

The Highland Licensing Board

Meeting – 24 February 2026

Agenda Item	8.4
Report No	HLB/13/26

Application for a major variation of premises licence under the Licensing (Scotland) Act 2005

Cabot Highlands, Balnaglack, Inverness, IV2 7JL

Report by the Clerk to the Licensing Board

Summary

This report relates to an application for a major variation of premises licence by Cabot Highlands LLP, Kinburn House, St. Andrews, KY16 9DR.

1.0 Description of premises

1.1 Cabot Highland is situated approximately eight miles east of Inverness and consists of two golf course (18 holes each), driving range and clubhouse.

2.0 Summary of variation application

2.1 Variation sought

The applicant seeks to vary the premises licence as follows:-

- (1) Incorporate halfway house on Castle Stuart course.
- (2) Incorporate halfway house on Old Petty course.
- (3) Add ability for mobile beverage cart.
- (4) Include Golf Lodge, Farmhouse and Castle Cottage.
- (5) Include 5 additional lodges in Phase 1.

3.0 Background

- 3.1 On 16 December 2025 the Licensing Board received an application for a major variation of a premises licence from Cabot Highlands LLP.
- 3.2 The application was publicised during the period 12 January until 2 February 2026 and confirmation that the site notice was displayed has been received.
- 3.3 In accordance with standard procedure, Police Scotland, the Scottish Fire & Rescue Service and the Council's Community Services (Environmental Health) and Planning and Building Standards were consulted on the application.
- 3.4 Notification of the application was also sent to NHS Highland and the local Community Council.
- 3.5 Further to this publication and consultation process, no timeous objections or representations have been received.
- 3.6 The applicant must nevertheless be given the opportunity to be heard before the Board determines the application and has accordingly been invited to the meeting. The applicant has been advised of the hearings procedure which may also be viewed via the following link:

www.highland.gov.uk/hlb_hearings

4.0 Legislation

- 4.1 The Licensing Board must in considering and determining the application, consider whether any grounds of refusal apply and if none of them applies, the Board must grant the application.

Relevant grounds of refusal may be: -

1. the grant of the application will be inconsistent with one or more of the licensing objectives;
2. having regard to (i) the nature of the activities carried on or proposed to be carried on in the subject premises, (ii) the location, character and condition of the premises, and (iii) the persons likely to frequent the premises, the Board considers the premises are unsuitable for use for the sale of alcohol in accordance with the proposed variation;
3. that the Board considers that, if the application were to be granted, there would, as a result, be overprovision of licensed premises, or licensed premises of the same or similar description as the subject premises, in the locality.

4.2 For the purposes of the Act, the licensing objectives are-

- (a) preventing crime and disorder,
- (b) securing public safety,
- (c) preventing public nuisance,
- (d) protecting and improving public health, and
- (e) protecting children and young persons from harm.

4.3 The Board only has power either to grant the application and make a variation of the conditions to which the licence is subject or to refuse the application.

4.4 If the Board refuses the application, the Board must specify the ground for refusal and if the ground for refusal relates to a licensing objective, the Board must specify the objective in question.

5.0 Licensing Standards Officer

5.1 The LSO has provided the following comments:-

Located approximately 8 miles to the east of Inverness, Cabot Highlands is a golfing venue which covers an area of 420-acre and incorporates 18-hole Castle Stuart and Old Petty golf courses, Clubhouse and three guest letting properties.

(i) Application is sought at Q5(f) of the operating plan to incorporate what is referred to as a halfway house on both Castle Stuart and Old Petty golf courses, offering on sales of alcohol, which will be available to golfers and caddies, only on the golf course. These facilities have operated successfully on occasional licences and have been in operation for about a year on the Castle Stuart golf course and about 3 months towards the end of the 2025 golf season at Old Petty after it opened to the public. Both halfway houses will operate restricted hours and will be staffed at all times whilst open.

(ii) Application is sought at Q5(f) of the operating plan to add the ability for a mobile beverage cart. This would allow the operators the flexibility to use the beverage cart to cover both Castle Stuart and Old Petty golf courses when staffing of the separate halfway houses is an issue. The halfway houses and the mobile beverage cart would not be in operation at the same time.

(iii) Application is further sought at Q5(f) of the operating plan to incorporate three current guest properties i.e. the Golf Lodge, Farmhouse and Castle Cottage along with a further 5 lodges which have been granted planning permission and await construction to the licenced footprint of the premises. This will allow the operators to provide either a mini bar or a welcome hamper for guests at these properties, as and when deemed appropriate, or specifically requested by the clients.

(iv) The operating history of the premises has been entirely satisfactory, compliance visits by the LSO have shown the premises to be well run according to the terms and conditions of the licence.

(v) During the public consultation phase of this application, no objections or representations were received by the Licensing Board.

(vii) The LSO is satisfied that should the Highland Licensing Board wish to grant this application then there will be no threat to the Licensing Objectives.

6.0 HLB local policies

6.1 The following policies are relevant to the application:-

- (1) Highland Licensing Board Policy Statement 2023-28
- (2) Highland Licensing Board Equality Strategy

7.0 Conditions

7.1 Mandatory conditions

If the application is approved the mandatory conditions set out in Schedule 3 of the Act will apply.

7.2 Local conditions

Existing local conditions will continue to apply and no additional local conditions are considered necessary.

7.3 Special conditions

The Board may wish to consider attaching the following special condition.

Alcohol sold from the halfway house on Castle Stuart golf course, the halfway house on Old Petty golf course or from the mobile beverage cart will only be supplied to golfers, guests and caddies using the golf course to play golf.

Recommendation

The Board is invited to determine the above application and if minded to grant the application, to agree the proposed local/special conditions detailed at paras. 7.2 and 7.3 above.

If the Board is minded to refuse the application, the Board must specify the ground for refusal and if the ground for refusal is in relation to a licensing objective, the Board must specify the objective in question.

Reference: HC/INBS/348
Date: 10 February 2026
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