speaking with members of the licencing team we are made aware that this is a noise monitoring device which has been removed from their house and is being used incorrectly to inflate the audio levels recorded. ("Complaint Black Box.pdf")

### July 2022

█ objects to another TEN for 'Old Town Live' citing again that registered door supervisors are required and stating there is still an open complaint to which we have had no information regarding. ("█ Complaint.pdf")

### August 2022

█ requests a meeting either 7/9/22 or 8/9/22 to discuss the outcome of her investigations. █ requests her findings ahead of time to discuss it with a legal team.

█ does not sent the evidence even after a further reminder, then goes onto annual leave until September.

### September 2022

█ leaves McMullen's and █ takes his place as head of tenancy.

### February 2023

We are notified by █ that █ has lodged yet another complaint about audible music in his house at 21:50. He then states he can still hear it at 22:30, both prior to the 11pm 'Quiet time'

█ advised █ this is yet again another complaint on the back of the parking restrictions on Walkern Road and █ abuse of the single permit he was given for our car park.

We now have another EHO officer █

### March 2023

█ advises █ that an acoustician has attended the premises and verified the sound limiting device is still fully functional

### May 2023

We have another EHO officer █ who immediately sends us a Warning letter ("Warning Letter █.pdf") citing the same allegation ""*The sound limiting device shall be set to control the sound level so that any noise resulting from amplified Public Entertainments, is inaudible at any point beyond the boundary of the premises known as: 'The Royal Oak Public*

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

House', █ Walkern Road, Stevenage" The device is still set at the same level as █ and myself agreed upon years ago.

█ responds to the complaint ("█.pdf")

### June 2023

We contacted █ and Partners for legal advise on theses issues. They stated to us that even though this is a complex issue with very little real evidence, complaints before 11pm are open to interpretation and are not easily 'convicted'

We receive another Warning letter ("Warning Letter █.pdf") stating further breaches, however they clearly state in the warning letter that the sound limiting device was in use. Essentially contradicting their own departments calibration of the machine and previous EHO officer visits.

During this time a meeting was called with the following representatives; EHO (█), Licencing(█), Stevenage Councillor, Publican Representative (█), Acoustician (█), and McMullen's (█) to deliberate on new wording for the premise licence. We had all agreed on the wording and the minor variation was being prepared for submission by █. This would have removed the grey area of interpretation of the licence and made everyone's lives easier.

The day before the consultation period ended █ objected to the variation leaving us dead in the water.

### January 2024

█ notifies us that a noise abatement notice has been issued against the pub, once again for a complaint prior to 23:00.

█ confirms the agreed level set out in a meeting in December 2023 with the acoustician as 91dB LAeq (30sec) during the meeting with the acoustician he takes readings from all areas of the premises and notifies EHO, Licencing and ourselves that the area to be measured around the dance floor area.

We receive a acoustic report on 15/1/2024 ("soundcert.pdf")

█ recommends a new sound limiter. To be installed Monday 29<sup>th</sup> Jan 2024

█ requests a picture of the new limiter in situ with specific screws installed. (anti tamper Torx screws)

Due to the constant stress and the harassment of the unfound complaints our manager hands in his resignation on 31/01/2024.

█ contacts █ reference to the measures we are having to go through to appease █. ("█ complaint.pdf")

### Feb 2024

█ arranges a meeting for 21<sup>st</sup> Feb 2024 to calibrate the new meter to the required levels.

█ rejects a TEN for the 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024 for music to carry until 1am.

█ and █ arrange a meeting for Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 11am.

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

██████████ emails ██████████ with the wording she recommends for the minor variation.

██████████ starts investigating allegations of bullying by ██████████. Requests statements from multiple parties. ("██████████.pdf")

██████████ notifies us of two further complaints.

██████████ (DPS) is notified he could lose his personal licence due to the unjust abatement notice against him.

██████████ submits an official complaint against EHO and licencing due to the years of failings of the departments and the hostility of ██████████. ("official complaint.pdf")

### March 2024

██████████ responds to ██████████ complaint and registers it as a "Formal complaint (Stage 1)" and will provide a response in the short term,

██████████ notifies ██████████ that the minor variation cannot go ahead due to the failure of accurately setting the noise limiting device. The acoustician's report clearly states that the average reading of the noise level should be taken 'around the area of the dance floor' however the CCTV we have clearly shows ██████████ only walking around the vicinity of the speaker, inflating the average reading on her decibel meter. ("EHO CCTV.mp4")

### April 2024

DPS of the Royal Oak is changed from ██████████ to ██████████ due to ██████████ resignation.

Multiple emails are sent to ██████████ with zero response.

██████████ finally responds to ██████████ who requested an update on the complaint. She advises she will respond in full by Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2024

██████████ finally responds to the complaint on Thursday 25/04/2024 ("Complaint response.pdf") however her responses are inadequate and dismissed most of our comments.

We received an email from SBC regarding our complaint (Ref CU609322980) 26/04/2024

### May 2024

██████████ and ██████████ visited the site and notified us that the noise could be heard at the boundary edge, the noise limited had already been set to the approved levels as outlined by ██████████ previously. This is yet another failing of their department and it was still clearly incorrect. ██████████ contacted us to clarify that the complaints will have no further action taken.

██████████ emails ██████████ after he chased any action still to be taken after ██████████ response to his complaint. ██████████ recommended yet another recalibration of the equipment which was only initially done Feb 2024.

We contact SBC to raise our complaint from Stage 1 to Stage 2.

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

### June 2024

We receive a complaint through [REDACTED] regarding issues irrespective of the premises licence, noting the police had to be called that night which is our policy and right if we have trouble.

[REDACTED] contacts [REDACTED] to set up a meeting regarding 3 complaints and a 'sound recording' of the incidents, this sound recording app is not an official SBC designed application meaning it is completely unregulated and therefore cannot be used as evidence against us.

[REDACTED] also wishes for [REDACTED] to be present however [REDACTED] declines due to the ongoing complaint regarding her actions.

[REDACTED] receives a complaint from neighbours regarding cigarette butts and broken glass at the side and rear of the pub. As [REDACTED] mentions in his email there is no possible way to prove this was caused by our customers especially with our proximity to the Old Town.

We installed acoustic grade sound proof curtains to prevent additional noise nuisance escaping the premises, these curtains are rated for up to 21dB difference.

A freedom of information request is submitted to SBC (FOI24/106) for all of the previous investigations and evidence against the Royal Oak.

[REDACTED] notifies [REDACTED] that following on from a complaint regarding 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024 [REDACTED] had offered to show [REDACTED] (on an unrelated visit to the Pear Tree) the video recordings of the night, which she declined. The Videos are sent to [REDACTED] via WhatsApp by [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] is contacted again and is annual leave.

FOI request comes back rejected due to an ongoing investigation.

[REDACTED] notifies us of a further breach of licence, [REDACTED] submitted recordings of the night to her to show we are doing everything we have been told to do.

[REDACTED] notifies us that a resident has praised the premises for the lack of noise over the weekend. She puts this down to the new internal sound curtains.

[REDACTED] responds to her notifying her of 3 ignored emails to her line manager [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### July 2024

[REDACTED] chases [REDACTED] again regarding his email with no response, [REDACTED] is also away. Without [REDACTED] response we cannot continue with the minor variation.

### October 2024

After months of zero correspondence from SBC we receive an email from [REDACTED] requesting a meeting reviewing the improvements that have been implemented. She also notifies us of 3 further complaints spanning 3 months.



## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

### December 2024

We are notified that [REDACTED] has left the business, as she was a main point of contact for us this is incredibly unprofessional.

### Jan 2025

[REDACTED] attempts to arrange a meeting at the premises to agreed the level on the sound limited once again. However due to the noise abatement order in place and the active complaint regarding [REDACTED] actions have made the situation frustrating for both parties.

A meeting is agreed with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] on 28<sup>th</sup> Jan

### February 2025

We are allocated another EHO officer in place of [REDACTED].

[REDACTED] is an expert in the field of acoustics. And wishes to set up a meeting ASAP

[REDACTED] and [REDACTED] visited the pub and did some general checks, paperwork was checked and photographed, the sound limiter was in use, and they stated the music level 'seemed ok'.

They were happy with what we were doing which was no different to any other event night. ("EHO and Licencing visit.pdf")

[REDACTED] arranges a meeting with [REDACTED] to get to the bottom of the situation for Monday 17<sup>th</sup> Feb 2025

[REDACTED] notifies us of a breach at 22.15 on 31<sup>st</sup> Jan

[REDACTED] sends a breakdown of what was discussed at the meeting with [REDACTED], mostly noting that the sound curtains are ineffective even though there is a clear difference in the number of complaints since they were installed. Also noting that the smoking solution needs to be looked at again, this is now the 3<sup>rd</sup> EHO officer who has determined that the smoking solution needs to be moved. The meeting overall is deemed to be positive.

### July 2025

McMullen's solicitors get involved and explain the situation after a meeting with EHO. (" [REDACTED] pdf")

McMullen's recommend getting letters from the locals and local residents in support of the pub and to show the site as a community asset.

McMullen's submit a minor variation to the premises licence without consultation with the tenant, McMullen's informed the tenant that the variation was to be submitted but not the contents. ("Minor variation") The tenant presumed these changes would be the ones stated in previous emails with [REDACTED]

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

### September 2025

██████████ requests another sound check to ensure that the noise limiter is working correctly on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025 alongside ██████████

### October 2025

Minor variation is finally submitted on the 17<sup>th</sup> October after receiving no objections from licencing and EHO regarding the proposed changes.

### *Conclusion:*

As you can see from the countless incidents we have had over the last 14 years, I would hope you agree that the situation the Royal Oak as well as McMullen's have been put it is unfair and unjust.

Countless EHO officers and Licencing officers over the years have skewed the lines on what we are actually meant to be doing. When EHO officers email us stating we are doing a great job only for a different one to email us the following week saying the opposite creates a level of distrust for the licencing and EHO departments.

The level of investment for both ██████████ and McMullen's is excessive especially when it's a constant back and forth on what actually needs to be done, three times the smoking shelter was moved depending on what EHO officer that week had ordered us to do.

### McMullen's investment:

- Air conditioning to prevent doors and windows from being opened
- Re insulating of the stage area
- Two sound monitors over 12 years
- Multiple engineer visits to recalibrate due to EHO error
- Internal specialist sound curtains
- External specialist sound curtains
- Acoustician reports
- Secondary glazing throughout the premises
- Multiple on site meetings

### Tenant investment

- Extra staffing costs due to additional monitoring needs (inside and out)
- Internal specialist sound curtains
- External specialist sound curtains
- Specialist foam inserts to windows
- Specialist foam inserts to old vents
- Door supervisors
- Specialist sound monitoring equipment
- Multiple on site meetings

## Time line of events at the Royal Oak

During the course of these issues at the request of McMullen's we have sought legal advice from our BII membership. The solicitors at our disposal have stated contradictory information compared to EHO and Licencing, mainly that you cannot have a noise abatement notice for something that happened before 23:00.

We have entertained every EHO and Licencing officer who has requested a meeting with us to finally get to the bottom of the problem.

We are aware that most of the complaints are coming from [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] Walkern road due to the parking restrictions we were unable to appease him with. We are also aware of the WhatsApp group some of the residents have shown us where he is trying to get the residents to complain for no reason other than to destroy this business.

We have previously submitted resident statements from immediate neighbours who didn't even know we have live music most weekends. These were ignored and brushed aside.

Previously we set a honey trap to prove to EHO and Licencing that the nuisance allegations are false by advertising a live band but not actually booking them. This caused an influx of complaints about noise that night however no music was actually played. We have also provided evidence on countless occasions that complaints are baseless and untrue.

We do accept that sometimes noise does escape which is why we have implemented so many policies and procedures to ensure this does not happen often. The residents were given an opportunity to voice their concerns to us and they chose not to take it.

These TENs have been denied due to interpretation by [REDACTED], historically no EHO or licencing officer has denied us a TEN on these grounds. [REDACTED] has interpreted them as a complete blanket over the current premises licence, however the TEN for 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup> and 31<sup>st</sup> Dec all only state extending the licencing hours and not a complete voiding of the premises licence conditions. The only TEN that stated we were voiding 2 conditions was one dated 5<sup>th</sup> Dec 2025. We would like this explained fully.

# Planning And Regulation

Assistant Director, Planning & Regulation - [REDACTED]



Daneshill House, Danestrete, Stevenage SG1 1HN • Tel: 01438 242242 • Textphone: 01438 242555 • Fax: 01438 242566 • stevenage.gov.uk

The Licensee  
McMullens & Sons Ltd  
26 Old Cross,  
Hertford,  
Hertfordshire,  
SG14 1RD

Our Ref: 23/00332/NOIMUS  
Contact: [REDACTED]  
Direct Line: [REDACTED]  
Email: [REDACTED]

Date: 22/05/2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

**ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1990, S79 – NOISE NUISANCE  
LICENSING ACT 2003 – PREVENTION OF PUBLIC NUISANCE  
ADDRESS: Royal Oak, 24 Walkern Road, Stevenage, SG1 3RA.**

I am writing to advise that the Environmental Health Team at Stevenage Borough Council continues to receive multiple complaints alleging a noise nuisance from loud music and loud patrons emanating from the above premises.

These complaints were received regarding the following dates: 29/04 (multiple complaint regarding loud, thumping music and patrons' noise), 06/05 (noise from drunken customers' fight).

Officers monitored the external areas on Friday 28/04, Saturday 29/04 and Friday 5/05. On all occasions the music and the bass could have been clearly heard on the street level and at the facades of the nearest noise sensitive premises. Specifically, on Saturday 29/04/23 at approximately 22:05 and 22:30 hrs officers observed that live music was much louder than the recorded music. Officers could clearly hear the lyrics of the song and patrons singing along. The music and bass breakout were most prominent when the side lobby door (facing the car park) was open to allow patrons ingress and egress. The music break out was also prominent via the glazing at the front façade which is facing several residential premises.

You as the Licensee have been informed about the complaints and the noise break out many times. Your tenant has met with the officers of this Team and agreed several actions that could help alleviate the problem. You have been informed about these actions in the email dated: 23/03/23. I reiterate these actions below:

1. That your tenant will continue to monitor for entertainment-noise at the boundary of your property to ensure that it will not disturb residents; it was agreed that staff will ensure that music-noise cannot be heard at this position. This applies to all events.
2. That you will arrange for an acoustician to visit the premises to re-set the settings on the noise limiter to prevent music noise being audible beyond the boundary, and to survey the premises to identify any 'weak spots' which could lead to noise break-out.
3. The lobby door system was identified as a possible cause of noise break-out which will also be looked at by the acoustician, as was the ventilation unit and grille behind the stage area.

4. Your tenant's on-site staff will also ensure that close supervision of the outside areas takes place, and action is taken immediately if customers' behaviour is likely to disturb local residents.

Officers' observations indicate that the above agreement is not being implemented and that you are in breach of your premises' licence condition Annex 2, 1 e):

*"The sound limiting device shall be set to control the sound level so that any noise resulting from amplified Public Entertainments, is inaudible at any point beyond the boundary of the premises known as: 'The Royal Oak Public House', 24 Walkern Road, Stevenage".*

I expect your soonest response as to when you going to implement the actions agreed and how you plan to fix the lobby door system and insulate the ventilation unit and the grill behind the stage.

I am also disappointed that there has been no further development on your side as to recalibration of the sound limiting device which as identified by your engineer, currently operates at 98dB. In the email dated 29/03/23, you advised that the site have had complaints from neighbours about the noise levels and that you wanted to set the cut off limit down to a lower dB level with an EHO present. However, I am yet to receive a response from you as to the date of the recalibration. Despite this the tenant continues with the usual regulated entertainment and live music events.

If, within 7 days from the date of this letter, I have not received a response from you as to the arrangements for the qualified acoustician to carry out the works as agreed above, I will have no alternative but to consider formal action. This may involve a service of an Abatement Notice under the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Section 80. The Abatement Notice can be served for **likely occurrence, recurrence or existence of a noise nuisance.**

The Notice will require that the noise nuisance be abated immediately, and not recur. Failure to comply with the Notice may result in prosecution and an unlimited fine imposed by the Magistrate's Court upon conviction.

As your premises is licensed you may also be failing to comply with one of the objectives of the Licensing Act 2003, i.e., Prevention of Public Nuisance.

You are warned that if the problem persists and enforcement action for statutory nuisance is taken, Officers will object to any future Temporary Event Notices and may seek to bring a Review of the premises licence which may result in a revocation.

I look forward to your co-operation and trust that further action will not be necessary. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully,



Environmental Health Officer

McMullen & Sons Ltd,  
26 Old Cross  
Hertford  
Hertfordshire  
BG14 1RD

Via email [-ssheahan@mcmullens.co.uk](mailto:ssheahan@mcmullens.co.uk)

Our Ref: 012662

Contact: [REDACTED]

Direct [REDACTED]

Line: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Date: 30 June 2023

Dear Sirs

Licensing Act 2003

**Royal Oak Public House, [REDACTED] Walkern Road, Stevenage. SG1 3RA.**

I write in regard to the above premises following routine monitoring which was carried out by myself and Environmental Health Officer [REDACTED] on the night of Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> June.

We arrived at the premises at around 22.30hrs and could hear instruments and bass across the boundary of the premises just outside of the entrance to the car park on Walkern Road. Upon entering the premises, it was established that the DJ was plugged into the sound limiting device and the sound limiting device was in operation. We walked with the manager [REDACTED] to just across the boundary of the premises, at the entrance to the car park and discussed how instruments and bass produced from the amplified music inside could still be heard beyond the boundary, this continued to be heard when we left at around 23:20hrs. This is a contradiction to the conditions attached to premises licence SBCL0076.

- *Annex 2, 1(e); The sound limiting device shall be set to control the sound level so that any noise resulting from amplified Public Entertainments, is inaudible at any point beyond the boundary of the premises known as: 'The Royal Oak Public House', [REDACTED] Walkern Road, Stevenage.*

Whilst staff at the premises appear to be taking steps to identify whether music being emitted from the premises is causing a nuisance by ensuring that DJs and live bands are connected to the sound limiting device, carrying out regular boundary checks and taking decibel readings, noise resulting from such entertainment can still be heard beyond the boundary. Despite this being brought to the attention of staff, no action was taken to rectify the situation at the time, therefore the condition outlined above was not being met and the premises were operating outside of their authorisation.

Environmental Health Officer [REDACTED] instigated a meeting with the management and area Manager for the Royal Oak, [REDACTED] on 16 March 2023 to discuss the continued reports of noise nuisance being received by the Council and the results of noise monitoring which had been carried out. It was agreed at this meeting that action would be taken to alleviate the problems. I have listed these actions below:



- That staff will continue to monitor for entertainment-noise at the boundary of your property to ensure that it will not disturb local residents; it was agreed that staff will ensure that music-noise cannot be heard at this position. This applies to all events. Music-noise could be heard at this position on the night of 23<sup>rd</sup> June.
- That you will arrange for an acoustician to visit the premises to re-set the settings on the noise limiter to prevent music noise being audible beyond the boundary, and to survey the premises to identify any 'weak spots' which could lead to noise break-out. Elimination of these 'weak spots' will enable louder music to be played whilst still complying with Licensing conditions, thereby leading to greater audience and artist Satisfaction. Environmental Health Officers have established that the noise limiting device is not operating effectively and is preventing the premises from meeting the licence condition.
- We will review once the noise limiter has been re-set, if it is felt that compliant music-noise-levels are, commercially, insufficient.
- The lobby door system was identified as a possible cause of noise break-out which will also be looked at by your acoustician, as was the ventilation unit and grille behind the stage area.
- Your on-site staff will also ensure that close supervision of the outside areas takes place, and action is taken immediately if customers' behaviour is likely to disturb local residents.

A further letter was sent to you on 17th May by Environmental Health Officer [REDACTED] where she advised that the Council continued to receive multiple complaints alleging noise nuisance.

I am disappointed that following the meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> March and our attempts to work with you in finding a solution, there appears to be no progression in carrying out the actions discussed. I am also still awaiting the submission of an application for a Minor Variation, to amend the plan attached to the premises licence, as per my letter dated 23<sup>rd</sup> November 2022.

As a premises licence holder, you have a duty to ensure that the required steps are taken to promote the four licensing objectives and to ensure that both the licence and its conditions are complied with. At the current time, the tenant is unable to comply with the licence conditions, as the noise limiting device is not effective. We have also suggested at the meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> March with [REDACTED] and on the night of the 23<sup>rd</sup> June that you evaluate your conditions of licence to ensure they are relevant, manageable, and able to be met at all times.

Pursuant to section 136 of the Licensing Act 2003, it is an offence to carry on or attempt to carry on a licensable activity, on or from any premises other than under and in accordance with an authorisation. Failure to comply with your premises licence may result in enforcement action being taken against you.

You must ensure that the licence conditions for the premises are fully operational at all times when the licence is in operation. Where conditions are unable to be met, you must

ensure that the tenant does not continue to breach the premises licence conditions; accordingly, they must adapt their operation to fully comply with all licence conditions.

Should you have any queries or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours faithfully

A large black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the Licensing Officer.

Licensing Officer

A long black rectangular redaction box covering the contact information of the Licensing Officer.





# Planning And Regulation

Assistant Director, Planning & Regulation - [REDACTED]

**Stevenage**  
**BOROUGH COUNCIL**

Danehill House, Dane Street, Stevenage SG1 1HN • Tel: 01438 242242 • Textphone: 01438 242555 • Fax: 01438 242556 • [stevenage.gov.uk](http://stevenage.gov.uk)



Direct Line:  
Email:



Date: 29<sup>th</sup> March, 2022.

Dear [REDACTED]

## WARNING LETTER RE BREACH OF PREMISES LICENCE CONDITIONS

I AM WRITING TO YOU IN YOUR CAPACITY AS THE DESIGNATED PREMISES SUPERVISOR OF THE ROYAL OAK PUB, 24 WALKERN STREET, STEVENAGE, SG1 3RA. ANNEX 3, SECTION 5 OF THE PREMISES LICENCE CONDITIONS FOR THE ROYAL OAK STATE; "THE PATIO/OUTSIDE SEATING AREA WILL BE CLOSED TO CUSTOMERS AT 23.00 HOURS EVERY NIGHT."

I HAVE RECEIVED A COMPLAINT FROM ONE OF THE LOCAL RESIDENTS THAT AT 11.30PM, FRIDAY, 25<sup>TH</sup> MARCH, 2022 THERE WERE APPROXIMATELY 30 PEOPLE WITH DRINKS IN YOUR OUTSIDE DRINKING AREA. I DID NOT WITNESS THIS MYSELF, BUT TODAY I WENT TO THE PUB TO VIEW YOUR CCTV IN AN ATTEMPT TO PROVE OR DISPROVE THE ALLEGATION. HOWEVER, WHEN I GOT THERE I WAS TOLD BY A MEMBER OF STAFF THAT YOUR CCTV ONLY COVERED THE INSIDE OF THE PUB. THERE WAS NO COVERAGE OF THE OUTSIDE AREAS.

ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO FURTHER INVESTIGATION OF THE COMPLAINT THAT I CAN CARRY OUT, I MUST ADVISE AND WARN YOU THAT IF I DID OBTAIN EVIDENCE IN THE FUTURE OF LICENSING OFFENCES BEING COMMITTED AT THE ROYAL OAK, ENFORCEMENT ACTION WOULD FOLLOW.



cc-a [rative councils](http://rative.councils)

hqn



HEROES



