

Public Health Team  
Merrion House  
Leeds City Council  
LS1 8DD  
Dear Sir/Madam

Entertainment Licencing  
Leeds City Council

R S Mini Market, 121A Markham Avenue, Harehills, Leeds, LS8 4JD would like to increase the hours of licensable activity by 3 hours a day. From, every day 11:00 - 23:00 to every day 08:00 - 23:00.

Regarding the above application, I would like to bring to your attention the negative impact granting this increase in hours selling alcohol would have on the local community. This would be a concern with regard to the potential harm to children, crime and disorder and public safety.

I would like to strongly object to this license on the following grounds.

After two years of the coronavirus pandemic, levels of alcohol consumption and alcohol harms have increased across Leeds, and they have disproportionately affected areas of multiple deprivation such as Harehills. Much work has successfully been undertaken by Ward Councilors, the Police, and the Council's Safer Stronger Communities Team to make Harehills a more attractive and safer (retail) area. Their success in reducing street drinking and crime levels will be significantly undermined by yet another retail outlet selling cheap alcohol every day between the hours of 08:00 - 23:00.

Leeds City Council has produced a matrix to estimate alcohol harm for each Middle Super Output Area (MSOA) in Leeds. Each MSOA is given an overall score which places the MSOA into a comparative city-wide risk rating. There are 107 MSOA's in Leeds. LS9 6AX was awarded an overall harm from alcohol related risk as **30 out of 107 LSOAs**, putting it within the medium risk of alcohol-related harm category.

Analysis of the individual scores on the matrix contribute to creating a fuller picture of the local community and will be highlighted forthwith with reference to the criteria.

#### **Protection of children from harm -**

This area has the **21<sup>st</sup> in the highest** number of off licenses in Leeds and **risk rated as high**. **Extending the hours of**, selling low-cost alcohol, will jeopardise the protection of children and young people from harm. This area has the **2<sup>nd</sup> highest number of children** under the age of 16 in Leeds District. The increased number of establishments selling cheap and strong alcohol and the subsequent proliferation of street drinkers and local residents suffering from alcohol addiction normalizes the situation for children and as they grow older it almost sets the benchmark of what is normal in their area. We know from much peer reviewed evidence such an environment can have a strong influence on impressionable children in low-income neighborhoods and can create low aspiration amongst this peer group.

This area has a very high number of young people not in education or training; it is ranked **2<sup>nd</sup> out of 107 MSOA's**. There is also a low level of educational attainment with a **high** rate of pupils not achieving a strong pass in English and Maths and is **ranked 10 out of 107**. Viewed alongside the very high number of looked after children and young people, which is **ranked 6 out of 107 MSOAs**, we have intelligence highlighting a high number of children and young people who are more vulnerable to harm. These children and young people will have experienced trauma within the family home severe enough to warrant their removal from that family home. Their life experience will undoubtedly be skewed from the norm which often results in the young person engaging in harmful behaviours, one of which is alcohol drinking. Furthermore, this road is a busy walking route of primary aged school children and their parents.

## Prevention of public nuisance

Alcohol specific related admissions to hospital are medium in the area – risk ranked as **36th** in Leeds out of 107 MSOA's and ambulance callouts related to alcohol are also **medium** in Leeds (43rd out of 107 MSOAs). These are avoidable pressures to the NHS and illustrate the harm caused by easy access to cheap alcohol within an area.

## Prevention of crime and disorder

Increasing the availability of cheap strong alcohol is strongly correlated with a higher prevalence of alcohol-related crime and disorder. This is backed up by statistics from Safer Leeds, which record the number of incidents of ASB, drunk and disorderly and violent crime stats

Anti-social behaviour where alcohol was flagged (excluding violent crime) was high risk ranked as **14 out of 107 MSOA's**, and violent crime very high and ranked 9 out of 107 MSOAs. Statistics relating to drunk and disorderly is also high and ranked as being **13 out of 107 MSOA's**. These indicators both suggest a risk to public safety as well as high levels of crime and disorder in existence in the community. This will be exacerbated by the increased accessibility of (cheap) alcohol.

Public safety

Street drinking and the associated negative safety and environmental impacts on residents and businesses has been a long-standing issue in the Gipton and Harehills ward. The availability of outlet selling cheap high strength alcohol for an additional few hour in the morning will contribute to these challenges in the area.

The intelligence provided above relates to the potential harm caused by alcohol within an area and viewed together creates an understanding of why this area was ranked as being an area of Leeds at high risk of alcohol related harm.

In summary extending the accessibility of alcohol for an additional few hours in the area is highly likely to add to the burden of ensuring public safety in the local area, moreover, there is a high population of vulnerable children and young people living within the area who will bear the brunt of increased accessibility to low-cost alcohol. This is in addition to facilitating the need for ambulance call-out and hospital admissions because of alcohol consumption.

The pandemic has undoubtedly impacted on the communities in a priority neighborhood in terms of economic decline adding increased cheap and strong alcohol to an already saturated environment to communities who are struggling with low mood, anxiety and depression is irresponsible and will be detrimental to child development, family life and public order.

I would therefore urge the licensing subcommittee to refuse this application to avoid the potential harm to children, additional crime and disorder offences and maintain public safety.

With regards

Emilia Slezak  
Advanced Health Improvement Specialist (Drugs and Alcohol)  
Leeds City Council