

Acting Committee Secretary
Legal Affairs and Community Safety Committee
Parliament House
George Street Brisbane Qld 4000

April 18, 2017

SUBMISSION, TO THE PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEE ON:

THE Liquor (Rural Hotels Concession) Amendment Bill 2017

Dear Sir,

Thank you for the opportunity to make this submission. I am grateful to and thank the member for Mount Isa, Mr Robbie Katter MP for his introduction of this bill to Parliament.

Please find below my submission on behalf of the licensee and proprietor of The Adavale Hotel, OLGR Licence number **138679, General Store (Adavale)**.

The Adavale Pub building was originally the General Store in a town which once boasted four pubs between 1878 to 1974. The last remaining purpose built pub, "The Greengate Hotel" burned down in 1974 upon which the locals demanded an alcohol sales outlet. A Two-Gallon Licence (Take-Away) was awarded to the General Store (Adavale) and licenced similarly. Over the ensuing years the licence evolved into the full Commercial Hotel Licence: **General Store (Adavale)**. Its licence still proudly bears that name in recognition of Adavale's history.

My purchase and operation of the "Adavale Pub" (as it is currently best known), five and a half years ago, saw a tree change for me, a Brisbane based musician and teacher who was taught at his Primary School in the 1960s, about the wonders of the Outback and its contribution to both Queensland's and Australia's economic prosperity.

I retired at age of 59, in 2011, with a meagre Superannuation, of which half was invested in the purchase of the venue and its perceived attraction to tourists. With gusto and enthusiasm a tree change was made and never was an eye turned back.

Upon entering the business the license fees were not much of an issue largely due to my inexperience in this field.

However, after 5 years of trading and surveillance of alcohol sales vs. costs, I found that the \$3,700 license fee for this tiny pub was ridiculously high for the amount of alcohol related trading conducted and in comparison to big city Hotels. Every June, since 2011, has become a stress, wondering whether the bank account could cope with that sum by end July. When it didn't, it was deducted from my Superannuation.

Issues relate to low local Hotel based consumption:

1. A town population of only 15 people;
2. Surrounding Stations, although numbering 18, are ex-soldier settlements and have been amalgamated to house only 3 families;
3. Few locals purchase alcoholic beverages in Adavale as supplies are easily purchased when shopping 100km away;

[REDACTED]

I found the local hotel trade issues had history and were most likely the reasons for the previous three licensees to sell or vacate their licences within 3 years each.

Some of the above issues in and of themselves should be concerning to government although unable to be remedied easily. I am well cognisant of that fact but feel the committee should be made aware.

The paucity of trade from local consumption has driven my promotion for the tourist trade even greater and to a high priority. However, there are restraints upon this trade also, namely, the weather. Due to its unique position and history Adavale is serviced by gravel roads only. Whenever it rains, the roads are out for a week or two depending on the deluge. During 2016 I suffered the worst winter of trading due to winter rains.

The Adavale Pub income includes the following:

1. Alcoholic beverages
2. Snack foods and soft drinks
3. Tobacco products
4. Microwave meals
5. Emergency toiletries
6. Emergency vehicle & trailer parts
7. Emergency fuel @ 20L per vehicle
8. Australia Post (Community Postal Agency) Mail Service

Trade income for the first 3 quarters 16/17 is: [REDACTED]
Expenditure for the first 3 quarters 16/17 is: [REDACTED]
With luck the tourists will come.

The Adavale Pub provides the following for which no income is derived, apart from “Good Will:”

1. Tourist information, verbally, in house
2. Tourist brochures
3. Maps to local tourist sites
4. Maps and information re tourist camping and related spots
5. Audio visual presentations in store for tourists
6. Brochures disseminated to Visitor Information Centres
7. Opportunities for International Backpackers to stay
8. A web-site: <https://www.adavalestore.com.au>
9. Facebook Pages focused on Adavale

There is no hiding the fact that providing the above are in some way related to generating income. However, it also reflects an altruist’s love of the Outback and the lifestyle it brings; the happiness and knowledge it brings to those who visit this unique town/area and the service it provides the local population.

The Adavale Pub is a “One Man Show” because it cannot afford to pay wages.

In conclusion, it has always been my desire to stay off the Federal Pension but looking at my remaining Superannuation and the costs yet to cover, with no tourist boom in sight, [REDACTED], could it be time to shut up shop, lock the doors and wait till the economy improves?

This Bill, when passed, will bring an extra glimmer of hope, support and reassurance to the “little battler” in the knowledge he is still a “goer” in the economies of scale and in the hearts of our Queensland Government.

Yours sincerely
Jacobus Harm (Koss) Siwers
Adavale Pub

[REDACTED]

**THE ADAVALE PUB WON THE INNAUGURAL
“BEST BUSH PUB” AWARD
FROM THE QUEENSLAND HOTELS ASSOCIATION IN 2012.**