

Delegate of the Director of Liquor Licensing

Decision Notice

MATTER:	Application for the grant of a licence with catering authority
APPLICANT:	Strawberry Hill Holdings Pty Ltd
PREMISES:	Bullo River Station 9870 Victoria Highway Baines NT 0852
OBJECTORS:	Nil
LEGISLATION:	<i>Liquor Act 2019</i> – Part 3 and 4
DECISION OF:	Southern Region Manager - Liquor
DATE OF REFERRAL:	21 October 2025

DECISION

1. As a delegate of the Director of Liquor Licensing (the Director), I approve the application submitted by Strawberry Hill Holdings Pty Ltd for the grant of a liquor licence with a catering authority, for operation throughout Bullo River Station, including during guests' tours of the station and offsite dining events coordinated from the main homestead.
2. The licence is granted in pursuance of section 60 of the *Liquor Act 2019* (the Act), with reference to section 47(1)(m) of the Act, being a catering authority.
3. The operating conditions in relation to the catering authority are in accordance with Part 4, Division 5 of the *Liquor Regulations 2019* (the Regulations) and the following special conditions:
 - a) The hours of operation are to be between 11:30 and 23:59 seven (7) days a week;
 - b) Liquor may only be sold and supplied ancillary to the food provided by the licensee as part of the catering services;

BACKGROUND

4. Pursuant to section 52 of the Act, Ms Catherine Atkins, on behalf of Strawberry Hill Holdings Pty Ltd, lodged an application for a licence with a catering authority on 25 September 2025.
5. The Applicant initially sought a material variation to the existing licence to include staff accommodation within the licensed area. However, under the current licence—issued under lodging authority and special venture authority conditions pursuant to Division 19 of the Regulations—liquor may only be sold or served to customers who have pre-booked the licensee's services. Staff accommodation is excluded from the licensed premises.

6. As the premises is extremely remote, as with many mine sites, staff are also patrons of the licensee in that they are provided all meals and board, and have no other means of locally obtaining liquor.
7. Following consultation with the Director, the Applicant was advised that a catering authority licence would better align with the expanded operational model of Strawberry Hill Holdings Pty Ltd. Accordingly, a new application was submitted.
8. The Applicant now seeks transition from the existing lodging and special venture authorities to a catering authority licence to more accurately reflect its hospitality operations. The premises include the entire station property, with renovations underway to support 12 exclusive guest accommodations.
9. The Applicant has provided the material prescribed in section 52 of the Act including:
 - a. an affidavit made under section 54;
 - b. evidence necessary to satisfy the onus specified in section 51; and
 - c. the application fee.

NOTIFICATION, PUBLIC NOTICES AND OBJECTIONS

10. Pursuant to section 57(2A) of the Act, the public notification of this application was exempted by the Director.
11. In pursuance of section 56(4) of the Act, the application was notified to the Commissioner of Police (Police), the Chief Executive Officers of the Department of Health (DoH), and Victoria Daly Regional Council (Council).
12. Although not a statutory requirement, as is practice, notification of the application was sent to the Liquor Compliance (Compliance).
13. Police, DoH and Compliance advised they had no objections to the application, and no response was received from the Council.

APPLICATION

14. The Applicant has provided a comprehensive suite of materials in support of the application including all materials prescribed by the Act.
15. The authority sought by the Applicant is in pursuance of section 47(1)(m) of the Act.
16. The determination of applications under section 60(1) of the Act has been conditionally delegated by the Liquor Commission to the Director of Liquor Licensing. The limitation including the authorities which may be granted under delegation being a catering authority.
17. The Director further delegated these powers to me by instrument.

18. For the avoidance of doubt, the licensee currently holds liquor licence FLL1129 under a lodging authority and a special venture authority. As this licence no longer aligns with the licensee's current business operations, the Applicant intends to surrender the existing licence upon the grant of the new licence.
19. It is for these reasons a new licence with catering authority is being sought to acknowledge the business operations.

DISCLOSURE OF PERSONS

20. Section 54 of the Act requires the Applicant to make an affidavit disclosing each person who, if the licence is issued, may
 - (a) be able to influence the applicant; or
 - (b) expect a direct or indirect benefit from the Applicant.
21. I am satisfied with the materials provided by the Applicant in relation to this requirement and note the applicant is the current nominee of premises, Bullo River Station.

RESULTS OF INVESTIGATION

22. Section 58 of the Act enables the Director to conduct an investigation into an application as considered appropriate. No materials have been discovered or provided to indicate there are any adverse matters in relation to this application.
23. A fulsome Business Plan was provided detailing the nature of the business.

FINANCIAL STABILITTY

24. I am satisfied with the materials provided of the financial stability and business reputation of the applicant.
25. As written previously, the applicant is a nominee for existing licensed premises, Bullo River Station.

FIT AND PROPER PERSON

26. Section 59(3)(g)(i) of the Act requires the decision maker to consider whether the Applicant, including the nominee designated by the Applicant, is a fit and proper to hold a licence.
27. The Applicant provided materials in support of this and Ms Atkins is to be the licensee's nominee in pursuance of section 53(3) of the Act.
28. Having considered the materials provided I am satisfied the applicant and Ms Atkins is a fit and proper person to hold a licence and act as nominee.

PUBLIC INTEREST AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

29. Section 49 of the Act requires the decision maker to be satisfied the applicant is fit and proper, the licence or authority is in the public interest and will not have a significant adverse impact on the community.
30. The first branch of the requirement has already been addressed.
31. It remains to consider whether the application is in the public interest, to do so consideration must be given to the objectives prescribed in section 49(2) of the Act which include:
- a. Minimising the harm or ill-health caused to people, or a group of people, by the consumption of liquor;
 - b. Ensuring liquor is to be sold, supplied, served and consumed on or in licensed premises in a responsible manner;
 - c. Safeguarding public order and safety, particularly when large numbers of people would be attracted to licensed premises or an area adjacent to those premises;
 - d. Protecting the safety, health and welfare of people who use licensed premises;
 - e. Increasing cultural, recreational, employment or tourism benefits for the local community area;
 - f. Promoting compliance with this Act and other relevant laws of the Territory;
 - g. Ensuring each person involved in the business conducted at licensed premises receives training suitable to the person's role in the business;
 - h. Preventing the giving of credit in sales of liquor to people;
 - i. Preventing the practices that encourage irresponsible drinking;
 - j. Reducing or limiting increases in anti-social behaviour.
32. In determining whether there would be a "significant adverse impact on the community" section 49(3) of the Act prescribes the decision maker "must consider the following":
- a. The risk of undue offence, annoyance, disturbance or inconvenience to persons who reside or work in the vicinity of the proposed licensed premises or who are using, or travelling to or from, a place of public worship, a hospital or a school;
 - b. The geographic area that would be affected;
 - c. The risk of harm from the excessive or inappropriate consumption of liquor;
 - d. The people or community who would be affected;
 - e. The effect on culture, recreation, employment and tourism;

- f. The effect on social amenities and public health;
 - g. The ratio of existing liquor licences and authorities in the community to the population of the community;
 - h. The effect of the volume of liquor sales on the community;
 - i. The community impact assessment guidelines issued under section 50;
 - j. Any other matter prescribed by regulation.
33. The Act is clear in that the applicant bears the onus of satisfying the decision maker of the relevant matters, irrespective of whether no objections were received as is the case in this matter.
34. In relation to the issue of the community impact and public interest, those matters have previously been published under section 6A of the *Liquor Act 1978* and in force immediately before the commencement of the *Liquor Act 2019* and are taken to be community impact assessment guidelines issued under section 50 of the Act.
35. Those matters remain as previously published in numerous decisions by the Liquor Commission and I am guided by these decisions.

CONSIDERATION CRITERIA

36. Consideration must be made of the applicant's affidavit, the results of any investigation, objections and responses, the suitability of the premises along with the appropriateness of the applicant to be a licensee.
37. With regards to the matters raised in section 49(2) of the Act, I note the following:
- a. Minimising the harm or ill-health caused to people, or a group of people, by the consumption of liquor is to be minimised:

I am satisfied the provision of liquor is ancillary and complementary to the catering services to be provided by the licensee to all, with no services being made available to casual or passing traffic.
 - b. Ensuring liquor is to be sold, supplied, served and consumed, on or in licensed premises in a responsible manner:

The Applicant stated that it was extremely mindful of maintaining a safe environment given the remote location of the premises. Having considered all the material, the Director considers that the licensee is likely to ensure that any liquor sold, supplied, served and consumed will be in a responsible manner.
 - c. Safeguarding public order and safety, particularly when large numbers of people would be attracted to licensed premises or an area adjacent to those premises:

The Director considers that public order and safety are unlikely to be jeopardised by the operation of the licence, because of its nature of business and remote location.

- d. Protecting the safety, health and welfare of people who use licensed premises:

The policies developed by the Applicant applicable to the premises are considered to adequately protect the safety, health and welfare of people who are likely to use the licensed premises during its hours of operation.

- e. Increasing cultural, recreational, employment or tourism benefits for the local community area:

The primary purpose of the licence is to facilitate the provision of catering services to accommodation guests visiting and staying at the premises, with the broader objective of supporting and enhancing tourism outcomes.

- f. Promoting compliance with this Act and other relevant laws of the Territory:

There are no materials provided which would suggest the Applicant will not comply with the Act and any other relevant laws.

- g. Ensuring each person involved in the business conducted at licensed premises receives training suitable to the person's role in the business:

I am satisfied the Applicant will appropriately manage and supervise service staff.

- h. Preventing the giving of credit in sales of liquor to people:

No issues have been raised to suggest there is any concern in relation to this objective.

- i. Preventing the practices that encourage irresponsible drinking:

No issues have been raised to suggest there is any concern in relation to this objective.

- j. Reducing or limiting increases in anti-social behaviour:

No issues have been raised to suggest there is any concern in relation to this objective.

38. Turning to the matters under section 49(3):

- a. The risk of undue offence, annoyance, disturbance or inconvenience to persons who reside or work in the vicinity of the proposed licensed premises or who are using, or travelling to or from, a place of public worship, a hospital or a school:

There are no materials to suggest there is a significant risk of undue offence, annoyance, disturbance or inconvenience likely to be caused by the granting of catering authority licence given the remoteness of the premises.

- b. The geographic area that would be affected:

The premises is extremely remote and as such there should be minimal additional adverse impact on residents.

- c. The risk of harm from the excessive or inappropriate consumption of liquor:

As previously indicated, there are no materials to suggest there will be excessive consumption of liquor.

- d. The people or community who would be affected:

It is unlikely to be significant adverse impact on the community by the granting of a catering authority licence to the Applicant.

- e. The effect on culture, recreation, employment and tourism:

The venture is expected to generate positive recreation, employment and tourism benefits.

- f. The effect on social amenities and public health:

It is unlikely there will be any significant adverse impact on the social amenities and public health by the granting of this licence to the Applicant.

- g. The ratio of existing liquor licences and authorities in the community to the population of the community:

It is my opinion this matter is not considered to be a relevant matter in this application given the nature of the venture and the remoteness of the premises.

- h. The effect of the volume of liquor sales on the community:

For the same reasons as above, this factor is not considered to be of great significance in the circumstances of this application.

- i. The community impact assessment guidelines issued under section 50:

These have been considered and referred to earlier in this notice.

39. Having regards to the foregoing, I am satisfied that the issuing of the licence as sought is in the public interest and will not have an adverse effect on the community. It is a natural growth of the business and aligns with the secondary purpose of the Act contained in section 3(2)(d) of the Act, being a stimulation of the tourism and hospitality industries.

REVIEW OF DECISION

40. Section 27 of the Act provides for the applicant or a person who made a submission the subject of the decision, to seek a review of a decision made by the delegate of the Director.
41. The Director delegated the determination of applications made under section 52 of the Act by instrument to the person from time to time holding, acting in or performing the duties of the position listed in the Schedule of that instrument. This decision was made by a person referred to in that schedule.

42. An application for review must be lodged with the Director within 28 days after written notice of the decision is given to the person and must be in the form approved by the Director, stating the grounds for the review and the facts relied on to establish the grounds.

43. Accordingly, the affected persons in relation to this decision are Strawberry Hill Holdings Pty Ltd, Police and Compliance.



Mark Wood

Southern Region Manager Liquor – Licensing and Compliance

Delegate of the Director of Liquor Licensing

21 October 2025