



CAMBRIDGE
CITY COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION

To be completed and signed before Members return to open session to announce their decision.

RECORD OF DECISION: APPLICATION UNDER LICENSING ACT 2003

Taxi Licensing Sub-Committee

Date: 5th September 2025

Members:

1. Cllr Moore - **Chair**
2. Cllr Divkovic
3. Cllr Blackburn-Horgan

To consider the application of **BBB UK Property Ltd** to the varying of the premises licence of **Boom Battle Bar, 36 & 36a St Andrews Street, Cambridge, CB2 3AR.**

The applicant is seeking to extend the hours of licensable activities on Thursday, Friday and Saturday as follows:

Exhibit films – 10:00 to 02:30
Recorded Music – 10:00 to 03:00
Indoor sporting events – 10 to 03:00
Late Night refreshment – 23:00 to 03:00
Supply of alcohol – 10:00 to 02:30

The applicant is also seeking to add licensable activity of 'Indoor sporting Events'

Sunday to Wednesday: 10:00 to 00:30
Thursday to Saturday: 10:00 to 03:00

Furthermore, the applicant is applying to amend/remove the following conditions;

1. Removal of Condition 16: which states: "No person will be allowed to play the axe throwing or similar games if they have consumed alcohol or illegal drugs/substances prior to playing the game, and no person playing these games will be allowed to consume alcohol or take illegal drugs/substances whilst playing these games. Where staff or door staff are unsure if the person

is under the influence of alcohol, then that person will be breathalysed, using a calibrated breathalyser."

2. Modification of condition 24 that currently requires "A minimum of two SIA registered door supervisors will be employed at the premises each day from 21.00hrs until close of business. On Fridays and Saturdays, all Sundays preceding a Bank Holiday, New Years' Eve, and Boxing night a further two SIA registered door supervisors will be employed from 21:00hrs until all customers have safely dispersed from the vicinity of the premises."

Amend to: "On Thursday, Fridays and Saturdays, all Sundays preceding a Bank Holiday, New Years' Eve and Boxing night a minimum of 4 SIA registered door supervisors will be employed from 21:00hrs until all customers have safely dispersed from the vicinity of the premises. At all times the Premises Licence Holder shall risk assess the requirement to employ additional door supervisors in such numbers and at such times as deemed necessary. This risk assessment will take into consideration information and advice provided by the local Police. A copy of this risk assessment will be made available to the Police and Licensing Authority on request."

3. Amendment to Condition 18 that currently states: "Should beer pong be played in these premises then polycarbonate drinking vessels must be used, and non-alcohol drinks will only be used for the game. For clarification no alcohol will be used for this game."

Amend to: remove the prohibition on alcohol use in this activity, while maintaining the requirement for polycarbonate or metal drinking vessels.

4. Amendment to Condition 43: which currently states "After 21:00 hours persons under the age of 18 years of age will not be allowed on the premises"

Amend to: "After 21:00 hours persons under the age of 18 years of age will not be allowed in the part of the premises occupied and trading as Boom Battle Bar. After 21:00 hours persons under the age of 18 years of age will be allowed in the part of the premises occupied and trading as Escape Hunt (shown edged in blue the plan attached to the application) but only if supervised by a responsible adult."

We heard representations from the following persons:

Marcus Lavell – Advocate for the Applicant – keystone
Asha Singleton – Boom Regional Manager
Riyaz Miah – Escape Hunt Regional Manager

The sub- committee were aware of the involvement of the police in negotiations with the Applicant prior to the Hearing and the agreed amended conditions.

In making our decision we considered the following:

List:
Statutory provisions (Licensing Act 2003)

*Statutory Guidance
Cambridge City Council's Statement of Licensing Policy
Reports*

Advice from Legal Officer

Representations from the applicants representatives listed above and written representations opposing the application from Mr Wales of 73 Ravensworth gardens, Cambridge CB1 2XN

We found the following facts:

The premises licence was originally granted on 3 January 2024. The operator is part of a national chain of 31 Boom Bars, including a flagship venue on Oxford Street, London, which is also within a Cumulative Impact Area. Members noted that the applicant had consulted widely with responsible authorities. No representations were received from any of those authorities. Only one relevant representation was made, which necessitated the hearing.

Members further noted that on 13 June 2025 the applicant accepted a Police amendment to condition 22, requiring five body-worn video cameras to be used whenever SIA-registered security staff are not deployed (i.e. Monday to Thursday). The correspondence between the applicant and the Police, contained in the agenda pack (pages 65–66), shows agreement on this amendment as part of the package of updated conditions now incorporated into this decision. Members also had regard to the statutory Guidance at paragraph 9.12, which emphasises that responsible authorities are experts in their respective fields and are the licensing authority's main source of advice — for example, the Police on crime and disorder.

Members noted submissions that the operator had invested approximately £2.5 million in refurbishing its premises. This investment created modern and safe facilities for the public to enjoy a range of activities including shuffleboard, axe throwing, beer pong and dancing. *Members further noted that although access for disabled customers to the 2nd and 3rd floors was currently restricted, they were pleased to receive assurances from Asha Singleton, Boom Regional Manager, that the applicant was in the process of creating lift access to the 2nd floor and the Escape Hunt area.* Members therefore accepted that the venue offers a distinctive contribution to the night-time economy, with a focus on games and entertainment, and is different in character from traditional pubs, clubs and bars in the area. This appeared relevant to the nature of its impact within the cumulative area.

In relation to axe throwing, Members accepted the evidence that the activity is available only until 10pm, takes place within secure caged lanes, and that customers do not handle axes except under staff control. Trained staff issue the equipment, assess each participant before play begins, and monitor them throughout.

As to beer pong, Members accepted (with caveats) the description provided: that the game involves attempting to bounce balls into cups containing modest measures of alcohol — approximately one-tenth of a pint per cup, with a maximum of about one pint consumed in a full game. The Committee recognised that the activity is designed primarily as entertainment rather than as a vehicle for alcohol consumption. However, Members did not accept the proposal to replace polycarbonate cups with metal ones, concluding that polycarbonate vessels remain necessary for safety.

Members accepted that it provided a different night out, and the applicants evidence in support, such as the fact that 50% of the turnover was from food, non-alcohol drinks and from selling games. While some Members were slightly sceptical to the claim that it was not alcohol led at all, it was accepted that the Premises was unlike a nightclub and, although it competes with nightclubs, that was not the reason for the enterprise.

Members considered the Licensing Officer's submissions and asked about any noise complaints received by Environmental Health. The Licensing Officer confirmed that since 2024 two complaints had been made, in May and June 2025. These were followed up by Environmental Health, who spoke with the applicant and reminded them to keep doors closed and to remain alert to noise as a potential issue. No formal warnings were issued and no further incidents were reported. Members noted the statutory Guidance at paragraph 9.15, which explains that it is reasonable to expect Environmental Health to make representations if they have genuine concerns about noise nuisance. No such representation was made in this case.

Members reviewed the written representation of Mr Wales of 73 Ravensworth Gardens, who objected on the basis of noise, asserting that loud music was played with doors open, that the later hours would turn the premises into a "club by the back door", and that alcohol combined with axe throwing posed a safety risk contrary to the licensing objectives.

Members accepted the applicant's submission that Mr Wales' home is around a 20-minute walk from the venue, making it unlikely that noise from the premises materially affects him. His evidence that music was "loud" was given little weight in the absence of any measurement or independent assessment. Members did not accept that noise from the venue could be heard inside his home and accordingly gave the representation limited weight. They also noted that Environmental Health had not raised any objection, *although they were aware of and had considered Mr Wales's representation. Members additionally took into account the fact that the council's Environmental Health team investigate and take relevant action for complaints of statutory noise nuisance – and were confident they would continue to do so should further complaints arise.* Members were reassured by existing conditions, including condition 36 (all external doors and windows to remain closed after 23:00,

except for the main entrance) and condition 35 (music to wind down 30 minutes before closing).

The Committee considered Mr Wales' concern that the premises was "becoming a club by the back door". While potentially a relevant matter, Members found the applicant's description more persuasive: that the venue offers a different experience centred on games and family-friendly activities such as Escape Hunt. Members noted that under the variation, teenagers may participate in Escape Hunt, with last games starting at 21:45 and ending around 22:50, reinforcing the venue's mixed and family-oriented character.

Detailed decision on the proposed variations:

Variation 1 & 2 Applicant seeking to extend hours of licensable activities on Thurs, Fri, & Sat and addition of licensable activity of 'indoor sporting events'

Hours and activities: Members considered together the proposed later hours on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays (films to 02:30; recorded music and indoor sporting events to 03:00; late night refreshment to 03:00; sale of alcohol to 02:30) and the addition of indoor sporting events (10:00–00:30 Sun–Wed; 10:00–03:00 Thu–Sat) were on balance proportionate, although there were a range of views. Members noted condition 34 (no entry or re-entry within one hour of closing), which limits late influx from other venues, and the wind-down arrangements from 02:30 with the cessation of alcohol sales and staggered dispersal. This acts as an appropriate and proportionate control within the circumstances.

Variation 3: Removal of condition 16

Although Members expressed reservations about Condition 16 (axe-throwing and consumption of alcohol), they considered the proposal to remove the blanket prohibition on customers who have consumed alcohol from participating in axe-throwing unnecessary. Members accepted evidence that lanes are caged; axes are controlled and issued only by trained staff; participation is preceded by staff assessment and subject to ongoing supervision; and that play will cease where staff have concerns. The removal of the prohibition was approved on the basis that the operator must maintain robust risk assessments and supervision in line with its Standard Operating Procedures. The precise wording of this condition is contained within the incorporated Conditions

Variation 4 Modification of condition 24

Condition 24 (door supervision): Members determined that condition 24 should be modified in the terms proposed and agreed with Cambridgeshire Constabulary. Specifically, on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, all Sundays preceding a Bank Holiday, New Year's Eve and Boxing Night, a minimum of

four SIA-registered door supervisors will be employed from 21:00 until all customers have safely dispersed.

In addition, Members accepted the applicant's request that on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and on Sundays other than those preceding a Bank Holiday, the requirement for SIA-registered door staff would be subject to a written risk assessment carried out in accordance with the premises' Standard Operating Procedures. That assessment, having regard to the likely customer profile and booking patterns, must be documented and available for inspection by the Licensing Authority or Police on request. Members were satisfied that, taken together with the agreed conditions and the Standard Operating Procedures, this modification provided flexibility while maintaining safeguards to promote the licensing objectives.

To avoid any ambiguity, Members grant this condition expressly on the basis that it incorporates the amendment of condition 22 agreed with Cambridgeshire Constabulary on 13 June 2025, requiring that five body-worn video cameras are available and operational on the premises whenever SIA-registered door staff are not deployed. The cameras must be worn and used by trained staff and recordings made available to the Police or Licensing Authority on request.

Variation 5: Amendment to condition 18 - to remove prohibition on alcohol use in this activity and maintaining use of polycarbonate

Condition 18 (beer pong): Members approved the amendment to permit alcohol to be used in beer-pong games, subject to continued use of polycarbonate vessels and active supervision. Members took into account evidence that the maximum consumption per game is limited (approximately one pint) and reiterated that the focus is entertainment rather than alcohol consumption. Members accept the introduction of metal cups and confirmed that polycarbonate (or equivalent shatter-resistant) vessels could also continue to be used for safety.

Variation 6: Amendment to condition 43 to allow persons under 18 to access the Escape Hunt after 9:00 pm only if supervised by a responsible adult.

Condition 43 (young persons and Escape Hunt): Members approved the amendment to allow persons under 18 to access the Escape Hunt area after 21:00 only when accompanied by a responsible adult. Members were satisfied that Escape Hunt is physically separate from Boom Battle Bar, that access to Boom Battle Bar remains controlled via the main entrance and age-verification by security, and that the operating pattern (last games commencing at approximately 21:45 and concluding around 22:50) supports the protection of children from harm.

Therefore, having listened to all the evidence and considered the relevant law, guidance, and policy, the Members determined to **GRANT** the variation subject to the agreed police conditions and the modified conditions set out in the application

Members reasons for reaching the decision are as follows:

Members were mindful that the premises lie within a Cumulative Impact Area. They noted that the applicant had engaged with responsible authorities and that none objected; Cambridgeshire Constabulary agreed strengthened conditions. Members reviewed the single representation alleging noise and safety concerns. In light of the lack of supporting evidence, the distance of the representor from the premises, and the absence of Environmental Health objection (notwithstanding two complaints in May and June 2025 that resulted in advice but no formal action), Members afforded the representation limited weight. Members considered public safety in relation to games and accepted that the operator's controls—training, supervision, written risk assessments and the ability to refuse participation—address the risks. Members also took into account existing conditions on doors and windows, the entry cut-off, wind-down period and staggered dispersal, minimum door-supervision levels and body-worn video requirements. Having considered the CIA policy and Section 182 Guidance, Members concluded that the applicant had demonstrated that the variation would not add to cumulative impact, and that granting the application with conditions is appropriate and proportionate for the promotion of the licensing objectives. Members emphasised that the licence remains subject to review should evidence of nuisance or safety issues emerge.

Signed: Councillor R Moore, 05/09/25
Councillor I Divkovic, 05/09/25
Councillor I Blackburn-Horgan, 05/09/25

The applicant or those who made a relevant representation has the right of appeal to a Magistrates Court within 21 days from the date of this decision notice by contacting:
Cambridgeshire Magistrates Court, The Court House, Bridge Street, Peterborough, PE1 1ED.

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