

**Objection to a Premises Licence Application for 15-19 New Road, Chatham, ME4 4QJ**

- 1 I am a resident of Chatham who lives near the centre of the town. I lived very close (in New Road) to this premises until January 2020 and still retain links with this area. I visit a friend there on occasions and often walk around this area. I am a frequent visitor to Chatham Town Centre i.e. the High Street, which is about 150 metres away.
- 2 I object to this application and ask that the licence application is refused because it does not address the licensing objectives. In not doing so, this application also fails to acknowledge Medway Council's Cumulative Impact Policy (CIP); the premises is in a Cumulative Impact Zone.
- 3 The CIP was formulated in 2018 to address the alcohol related problems which were common in this and other local areas. While there has been some improvement, the problems are still prevalent today.
- 4 Chatham is a busy town with clearly identified alcohol-related problems. These problems are poor health, public drunkenness, crime and disorder, littering and domestic violence. It has been demonstrated to Medway Council's Licensing Committee that the availability and oversupply of alcohol from off-licences has contributed to the problem. Indeed, it is the supply of inexpensive alcohol especially to street-drinkers, which has caused many of the problems. I am very aware that alcohol abuse is not confined to street drinkers and that retailers have little opportunity to influence people's behaviour which may have been affected by alcohol which has been taken away from their premises. This is a compelling reason for not granting a Premises Licence for off sales in this area.
- 5 Any store offering alcohol for sale is, in my opinion, contributing to alcohol related problems in the locality. There are already many businesses offering alcohol as "Off sales" including clearly advertised 24-hour availability at the nearby garage. The CIP is designed to reduce the impact of alcohol consumption and some of the evidence which informed this policy originated from the immediate area close to this shop. Medway Council reaffirmed its commitment to the CIP only 2 years ago in 2023 and to grant a licence to this premises would be contrary to the intentions of CIP.
- 6 I contend that no amount of supervision, and certainly not the level indicated in this application, can prevent inexpensive alcohol ending up in the hands of street drinkers.
- 7 The application does not demonstrate knowledge of local conditions and does not fulfil any of the four licensing objectives especially in its failure to address:
  - Prevention of Crime and Disorder
  - Public Safety
  - Prevention of public nuisance
- 8 It does not demonstrate how the applicant will address issues of littering (alcohol bottles and cans) and this is contrary to the licensing objective - Prevention of Public Nuisance. Littering, especially of cans of beer and cider, is a considerable problem close to this shop especially in the nearby Rhode Street Car Park area (see image taken 1<sup>st</sup> May, 2025). I have

also observed drink cans and bottles in the gulleys in Clover Street (which leads into The Paddock) and also in the Paddock itself (see images taken on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2025). On 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025, I observed a drunk couple sitting in the lift area on the floor of the Rhode Street car park. They were drinking from cans of cider at 1pm in the afternoon. When I returned to the vehicle I was travelling in at about 2.45pm, the couple were still there and arguing loudly. In my opinion, alcohol consumption was a contributory factor.

- 9 The premises plan which accompanies this application is confusing. While it states that alcohol is behind the counter “and will only be touched by staff”, the plan indicates storage of alcohol along a wall in the shop not protected by the counter.
- 10 This shop intends selling alcohol from 08.00 until 23.59 hours. This is a very long time and a shop on a busy road is more accessible to pedestrians than a garage; it is a busy pedestrian route. In nearby Gillingham, a major retailer elected not to sell alcohol in the best interests of protecting its staff from abuse by customers who might wish to purchase alcohol. In April 2025, the BBC Southeast news broadcast an item in which local retailers in Chatham complained of drunk people near their shops; these shops are approximately 200 metres from this premises.
- 11 I wish this business well as a local convenience store for the increasing local population. I would not want to see it contributing to the many alcohol-related problems which exist in the immediate area.

I ask that my address is not disclosed to the public in respect of this application and am happy to explain this further if asked.

Bryan Fowler



Clover Street, Chatham



Rhode Street, Chatham



The Paddock Street, Chatham