

Section 36B Submissions:

The Applicant is proposing a gentle change in direction in terms of packaged liquor products available under the proposed tavern licence, in order to meet the global shift in wine trends. With global wine consumption hitting a record low in 2024, the lowest point since the early 1960s¹, and the natural wine movement showing signs of decline both nationally and globally², consumers are beginning to shift their interests to more affordable options. As the cost of living continues to rise, many producers and suppliers in Australia are grappling with oversupply, decreasing demand and steadily rising costs³ with small, independent growers having to increase their prices as supply outpaces demand.⁴ Despite the setbacks in steadily declining overall volumes, and the subsequent necessity for small-scale producers to hike their prices, a small wave of consumers are spending more on premium wine experiences that are backed by authenticity.⁵ With this unsteady balance between cost of living pressures and increasingly expensive handmade wines, WCWS wishes to propose more leniency in regards to the range of products on offer.

While the Applicant wishes to remain invested in the independent, small-scale wine movement, this being the ethos of the WCWS brand, the Applicant is seeking to incorporate a more commercial range of products at a lower price point to address the abovementioned divergence in consumer needs. As a response to economic pressures and changing consumer preferences, there is a notable global trend of wine buyers 'trading down' or shifting towards cheaper options.⁶ Despite this global shift in consumer perspectives and wine trends, the Australian wine industry nevertheless saw sales from higher-valued wines helping to maintain steady profits amidst the overarching slump in trade.⁷ The premium nature of boutique or handmade wines will remain at the forefront of the brand, however WCWS believes that in order to truly meet the demands of the consumer, a broader selection of wines, beers and spirits are required. With the proposed change to tavern licence, WCWS must be able to supply both premium drinking

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<https://www.agrilinkage.com/post/the-global-wine-industry-faces-historic-lows-what-s-driving-the-decline?>

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[https://www.vinetur.com/en/2024090481502/french-natural-wine-market-faces-backlash-amid-overproduct ion.html?](https://www.vinetur.com/en/2024090481502/french-natural-wine-market-faces-backlash-amid-overproduction.html?)

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https://www.theaustralian.com.au/subscribe/news/1/?sourceCode=TAWEB_WRE170_a_GPT&dest=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.theaustralian.com.au%2Fbusiness%2Fvineyards-are-being-burnt-across-australias-grape-growing-regions-amid-a-wine-crisis%2Fnews-story%2F2fb01fb38dc792367fb063cdbca1f3cf&memory=anonymous&mode=premium&v21=GROUPB-Segment-2-NOSCORE&V21spcbehaviour=append

4 <https://www.wineaustralia.com/news/market-bulletin/issue-335?>

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<https://wine-intelligence.com/blogs/wine-analytics-pricing-report-data/global-wine-market-faces-decline-but-innovation-and-millennials-offer-hope-vinovistara-wine-intelligence?>

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<https://wineeconomist.com/2025/07/22/bargains/#:~:text=This%20is%20how%20George%20M,planting%20were%20still%20being%20felt.>

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<https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/wine-maker-says-cheap-drop-sales-down/kzodpn46y#:~:text=Wine%20maker%20says%20cheap%20drop,of%20a%20falling%20Australian%20dollar.>

options and more affordable, by-the-glass options that cater to the needs of all consumers. This relates not only to wines, but also to the artisanal range of beers and spirits currently stocked at WCWS. While underground, craft breweries and select handmade spirits will continue to be at the forefront of the WCWS brand, the Applicant seeks to afford customers with more affordable drinking options, particularly if operating under a tavern licence. The need to extend the selection of wines, beers and spirits relates directly to the global economic downturn and to the extreme slump hitting the national wine industry. The inclusion of a more commercial offering may bring WCWS more in line with existing packaged liquor outlets in the area, however the mainstay of premium products available at WCWS will continue to set it apart from its counterparts.

With existing packaged liquor outlets in the locality offering a broad selection of highly conventional, commercial products at discounted prices, the proposed range of packaged liquor products put forth by the Applicant will allow for a more competitive contribution to the locality. While some products may overlap with those sold by existing retailers in the area, this will strengthen the Applicant's reach and provide the community with a broader range of products, and more importantly, a more inclusive price selection. As handmade wines reinforce the brand image of WCWS and provide consumers with an immersive brand experience, thus furthering niche neighbourhood engagement,⁸ the downside is that the exclusivity of the product and its corresponding price-tag alienates many consumers. With the conditional grant of the tavern licence, WCWS seeks to simultaneously appeal to their current customer base while broadening their reach to the larger community, which is of vital importance in the current economic climate.

The Applicant proposes a series of altered conditions whereby WCWS is free to broaden their nature of trade in terms of product selection:

- Take-away packaged liquor will be restricted to wine only sales after 7pm, the current closing time of WCWS.
- The Applicant proposes to prohibit the sale of on-premise shots of liquor, or any form of liquor intended to induce rapid intoxication.
- The restrictions pertaining to the natural or minimal intervention nature of the wines be amended to allow for a more extensive offering of conventional or commercial wine producers.
- The restrictions pertaining to the sale of unfinned and unfiltered wines be amended to include a more conventional wine selection.
- The restrictions limiting the sale of wines from small-scale producers (producing under 500 tonne) be increased to include larger-scale wine producers.
- The Applicant maintains that the sale of wines will remain at 60% Australian origin, including beer and spirits.
- No cask wine shall be sold for less than \$60 per cask.

