

Annex 2

Friends Fish Bar, 162 King Street, Ramsgate, Kent

I have read through your client's application with regards to an off-sales alcohol licence. I am objecting to the licence based on the following grounds:

PREVENTION OF CRIME AND DISORDER

The fish bar is located within Central Harbour Ward and this area experiences one of the largest concentrations of anti-social behaviour across the Thanet district. The ASB stems from a mixture of youth related offending and disorder caused by a cohort of rough sleepers. The night-time economy with regard to pubs and clubs also plays a part when hospitality is open. Alcohol is the key factor across all elements.

In order to demonstrate please find below Police statistics for ASB calls to the ward from Oct 2019 to Oct 2020:

Oct 2019 – 51 calls
Nov 2019 – 31 calls
Dec 2019 – 35 calls
Jan 2020 – 41 calls
Feb 2020 – 39 calls
Mar 2020 – 40 calls
Apr 2020 – 61 calls
May 2020 – 72 calls
June 2020 – 73 calls
Aug 2020 – 90 calls
Sept 2020 – 71 calls
Oct 2020 – 71 calls

The corona virus pandemic saw much of 2020 in a national lockdown with subsequent local closures. However, the demand upon Police in relation to ASB remained high with an increase toward the end of the year. Police have taken numerous measures to 'crack down' on the behaviour from increased patrolling through to the use of dispersal orders and civil injunctions. Our partners from youth services are also engaged in outreach and diversionary tactics in the area.

The granting of an alcohol licence to this premises is contradictory to the positive steps already undertaken by the Police and other community groups. The aim is to reduce alcohol consumption and related nuisance. Enabling another venue (a fish and chip shop) to sell alcohol only encourages sales and makes it more readily available.

The fish bar is a take-away only business and the premises has no seating area for customers to dine in. An off sales license raises concern in relation to people taking alcohol away from the venue to drink in the nearby park or other public open space.

I am also concerned that the granting of this licence would set a precedence for other take away venues to follow suit which cannot be permitted due to the risk of disorder and the already significant levels of ASB.

PUBLIC SAFETY AND PREVENTION OF PUBLIC NUISANCE

I understand you already operate until 11pm serving food to take away, but with the added sale of alcohol this increases the potential for more noise and alcohol related disorder. It is a largely residential area so there is an obligation to consider the prevention of nuisance to the local community.

A Public Spaces Protection Order (under The Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014) is already implemented and covers the location of Ramsgate town centre. There is also a PSPO in place for the whole of the Thanet district regarding the consumption of alcohol in public places. They were brought in following public consultation to restrict the use of alcohol and reduce levels of anti-social behaviour in public spaces. The granting of an off licence for take away alcohol again contradicts those plans in place at the location, to try and protect the public from ASB and alcohol related behaviours. We do not want to add to the issues, rather reduce.

PROTECTION OF CHILDREN FROM HARM

Boundary Park, directly across the road from the Fish bar, is a hotspot for youth related ASB. It is a congregation area and the Police object to any alcohol related licence (particularly off licence) that could potentially enable youths to purchase alcoholic drinks and/or consume them. There is also the opportunity for them to incite/encourage other adults to purchase on their behalf. The fish and chip shop is too easily accessible in that respect.