

Response to Environmental Health Queries

Thank you for your detailed response and for providing us the opportunity to clarify our position.

We take the concerns of Environmental Health and our neighbours very seriously, and we wish to demonstrate why the proposed licence extension to 24 hours, including alcohol sales, can be delivered responsibly and in a way that supports the community while upholding the licensing objectives.

1. Rationale for 24-hour alcohol sales

While the primary purpose of our application is to provide a genuine 24-hour convenience service for groceries and essentials, alcohol sales are included for the following key reasons:

- **Consistency of service:** Customers often purchase alcohol alongside groceries. Restricting alcohol after 23:00 while still selling groceries creates confusion, frustration, and the potential for disputes at the counter when staff must refuse items. Allowing alcohol sales throughout ensures smooth, calm, and consistent service.
- **Support for key workers & shift workers:** NHS staff, carers, taxi drivers, hospitality staff, delivery workers, and factory shift workers regularly finish late at night or start very early. For these customers, the ability to buy groceries and alcohol together at any time is a valued convenience and avoids unnecessary travel elsewhere.
- **Safety benefit:** Having a well-lit, staffed, and CCTV-monitored premises open 24 hours increases safety in the neighbourhood and offers a secure alternative for purchasing alcohol, compared to travelling further at night or resorting to unsafe, unregulated sources.

2. Prevention of public nuisance

We fully acknowledge the concern that late-night trading could attract noise or antisocial behaviour. We have therefore put in place the following robust safeguards:

- **Serving hatch system:** From 23:00–07:00, the premises will operate solely through a secure serving hatch, preventing loitering inside and allowing staff to control interactions efficiently.
- **Challenge 25 & refusal of intoxicated customers:** Strict policy in place with staff training and a refusal register maintained. This ensures that underage or intoxicated individuals will not be served.
- **Active staff monitoring:** Staff will monitor outside the premises, discourage groups from gathering, and take steps to disperse any potential disturbance quickly.
- **Noise control policy:** Transactions will be kept brief, signage will remind customers to respect neighbours, and staff will intervene immediately if customers are disruptive.
- **24-hour CCTV coverage:** High-quality CCTV covers both inside and outside areas, acting as a deterrent and providing evidence to the authorities if required.

3. Addressing historic complaints.

We are aware of historic complaints linked to refrigeration units under previous management. Since taking over, we have ensured these are properly serviced and maintained to reduce noise.

We are committed to further cooperation with Environmental Health should any additional measures (e.g. acoustic treatment or adjusted delivery times) be considered beneficial.

4. Willingness to review and cooperate

We note your strong advice to review overnight operations. We are prepared to:

- Closely monitor demand and impact during overnight hours.
- Conduct a formal review after an initial period (e.g. 12 months) and, if it becomes clear that late-night trading is not required or causes disruption, we will reduce hours voluntarily or seek to vary the licence accordingly.
- Maintain open communication with Environmental Health and the Licensing Authority to address any concerns quickly and effectively.

5. Conclusion

We believe that the steps outlined above demonstrate a proactive and responsible approach. The premises is under completely new management, with significant investment already made in CCTV, servicing of equipment, and staff training.

Our goal is to provide a safe, reliable, and convenient 24-hour service that meets the needs of the community, while fully respecting our neighbours and upholding the licensing objectives. We are committed to working in partnership with Environmental Health and the Council to ensure that our operations remain compliant, safe, and considerate at all times.