Council Regulation (EEC) No 2081/92

Application for Registration: Article 17

PGI

National File No: PGI/00221

1. Competent Service

The Consumer Protection Division
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food
Ergon House c/o Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR

2. Applicant

a) Shepherd Neame Brewery
b) 17 Court Street
Faversham
Kent ME13 7AX

c) Composition producer/processor (1) other (0)

3. Name of Product

Kentish Ale or Kentish Strong Ale
dependent on the "alcohol by volume" content

4. Type of Product

Beer - Class 2-1

5. Description of the Product

a) Name: Kentish Ale/Kentish Strong Ale

b) Description

Kentish Ale is a fermented malt based alcoholic beverage with a unique strong aroma of hops and a balanced full bitter flavour; golden brown in colour with a light creamy head when poured and an "alcohol by volume" content in the range 3.5% to 6.0%.

c) Geographical Area

The area where the ale is brewed and subsequently prepared for marketing is defined as the County of Kent.

d) Background

Historical records show that Kentish Ale has been brewed in Kent since the 12th Century from local barley, local hops and spring water.

Breweries were always sited near a supply of good brewing water (or "liquor" as it is called in brewery parlance). Their distribution radius was based upon the distance a fully loaded brewers dray could deliver and return within daylight hours. Most raw materials were grown locally, particularly malting barley. Hops were a problem as they were grown only in Kent, Sussex and Worcester.

Therefore, most breweries had to make do with hops that had been pressed, stored then transported slowly over large distances. No vacuum packaging or flavour stabilization existed. Hops were often stale and had lost their characteristic fresh flavour and aroma by the time they were used. Old hops introduce "cheesy" flavours/aromas to beers.

Because Kent Breweries were in the midst of the hop fields, the hops used were fresh/fragrant and imported the unique strong hop flavour and bitter character to what is now known as "Kentish Ale".

The flavour has always been balanced and enhanced by the use of brewing liquor extracted from the Green Sand layer below chalk. The high calcium levels from this chalk are essential to the recipe and unique to this type of beer.

Shepherd Neame has been continuously brewing ale on the present site since 1698, and it is recognised as the oldest brewery in Britain. During this time all Kentish Ale produced by the Company has been brewed by mixing malt with pure water from an artesian well under the brewery and using local Kent grown hops. It is now the only brewery in Kent using well water and local hops to produce Kentish Ale.

Shepherd Neame remains a private limited family company and it is the 12th, oldest trading company in the United Kingdom.

e) Method of Production

The brewing process starts by crushing malted barley to produce a meal called "grist". Water from the 200 ft artesian well under the brewery is heated and mixed with the grist by a traditional infusion "mashing" process in a large vat or "mash tun".

After about an hour, natural sugars have been released and the sweet extract produced, known as "wort", is run into a copper or boiling vessel where selected locally grown varieties of hops such as Wye-Target, Wye-Challenger, and East Kent Goldings are added. A portion of the hops are added towards the end of the boil to maintain a powerful hop aroma.

After boiling for one hour, the wort is cooled and run into Fermentation Vessels. Kentish Ales ferment for one week whilst the yeast acts with the natural sugars to produce carbon dioxide bubbles and alcohol. The Kentish Ale strain of yeast is safeguarded and frequently revitalized to ensure it maintains vigour and produces consistent beer flavours.

The ale is then either "racked", eg filled into casks, or filtered into bottles, casks/kegs.

Ale destined for casks is further treated with East Kent Golding hops prior to rack to reinforce the Kentish Ale hop flavour.

f) Link

Kentish Ale has a high reputation as a regional ale with specific quality characteristics which are particularly associated with the Shepherd Neame brewery in Faversham

While some ale flavour comes from malt the majority of Kentish Ale flavours and aromas are derived from Kentish hops.

Kent is now the only major county in the United Kingdom producing hops for brewing. Its soil and agricultural heritage produce fully flavoured aromatic hops with characteristics that create the traditional hoppy Kentish Ale when brewed from local spring water which reinforces the character of the ale.

g) Inspection Body

The Brewing Research Foundation International
Lyttel Hall
Nutfield
Redhill
Surrey.

h) Labelling

Each container, ie cask, keg or bottle, is labelled in accordance with statutory requirements.

Following registration of the name Kentish Ale/Kentish Strong Ale each product label will carry one of the PGI logotypes, shown below, in close proximity to the registered name.





KENTISH ALE / KENTISH STRONG ALE

The applications for the registration of Kentish Ale and Kentish Strong Ale as Protected Geographical Indications are from an individual company. This is due to the fact that the Shepherd Neame Brewery is the only company brewing the ales as Kentish ales in the designated area. It is the oldest brewery in England which has been brewing ale at the same site since 1698. The unique characteristic about the ales is the fact that the applicant still follows the traditional method of using water from the artesian well situated below the brewery.

"KENTISH ALE"

Breweries were always sited near a supply of good brewing water (or "liquor" as it is called in brewery parlance). Their distribution radius was based upon the distance a fully loaded brewers dray could deliver and return within daylight hours. Most raw materials were grown locally, particularly malting barley. Hops were a problem as they were grown only in Kent, Sussex and Worcester.

Therefore, most breweries had to made do with hops that had been pressed, stored then transported slowly over large distances. No vacuum packaging or flavour stabilization existed. Hops were often stale and had lost their characteristic fresh flavour and aroma by the time they were used. Old hops introduce "cheesy" flavours/aromas to beers .

Because Kent Breweries were in the midst of the hop fields, the hops used were fresh/fragrant and imported the unique strong hop flavour and bitter character to what is now known as "Kentish Ale".

The flavour has always been balanced and enhanced by the use of brewing liquor extracted from the Green Sand layer below chalk. The high calcium levels from this chalk are essential to the recipe and unique to this type of beer.

Nowadays, Shepherd Neame is the only brewery in Kent using well water and the local hops to manufacture Kentish Ale. Traditional varieties of hops from Kent feature in our recipes, in particular the Kentish Cobb or Golding. Most of our hops come from East Kent within a 15 mile radius of the Brewery.


SHEPHERD NEAME
SINCE 1698
BISHOPS FINGER
ALC 5.4% VOL
KENTISH STRONG ALE
BEST BEFORE END - SEE BACK LABEL
UKF1

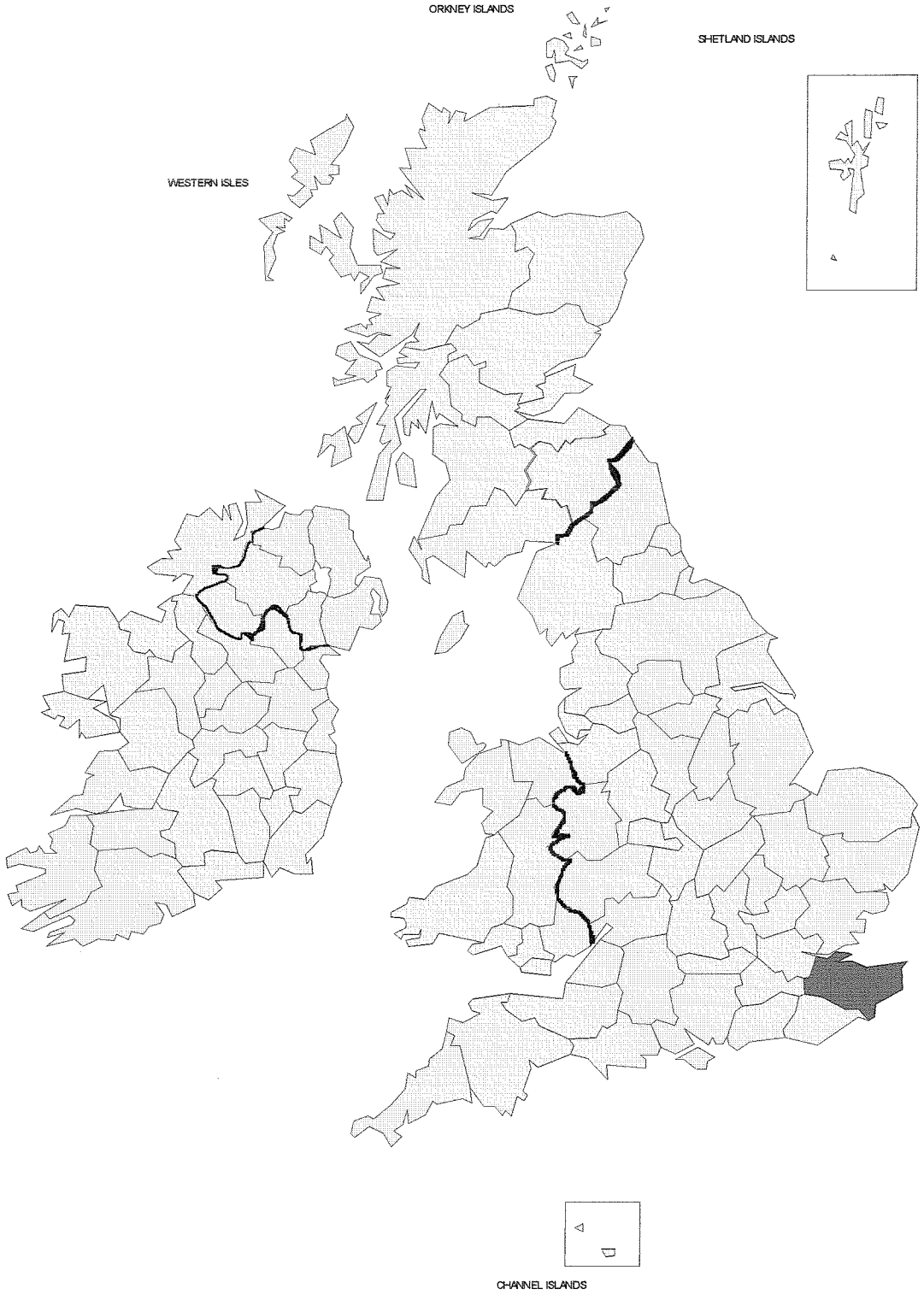

SHEPHERD NEAME
SINCE 1698
BISHOPS FINGER
ALC 5.4% VOL
KENTISH STRONG ALE
BEST BEFORE END - SEE BACK LABEL
UKF1



Échelle 1 : 5 000 000

0 50 100 150 200 km

- plus de 1 000 000 d'hab.
- plus de 500 000 hab.
- plus de 100 000 hab.
- plus de 20 000 hab.
- moins de 20 000 hab.



KENTISH ALE & KENTISH STRONG ALE

Geographical area :

Kent

i) Legislation

The major legislation covering the production and marketing of beer is as follows:

- Preservatives in Food Amendment Regulation 1980 SI No 931 1980.
- The Emulsifiers and Stabilisers in Food Regulations 1980 SI No 1833 1980.
- Miscellaneous Additives in Food Regulations 1980 SI No 1834 1980
- Materials and Articles in Contact with Food Regulations 1987 SI No 1523 1987.
- Pesticides (Maximum Residue Levels in Food) Regulations 1988 SI No 1378 1988.
- The Food Safety (Amendments) (Metrication) Regulations 1992 SI No 2597 1992.