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# Carlsberg Britvic Proposes to Close Marston’s Brewery, Jeopardizing 310 Jobs

The proposal targets a historic Burton upon Trent site as U.K. cask ale volumes have more than halved.

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Carlsberg Britvic said it has proposed closing Marston’s Brewery in Burton upon Trent and its main logistics operation at the site in the summer of 2027, putting about 310 jobs at risk and marking a major change for one of Britain’s best-known historic brewing

sites.

The company said the plan is subject to consultation. In announcing the proposal, Carlsberg Britvic said the move reflects a long decline in the ale market, especially cask ale, and a need to focus its business on parts of the drinks market where consumer demand is growing.

The brewery in Staffordshire has deep roots in British beer production. John Marston started his brewery business in Burton in 1834, and the company later moved to the current Shobnall Road site in 1898. The proposed closure would therefore affect a site tied to nearly two centuries of brewing in a town long associated with the industry.

According to ITV News, the closure plan would affect around 310 workers. Carlsberg Britvic said the brewery and the logistics operation are expected to continue running during a transition period while the consultation process takes place.

Paul Davies, chief executive of Carlsberg Britvic, said the announcement would be a shock for employees and acknowledged the scale of the impact. He said the company had continued to support and invest in ale, but argued that market conditions had worsened sharply. “The stark reality is that UK cask ale volumes have more than halved in less than a decade, and this trend looks set to continue across the UK,” Davies said, according to ITV.

Davies also said the company’s broader drinks portfolio must be aligned with current consumer demand. He said his role was to ensure Carlsberg Britvic’s “multi-beverage portfolio is focused where consumers are today, and where customer demand is growing.”

Carlsberg Britvic said it plans to keep producing some ale brands, including Hobgoblin, McEwan’s and Brooklyn. At the same time, it said it will look for buyers for some of its other cask and regional ale brands. The company did not publicly identify which brands could be sold.

That part of the plan could matter beyond Burton. If Carlsberg Britvic transfers smaller regional labels to specialist or local operators, it may reshape supply relationships, brewing contracts and routes to market in the U.K. beer business. More broadly, the proposal points to how brewers are adjusting production capacity and brand portfolios as traditional ale consumption declines, with possible effects for ingredient suppliers, packaging companies, wholesalers and distributors tied to those volumes.

The decision would also represent another major step in the ownership changes surrounding Marston’s brewing operations in recent years. In 2020, Marston’s and Carlsberg agreed to combine their brewing interests in a joint venture called Carlsberg Marston’s Brewing Company. That deal included Marston’s breweries and distribution operations, but not its pubs. Carlsberg initially held 60% of the venture. In 2024, it bought out Marston’s remaining stake, leaving Marston’s focused on its pub business while Carlsberg took full control of the brewing assets.

The proposed closure suggests that full ownership has not changed the pressure facing the ale side of the business. Demand patterns in beer have shifted for years, with drinkers moving across categories and producers placing more emphasis on products with broader growth prospects. Carlsberg Britvic has framed the Burton decision in that context, presenting it as part of a wider effort to position the company around stronger-performing parts of the drinks market rather than as a one-off site issue.

Even so, the Burton site carries symbolic weight that goes beyond normal capacity planning. Burton upon Trent has long been central to British brewing, and Marston’s has been one of the names most closely linked to the town. A closure would reduce brewing activity at a location that has been part of that industrial identity for generations.

Davies said smaller ale brands still have loyal drinkers and said the company would try to give those labels a future under different ownership where possible. “That said, smaller ale brands are much-loved by select consumers, and we will do everything we can to ensure they thrive under more specialist or local ownership in the future,” he said, according to ITV.

For workers, the immediate issue is the consultation and the uncertainty around jobs over the next several months. For the wider beverage sector, the proposal is another sign that brewers are under pressure to match production networks to current demand, even when that means reconsidering long-established sites and legacy beer brands. The outcome of the consultation, and any future sales of regional ales, could help determine how much of Marston’s brewing heritage remains in the market and under whose control.