

COMMUNITY AND HOUSING DEPARTMENT

Department of Public Health

To: Licensing Department
London Borough of Merton
Merton Civic Centre
London Road
Morden SM4 5DX

Public Health
London Borough of Merton
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London Road
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Date: 20/08/2018

Re: Application for a Premises License under the Licensing Act 2003- Mitcham News, 25 Upper Green East, Mitcham, London, CR4 2PE

License Number	WK/201804360
License Type	Off license
Ward	Figges Marsh

As a responsible authority under the 2012 amendment to the Licensing Act 2003, the Director of Public Health for Merton wishes to submit a representation for this premises license application, on the four licensing objectives namely:

- 1. The Prevention of Crime and Disorder**
- 2. Public Safety**
- 3. Prevention of Public Nuisance**
- 4. The Protection of Children from Harm**

The applicant is seeking to sell alcohol (off the premises) from 09:00 to 23:00 Monday –Sunday. Public Health is concerned about this application to sell alcohol off the premises for the following reasons:

- Public health data shows some areas for concern within the premises postal code
- Proximity of the premises to St Mark’s Primary School and Mitcham Common
- The premises is located within a Cumulative Impact Zone, an area which has been identified as presenting serious issues regarding crime and anti-social behavior from street drinkers

Introduction and Background

Tackling alcohol misuse is central to achieving the outcomes in Merton's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

A crucial element of tackling alcohol-related harm is ensuring that health and wellbeing considerations are met by premises licensed to sell alcohol within the borough, in order to prevent alcohol-related crime and anti-social behaviour, ensure public safety, and prevent harm to children.

Alcohol misuse is currently one of the biggest Public Health issues in the U.K., and it imposes a huge burden on our society.



Irresponsible drinking costs the taxpayer a staggering **£21 billion a year**.¹



Alcohol is currently the **biggest risk factor** for death, ill-health, and disability among 15-49 year olds in the UK.²



The cost of alcohol-related conditions to the NHS is **£3.5 billion** annually.³



Alcohol is a contributing factor in **75% of stabbings**, and **60-70% of murders**.⁴

¹ Home Office, 2012.

² . Strang, J., Drummond, C., McNeill, A. et al (2014) Addictions, dependence and substance misuse In: Davies, S Annual Report of the Chief Medical Officer 2013: Public Mental Health priorities: investing in the evidence.

³ <https://www.alcoholconcern.org.uk/alcohol-statistics>. Accessed April 2018

⁴ British Medical Association (BMA)

Evidence of detrimental impact on the licensing objectives

1. The prevention of crime and disorder

The link between alcohol and violence has been recognized as far back as the 4th century BC. Alcohol-related violence causes substantial injury and death.⁵

Local data suggests there is a serious issue with crime and violence in the area surrounding the premises postcode.

Within **100m** of the premises postcode, CR4 2 PE

- Bus driver reported anti-social behaviour falls in the **top 20%** of the borough
- Ambulance recorded assaults fall in the **top 40%** of the borough
- Gun, knife and weapon injuries fall in the **top 30%** of the borough
- Head injuries fall in the **top 30%** of the borough

Between **100m and 200m** of the premises postcode, CR4 2PE

- Bus driver reported violence falls in the **top 5%** of the borough
- Alcohol related incidents fall in the top **20%** of the borough

The above data suggests there is a significant impact of alcohol consumption in the local area. While the above data does not relate to the specific premise, any premises that supplies alcohol in the area will be contributing to the trends relating alcohol to crime and disorder.

2. Public safety

- The recent [Annual Residents Survey for Merton](#) (2017) highlights that 17% of residents in this area of the borough are very worried or fairly worried about people being drunk and rowdy in public places. 23% are very concerned or fairly concerned about groups hanging around in the streets, and 15% of residents are very concerned or fairly concerned about people using or dealing drugs.⁶
- The recent Annual Residents Survey for Merton (2017) also highlights that crime is the second highest issue (after gangs) that young people in Merton are personally most concerned about, with almost a quarter (24%) of young people citing it as an issue.

⁵ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3170096/#R2>

⁶ https://www2.merton.gov.uk/residents_survey_research_report_2017.pdf

- In terms of alcohol harm overall, in 2012 Merton ranked 55 out of 326 local authorities and was in the higher percentiles for:
 - Male mortality chronic liver disease (104/326)
 - Female alcohol-specific hospital admissions (106/326)
 - Male alcohol-specific hospital admissions (109/326)
 - Male alcohol-attributable hospital admissions (151/326)
 - Alcohol-related violent crimes (192/326)
 - Alcohol-related sexual offences (208/326)⁷
- Within the borough, there is an element of variance in the degree of alcohol harm between different wards. Figges Marsh, where this premises is located, has a higher admission ratio of hospital stays for alcohol-related harm than the figure for Merton and that for London.⁸
- The crime rate in Figges Marsh is 95 offences per 1,000 population in 2017. This is higher than the Merton value, which is 65 offences per 1,000 population.⁹ The highest number of offences recorded is 'violence against the person'.

3. Prevention of public nuisance

- The premises in concern are located in the Cumulative Impact Zone (CIZ) of Mitcham Town Centre, an area where it is recognised that there is a problem with the impact of alcohol on public nuisance, particularly with regard to street drinking.

4. The protection of children from harm

The creation of healthy places is crucial to ensuring future generations have the best possible chance at a healthy future. This is not only essential for individual wellbeing, but also for society as a whole. A healthy place means an environment that makes the healthy choice the easy choice (for example, limiting fast food outlets and sales of alcohol near schools and public spaces), and that protects children from being exposed to antisocial behaviour and crime on their streets. However:

- The population of Figges Marsh is different to other wards in Merton in that there are a higher proportion of young people (0-29 years) living in the area. The premises postcode, CR4 2PE, is also a mere 3 minute walk (0.1 miles) from St Marks Primary School, and is likely to be on the route to and from school for children.

⁷ <https://www2.merton.gov.uk/health-social-care/publichealth/jsna/lifestyle-risk-factors/adults-substance-misuse/alcohol-jsna.htm>

⁸ https://www2.merton.gov.uk/figges_marsh_ward_health_profile.pdf

⁹ https://www2.merton.gov.uk/figges_marsh_ward_health_profile.pdf

- The premises postcode, CR4 2PE is a short 5 minute walk (0.2 miles) from Mitcham Common, a large public open space frequented by children, young people and older people
- As stated previously on page 3, within 100m of the premises postcode, CR4 2PE, there are high levels of the following: gun, knife and weapon injuries; bus driver reported anti-social behaviour; ambulance recorded assaults; and head injuries.

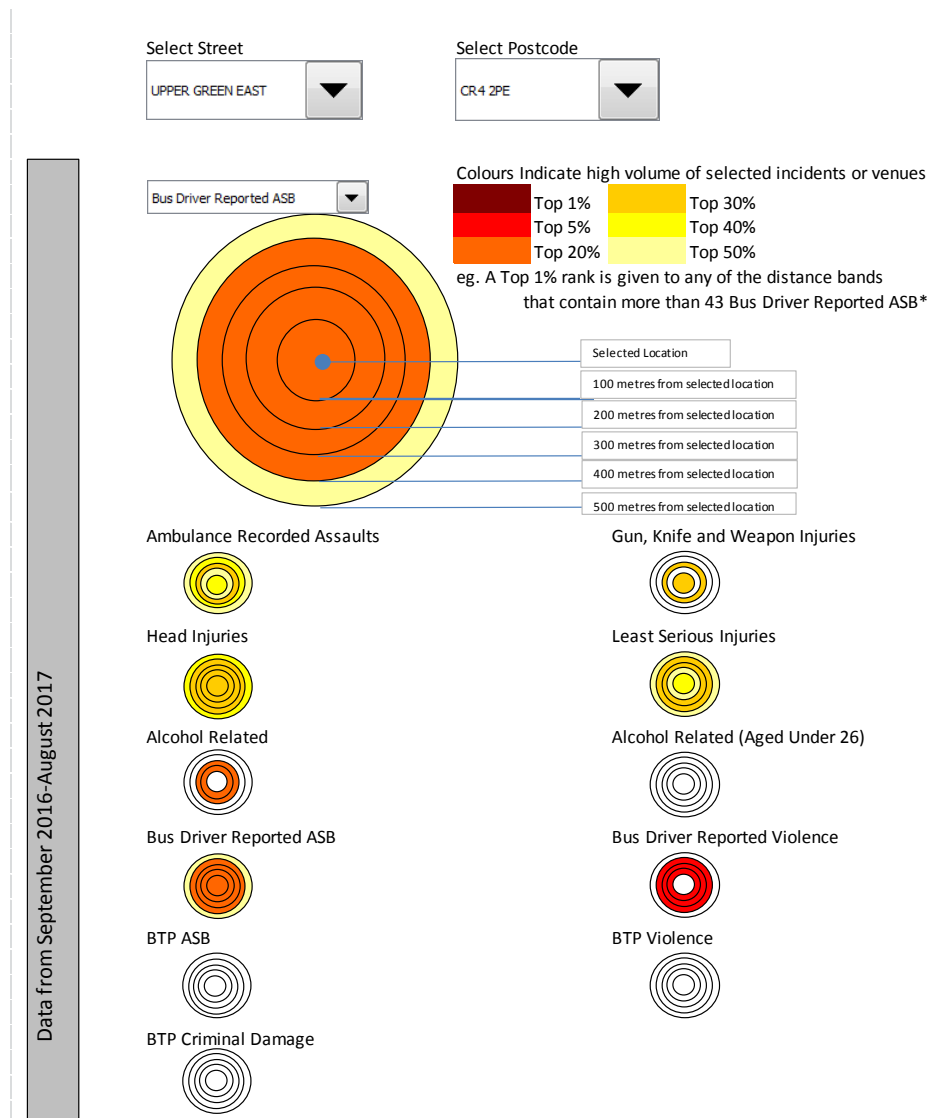
Conclusion

There is evidence revealing serious concerns about alcohol harm in the local population, and the location of the premises in concern is that which serves potentially vulnerable individuals. Therefore, we request that the application for a premises license WK/201804360 be rejected.

Yours Sincerely,
Natalie Lovell

Signed electronically
Natalie Lovell
Healthy Places Officer
On behalf of Dr Dagmar Zeuner, Director of Public Health

APPENDIX



All Infographics on page 2 from Noun Project artists, accessed at <https://thenounproject.com/>

Credits:

£ icon by Chameleon Design

Heart icon by Ben Davis

Criminal icon by Bakunetsu Kaito

Ambulance icon by dDara