

Report of: Head of Environmental Development
To: General Purposes Licences Committee
Date: 3rd June 2008 **Item No:**
Title of Report : Allocation of Street Trading Consent for vacant site at St Giles Oxford.

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To assess the merits of applications for the vacant street trading site at St Giles Oxford and determine which applicant is most suitable to receive a Street Trading Consent.

Key decision: N/a

Portfolio Holder:

Scrutiny Responsibility: N/a

Ward(s) affected: Carfax

Report Approved by

Portfolio Holder:

Legal: Jeremy Franklin

Finance: Andy Collett

Strategic Director:

Policy Framework: N/a

Recommendation(s): General Purposes Licensing Committee is recommended to review three street trading applications for the recently vacated street trading site at St Giles Oxford (Ashmolean Museum) and determine which applicant is most suitable to receive the Street Trading Consent for this site.

1. Oxford City Council introduced a Street Trading Consent Scheme in 1986 to regulate trading in the city centre and its suburbs. The Street Trading Consent Scheme requires anyone selling items to hold a Street Trading Consent issued by the City Council's Environmental Health Service. The consent allows that trader to trade from a fixed site and is granted under the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982. There are currently 30 annual let sites within the consent area, 16 for evening sales of hot food, 11 for daytime sales (mainly non food) and 3 for ice cream.
2. There are currently two street trading sites for the sale of hot food at St Giles Oxford outside The Ashmolean Museum/Taylorian Institute. The original operators have traded there for between 15 and 20 years. One of the operators and Consent owners, Mr Mohammed Elhachemi wrote to Oxford City Council on the 24th of December 2007 advising us that he no longer wanted the responsibility for the street trading Consent at St Giles.
3. He made a recommendation that an associate of his, Mr Bayrim Bozbayir should be allowed the opportunity to have the Consent for this site. A formal letter was sent to Mr Elhachemi on the 18th of March 2008 confirming his relinquishment of the Consent for this site. The letter also advised him that as the site was now vacant any new trader would have to apply for the Consent, which was available for renewal from 1st April 2008.
4. Mr Elhachemi and Mr Bozbayir attended Ramsay House on the 27th of March along with another street trader Mr Seydi Caner who has a street trading consent for Botley Rd. Mr Bozbayir intended to apply for the vacant consent. However he was unable to articulate why he wanted to trade in Oxford and it was felt he was not a suitable candidate to make an application.
5. Mr Elhachemi and Mr Caner returned to Ramsay house on the 31st of March with **Mr Nevzat Can** who presented an application to trade from the St Giles site. Mr Can currently works for Mr Caner and has worked for Mr Elhachemi at his Roving Gourmet and City Kebab hot food van in St Giles. Mr Can is a cousin of Mr Caner and Mr Bozbayir is related to them also. Mr Can has 10 years experience in cooking and management. His intention is to continue with the traditional sale of hot food, (kebabs and burgers) from an existing trailer. He would use the trading name 'City Kebab' and would be assisted by Memet Bozbayir.
6. The second applicant for the vacant site at St Giles is local businessman, **Mr Robert Pouget de St. Victor** of The Oxford Cheese Company Ltd. Along with his son William Pouget they own a portfolio of food businesses in Oxford City Centre, namely The Vaults at Radcliffe Square, The Woodstock Deli in Woodstock Road and The Alpha Bar in the Covered Market.

7. Mr Robert Pouget applied to Oxford City Council on the 12th of December 2006 for Street Trading Consent. At that particular time and thereafter there were no vacant sites to allow for their inclusion in Street Trading but they were advised that their application would be filed and they would be notified if a vacancy arose in the future. His original idea was to offer the residents of Oxford a healthier alternative to other types of hot food that was currently available by offering vegan/vegetarian and organic produce. Mr Pouget referred to a report from NICE (National Institute for Clinical Excellence) that the 'obesity epidemic' effecting youth should be stemmed. Mr Pouget feels that his street trading option would contribute to health improvement.
8. In April 2008 both Robert and William Pouget discussed their plans further and confirmed that they would like to continue with their original application for Street Trading Consent in Oxford. They elaborated on their plans to offer an alternative to existing kebab style hot food vans;
9. Their new van would be of a high specification and custom made to suit its purpose. The trading name would either be 'Alpha Late' or 'Health Addiction'. They intend to offer customers organic, Fair-Trade, local and seasonal foods. For example; seasonal soups, steak sandwiches, 50% vegetarian/vegan range, pasta, Fair-Trade coffee sourced from Mexico and Chai teas. Some of the produce will be sourced from local suppliers, Woodlands Ltd an organic farm 5 miles from Oxford and Sheepdrove farm in Lambourne, Berkshire. They have also considered the environment by serving their food in disposable cardboard boxes and the use of wooden cutlery, as already utilised at their other businesses. They will use an environmentally friendly generator while operating their van. Staff employed will be certified to Intermediate food hygiene standards.
10. The Pouget family have at least 20 years experience in operating and managing food businesses and would like the opportunity to extend their portfolio into street trading.
11. A third application was received on the 28th of April 2008 from **Mr & Mrs Soulaiman & Leila Aidi**. Mrs Aidi has previously shown an interest in this site in the past should it ever become vacant. Her last such enquiry was towards the end of 2007 when she was informed there were no current vacancies. She did not make a formal application until now, realising through relatives who currently trade from St Giles that part of the site was now vacant.
12. Mrs Aidi is the daughter of Mr Ali Sultani who has been a hot food trader for over 20 years trading from Woodstock Rd Oxford. Her sister Mrs Kay Elouath is married to Mr Houssain Elouath who is the existing hot food trader at St Giles. Her other sister Mrs Semlali is married to Mr Ahmed Semlali a hot food trader who trades in the High St.

13. Mrs Aidi's experience in the hot food industry comes from working with her father and relatives over a period of 12 years, preparing food, ordering stock, and assuring good hygiene is kept. Her husband has been working with her Father Mr Sultani for the past three years. He has also run the hot food van in Mr Sultani's absence and has gained considerable food preparation, cooking and hygiene experience. He has also provided corporate catering services to some of the colleges of Oxford University.
14. Mr & Mrs Aidi intend to provide a changed service to the traditional kebab van, but with a Moroccan twist. They intend to sell cous-cous, olives, salads, Baysar & Harira soups, pasta, rice and a range of healthy drinks. Their trading name will be Solomans Bistro.
15. Therefore General Purposes Licensing Committee is recommended to review three street trading applications for the recently vacated street trading site at St Giles Oxford (Ashmolean Museum) and determine which applicant is most suitable to receive the Street Trading Consent for this site.

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Background papers: Copies of Street Trading Consent Applications and associated correspondence.