

APPLICATION NUMBER

036/ON/004/2025

IN THE MATTER

of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012

AND

IN THE MATTER

of an application by **The Spirit of Whanganui Limited** for an On-licence pursuant to section 100 of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012, in respect of the premises situated at 17 Drews Avenue, Whanganui and known as "The Distillery".

BEFORE THE WHANGANUI DISTRICT LICENSING COMMITTEE

The application for a new On-licence was advertised in the Whanganui Chronicle on the 23 October 2025 and again 30 October 2025; together with statutory signage on the building. No objections were received. No matters of opposition were raised under section 102 and 103 reports; therefore, the matter was considered by the Whanganui District Licensing Commissioner on the papers contained in the full file provided by the secretary in accordance with the provisions of s.202 (1) and 191(2) of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012.

Commissioner: Stuart Hylton

DECISION OF THE WHANGANUI DISTRICT LICENSING COMMITTEE

Application

(1) The application was made on the 21 October 2025 on the prescribed form. The application seeks to establish a new On-licence establishment in newly renovated premises in Drews Avenue. The applicant is a newly formed business that incorporates two experienced Whanganui based distillers, one of which is disestablishing their gin off licence distillery from Upokongaro to this premises.

The on-licence will cover the bar and tasting/retail area, where the licensee will offer their own spirits (primarily New Zealand-made), a concise cocktail and food menu, and host small-scale events such as product launches, educational tastings, private functions and Distillers Club evenings. The operation is production-led and focused on premium, boutique experiences rather than broad retail sales. The Off-licence part of the premises will be applied for in the near future.

(2) The premises at 17 Drews Avenue, Whanganui is owned by Careca Holdings Limited who have confirmed by way of supporting letter that the applicant has a lease for the premise including the ability to be licensed.

(3) The applicant is an incorporated company with four directors/shareholders, all of whom have interests and experience in the industry.

(4) The premise has a risk rating of 'medium' and is seeking to be designated 'supervised' which is suitable for this type of licensed premises. The principal entrance is located at the front of the entrance to the premises off Drews Avenue. The certificate of compliance from the Whanganui District Council, has stated a maximum number of persons as being 75.

(5) The complete file that the District Licensing Committee received included –

- The application
- Certificate of incorporation
- Floor plan
- Compliance Documentation Provided
- Certificate of Compliance, issued by Whanganui District Council dated 11 July 2025 (section 100(f))
- Town Planning and Building Certificate of Compliance specifying maximum occupancy 70 persons
- Code Of Compliance Certificate to be provided prior to the issue of a licence.
- Applicant confirmed on 2 July 2025 that an evacuation scheme under section 76 of the Fire and Emergency New Zealand Act 2017 is not required (section 100(d))
- Copy of public notice on the building
- Host Responsibility Policy
- Copy of supporting letter from landlord
- Full menu
- Public Advert wording
- Reports from Police, Medical Officer of Health and Inspector

Decision Making

(6) In considering this application for On-Licence the District licensing Committee (here in after referred to as the 'Committee') had regard to the criteria specified under s. 105 of the Act.

(7) the object of this Act:

This is a new license within a newly renovated premise which will include a boutique bar and in time, tasting /retail area off sales shop to compliment the distillery on site. Whilst this licence is new, the soon to be applied for ancillary off-licence will replace an existing off-licence in Upokongaro.

The applicant provided a Host Responsibility Policy that shows how alcohol will be sold in a responsible manner under the licence. If followed this should ensure the object of the Act continues to be complied with. The applicant has the initial first year to show that they can operate the licence in accordance with the Act and the licence conditions.

The Inspector notes in her report – *"No adverse events or compliance concerns are known or recorded against this applicant. It is this Inspector's conclusion that the applicant has at all times operated their existing off-licence in a professional and responsible manner"*.

(8) the suitability of the applicant:

The applicant, **The Spirit of Whanganui Limited**, is an incorporated company with four directors/shareholders. The directors/shareholders have an interest to ensure the licence is a success and the statutory responsibilities are adhered to. All the Directors have experience in the industry.

The Whanganui Distilling Company Ltd, trading as Papaiti Gin and known for its boutique gin production, together with Good Bones Distilling Ltd, a producer of small-batch craft vodka, are both well-established Whanganui-based distillers with strong industry reputations. The two companies intend to relocate their production operations to a central-city location and will operate jointly from the proposed premises at 17 Drews Avenue, Whanganui.

Three certified managers are named on the licence application. This is seen as sufficient by the inspector.

(9) The inspector and reporting agencies do not challenge suitability of the applicant and neither do I.

(10) any relevant local alcohol policy:

The applicant has agreed to relevant LAP discretionary conditions introduced by the Inspector. These are listing in the recommended conditions by the Inspector.

(11) the days on which and the hours during which the applicant proposes to sell alcohol:

The applicant has applied for the following days and hours –

Monday to Sunday, 8.00 a.m. – 12.00 a.m. (midnight) the following day

These hours seem reasonable for the activity and are similar to the hours of the previous licence.

(12) the design and layout of any proposed premises:

The application included a floor plan dated as accepted by Council on the 21 October 2025 showing the premise layout, areas to be licenced and principal entrance.

This relatively simple and small layout should assist compliance management.

The Inspector has commented in her report – *"A site visit was completed on 15 December 2025, and the layout provides for adequate overview of all areas by staff. It appears that the proposed licensed area, which include the alleyway as an outdoor area is likely to be easily managed by the applicant"*.

(13) whether the applicant is engaged in, or proposes on the premises to engage in, the sale of goods other than alcohol, low-alcohol refreshments, non-alcoholic refreshments, and food, and if so, which goods:

Nil.

(14) whether (in its opinion) the amenity and good order of the locality would be likely to be reduced, to more than a minor extent, by the effects of the issue of the licence:

This premise is an existing licensed restaurant located within the commercial zone.

Within the agency reports there are no concerns about the possible reduction in amenity and good order from any licence issue.

(15) **whether (in its opinion) the amenity and good order of the locality are already so badly affected by the effects of the issue of existing licences that—**

(i) they would be unlikely to be reduced further (or would be likely to be reduced further to only a minor extent) by the effects of the issue of the licence; but

(ii) it is nevertheless desirable not to issue any further licences:

No concerns raised.

(16) **whether the applicant has appropriate systems, staff, and training to comply with the law:**

If the host responsibility policy is followed the licence holder should have no problems with compliance. The applicants have confirmed that trained staff will always be present, and a staff training program will be maintained.

A training register has been recommended by the Inspector, and this is to be made available on request of a compliance officer during usual business hours.

Reporting Agencies

(17) The following reports were received under section 103 of the Act.

(18) **Police** – No opposition within report dated 13 November 2025.

(19) **Medical Officer of Health** - Report received on 11 November 2025, offering no opposition.

(20) **Licensing Inspector**

Full report dated 12 January 2026. The inspector provided a comprehensive report into the application, has met the applicant and concluded that the application is complete, appears to meet the criteria for a new On-licence and therefore there has no opposition to the application. The Inspector offers draft conditions which the Committee endorses.

Committee's Decision and Reason

(21) Based on the evidence provided to me within the complete file, lack of opposition from the relevant agencies, my assessment above, I conclude that the application meets the s. 105 criteria under the Act to be granted an On-licence for the premise situated at 17 Drews Avenue, Whanganui and known as "The Distillery".

(22) Accordingly, the application is **approved** for issue for one year subject to the conditions outlined in the Inspectors report and payment of any outstanding fees, if any.

(23) The licence can be issued subject to completion of works and the issue of a Code of Compliance Certificate (CCC).

3 Decision

(24) Accordingly, the application is **Approved** for issue.

Dated at Whanganui District this 22nd day of January 2026.

Signed



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Stuart Hylton
Whanganui District Licensing Committee

