

## INTRODUCTION

### Personal statement

I (Dr Alistair Nesbitt) am CEO of Vinescapes Ltd., a consultancy that supports the technical and strategic development of wine production businesses. Vinescapes consults to new and existing vineyards, wine producers, policy actors, and the global wine industry. I hold a PhD in Viticulture and Climate Science, an MSc in Wine Bioscience and a BSc in Viticulture & Oenology and draw on 20-years' experience to help wine production businesses establish and operate sustainably.

1. This is an addendum to the Winery Scoping Report dated 12 August 2023 submitted as part of the relevant prior approval application ref. 20240544 in respect of a building which would serve the vineyard at the site. The purpose of this addendum is to provide details of what one would reasonably expect to be 'typical operations' for a winery of the scale proposed and the wine that the applicant plans to make over a typical wine production year. The document also sets out refinements made to the proposed business operation.

## SCALE OF OPERATIONS

2. Once fully established one would expect the 8.8ha of vineyard area to yield circa 50,000-60,000btlts of wine per annum. This will vary from year to year due to vintage / seasonal weather variation and your desired grape and wine quality targets.
3. To accommodate the grapes' transformation into high-quality still and sparkling wine a building with a floor area of circa 900-1,100m<sup>2</sup> will be required. Within this space grapes will be sorted, some will be destemmed, pressed, pumped into stainless steel tanks, fermented, possibly moved into barrels or other vessels, racked, fined, filtered, blended, bottled, aged (sparkling wine often for >3-years), labelled and packaged. Sparkling wine will also be riddled, disgorged, and corked.
4. To undertake the work safely and have space for the various operations the scale of the proposed building is appropriate.

## VINEYARD AND WINDERY LIFECYCLE

5. Here I set out the core elements of the vineyard and winery cycle. This is not an exhaustive list as farming and winemaking activities are sometimes pro- or reactive to seasonal conditions.
6. In summary: during December – March the vines are pruned, canes pulled out and those left tied down for the years production. Over winter any trellis repairs are made, wires are dropped, and the vineyard is prepared for the growing season. The growing season starts in April as ground and air temperatures increase, sap rises and new shoots, leaves and flowers start to emerge. By early summer bunches are forming on the vines and the regular tasks of scouting the vineyard for any issues, managing pests or diseases, increasing biodiversity, managing the inter-row and under vine areas takes place. The specific practices used to achieve the above are dependent on the season and management decisions. Come

autumn the grapes are regularly monitored for ripeness and when the optimum levels are reached the grapes are harvested and taken to the winery for processing. Harvesting is usually by hand into small baskets that are placed on a trailer and towed to the winery. At Gold Street some of the harvested grapes may just be walked to the winery.

7. The vines are then left until they go dormant and the cycle starts again.
8. In terms of use of the winery building itself, once the grapes arrive at the winery building they are sorted by hand to remove any bad grapes, leaves or dirt, and placed into a press for juice extraction. The juice is then pumped into tanks or barrels to be fermented and the range of processes listed above in paragraph 3 are then enacted over the course of a few months to several years depending on the styles of wine being made from that year's harvest. During this time the winemaker and cellar staff will tend to the wines to help them evolve into their full potential.

## WINERY STAFFING

9. Once at full production capacity (by 2027) we estimate the winemaking process will require 2 full-time staff (winemaker and assistant winemaker) and a seasonal cellar hand to support during harvest or other peak times like bottling. The owners will also be on-site frequently, meaning there will be 2 full timeworkers and around 3 part-time workers. The latter are usually viticulture or winemaking students or aspiring vigneron or winemakers. During harvest (likely a 1-2-week period from September to October), seasonal workers will be on-site at a comparable level to the former orchard, which I understand from aerial photography, was removed around 2022.

## WINERY OPERATIONAL HOURS

10. For most of the year we would expect the winery to be operational during normal daytime working hours. During harvest (as noted a likely 1-2-week period during September – October) this may alter and / or increase to longer days, maybe 12-hours-long depending on the winemaker's decision regarding process optimisation.

## WINERY OPERATIONAL MOVEMENTS

11. During the course of the year a winery of this scale would expect staff on a daily basis plus the post person. Within a week the winery may have one or more deliveries from couriers or suppliers but it's impossible to say exactly how many. At harvest there would be additional vehicles for the winery cellar hands. These estimations do not include any commercial element related to the winery.

## BOTTLING

12. The bottling plant needed at Gold Street might typically bottle 3,000 bottles per hour. That equates to 20 hours of bottling per annum or less. Operationally, the bottling of wine is specific to the quantities and type of wine produced which will include:

a) *Blanc de Blanc – Premium quality Traditional Method sparkling made from three clones of*

*Chardonnay, with barrel ageing and extended lees ageing of up to 5-years.*

- b) Classic Cuvée – Premium quality Traditional Method sparkling made from multiple clones of Chardonnay, Pinot Noir and Meunier, with barrel ageing and extended lees ageing time of up to 3.5-years.*
- c) Blanc de Noir - Premium quality Traditional Method sparkling made from multiple clones of Pinot Noir and Meunier, with barrel ageing and extended lees ageing time of up to 3.5-years.*
- d) Rosé de Noir - Premium quality Traditional Method sparkling made from multiple clones of Pinot Noir and Meunier, with barrel ageing and extended lees ageing time of up to 3.5-years.*
- e) Still Rosé – Premium quality still Rosé wine made from Gamay. A unique offering that will be the house's style point of differentiation within the market.*

- 13. The range of wines in production makes it likely that bottling would be achieved over the course of 3-4 days per annum.

## SUMMARY

- 14. Given the small scale of production, the proposed winery at Gold Street would be relatively boutique in scale, and from experience with similar scale wineries, I believe it could be managed with limited disturbance to surrounding properties or neighbours in terms of vehicle movements or noise. From the proposals I have seen, this would operate as a complementary enterprise to a fruit growing area, and for the purpose of fruit / grape processing, it is at a fit-for-purpose scale.

Further information on UK wine production and viticulture impacts in the UK, across the environment and economy can be found via:

- Wines of Great Britain: <https://www.winegb.co.uk/news/>
- The South Downs National Park Authority Viticulture Impact Assessment: <https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/South-Downs-Viticulture-Growth-Impact-Assessment.pdf>