



Chief Officer of Police Representation in relation to an application for grant of a premise licence made under Part 3 **Section 17** Licensing Act 2003 (S18 Licensing Act 2003)

Details of person making representation	
Name of Chief Officer of Police	Chief Superintendent 10582 Loudon
Postal Address: (Divisional Headquarters)	Medway Police Station Purser Way Gillingham Kent ME7 1NE
E-mail address	licensing.north.division@kent.pnn.police.uk
Telephone Numbers:	
Licensing Co-ordinator	Geoff Rowley 01634 792733
Licensing Officers	PC Smuts 11250 PC Hunt 11044
Details of premises representation is about	
Name of Premises:	124 High Street, Gillingham
Address of premises:	124 High Street Gillingham Kent ME7 1AU
Date application received by police	10/03/2022
Date representation sent to Licensing Authority	07/04/2022
<p>All representations must be made within 28 days of receipt of initial application</p> <p><i>The Licensing Act 2003 (Premises Licences and Club Premises Certificates) Regulations 2005, Part 4 Reg. 22.</i></p>	

The Chief Officer of Police has received an application for the grant of a premises licence made under the provisions of Section 17 Licensing Act 2003, and under Section 18 of that Act, asks the Licensing Authority to consider these representations in respect of: -

Prevention of crime and disorder	X
Public Safety	X
Prevention of public nuisance	X
Protection of children from harm	X

Is this a representation regarding the Designation of Premises Supervisor under S18 (9) Licensing Act 2003? No

Please give the reason for the representation and detail the evidence supporting it under the appropriate headings:

Having considered this application, Kent Police make objections and request that a premises licence is not granted. Kent Police submit the following information to support our objections:

This is a new premises licence application which if granted would allow the premises to sell alcohol on an off-sale basis Monday to Friday 0800 to 2200 hours, Saturday 0900 to 2022 hours and Sunday 0900 to 2000 hours. The applicant has indicated that the premises will operate as a grocery store.

The premises is located in the centre of Gillingham High Street opposite the junction of Green Street. Gillingham High Street is a busy town centre, with a significant number of retail outlets many of which already sell alcohol on an off-sale basis.

Gillingham High Street currently forms part of a Cumulative Impact Policy Area (CIP) and the area suffers with a high volume of alcohol related crime, disorder and public nuisance. It is also covered by a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO), commonly known as an Alcohol Control Zone. A particular issue in this area relates to antisocial behaviour and street drinking, a concerning issue which can be directly linked to off-licence premises in this area. A street drinker can be defined as the following:

"A person who drinks heavily in public places and, at least in the short term, is unable or unwilling to control or stop their drinking, has a history of alcohol misuse and often drinks in groups for companionship (Lamb, 1995). People who are street drinkers are likely to be at increased risk of causing harm to themselves or others and may be involved in antisocial behaviour such as begging, or rowdy drunken behaviour that can be intimidating or even violent".

It is incumbent upon an applicant to research the local area when considering what measures they propose to adopt to reduce risk and promote the licencing objectives. This application makes no mention of the area's demographic, or local initiatives and it appears the applicant has failed to acknowledge the existence of the CIP. (Details of the CIP are readily available within the Medway Council Statement of Licensing Policy, a document easily and readily available online). It also appears that the applicant has failed to identify or to address how it will assist in dealing with issues such as street drinking or to the other issues identified within the CIP.

Kent Police are concerned that the granting of another off-licence in this immediate area, an area that is already populated by many licenced premises, would make alcohol even more widely available and is likely to attract further street drinkers and antisocial behaviour resulting in issues worsening and becoming a greater problem. The selling of alcohol to street drinkers would be considered a failure to promote the licensing objectives of preventing crime and disorder and preventing public nuisance.

The town centre areas within the Medway Towns are patrolled by a dedicated town centre policing team consisting of both Police Officers and Police Community Support Officers. This application has been brought to the attention of officers from the town centre policing team at Gillingham who are in support of the view that this application should not be granted. Tackling street drinking and antisocial behaviour in this area remains a priority and alcohol confiscations and seizures from persons consuming alcohol within this CIP and PSPO area continue to occur on a regular basis.

Due to the existence of the CIP, it is the understanding of Kent Police that there is a rebuttable presumption of refusal of the application by the Authority in all but exceptional circumstances, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the premises would not adversely affect the licensing objectives. Sadly, Kent Police do not believe the proposed conditions offered by the applicant demonstrate exceptional circumstances. Kent Police are of the opinion that there are no meaningful conditions that can be added to

this licence that will ensure that the four licensing objectives are being fully promoted and would ensure that the issues already experienced within this CIP area would not increase.

Prevention of Crime and Disorder.

High Street Gillingham is a high priority area for Kent Police due to the levels of both crime and anti-social behaviour. The applicant has made no mention of localised, geographical crime issues in this area. High Street Gillingham suffers greatly with 'Street Drinkers'. Street Drinkers are persons who tend to be alcohol dependant and will drink alcohol in public. Street drinking and associated antisocial behaviour can impact on people's perception of the physical environment and more importantly their quality of life and safety. Groups of drinkers can sometimes be intimidating and stop people using public spaces or facilities causing some residents live in fear of crime. There are multiple locations near to this premises that street drinkers already congregate and consume alcohol.

Public Safety

Much of the representations that have been made in respect of the impact on the Licensing Objective of Crime & Disorder can be mirrored under this objective. Any incident of Public Order or Assault has a propensity to have an element of collateral impact on Public Safety, through the protagonists and their interaction with Police. The proposal of another off-licence in this area are likely to add to the issues already mentioned above.

Prevention of Public Nuisance

Public nuisance under the Licensing Act enables the interpretation of nuisance to retain its wider meaning under common law. It therefore retains the breadth and flexibility to take in all the concerns likely to arise from the operation of any premises conducting licensable activities in terms of the impact of nuisance on people living or doing business nearby. Any incidents that Kent Police responds to are by definition a nuisance to some section of our community. They who engage in antisocial behaviour and crime brought about by excessive uncontrolled consumption of alcohol are a public nuisance.

Protection of Children from harm

The protection of children from harm includes protection from moral, psychological and physical harm. It is not therefore limited to only protecting the children from the inherent harms of alcohol.

Kent Police respectfully request that this application be refused.

PC Smuts 11250
PP. Ch/Supt Loudon 10582
North Division Area Commander

Date: 7th April 2022