

Vendees Local Ltd, 103 Wellington Road South, Stockport, SK1 3TH

The department of Public Health would like to submit a representation against the above licence application. Public Health have concerns that approving this licence to allow the sale of alcohol 24 hours a day in central Stockport could harm the local population, exacerbate inequalities in the Borough, and compromise the following licencing objectives:

1. Prevention of crime and disorder
2. Prevention of public nuisance
3. Protection of children from harm

Research has shown there is a link between the increased availability of alcohol through extended opening hours and increased alcohol consumption. However, the impacts of alcohol consumption in a population are not felt equally across society. Increased levels of deprivation are associated with increased levels of alcohol-related harm.

Brinnington and Central is the most deprived ward in Stockport, and there are higher than average levels of deprivation in this part of the borough when compared to regional and national averages. Therefore, residents from Brinnington and Central are more likely to be vulnerable to alcohol-related harms. Data from the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) NHS Digital shows that in 2020, this MSOA (Middle Layer Super Output Area) was the second highest for hospital admissions in Stockport for alcohol attributable conditions rates, more than double the national average. In this area, the standardised admission ratio in 2023 was 237.2 where England is 100. The MSOA is a geographical small area, of around 10,000 people. The MSOA of the premises is E01005758, Central Stockport, Portwood & Shaw Heath.

The approval of a licence that allows the sale of alcohol 24 hours a day does not foster a supportive environment for people who are dependent on or misuse alcohol and need to reduce their drinking. The location of this premises is just a 6-minute walk away from the Stockport Alcohol and Drug Service and a 5-minute walk away from MOSAIC, where vulnerable adults and young people attend to access support services and treatment for alcohol misuse.

The provision of alcohol 24 hours a day in this area, where there will be many vulnerable people, may result in people relapsing and purchasing alcohol when the support services are not open. Therefore, approval of this licence in this location is likely to put vulnerable people at risk. There is also the risk that the congregation of people at a 24 hour off licence late at night, throughout the night and into the early hours of the morning to purchase and consume alcohol could cause a public nuisance. This hidden harm of alcohol extends beyond the individual who misuses alcohol and negatively impacts the family unit and wider community.

When a child lives with a parent or guardian who misuses alcohol, this is termed an adverse childhood experience. The cumulative impact of this trauma can have long-term consequences for a child's physical and mental health. Therefore, approving a licence that will increase alcohol consumption in the population, and increase the likelihood of adults dependent on alcohol relapsing or consuming more alcohol, will undermine the licensing objective to protect children from harm.

The Stockport JSNA states that 40% of adults in treatment services for drug and alcohol live with children. Children may also come to harm if they can purchase alcohol from this premises. Though

the applicant does stipulate they will operate a challenge 25 policy, the proximity of this premises to the Stockport College is 0.1 miles, a 2-minute walk.

The licensed premises are directly opposite the college site, and are particularly prominent on Wellington Road, exacerbating the potential for alcohol sales from this location to appeal to children attending the college. This higher further education setting has students as young as 16 in attendance, there is likely to be a high footfall of young people coming to this premises, increasing the likelihood of underage purchases, particularly when operating such extended hours. Alcohol and violence are linked. Victims of violent crime perceived the offender or offenders to be under the influence of alcohol in over half of all violent incidents reported in the Crime Survey for England and Wales.

The survey also reported 70% of violent incidents that occurred in the evening or night were alcohol-related. The proportions of violent incidents that were alcohol-related increased as the afternoon and evening progressed. 23% of violent incidents occurring between noon and 6pm involved alcohol, whereas 52% between 6pm and 10pm, 83% between 10pm and midnight, and 84% between midnight and 6am. Allowing the sale of alcohol for 24 hours a day therefore increases the risk of more violent crime and thus undermines the licensing objective to prevent crime and disorder. This MSOA area is ranked the 8th in Greater Manchester for all crime. More specifically, on the Greater Manchester VRU dashboard, there were 602 recorded violent crimes in the most recent year of data in E01005758 (Central Stockport, Portwood & Shaw Heath area of Stockport, 2023).

Stockport's Serious Violence Strategic Needs Assessment (January 2024) states over the last three years, GMP has recorded around 90 domestic abuse incidents per week in the borough and that alcohol was identified as a feature in around 50% of domestic abuse offences in 2022 and around 67% occurred during the time period associated with the "night time economy". Witnessing domestic abuse is yet another adverse childhood experience. Exposing children to an increased risk of domestic violence by allowing the sale of alcohol 24 hours a day, again, undermines the licensing objective to protect children from harm.

In summary, numerous concerns have been raised on review of this application. On review of the available evidence, to approve a licence for the sale of alcohol 24 hours a day in this area could cause harm to the local population and undermine the licensing objectives to; prevent crime and disorder, to prevent a public nuisance, and to protect children from harm. The department of public health therefore request this application is refused.