

**RESTRICTED (when complete)****CLEVELAND POLICE****WITNESS STATEMENT**

(CJ Act 1967, s9 MC Act 1980, ss5A(3)(a) and 5B; MC Rules 1981, r70)

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Statement of **Emma Jane PRICE**Age if under 18 **Over 18** (If over 18 insert "Over 18") Occupation **Police Constable 1841**

This statement (consisting of **5** page(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that if it is tendered in evidence I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated anything in it, which I know to be false, or do not believe to be true.

Signature **E Price**Date: **20/02/2015**Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded  (supply witness details on rear)

I am Police Constable 1841, employed by Cleveland Police; currently working as part of the Licensing Support Unit based at Middlesbrough Police Station.

My role as a Licensing Officer involves dealing with licensed premises which include on/off alcohol sales and late night refreshment venues. I carry out regular enforcement visits at all licensed premises. This is to ensure that premises are run correctly, the conditions of the licence are being adhered to and the licensing objectives are being promoted.

The premises SLAM is located within EXCHANGE PLACE, Middlesbrough which is a busy Town Centre location. The current premises licence in place authorises licensable activities of film, live music, recorded music, performance of dance, facilities for making music, facilities for dancing and sale of alcohol. The operating hours for licensable activities are currently Monday between the hours of 11:00-04:00hrs, Tuesday to Saturday between the hours of 11.00-03.00hrs and Sunday between the hours of 12.00-02.00hrs.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Signature Witnessed by **N/A**

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It is proposed that the licence is varied to change the operating hours on Tuesday to Sunday to 11:00hrs-04:00hrs for the sale of alcohol and regulated entertainment, the hours on a Monday will remain the same. The premises opening times will subsequently become Monday to Sunday 11.00-04.30 hours.

The applicant has requested to add the provision of late night refreshment Monday to Sunday from 23.00-04.00 hours.

All non standard timings and embedded restrictions are to be removed with the exception of the permitted hours for New Years Eve.

The application intends to remove Condition 8 of the Prevention of Crime and Disorder section on the current premises licence; this condition reads 'No person under 18 years whether accompanied or not shall be allowed on the premises after midnight'.

Also Condition 2 of the Protection of Children from Harm section which reads 'Children are not allowed on the premises'. These conditions will be replaced with one condition reading 'No person under the age of 18 years shall be permitted on the premises'.

A number of alterations to the venue are proposed which have been included in a plan; these boast a new entrance and means to provide two rooms, one room to consist of a lap dancing area/Gentleman's Club.

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The applicant for the variation is Wild West Leisure Limited of 16 Oakfield, Methley, Leeds, West Yorkshire. From a search for this company it is established that the business was set up on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2014.

It is a concern of Cleveland Police that if a later licence is granted for the remaining days of Tuesday – Sunday incidents of crime and disorder will increase. The premises have been subject to meetings throughout 2013 following the quantity of violence offences at the premises. These meetings were held with the Designated Premises Supervisor Stuart RHODES and the Premises Licence Holders. During these meetings an action plan was drawn up as to how the problems at the premises could be tackled. Minutes of these meetings and the drafted action plan I produce and exhibit as EJP/1.

The quantity of incidents at the premises have reduced however violence offences still continue to occur within the premises. Incidents of some concern include:

- On Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April 2014 at 02:20 hours two males were arrested for assault and public order offences following disorder outside of the venue. Police Officers witnessed a male run from the smoking area of the venue, pick up street furniture and throw the item into the crowded smoking area. A further male retaliated to this and threw part of the barriers cordoning the smoking section into the street. During this fracas two persons have been assaulting receiving injuries to their faces. Two males were arrested from this incident and were dealt with for public order offences.

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- On Friday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2014 at 01:10 hours a member of door staff for the premises flagged down Police to report a male being knocked unconscious following being assaulted inside the premises. This male suffered a fit following being assaulted and a fractured collar bone. The male's friend was also assaulted during this incident whereby he received bruising to his face. Two males were arrested for the offence and have been charged.
- On Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2014 at 03:00 hours a male was assaulted following a disagreement over use of the punch bag machine inside the venue. This male received cuts and swelling to his face however no suspect was located for this incident.
- On Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2015 at 02:30 hours a member of door staff have been assaulted inside the premises following him challenging a male over use of counterfeit bank notes; this male punched the member of door staff to the face causing bruising and pain to the jaw. No suspect was located for this offence.

In addition to the above events there are also a number of incidents of disorder reportedly occurring at the premises with several persons being arrested for drunk and disorderly behaviour.

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Within the vicinity of the premises in Exchange Square, there have been in the past twelve months around 44 incidents of violence and disorder and 4 offences involving possession of drugs

The premises are situated in an area which has been declared saturated by Middlesbrough Council and a Special Policy has been adopted; this is outlined within Middlesbrough Council's Licensing Policy statement of principles in relation to the Licensing Act 2003 – January 2011-January 2016.

In relation to the proposed changes to the internal layout of the premises with a view to future lap dancing this also causes concerns to the Police as to the sort of customers the premise would attract. Cleveland Police have experience of a previous venue conducting lap dancing in Exchange Square and this resulted in the licence being reviewed and conditions preventing lap dancing being imposed on that licence. That premises only attracted persons who would visit Exchange Square to attend the existing premises and consume alcohol. Prices for dances got cheaper and standards fell way below what was acceptable in order to attract customers which resulted in the review.

Cleveland Police are of the opinion that the onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that they will not produce a negative cumulative impact on the licensing objectives. The Police concerns can be summarised that this is an area which already suffers significant Crime and disorder and indeed is the worst hotspot for alcohol fuelled Crime and Disorder in the Middlesbrough area. If the Slam premises are granted later hours then a negative impact will be made on the Crime and Disorder Objective.

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