

Karen Plympton  
Team Leader Principal – Health, Safety and  
Licensing  
Crawley Borough Council  
The Boulevard  
Crawley  
West Sussex  
RH10 1UZ

17<sup>th</sup> August 2022

Dear Karen,

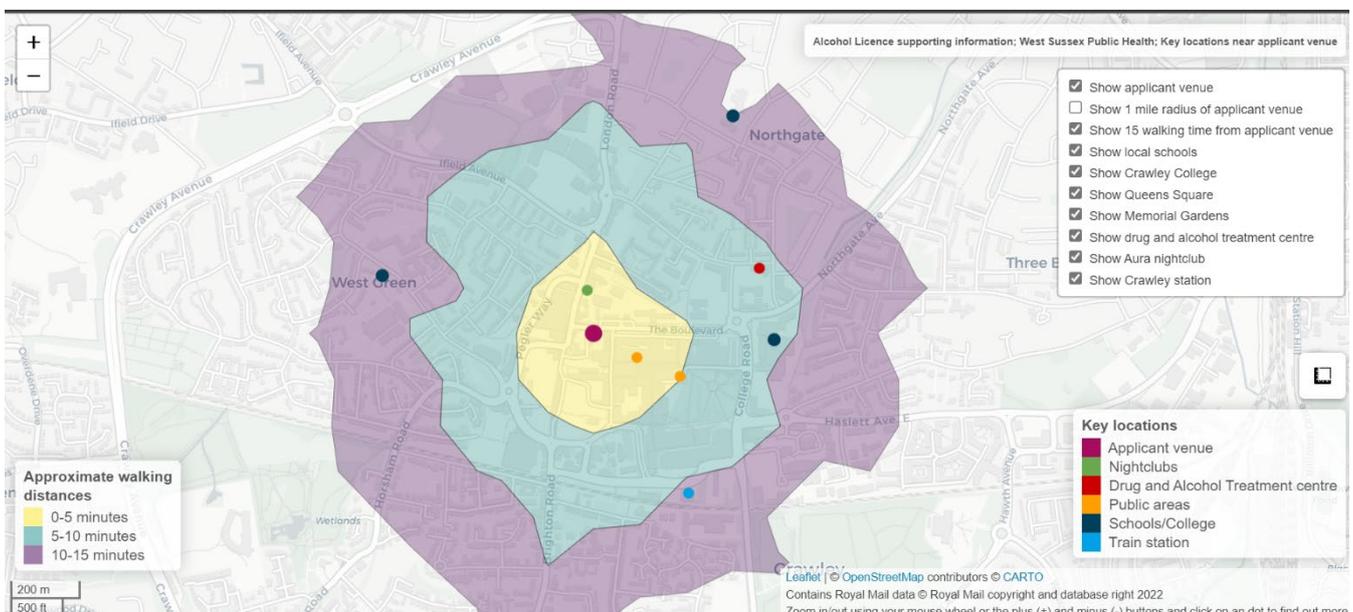
**Re: Premises Licence Application for: 7 DAYS FOOD AND WINE, 12 THE BOULEVARD, NORTHGATE, CRAWLEY, RH10 1XX**

This application is for a new premises licence to replace an existing licence for a convenience store on The Boulevard in Crawley town centre. The existing licence allows for the sale of alcohol, for consumption off the premises, from 0600 – 2300 hrs, 7 days per week. The new application seeks alcohol off-licence sales 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Other off-licences in the vicinity are permitted to sell alcohol from as early as 0600 hrs and the latest licence permits sales until midnight. Granting of this new premises licence would permit the off-licence sale of alcohol for an additional 6 hours each night, when no other off-licences in the vicinity will be open.

The map below shows the proximity, and approximate walking distances, of the applicant venue to:

- a nightclub and the public areas of Queens Square and Memorial Gardens which have problems with street drinking. These are all within a 5 minute walk.
- The drug and alcohol treatment service and Crawley College, which are within a 5-10 minute walk
- Primary schools and the train station, which are within a 10-15 minute walk



## Premises licence application

The West Sussex County Council (WSSCC) Public Health Department has reviewed the application in detail and has identified a number of concerns. Not least that the application, in its current format, does not sufficiently promote the licensing objectives of:

- The Prevention of Crime and Disorder
- The Prevention of Public Nuisance
- Public Safety

We are disappointed to see that there is no mention of the deployment of SIA door supervisors or the suggestion of additional security measures, nor the mention of training and support to staff in refusing sales to people who are drunk.

We would recommend that the licensable hours be kept in line with other off-licences in the vicinity but, if the committee sees fit to grant the 24-hour licence, we would strongly recommend that the following conditions be applied to the licence in order to promote the licencing objectives:

1. No sale of high strength (over 6% ABV) lager, beer or cider to be sold from the premises
2. No single cans of lager, beer or cider to be sold from the premises.
3. Regular staff training in refusing sales of alcohol to a person who is drunk
4. At least one member of Security Staff (SIA registered door supervisors) to operate every evening between 2300 and 0530.
5. No glass bottles to be sold between 2300 and 0600
6. DPS or personal licence holder to be on the premises between 2300 and 0600 every day.

Please note that we reserve the right to reconsider our position in the event of a change to this application or negotiations between the applicant and another Responsible Authority.

## Supporting Evidence

### Unregulated extension to the night-time economy

Crawley town centre is home to a vibrant and diverse night-time economy (NTE), starting in the early evening, and continuing to 0300 hrs and slightly beyond, 7 days of the week.

Whilst not without its challenges, the NTE is regulated and supervised with conditions ranging from door supervisors, the prohibition of glass bottles and drinking receptacles, limits to entry and re-entry, a duty of care to customers appearing vulnerable or intoxicated.

If this licence were to be granted in its current form, customers leaving NTE venues could purchase alcohol for up to an additional 3 hours from 7 Days Food And Wine, but in a largely unregulated and unsupervised way.

This could create a hotspot for alcohol-fuelled antisocial behaviour and violence, with increased demand on healthcare services (Ambulance, A&E, Urgent Treatment Centre, hospital admissions) that are already stretched, along with causing associated noise nuisance and litter.

### Street drinking

Crawley town centre is an area with known issues with Street Drinking and associated nuisance, crime, and anti-social behaviour.

In October 2020, for example, Crawley Borough Council opted to continue the implementation of a Public Space Protection Order (PSPO), under Section 59 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, prohibiting alcohol related nuisance and anti-social behaviour in a public place.

Prior to the decision to continue the PSPO, Crawley Borough Council carried out a public consultation. In its communication to residents about the consultation the council stated the following:

*'Last year, the town centre and Memorial Gardens were significantly impacted by the behaviour of individuals who were under the influence of alcohol.'*<sup>[1]</sup>

### Street drinking

Street drinking can be characterised by the consumption of alcohol by people who are homeless, or by those who have accommodation but drink heavily in public places. These groups often converge and are known collectively as 'the street community'.

It is common for members of the street community to have multiple and complex needs (including mental health issues), and to be highly vulnerable. As a result of this and their chaotic lifestyles, they are often the perpetrators (as well as victims) of violent crime, domestic abuse and antisocial behaviour.

If alcohol is to be sold 24 hours a day, 7 days per week at 7 DAYS FOOD AND WINE, 12 THE BOULEVARD, NORTHGATE, CRAWLEY, RH10 1XX, it is likely that members of the street community will congregate and drink heavily in the immediate vicinity of the store. This is likely to result in noise, nuisance, antisocial behaviour and crime and disorder, including violent crime and domestic abuse between members of the street community.

### Information provided from a member of Crawley Rough Sleeper multi-agency group

WSCC Public Health have spoken to a member of Crawley Rough Sleeper multi-agency group who has many years' experience of working with rough sleepers and street drinkers in Crawley, who has confirmed that Crawley town centre suffers from an ongoing range of issues linked to street drinking and rough sleepers.

Support services have been making contact with both rough sleepers, who are drinking in the town centre, and street drinkers who have accommodation but drink heavily in the town centre. Individuals from both categories often cluster together and drink in groups.

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[1] [Public Spaces Protection Order to tackle alcohol related ASB | Crawley GOV](#) [Accessed 17/08/2022]

Alcohol continues to affect the dynamics of the town centre, in the immediate vicinity of the proposed 24 hour-licenced convenience store. People under the influence have been abusive to members of public and there are issues with alcohol and antisocial behaviour that have made it necessary for both Community Protection Warnings and Community Protection Notices to be issued<sup>[2]</sup>. This can be off-putting and very intimidating to shoppers.

Aside from the immediate implications of street drinking as detailed above, there are secondary negative impacts and environmental health concerns such as people drinking into a state of self-neglect and incontinence, as well as the litter and food waste resulting from street drinking.

There would be risks of increased crime and disorder and public nuisance, to the detriment of the town centre as a whole, if there were to be greater availability of alcohol in the town centre, without significant additional safeguards, including those set out in the proposed conditions above.

### Alcohol-related hospital admissions the ward of Northgate & West Green

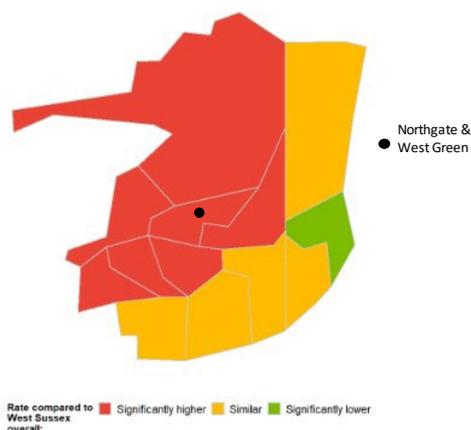
7 Days Food And Wine is in the ward of Northgate & West Green. This ward has a significantly higher rate of alcohol-related hospital admissions than the West Sussex average, indicating that there are greater alcohol-related issues in the ward in which 7 Days Food And Wine is located. Between 2016/17 and 2020/21 (the most recently available data) there were 835 admissions to hospital from people resident in that ward. This is significantly higher than the West Sussex average.

## Crawley results (broad definition)

- Between 2016/17 and 2020/21, there were a total of **7,070 alcohol related admissions (broad definition)** in Crawley (on average, 1,410 admissions per year).
- This is a rate of 1,598 per year per 100,000 (95% CI: 1,559-1,637). It is significantly higher than the West Sussex overall rate.

Ward	Rate	Number of alcohol related episode	Compared West Sussex
Three Bridges	1,893 (1,736-2,059)	585	Significantly higher
Langley Green & Tushmore	1,880 (1,720-2,049)	575	Significantly higher
Northgate & West Green	1,852 (1,725-1,986)	835	Significantly higher
Southgate	1,799 (1,658-1,948)	640	Significantly higher
Bewbush & North Broadfield	1,764 (1,615-1,922)	750	Significantly higher
Ifield	1,681 (1,551-1,818)	660	Significantly higher
Gosspos Green & North East Broadfield	1,623 (1,466-1,792)	400	Significantly higher
Tilgate	1,535 (1,387-1,695)	405	Similar
Broadfield	1,447 (1,315-1,589)	535	Similar
Pound Hill North & Forge Wood	1,417 (1,289-1,554)	465	Similar
Furnace Green	1,399 (1,265-1,543)	410	Similar
Maidenbower	1,285 (1,126-1,457)	355	Similar
Pound Hill South & Worth	1,278 (1,163-1,402)	465	Significantly lower

Age-standardised rate of alcohol-related admissions (broad definition); Crawley Wards (2021 boundaries) (2016/17 to 2020/21 aggregated data)



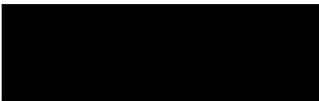
<sup>[2]</sup> A Community Protection Notice (CPN) is aimed to prevent unreasonable behaviour that is having a negative impact on the local community's quality of life. [Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 - Explanatory Notes \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk) [Accessed 18/08/2022]

In summary, WSCC Public Health Department would recommend that the licensable hours be kept in line with other off-licences in the vicinity but, if the committee sees fit to grant the 24-hour licence, we would strongly recommend that the following conditions be applied to the licence in order to promote the licencing objectives:

1. No sale of high strength (over 6% ABV) lager, beer or cider to be sold from the premises
2. No single cans of lager, beer or cider to be sold from the premises.
3. Regular (minimum quarterly) staff training in refusing sales of alcohol to a person who is drunk
4. At least one member of Security Staff (SIA registered door supervisors) to operate every evening between 2300 and 0530.
5. No glass bottles to be sold between 2300 and 0600
6. DPS or personal licence holder to be on the premises between 2300 and 0600 every day.

Please note that we reserve the right to reconsider our position in the event of a change to this application or negotiations between the applicant and another Responsible Authority.

Yours sincerely,



Holly Yandall MSc, BSc.  
Public Health Lead for Substance Misuse

**On behalf of the Director of Public Health**