



Details of person or body making representation

Name of Chief Officer of Police	Chief Inspector Woodward 10618
Postal Address: (Area Headquarters)	Medway Police Station Purser Way Gillingham Kent
E-mail address	licensing.north.division@kent.police.uk
Telephone Number:	

Details of premises representation is about

Name of Premises:	Wards News
Address of premises:	53 High Street Gillingham Kent ME71BQ
Date application received by police	14 th April 2026
Date representation sent to Licensing Authority	8 th May 2026
	<i>Must be within 28 days of receipt – The Licensing Act 2003 (Premises Licences and Club Premises Certificates) Regulations 2005. Part 4 Reg. 22</i>

The Chief Officer of Police has received an application for the variation of a premises licence made under the provisions of Section 34 Licensing Act 2003, and under Section 35 of that Act asks the Licensing Authority to consider these representations in respect of: -

Please tick one or more of the licensing objectives that the representation relates to:

Prevention of crime and disorder	X
Public Safety	X
Prevention of public nuisance	X
Protection of children from harm	

The relevant representations within the meaning of S.35(5) of the Licensing Act satisfy the requirements of S.35 (6) of that Act and are as follows:

Please give the reason for the representation and detail the evidence supporting it:

Please see document entitled "Representations Wards News"

Please use separate sheets where necessary

Suggested conditions that could be added to the licence to remedy the representation or other suggestions the Licensing Sub Committee may take into account:

Please use separate sheets where necessary. Consider s106 Licensing Act 2003.

N/A

Signed: _____

Date: 08/05/2026

Print name: PC HUNT 11044

Force Number: 11044

pp Chief Officer of Police for the Police Area in which the licensed premises are situated

Representation may be made at any time during the 28 consecutive days starting on the day after the day on which the application to which it relates was given to the authority by the applicant. Please return this form along with any additional sheets to the Licensing Authority. This form must be returned within the Statutory Period.

Wards News, 53 High Street Gillingham is a licenced premises authorised to conduct the sale of alcohol on an off-sale basis from 09:30 to 18:00 daily. If granted as applied, this variation seeks to extend the sale of alcohol from 08:00 to 21:00 daily, an extension of 4.5 hours of alcohol sales per day. The applicant has provided information detailing measures to be undertaken to promote the licensing objectives.

High Street Gillingham and the surrounding areas suffer widespread multiple deprivation. Evidence shows the area has high rates of crime, disorder and antisocial behaviour, many of which can be attributed to alcohol, including:

- Police arrests for drunk and disorderly conduct and public order
- Assaults
- Criminal damage
- Alcohol related hospital admissions
- Alcohol related ambulance callouts
- Street drinking

The immediate area has a high concentration of off-licence premises. Evidence shows that the large number of off-licenced premises in the area has in part led and contributed to issues of street drinking and associated crime and disorder as well as to more hidden alcohol related harms such as domestic abuse and health harms.

This is all evidenced within the Medway Council Cumulative Impact Policy (CIP), in which it designates Gillingham Town Centre as being a dedicated CIP area. The CIP was renewed in May 2024 and expires on 31st April 2027.

When considering applications within a CIP area, it will often be the case that there is a rebuttal presumption of refusal for any new applications or variations, placing an additional burden on the applicant to demonstrate that their application will not add to the cumulative impact and alcohol related harms already effecting the area, and to evidence that the granting of the licence will not undermine the promotion of the licensing objectives.

Whilst the applicant seeks additional licence hours, it is not clear within the application as to the reasons why such an increase is sought. Nor is it clear that the applicant has given weight to or shown an understanding that the premises are located within a dedicated CIP area and there is no mention of the policy within the application. At this stage the applicant has

failed to rebut the presumption of refusal and hasn't explained why this premises should be considered an exception in this case.

It is however appreciated that the applicant has provided a level of information within the application as to the measures that will be adopted to promote the licensing objectives, these include but are not limited to:

- Comprehensive CCTV retaining images for 28 days
- Staff training
- Refusal registers
- Reporting of incidents to police
- Zero-tolerance policy towards antisocial behaviour, theft and disorder
- Signage regarding CCTV, proxy sales, a need to respect neighbours
- Challenge 25
- SIA when appropriate

Premises that adopt and abide by such conditions are often well run and well managed, and Kent Police very much welcome such conditions. We agree that this is seemingly already a well-run and responsibly managed premises that has not been cause of concern to Kent Police. That said, whilst good management should be considered, alone it is not an exception to the CIP, and the test is the impact going forward, not historic compliance.

With regards to the proposed measures, clarification is also sought in some areas:

- The proposal on the application is that CCTV will be retained, and images will be stored for a minimum of 28 days, this contradicts the current premises licence conditions that states CCTV last be retained for a minimum of 31 days.
- The proposal suggests that door supervisors will be employed where appropriate. The phrase "where appropriate" is vague and subjective and would be open to interpretation, be that by the licence holder, designated premises supervisor, police or other enforcement agency.

It is appreciated that the licenced hours sought, 08:00 to 21:00, remain early, and may appear modest in isolation, but within a CIP area, even

small incremental increases can contribute to the overall negative impact experienced. Had this premises not been in an area experiencing issues as evidenced within the CIP, Kent Police would likely not oppose this variation.

At this stage Kent Police remain concerned that increasing the availability of alcohol within the CIP and the selling of alcohol later into the nighttime economy increases the risk of alcohol related incidents, crime and disorder, in an already saturated area, thus undermining the licensing objectives. The application does not provide sufficient evidence to justify a deviation away from the CIP. Kent Police respectfully request that the application be refused.