

This is a formal objection to the application made by Mr Varandeep Singh Khurana for a premises licence at 67 Lilburne Walk, under the Licensing Act 2003. I ask that these comments be treated as my full objection to the proposal.

Under section 4(2) of the Act, I address the main licensing objectives:

The prevention of crime and disorder

Public safety

The prevention of public nuisance

The protection of children from harm

#### 1. Prevention of Crime and Disorder

The premises is located in the middle of the St Raphael's Estate (known locally as "St Raph's"), an area with a long history of crime and social issues. Many residents are from vulnerable and marginalised backgrounds, and the estate has struggled for years with gang activity, drug dealing, and violent crime.

In recent years, through great effort by residents, the council, police, and community groups, the situation has improved. Allowing a new off-licence here would undo much of that progress. It would likely bring back the problems of drug use, antisocial behaviour, and violence that the community has worked so hard to reduce.

There are also recent examples showing why alcohol sales here would be dangerous. A murder linked to drug-related activity happened on the estate not long ago. The suspect was reportedly seen near this same parade of shops shortly after the incident. This has left residents frightened and anxious, and granting a licence to sell alcohol nearby would only heighten those fears.

In addition, there was a serious violent incident earlier this year right next door to the proposed site, at the local mosque on Lilburne Walk. A person, while drunk, verbally and physically attacked worshippers with racist and religious abuse after Friday prayers. They were later arrested and convicted. This incident clearly shows how alcohol has already fuelled violence and hate crime in this exact location.

The estate also continues to suffer from gangs, open drug use, and the constant littering of nitrous oxide canisters and drug paraphernalia. I have personally cleaned these from flower beds near the premises. Alcohol sales here would only make the area more

attractive for those who cause trouble and would worsen an already fragile situation.

## 2. Public Safety and Prevention of Public Nuisance

Residents and authorities are aware of ongoing problems with people drinking and taking drugs in Brent River Park, only a few minutes' walk away. Groups often buy alcohol from local off-licences before heading to the park, where they engage in vandalism, violence, drug use, and public urination.

The easy availability of alcohol is a major reason this behaviour continues. Allowing another licensed shop nearby would effectively encourage this activity and add to the existing nuisance. The estate already suffers from regular antisocial behaviour, and more alcohol sales will only increase noise, litter, and intimidation of local residents.

## 3. Protection of Children from Harm

The proposed shop sits between two children's playgrounds. The main path outside the premises is used daily by children playing, cycling, and walking to the parks. Selling alcohol so close to where children gather would create serious safety risks and expose them to antisocial and unsafe behaviour.

Parents would likely feel forced to keep their children indoors, which would harm the community's sense of togetherness. St Raph's is home to many young families from a mix of backgrounds who currently enjoy a strong sense of unity and inclusion. If children can no longer play safely outside, that positive community spirit could quickly disappear—something we cannot afford to lose, especially at a time when social tensions are already high.

The premises is also directly opposite the St Raphael's Voice Centre, a local hub that provides educational, fitness, and support activities for children, women, and vulnerable residents. Many people who attend are survivors of domestic abuse, new migrants, or children with special needs. If alcohol is sold nearby, some of these vulnerable people may stop attending, isolating them further and undoing the centre's valuable work.

## 4. Concerns About the Applicant's Other Businesses

The applicant runs several similar convenience stores across London and beyond. Publicly available information shows that some of these businesses have faced regulatory issues and poor customer feedback. One company is currently facing a compulsory strike-off by Companies House, which raises questions about compliance

and management standards.

Online reviews for some of the applicant's other stores report serious issues such as rude or discriminatory behaviour by staff, the sale of expired goods, and even alleged counterfeit alcohol. These patterns suggest poor oversight and disregard for consumer safety and legal responsibilities. Granting another licence under these circumstances would not be in the public interest.

## Conclusion

For all the reasons above, this application clearly fails to meet the licensing objectives under the Licensing Act 2003. Granting a premises licence at this location would:

Increase crime, antisocial behaviour, and public disorder.

Put local residents and children at risk.

Damage the community's safety, cohesion, and wellbeing.

Undermine years of hard work by residents, police, and the council to improve the estate.

I therefore respectfully urge Brent Council to refuse this application in its entirety.

## **Public Objectors**

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