



Director of Public Health  
Public Health Directorate  
Medway Council,  
Gun Wharf,  
Dock Road,  
Chatham, Kent. ME4 4TR  
23<sup>rd</sup> March 2022

## LICENSING ACT 2003 – REVIEW OF A PREMISES LICENCE APPLICATION

**Name and address of premises**

**Baba Food, 75, High St, Gillingham. ME7 1BJ**

The Director of Public Health is making representations concerning a review of the licence for the above premises. The representations are made against the following licensing objectives:

- The prevention of crime and disorder
- The prevention of public nuisance

### **General comments**

This premises is in Gillingham High St, a busy pedestrian shopping area consisting of a mix of businesses and shops, including those selling alcohol. The shop is a very short walk from one of the most densely populated and most deprived residential areas of Medway in Gillingham North and South wards.

This premises is located within the Gillingham cumulative impact policy (CIP) area which covers Gillingham High St and the surrounding area. The evidence accepted by the Authority to support the CIP is relevant to this review in that it shows high levels of alcohol related crime, disorder, and public nuisance in this area.

These representations are intended to give the Licensing Committee a better understanding of the issues in this area and the current evidence to support the concerns the Director of Public Health has regarding the events outlined in the police review.

### **The prevention of crime and disorder**

The police provided evidence of alcohol related crime in this area. This relates primarily to anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, assault, public order, and criminal damage. This area has been identified as a hot spot for a range of alcohol related crime. This is evidenced by the high arrest levels for drunk and disorderly and associated public order offences. The community safety unit has identified a significant problem with the availability of alcohol in this area which appears to be related to alcohol related crime and has recently undertaken a

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consultation to renew the control of public drinking in the area by way of a Public Spaces Protection Order.

### **The prevention of public nuisance**

There is a general problem in the High Street area with street drinking, intimidating and anti-social behaviour and associated litter, with discarded cans and bottles in alleyways and public areas.

A member of public health staff has attended this area on several occasions since June 2021 up to March 2022 and there is ongoing evidence of alcohol related street drinking and associated litter in and around the High Street. This consists of bottles and cans of beer and cider, both 'super strength' and regular strength, and bottles of spirits, as well as plastic and cardboard wrappings, bottle tops and other associated litter. Areas where the litter was found in particular concentrations were

- alleyways off Balmoral Road/Duncan Road area,
- Balmoral Gardens,
- alleyways off Fox St,
- along Jeffery Street, but particularly in the communal gardens to the flats in Jeffery Street at its junction with Skinner Street, and by the public car park,
- in the flower beds around St Mark's church and
- in the car parks and alleyways off Green St.

However discarded bottles and cans can be seen everywhere thrown into the gutter, front gardens and on footpaths. Examples of the type of litter in areas closest to the premises have been included in Annex 1. The photographs show much of the litter consists of single cans and bottles but taken in totality there is a large quantity of it in the area. Over the period of time the evidence was collected the litter is ongoing and consistent in the areas shown.

The area to the front and side of St Mark's Church, which is directly next to the premises is particularly bad for alcohol litter, and, as can be seen from the photographs, it is often found in and under the bushes in significant quantities.

People engaging in public drinking have been witnessed in

- The High Street,
- Green Street,
- Balmoral Gardens,
- Jeffery Street, and
- on the benches by St Mark's Church, which tallies with the alcohol litter.

On occasions there was a strong smell of urine and evidence of public defecation in the flower bed bordering St Mark's Church in Canterbury St, the alleyways leading off Balmoral Road and in a doorway in an alleyway between Green Street and the bridge to Balmoral Gardens.

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### Summary

Gillingham High Street and the surrounding area has unacceptable levels of alcohol related issues, including crime, domestic abuse and public nuisance associated with a high density of off licences. These problems are current, ongoing, and still of concern in this area.

Any licenced premises which shows the kind of disregard of the licensing objectives as outlined in the evidence contained in the police review will be adding to the alcohol related issues and problems this area has. The Director of Public Health therefore supports the police request for the Licensing Committee to revoke this premises licence.

James Williams

Date 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2022

**Director of Public Health**

For all communication, please contact **Barbara Murray**, Public Health Project Officer at the address at the head of this representation or by the following:

Tel: 01634 332637:

E mail: [barbara.murray@medway.gov.uk](mailto:barbara.murray@medway.gov.uk)