



Supplementary Information from Kent Police Licensing

Firstly, Kent Police would like to apologise in advance. Unfortunately, the entire Kent Police Licensing Team is unable to attend the Licensing Panel Hearing for *Gepetos*, 42 High Street, Chatham, Kent, ME4 4DS on **3 February**, due to prior commitments which cannot be rearranged. The Medway council Licensing Team were consulted regarding the possibility of amending the hearing date; however, the date had been set and was unable to be changed.

Please accept the following as supplementary information for consideration during the hearing, submitted as a continuation of the evidence already provided by PC Knight.

Kent Police were asked to assess the new premises licence application for *Gepetos*, submitted on Thursday 11 December 2025, with a closing date for representations of 8 January 2026. An assessment was completed, reviewing all documentation provided by the applicant, and as a result, Kent Police submitted formal representations objecting to the grant of this licence.

Kent Police understand that the premises intends to operate as a general store selling alcohol and groceries. However, what remains unclear is how the applicant proposes to operate in practice or how they intend to address the issues associated with the premises being located within a Cumulative Impact Assessment (CIA) area.

As you will be aware, *Gepetos* is located on Chatham High Street—an area subject to Medway's CIA—and within a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) zone (formerly an alcohol-control zone) As highlighted in previous submissions, the premises falls within the western section of the CIA boundary, close to Hammond Hill.

This area has already been identified as being under considerable pressure from alcohol-related harm, as detailed within the CIA.

In addition to the premises being located within both the CIA and PSPO areas, Kent Police have identified significant additional concerns.

Crime and anti-social behaviour remain persistent issues within Chatham. Local beat officers have raised concerns that granting another off-licence in this area will exacerbate existing problems with street drinkers and anti-social behaviour. As you are aware, street drinkers are linked to a wide range of issues including ASB, littering, low-level crime such as shoplifting, and incidents of disorder and fighting. This behaviour is intimidating to the public, deters visitors, and poses risks to both individuals and the wider community.

Further research has been conducted into individuals issued with Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) and Community Protection Notices (CPNs) within Chatham Town Centre. To briefly clarify:

- A **Community Protection Warning (CPW)** is a formal written warning informing an individual that their behaviour is having a detrimental effect on the community and must stop. It is not a criminal offence.
- A **Community Protection Notice (CPN)** is issued when behaviour continues despite a CPW. A CPN is legally enforceable and breaching it constitutes a criminal offence.

The escalation from CPW to CPN evidence that the problematic behaviours—street drinking, intimidation, and persistent ASB—are not hypothetical; they are ongoing, documented, and require enforcement.

Research shows that within the past seven months:

- **26 individuals** have been issued with CPWs
- **16** of those have gone on to receive CPNs due to continued behaviour
- **9** have breached their CPNs and been arrested

All of these individuals are known street drinkers. This clearly demonstrates that street drinking is a significant and active issue in this area.

Chatham town is also designated as a **GRIP Hotspot**—a Home Office-funded area identified as having persistently high levels of serious violence and related crime. These areas receive targeted, high-visibility policing aimed at reducing violence, deterring offending, and protecting the public. Current research indicates that Chatham experiences elevated rates of ASB, serious violence, and knife crime. Chatham is presently ranked **7th of 15 hotspot areas** within Kent.

The applicant has proposed the following conditions:

- CCTV
- Challenge 25
- Incident log
- Refusals log

These conditions represent only the *minimum* standard expected of any responsible operator applying for a new premises licence. No additional or strengthened conditions have been offered to address the specific issues associated with the CIA or the local area—such as street drinking.

The CIA makes clear that where an application attracts relevant representations, there is a **presumption of refusal**, unless the applicant can demonstrate that the premises will *not* adversely impact the licensing objectives. Minimal proposed conditions do not meet this requirement.

Kent Police would also like to remind the panel that the CIA explicitly states that an application **should not be considered exceptional** simply because:

- The premises is well-managed,
- It is built to a high standard, or

- The applicant operates similar premises elsewhere without complaint.

The CIA further states that only genuinely exceptional circumstances can overcome the presumption of refusal. Exceptional circumstances must directly address the issues the CIA was created to manage.

At this stage, Kent Police ask the panel to consider objecting to the granting of this licence. Introducing another off-licence within a CIA area will likely worsen the existing alcohol-related problems the policy aims to control. This area already suffers from high levels of alcohol-related crime, anti-social behaviour, and street drinking. Increasing the availability of alcohol will add to these issues.

Granting this licence risks attracting additional street drinkers, escalating disorder and nuisance, and placing further strain on local policing and public services. Permitting alcohol sales at these premises would therefore conflict with the licensing objectives—specifically the prevention of crime and disorder and the prevention of public nuisance.

The applicant has not demonstrated exceptional circumstances nor shown how their premises would avoid contributing to the cumulative impact identified in this area. As such, Kent Police believe that granting this licence would undermine the purpose and effectiveness of the CIA and would negatively impact the local community.

For these reasons, Kent Police respectfully request that the application is **not** granted.

Thank you for your time, and once again, we apologise for not being able to attend the hearing in person.