

DREAMLAND, MARINE TERRACE, MARGATE

SUBMISSIONS OF PREMISES LICENCE HOLDER ON APPLICATION FOR REVIEW PURSUANT TO SECTION 53 LICENSING ACT 2003

Introduction

1. These submissions are made on behalf of Sands Heritage Ltd (“SHL”) who are the premises licence holders for Dreamland Events and Amusement Buildings and Park (“Dreamland”).
2. SHL are deeply saddened by the death of Emily Stokes and offer their condolences to her family and friends and all those affected by the events of 29th June.
3. In these submissions, SHL will:
 - set out a brief history of Dreamland,
 - explain its management arrangements,
 - set out the background to 29th June,
 - explain the conditions proposed to the Sub-Committee following discussion with the statutory authorities;
 - deal briefly with the other representations.

Dreamland history

4. SHL have operated Dreamland since 2015 following the reopening of amusement park and entertainment complex after a 10-year closure period. A 99 year lease was granted to SHL by the Council who had previously acquired the complex under a Compulsory Purchase Order.
5. In December 2020, SHL acquired the freehold of the Dreamland complex from the Council and with the support of the Dreamland Heritage Trust.

6. In March 2023, a new premises licence was granted to SHL. The Sub-Committee is respectfully referred to the licence. In very brief:

- the licence allowed for an increase in the number of outdoor music events held at the venue to 40 per year;
- it required the production of an Event Management Policy, which was to be agreed with the Police and Licensing Authority. A copy of the Policy is at **Appendix 1** herewith, duly signed by all parties;
- it included the following condition:

The licence to be reviewed in 18 months and by July 2024 to allow for a later consideration of any issues that may have occurred due to the implementation of the new licence. This review is to be an informal review between Thanet Council and Sands Heritage not a formal review under Section 51. This review was scheduled for 24th July 2024.

7. Dreamland has a rich history as an amusement park and entertainment complex which goes back well over 100 years. Live music has been at the heart of its entertainment throughout the generations from ragtime to rock and roll and modern music genres. Since the 1960's, it has seen performances by a host of internationally renowned artists many of whom have returned in later years to entertain residents and visitors to Margate.

8. Dreamland is integral to the thriving local tourist and cultural economy of Margate. It is specifically referenced in:

- the Economic Growth Strategy for Thanet (November 2016),
- Economic Development in Thanet (Employment Land Update and Economic Needs Assessment) (July 2018)
- the Thanet District Local Plan (July 2020) which states at paragraph 2.18 that the vision for Margate is to build on its success as a fashionable seaside resort based on its unique assets of a sandy beach, harbour, rich townscape, and on the success of the Turner Contemporary Gallery and a revived Dreamland Heritage Amusement

Park; and at paragraph 2.22 that Dreamland is synonymous with Margate as a seaside resort.

9. SHL is committed to their continuing investment in the venue to provide local employment opportunities and business and leisure visitation throughout the year.
10. The site provides an ideal space for a mid-size outdoor music space, with close proximity to public transport and parking facilities, a significant forecourt area for controlled queuing, space for a dedicated search tent, a circular arena providing ample space for audience members according to industry standards, and allowing excellent views of the stage, the ability to view the stage from the concessions, and certain rides kept open as side attractions. The quality of the venue and the quality of the management has helped to attract major artists in recent years. This is all complemented by smaller interior spaces which can be used for smaller events and which are also important in the winter months.
11. It is right to say that Dreamland is dependent upon its revenues both from live music events and its day to operation as an amusement park in order to be able to operate the site viably.

Dreamland management

12. SHL employ 30 full time staff at Dreamland. In addition, there are up to 500 contracted persons working at events which include production, security, operations, medical, guest experience, ride staff, bar staff and food vendors.
13. The large majority of employees and contracted staff come from the Thanet area and virtually all are from Kent.
14. Its CEO, Eddie Kemsley, has been in senior management positions in leisure venues for over 20 years. She is a founding member of the World Experience Organisation, and a long-standing member of the management committee of The British Association of Leisure Parks, Piers and Attractions (BALPPA).
15. Its Operations Director, Shane Guy, is a former police officer and was the Head of Operations at Leeds Castle before joining SHL in December 2021.

16. SHL's security provider, Manchett, has a core team of around 50 SIA security and stewards from the local area who work at Dreamland events along with additional security as and when required.
17. SHL have a Memorandum of Understanding with East Kent College (EKC) to promote work and career opportunities to young persons who live locally. SHL attend EKC and local career fairs and two placements have been made this summer in the event marketing and production teams. SHL also work with the Forward Trust through the Restart scheme to promote jobs and getting people back into work.
18. There are 168 CCTV cameras covering the whole estate which are monitored at all times (24 hours, every day of the week) by trained CCTV operatives within the Operations Control centre at Dreamland. 88 cameras are external, including the queuing area, and 80 cameras cover internal areas. During events there is also a radio controller within the Operations Control Centre, who maintains radio connections on site and who is also responsible for maintaining the radio log.
19. In 2023, there were 24 outdoor music events held at Dreamland (which included performances by Tom Jones; McFly and Recessland). In addition, there were over 100 indoor events which included:
 - a. 40 music events (including Rock Orchestra by Candlelight and Skindred & Reef)
 - b. 53 non-music events (including Margate Bookie and Thanet Scouts celebration)
 - c. Christmas – 2,323 tickets sold (including grotto; performances; snowball fights)
20. In 2024, there have been 18 outdoor music events to date (including Elbow, Bryan Adams and Limp Bizkit) and there are 16 upcoming events (including Jess Glynne, Becky Hill and Paloma Faith). Indoor events to date for 2024 are 14 music events and 21 non-music events. The total forecast of indoor events for year end will be around 120.
21. The total number of visitors to Dreamland in 2023 for all events was 460,670. To date in 2024, the total number of visitors is around 220,000 and the predicted total by the end of the year will be over 500,000.

Event Management process

22. As stated above, SHL operate an Event Management Policy which has been approved by the Police and Licensing Authority in accordance with Annex 2, condition 3 of the premises licence and forms part of the licence. The Policy provides general and confidential information about the arrangements for live events held at Dreamland which includes security and audience management; CCTV and Body Worn Video (BWV) policy; alcohol and drugs policies; general health and safety policies and risk assessments; emergency procedures and Show Stop procedure. The Policy is subject to periodic review by Dreamland senior management and nominated members of the Safety Advisory Group.
23. SHL also operate a Sound Management Policy which has been agreed by the Licensing Authority and Environmental Health Officer (“EHO”) in accordance with Annex 2, condition 4 of the premises licence and forms part of the licence.
24. In addition to the Event Management Policy and the Sound Management Policy, SHL provide the following in relation to events held at the premises as defined by the premises licence:
 - a. A List of Events on a monthly basis with full details of proposed timings. The List is provided to Police Licensing, Police Events, Thanet District Council Events Team, TDC Licensing, British Transport Police, Kent Fire & Rescue, NHS, South East Ambulance, South Eastern Rail and EHO.
 - b. A specific Event Management Plan for each event which includes the required numbers and deployment of SIA security for the particular event.
 - c. A risk assessment for each specific event with the risk score matrix and the mitigation measures to be implemented.
25. All outdoor events are referred to the Partnership Group which consists of Dreamland senior representatives and the security manager, the Police, Thanet District Council Licensing, NHS, South Eastern rail, British Transport Police, Kent Fire and Rescue and South East Ambulance. The Group is chaired by the Police representative. The Partnership Group considers the Event Management Plan and Risk Assessment

provided in advance of the event and discusses details and specific measures or intelligence with any recommendations.

Worried About Henry event – 29th June 2024

26. The Worried About Henry (“WAH”) event had been included on the 1st February 2024 Events List (5 months before the event) and circulated to the Partnership Group. The specific Event Management Plan (versions 1 and 2) had also been circulated and a pre-event Partnership Group meeting took place on 24th June 2024 which was chaired by Inspector Jim Woodward. On behalf of Dreamland, Shane Guy, Operations Director and Sam Noble, Security Manager were present.
27. There was a full discussion about the nature of the event, audience profile, event risk assessment, security provision, police resources, risks of trespassing on the railway and other issues relevant to the event. In particular, there was a detailed discussion about concerns over the supply and use of synthetic drugs by persons attending the event. There was no suggestion at this meeting that the event should not go ahead and the Police and Thanet District Council Licensing were satisfied with the responses from Dreamland on the control measures being adopted.
28. Specifically:
 - The deployment of security including stewards amounted to 49 operatives.
 - Drug detection dogs and general purpose patrol dogs were utilised for the event.
 - There was a detailed search in place, including full pat downs and bag searches. Bags sizes are restricted to maximum A4 size.
 - There was a fully staffed and equipped medical facility operating on site.
 - There was a private ambulance kept on site in case of need.
29. There were 7,027 tickets sold in advance for the WAH event which included 342 to under 18’s (16 and 17 year olds) and no tickets were sold on the door, only 23 VIP upgrades to those who had general admission tickets. This is a correction to the Police Summary Review application which states that 6,300 tickets were sold in advance and 700 tickets sold on the door.

30. In the Summary Review application, the Police refer to a male being arrested at 17.00 for possession of illegal drugs and suspicion of intent to supply. The arrest came about as a result of SIA security finding the drugs on the individual which were handed over to the Police by the security manager, Sam Noble. SIA security handed over one other individual to the Police who made 5 other arrests.
31. Following the tragic incident of 29th June, Dreamland fully assisted Kent Police throughout their investigation and 13 separate CCTV and BWV files including a log were provided to the investigation team. Shane Guy, Operations Director, handed over CCTV footage showing Emily removing a bag of what appeared to be drug pills concealed in her bra and swallowing a pill and handing drugs to two of her friends. She was found in an intoxicated state, and told medical staff that she had also taken a pill before entering the site. She was transported to hospital, but sadly died. As the Sub-Committee knows, a large number of people were taken to hospital with drug intoxication. It is not known whether all were intoxicated with the same substances or where the supplies took place. It is a fair inference that a seriously harmful batch was in circulation in Margate or further afield on the day of the event.
32. Following the event, a de-brief Partnership Group meeting took place on 4th July 2024 at which details of the Event Report and the Major Incident key points were run through. Shane Guy confirmed at the meeting that they had reviewed remaining shows within the calendar and the Foreverland event listed for 27th July would be cancelled due to its similar nature and similar customer base.
33. It is right to point out that the event was planned in partnership with the statutory authorities. No criticism has been directed at SHL by the statutory authorities arising from this tragic incident and there is no suggestion that any licence condition was breached.

The review

34. Following a fatality SHL regard it as entirely fair for the Police to have brought this review, so as to enable the licensing authority to satisfy itself that appropriate and proportionate measures are being taken to avoid similar incidents in the future.

35. None of the authorities has suggested the more draconian remedies available to licensing authorities. Respectfully, there would be no rational basis to do so.

36. Rather, following its own consideration of events, and in discussion with the authorities, SHL has produced a list of further conditions, which has been revised following consideration of the conditions suggested by the authorities, to produce a single consolidated list. Please see **Appendix 2**. This list does not include every condition suggested by every party, but it is hoped that the Sub-Committee will view it as fair, balanced and proportionate.

37. The essence of the conditions is:

- To create a formal Safety Advisory Group to discuss and advise on events at Dreamland. The constitution of the Group will facilitate discussion about events on site but also enable regular consideration of wider factors in the town in so far as they affect events including, for example, information from NHS and Police regarding drugs issues locally, area-based crime and disorder, police intelligence, transportation matters etc. It will also help partnership working within the group itself, for example between the venue's medical team and the NHS and Police and British Transport Police.
- To further formalise the process for development of Event Management Plans, cascading from the Events Policy to the Event Overview, the Risk Assessment to the Event Management Plan, discussion of the documents suite at SAG level and incorporation of alterations to reflect advice from the SAG, with limited scope for later revision.
- Detailed conditions regarding drugs, age verification, security and stewarding, medical facilities and noise.

38. The conditions are the product of a conscientious approach by the SHL management team, assisted by senior legal advice, and reflecting the suggestions of the statutory partners. They are commended to the Licensing Sub-Committee for adoption in this case.

Representations

39. The population of Margate is 64,000, out of whom 14 have made representations, a ratio of one representation for every 4,500 residents.
40. Some concern the events on the night. Others cover a range of topics including wider behaviours in the town and some criticisms of management. These can be picked up through the SAG, by the informal licensing review referred to in paragraph 6 above and by licensing inspections under condition 20 on the licence.
41. 6 residents have made representations regarding noise, that is 1:10,500 Margate residents. Environmental health records show that there have been about 49 noise complaints from 40 outdoor events held in 2023 and 2024, i.e. about 1 complaint per event. In all instances, SHL were operating within their licence conditions.
42. As the Sub-Committee will understand, it is not possible to operate outdoor events with zero complaints. Licensing authorities set fair balances between the desire of large numbers of people to attend such events, cultural and economic considerations and the protection of the local community. That exercise was performed by the Sub-Committee in 2023, following detailed analysis and submissions, and appears to have been fair and successful. There is no reason to interfere with the balance set on that occasion. However:
- SHL has offered further conditions, suggested by the EHO, to ensure a shared understanding of noise levels at each event, and to ensure that noise equipment is properly calibrated.
 - The question of sound production can be considered at the informal review.
 - Noise will continue to be monitored, with full powers vested in the environmental health service to act on any nuisance which may arise.

Conclusion

43. This review has arisen because of a tragic event which arose, not through the fault of SHL, but because of the scourge of unlawful drugs in society. SHL takes, and will continue to take such measures as it can to keep its customers safe, and has proposed a

series of further measures to formalise existing processes and to strengthen partnership working.

44. The Sub-Committee is respectfully invited to adopt the conditions which SHL has suggested.

Sands Heritage Limited

July 2024