

Additional Evidence presented by Middlesbrough Council, Responsible Authority for health, against the application for a premises licence in respect of premises situated at Unit C Rede House, Middlesbrough the Licensing Act 2003

The application made is to vary the existing premises licence from 08:00 – 22:00 hours to 08:00 – 00:00 seven days a week for the supply of alcohol and to add the provision of late-night refreshment from 23:00 – 00:00 hours seven days a week. The current Premises Licence holders are MPK Properties.

There are a number of concerns regarding the current application made to Middlesbrough Council's Licensing Authority and it is our opinion that the granting of any variation to these premises off licence will have a negative impact on the Crime and Disorder, Public Safety and Protection of Children from Harm licensing objectives.

A licensing sub-committee hearing was held on 10 May 2018 where members of Middlesbrough Council's Licensing Committee heard evidence from Public Health and Cleveland Police representatives as to their concerns regarding the application.

Following this, a decision was made by the licensing sub-committee to grant the licence however with modified licensing hours for the supply of alcohol and with conditions (Exhibit FMH/1).

The impact of alcohol misuse is broad, often hidden and adversely affects individuals, families and communities in many ways, with the harm being disproportionately greater for vulnerable and disadvantaged communities. It impacts upon a number of Council services as well as the NHS, Police, Criminal Justice System, Education, Voluntary and Community sector.

The cost of alcohol misuse was estimated to cost the economy in England up to £25 billion per year and for Middlesbrough a total of £56.5 million which included costs relating to health, social care, crime and licensing.

People in Middlesbrough are more likely to die of alcohol related conditions or specific reasons compared to England or the region. Middlesbrough ranks 2nd across the North East region for alcohol related mortality. In 2020, Middlesbrough had an alcohol-related mortality rate per 100,000 of 55.9 per 100,000 which was higher than the North East rate of 49 per 100,000, significantly higher than the England rate of 37.8 and the 6th highest nationally.

It also has one of the highest rates of hospital admissions in the North East which relate to the following alcohol related disorders -: cardiovascular disease, mental and behavioural disorders, self-poisoning and exposure and unintentional injuries. Such alcohol related illnesses/disorders have a huge impact on the National Health Service.

These premises are situated within Central ward, one of the most deprived in Middlesbrough. The premises are near residential properties including adjoining student accommodation. It also sits within Middlesbrough’s night-time economy where there are several late night on licensed premises situated, some approximately 100 meters away.

Historically, Middlesbrough Council had two Cumulative Impact Policies (CIP). CIP 1 covered on licensed premises in a designated area of Middlesbrough Town Centre. CIP 2 covered off licence premises across 5 ward areas including Central, Newport, North Ormesby, Park and Longlands and Beechwood.

In Middlesbrough town centre there are high levels of alcohol related crime and disorder and wholly attributable hospital admissions recorded. This, together with the high density of licensed premises has evidenced the need for Middlesbrough Council’s Cumulative Impact Policies that lapsed in March 2022 to be reinstated.

In Central ward alone, there are higher levels of alcohol related crime and disorder now than that reported in 2018. This is having a serious impact on health and a number of services, including local ambulance and NHS Accident and Emergency departments who are already under a lot of pressure.

The following table shows alcohol related crimes for all 20 ward areas in Middlesbrough over a 3 year period from 2018/2019/2020. Throughout this period Central ward had the highest levels of alcohol related crime recorded across the three years. Newport ward, which borders Central ward, had the second highest levels recorded

AR-Crime			
Ward	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Acklam	11	21	13
Ayresome	30	47	48
Berwick Hills & Pallister	91	135	155
Brambles & Thorntree	119	151	133
Central	458	516	447
Coulby Newham	49	45	47
Hemlington	48	80	68
Kader	26	17	19

Ladgate	37	44	46
Linthorpe	28	29	25
Longlands & Beechwood	107	155	142
Marton East	17	27	12
Marton West	8	16	13
Newport	223	261	262
North Ormesby	86	115	114
Nunthorpe	8	8	7
Park	99	109	81
Park End & Beckfield	79	129	133
Stainton & Thornton	11	8	9
Trimdon	11	9	18
Unknown Ward	1	4	3
<i>CIP Zone</i>	<i>278</i>	<i>287</i>	<i>218</i>
All AR-Crimes (not inc CIP)	1547	1926	1795

The following table shows alcohol related anti-social behaviour for all 20 ward areas in Middlesbrough over a 3 year period from 2018/2019/2020. Central ward had the highest levels of alcohol related Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) across the three years. Newport ward, which borders Central ward, had the second highest levels recorded

AR-ASB			
Ward	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Central	361	373	241
Newport	124	134	109
Longlands & Beechwood	76	69	50
Park End & Beckfield	46	57	30
North Ormesby	59	50	33
Park	80	55	30
Berwick Hills & Pallister	46	50	36
Brambles & Thortree	45	53	22
Hemlington	40	27	27
Ladgate	20	16	13
Coulby Newham	25	22	12
Kader	12	12	4
Acklam	21	14	9
Marton East	20	13	5
Ayresome	10	15	13
Marton West	5	13	10
Linthorpe	13	4	13
Trimdon	12	9	7
Nunthorpe	7	4	3
Stainton & Thornton	4	9	4

Unknown Ward	1	3	0
<i>CIP Zone</i>	287	308	193
All AR-ASB (not inc CIP)	1027	1002	671

During the same three years, there was also an increase in Domestic Abuse. Such incidents often result in violence being used against another and injuries being sustained that require a clinical intervention.

Middlesbrough has an integrated alcohol treatment and recovery service that continues to provide specialist treatment and aftercare for those suffering with alcohol dependency whilst focusing on the hidden harms often associated with alcohol consumption including domestic abuse and homelessness.

Alcohol related crime and ASB has a significant impact on our NHS services including local A&E departments.

In 2014 the Safe Haven Service was introduced into Middlesbrough's night-time economy to address alcohol related injuries to alleviate the pressures on NHS services.

The Safe Haven service responds to problems arising from alcohol and substance misuse, violence against the person and all aspects of vulnerability in the town centre.

Information received from the Safe Haven Service confirms that several incidents of alcohol related violence, intoxication and/or substance misuse have taken place near these premises.

Over the past 12 months there has been a high number of young people frequenting Middlesbrough's night-time economy, using fake identification to access licensed premises to purchase and consume alcohol. Several alcohol related incidents reported to Police and NHS services have involved young people being seriously injured.

In April 2022 a 19-year-old male was stabbed in a licensed premise situated less than 100 meters away from this premises. The victim suffered serious injuries because of this incident. The three male suspects were identified as all being 16 and under.

Throughout 2020 and to date there was an alarming rise in the numbers of people choosing to drink at home during the Covid-19 pandemic with an estimated half a million people across the region drinking above the Chief Medical Officers guidelines.

An alcohol study completed in 2021 by Teesside Universities researchers with Middlesbrough residents across all ward areas, provided evidence that people in Middlesbrough are drinking more at home due to the pressures and anxiety brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic, including, financial pressures, unemployment, social isolation, and daily routines being disrupted. For whatever reason, it is believed that alcohol in many cases continues to be used as a coping mechanism.

Between March 2020 and April 2021 increases in certain alcohol related issues in Middlesbrough were identified. During this period, a large proportion of on licensed premises/businesses if not all remained closed due to the Covid restrictions put in place. However, off license premises remained open and continued to supply alcohol throughout.

Deaths caused by alcohol hit a new record high in England and Wales. High-risk drinking increased by almost 90% between February and September 2020. It was estimated there were 8 million people drinking at higher risk levels, with alcohol treatment services struggling to cope.

Between 1 May 2020 and 18 November there were 9 deaths recorded in Middlesbrough where alcohol had been a contributing factor. There was a further 43 drug related deaths recorded between 8 January 2021 – 14 April 2022 in Middlesbrough, where alcohol has been identified as the sole or additional contributing factor. Almost 50% (19) of these deaths were recorded from both Central and Newport wards.

The rate of hospital admissions for alcohol-related conditions in 2020/21 was also significantly higher in Middlesbrough compared to England with a rate of 1,957 per 100,000 compared to 1,500 nationally.

The rate of admission episodes for alcohol-specific conditions in under 18s for the period 2018/19 – 20/21 was 35.6 per 100,000, higher than the England rate of 29.3 per 100,000.

During 2020 there was a steady increase in the numbers accessing services for the following reasons:

- Those that have been abstinent for a number of years relapsed
- Those using opioids/non opioids where alcohol also became a problem
- Those processed through the Criminal Justice System for alcohol related crime and issued an Alcohol Treatment Referral (ATR).

Middlesbrough Council are working with the South Tees CCG who have commissioned the hospital's intervention liaison team in James Cook University

Hospital due to the levels of harm caused by alcohol related A&E attendances and hospital stays experienced in local departments.

The Hospital Intervention Liaison Team (HILT) sits within Accident and Emergency unit James Cook Hospital to assess those patients accessing the hospital with drug and/or alcohol issues. They engage, support, and make referrals into community services where needed.

Between April 21 and March 2022 HILT assessed 819 patients in total from the Middlesbrough area.

The following table shows the number of patients living in both Central and Newport wards of Middlesbrough (postcode starting with TS1) that were assessed by HILT in JCUH during this period.

Patients living in TS1 identified as suitable for HILT	116
Alcohol Only	75
Presenting with both Alcohol & Drug misuse	41

Central ward has consistently higher rates of all types of emergency admissions to hospital then overall in Middlesbrough for all causes, and much higher rates of self harm.

Alcohol is readily available in Middlesbrough and can be purchased from a number of different alcohol premises including off licences, supermarkets and premises offering alcohol delivery services making it easy for those who are vulnerable and suffering with alcohol addiction to access.

The introduction of the Licensing Act in 2005 resulted in a significant increase in off licence premises in Middlesbrough as a whole. In 2005 there were 94 off licence premises, in November 2015 there were 141 and in November 2021 there were 138. Alcohol sold from off licences can be considerably cheaper than on licence sales.

Middlesbrough has the second highest rate in the Northeast for the number of premises licensed to sell alcohol per square kilometre with a rate of 7.7, significantly higher than the England rate of 1.3.

Survey work carried out in Middlesbrough 2015/16 found that alcohol was being sold as cheaply as 13p/unit. A more recent survey completed in Oct/Nov 2022 shows a slight rise in both Central/Newport wards, increasing the unit cost to 21p per unit.

This increase falls in line with several factors including:

- The introduction of the cumulative impact policy in 2016 for off licensed premises.
- Reviewing licenses of problematic premises,
- Submission of representations to licence applications where there are concerns that additional licensable activity would impact on the licensing objectives.
- Working alongside retailers to promote responsible retailing and imposing or agreeing conditions that help to limit the sales of cheap, strong alcohol products especially in areas that suffer from high levels of alcohol related crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, and health harms.

At 14:38 hours on Friday 21 October 2022 I visited these premises to complete the alcohol survey, looking at the availability of alcohol on sale. As I approached the store entrance, I noticed a male sat outside begging. He was asking customers for spare change.

During my visit I identified that the premises were selling 500ml bottles of Thatcher's Vintage Cider that has an ABV content of 7.4% and was being sold for £2.29. I pointed this out to the shift manager on duty at the time as a condition attached to this premises licence prevents the sale of such products, therefore they were in breach of the premises licence.

The shift manager explained that they had received a number of products from another store in Newcastle that had closed, and that this product had been placed on the shelf by mistake. This issue was immediately rectified as the product was removed from sale.

It is of concern that any additional hours granted to this premises for the supply of alcohol and late-night refreshment may attract those frequenting or leaving the night-time economy, already fuelled with alcohol due to where these premises are situated and the availability of cheaper alcohol than what they could purchase at any on licensed premises.

It is worthy of note that these premises are attached to a large student accommodation block. It is well known that pre-loading is notorious amongst students, again due to alcohol being cheaper from off licensed premises. Such consumption can often lead to incidents involving acts of violence, asb and/or

individuals may find themselves in very vulnerable situations both of which are a concern.

It is our opinion that the granting of additional hours to a later terminal hour for the sale of alcohol and late-night refreshment at these premises will further undermine the Crime and Disorder and Public Safety and Protection of Children From Harm licensing objectives, exacerbating some of the alcohol related issues already experienced in the area.

Signature: 

Dated: 03.01.23