

Stress Area - Strood Town Centre

This Stress Area will cover the area shown in the below maps. There is also a list of roads at the end of the appendix.



The Strood Stress Area will apply to the following applications for the sale of alcohol for consumption off the premises.

- New premises licence applications.
- Material variations for existing premises licences.
- Provisional statements for premises licences.

If an application that meets the above criteria is submitted within this Stress Area, the applicant is expected to have carried out a risk assessment for their business and considered the addition of recommended measures to prevent a negative effect on the licensing objectives. If they choose not to carry out the assessment or include the recommended measures, they should provide reasons why.

Evidence summary

Evidence, provided to the Authority, shows this area has concerning rates of:

- a. Criminal offences, particularly in the town centre and by the train station.
- b. Antisocial behaviour.
- c. Domestic Abuse.
- d. Alcohol related hospital admissions.
- e. Deprivation.
- f. Alcohol related littering.

Strood Town Centre overview

Pedestrians in Rochester can access Strood town centre within minutes, by walking across the Rochester Bridge, and vice versa. Alcohol can easily be purchased in one area and consumed in the other. The area of Rochester High Street is one of Medway's Cumulative Impact Areas. The close proximity of these areas makes the issues of dispersal and displacement from one area to the other a concern for the Authority.

The Strood Public Space Protection Order implemented by Medway Council to try and prevent anti-social behaviour covers the same area as this Stress Area.

Strood is primarily a convenience retail destination with a Retail Park, a selection of supermarkets and a traditional High Street serving the local community. Although it provides everyday basic needs, the general quality of the town centre environment is currently poor and there is currently little leisure provision in this area.

In Medway it has been identified that town centres are valued by communities for a range of retail services and community facilities, such as libraries. The Authority supports the social dimension of sustainable development by ensuring local services reflect the community's needs, and it wants to support a strategy in Strood town centre which sees a high-quality built environment supporting the local community by providing a strong and healthy town centre.

Notwithstanding the existence of the stress area, members are supportive of applications which will positively benefit Strood town centre in line with the aspirations outlined above.

Recommended Measures

Risk Assessment

The Authority recommends that applicants complete a risk assessment of their business to understand what steps are required to complete the operating schedule in a manner which enables the Council, responsible authorities and other persons to assess how they will seek to promote the licensing objectives in this area. Risk assessments will vary according to the nature of the business, and it is for applicants to decide what is appropriate in each case. The Authority believe that the completion of a risk assessment and implementation of appropriate steps will reduce the likelihood of representations.

The Authority recognises that it cannot insist on a risk assessment. However, an applicant who decides not to complete or provide a risk assessment may face representations and the expense of a hearing as a result. If a risk assessment is not completed, then applicants will need to demonstrate how these matters have been addressed through the operating schedule provided.

While it is a matter for each applicant, the Authority strongly recommends that all issues identified in this and the surrounding area are addressed when completing their risk assessment.

Suggested conditions

The Authority, having accepted the evidence of alcohol related problems in this area, encourages applicants for the sale of alcohol off the premises to consider the following measures:

- a. Hours of operation for off licensed premises 09:00 to 23:00.
- b. Installation of CCTV to a standard acceptable to Kent Police.
- c. Challenge 25 policy.
- d. Documented refusals system.
- e. Documented staff training, and retraining, including underage sales, proxy sales and drunkenness.
- f. Minimum staffing levels.
- g. Restrictions on high-strength beers, lagers and ciders.
- h. A clear glazing policy to allow for a clear and unobstructed view to the front of the premises.
- i. No sale of single cans or bottles of beer, lager or cider.
- j. Defined display areas.
- k. Monitoring of litter in immediate area.

List of roads included in the Strood Stress Area.

Addresses on both sides of all roads shown in the above map are included in the Stress Area unless otherwise stated.

While every effort has been made to include all roads within the above area, there may be omissions, errors or additions due to ongoing development, and the following list is only intended as a guide. It is the applicant's responsibility to confirm the location of their premises.

Albert Place
Alma Place
Bowes Road
Burgess Road
Canal Road
Charles Street
Commercial Road
Cuxton Road between Gun Lane and Priory Road
Doggett's Square
Edward Street
Esplanade
Frindsbury Road between Station Road and North Street
Friary Place
Grange Road
Grove Road
Gun Lane
High St between Rochester Bridge and Gun Lane/Cuxton Road
Knight Road
Marsh Street
Newark Yard
North Street

Priory Road
Roach Street
Smith Street
South Eastern Road
St Mary's Road
Station Road
Vicarage Road
Victoria Street.