

Fw: FOA: Planning Officer, Planning Application No: 141642/JO/2024 - Letter of Support

From Planning <[REDACTED]>

Date Thu 13/03/2025 07:37

To Holly Wright <[REDACTED]>

Information, Delivery & Support Team
Planning, Building Control & Licensing
Growth & Development Directorate
Postal address: Manchester City Council, P O Box 532, Town Hall, Manchester M60 2LA
Location address: Level 6 Town Hall Extension, Manchester M2 5DB
Tel: 0161 234 4516

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 12 March 2025 17:31

To: Planning <[REDACTED]>

Subject: FOA: Planning Officer, Planning Application No: 141642/JO/2024 - Letter of Support

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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
12/03/2025

Planning
Growth and Development
Manchester City Council
P O Box 532
Manchester
M60 2LA

Subject: Letter of Support for Planning Application No: 141642/JO/2024

Dear Planning Officer,

I am writing as a local resident who lives [REDACTED] from the business to express my full support for Planning Application No: 141642/JO/2024 submitted by Something More Productive to extend their opening hours. As a neighbour and a frequent visitor to the café, I believe this amendment will bring significant benefits to both the business and the local community. In the time the café has been open, I have observed the management and staff of SMP demonstrate care for our local community and a genuine desire to contribute positively to the area.

SMP is a valued establishment and asset to our local community, providing a welcoming space for social gatherings, local events, and community engagement. Their exemplary service, neighbourliness, commitment to sustainability and fair work, and support for local suppliers contribute positively to the local economy and culture of Withington. I am frankly astounded that in this current economic climate, in particular for those operating within the hospitality industry, that our council is not doing everything in their power to enable and support independent and creative entrepreneurial endeavours like SMP. My understanding is that our current administration is keen on “growth” – I view businesses like SMP as critical to new and continued growth in our local area.

Furthermore, I am confident that the café team will continue to operate in a professional and responsible manner, ensuring that noise levels and any potential disturbances are well managed. That the team at SMP has consistently demonstrated a professional, responsible, and considerate approach to business on our street reinforces my belief that the proposed changes will not negatively impact the surrounding community. The extension of opening hours will enhance the vibrancy of our area and will foster a more dynamic social and economic environment.

I strongly encourage the Council to approve this application, as it aligns with the ongoing efforts to promote a thriving and inclusive local economy.

Thank you for considering my support for this application. Should you require any further information, please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]

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Fw: Planning application no: 141642/JO/2024 (Cafe/license: Something More Productive)

From Planning <[REDACTED]>
Date Thu 13/03/2025 11:58
To Holly Wright <[REDACTED]>

Information, Delivery & Support Team
Planning, Building Control & Licensing
Growth & Development Directorate
Postal address: Manchester City Council, P O Box 532, Town Hall, Manchester M60 2LA
Location address: Level 6 Town Hall Extension, Manchester M2 5DB
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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 13 March 2025 11:56
To: Planning <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Planning application no: 141642/JO/2024 (Cafe/license: Something More Productive)

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To whom it may concern,

I'm writing to support the application of Theo Tobias and his cafe Something More Productive in Withington. My understanding is that, on Friday and Saturday evenings they have successfully applied for a late licence, but that they also need separate planning permission from the council in order to stay open during these evening hours.

I am a Didsbury resident [REDACTED] and a lecturer at the University of Manchester. I first came across Theo - who went to school in Fallowfield - around the time that he graduated from the English department of the University of Manchester in 2012. I am a member of the [REDACTED] department, and never taught Theo myself, but he was (and still is) a musician who collaborated with several students I worked with. His reputation as a student was very high - he has always been a responsible, thoughtful, and creative young man, and a credit to himself and the city.

Since 2012, I have regularly encountered Theo working in, and training others to work in, South Manchester's cafes. He and his dog Roscoe are deeply embedded in the local community, and I was delighted to hear that he was opening his own cafe, Something More Productive. If you have visited in person, you will no doubt understand why: Theo has worked incredibly hard to make this

a small, beautiful, calm and welcoming space. Beyond the work done to the space, and the carefully designed menu (which prioritises local producers and small and ethical coffee producers), Theo has - most importantly - worked to bring everything that he has learned about community and hospitality to the venue. He knows me and my children by name - indeed, every time I visit I notice how he and his staff make an effort to know as many of their customers as they can.

I say this to say: Something More Productive is a gem, run by a team who are caring, community-oriented, and hugely responsible. Their request to stay open on a Friday and Saturday evening seems to me to be entirely reasonable for a venue in their location.

The landscape for independent businesses is, as you will know better than most, really challenging at the moment. Allowing small, creative, ethically-minded spaces like Something More Productive to survive seems to me to be a priority for the local area. Theo and his team make Withington and South Manchester a better place to live, and I am deeply surprised to hear that anyone local has raised objections. The venue is right in the heart of Withington, and is not proposing anything antisocial either in terms of their hours or the potential noise or disturbance: I can't fathom an objection to their application which has any real merit or substance.

I am happy to be contacted via email or phone [REDACTED] if there is anything further that I can add to clarify or support this application.

With warmest wishes

[REDACTED]

<https://research.manchester.ac.uk/en/persons/rachel.clements>

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Fw: Local cafe struggling with Planning Department in Withington - Please Help

From Des Jones <[REDACTED]>

Date Wed 19/03/2025 11:59

To Holly Wright <[REDACTED]>

See below



Derek W Jones
Strategic Planning and Project Lead
Planning
Growth and Development Directorate
Manchester City Council
Level 6 Town Hall Extension
Albert Square
Manchester
PO Box 532
M60 2LA



From: Julie Roscoe <[REDACTED]>

Sent: Wednesday, March 19, 2025 11:49 AM

To: [REDACTED] Bev Craig <[REDACTED]>

Cc: Des Jones <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Re: Local cafe struggling with Planning Department in Withington - Please Help

Dear [REDACTED],
thank you for your email.

The application is still under consideration. I will ensure your comments are taken into consideration as part of the planning process.

Kind regards
Julie

Julie Roscoe
Director of Planning, Building Control and Licensing,
Growth and Development
I♥MCR

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
E-mail: [REDACTED]

Interim Business Support@ [REDACTED]

Postal address: Manchester City Council, P.O.Box 532, Town Hall, Manchester, M60 2LA

Location address: Town Hall Extension, Level 6.

From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 19 March 2025 11:41

To: Bev Craig <[REDACTED]>

Cc: Julie Roscoe <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Local cafe struggling with Planning Department in Withington - Please Help

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Hello,

I'd like to draw your attention to the difficulties a local cafe in Withington is having getting a small extension to their licensing hours (that is threatening their viability of their business). "Something More Productive" (<https://www.instagram.com/somethingmoreproductive/>) opened in October 2023 as an independent cafe serving specialised coffee and organic food from local suppliers in Withington. It's been an incredible success due to the hard work of the single owner and is much loved by the community. It offers something totally unique for the village. They have applied for a small extension of their licensing hours (141642/JO/2024) to enable them to extend their night-time service hours which is vital for the ongoing viability of the business. They successfully received the alcohol license from the licensing department only to be told the planning department have objected. The objections from the Planning department seem completely divorced from reality.

Listening to the owner (Theo) talk about the onerous requests from planning that seem totally disproportionate to the business (e.g. a "full acoustic report" which would cost ~£3000. This is for a cafe with a single small speaker...). The full details on how kafka-esque this process is for him and how disastrous the rejection would be for the future of the business can be found here:

https://www.change.org/p/grant-something-more-productive-s-friday-saturday-evening-service?recruiter=1367767404&recruited_by_id=794a3d00-ff36-11ef-af81-7532ce10c8be

As a resident of Withington and regular customer of the cafe - I can't tell you how vital this business is to the community and the regeneration of the village. The council has recently a large sum of money refurbishing the high street and SMP is exactly the kind of business it would want to attract. Why is the council making it so difficult for independent hospitality business to operate at a time when hospitality businesses are struggling to survive? Please could you look into what can be done to help them having their Planning application accepted?

Regards,

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Fw: Planning Application No: 141642/JO/2024

From Planning <[REDACTED]>

Date Wed 19/03/2025 15:27

To Holly Wright <[REDACTED]>

Information, Delivery & Support Team
Planning, Building Control & Licensing
Growth & Development Directorate
Postal address: Manchester City Council, P O Box 532, Town Hall, Manchester M60 2LA
Location address: Level 6 Town Hall Extension, Manchester M2 5DB
Tel: 0161 234 4516

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From: [REDACTED]

Sent: 19 March 2025 11:42

To: Planning <[REDACTED]>

Subject: Planning Application No: 141642/JO/2024

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Dear whomever it may concern,

I am writing to you concerning
Planning Application
No: 141642/JO/2024
which relates to my local coffee shop Something More Productive.

I am a resident at [REDACTED] and have lived at this address for three years. I am a part time masters student and I am also employed at [REDACTED].

I would like to ask you to support Something More Productive at this time where small businesses are struggling to stay afloat. Working at Ice Shack I have dealt with the struggles of slow days and having to think of innovative solutions to increase customers.

Something More Productive have done just the same and created some brilliant evening events for the local community. Their later opening hours mean I have been able to celebrate birthdays, passing driving tests, graduations, anniversaries and some sunshine at their lovely establishment

which is a perfect place for both a coffee in the day and a glass of locally sourced wine in the evening.

After the devastating loss of cafe blah where else would you like us to go to spend our money on a weekday? We need local businesses, Theo is the bright energetic person we need to launch community endeavours in Withington.

As a local resident their smiles, customer service and dedication to being involved in the community is invaluable - their later hours request only improves this. For example could they support the student community more with later hours, do more charity events for Withington? Longer hours also means 2 more jobs for local withington residents.

Please hear us when we say this is a very VALUABLE place in our community, liaise with the team, hear them out and see for yourself what a wonderful addition they are to our blossoming village.

Best wishes,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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Fw: No. 141642/JO/2024

From Planning <[REDACTED]>
Date Fri 14/03/2025 11:44
To Holly Wright <[REDACTED]>

Information, Delivery & Support Team
Planning, Building Control & Licensing
Growth & Development Directorate
Postal address: Manchester City Council, P O Box 532, Town Hall, Manchester M60 2LA
Location address: Level 6 Town Hall Extension, Manchester M2 5DB
Tel: 0161 234 4516

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 March 2025 11:04
To: Planning <[REDACTED]>
Subject: No. 141642/JO/2024

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Dear Members of the Licensing Committee,

I am writing to express my wholehearted support for the application submitted by Something More Productive for a licence to serve alcohol until late on weekends.

This café, owned by Theo, has become a cornerstone of our community. Beyond serving gorgeous food and beverages, Theo organises wonderful jazz evenings on select weekends, fostering a sense of togetherness among residents. These events not only enrich our local culture but also provide a safe and welcoming environment for community members to gather and enjoy live music.

Granting this extended licence would enable Theo to continue offering these valuable events, enhancing the vibrancy of Withington's social scene. Moreover, it would support a local business that consistently demonstrates a commitment to community engagement and cultural enrichment.

I kindly urge the committee to consider the positive impact Something More Productive has on our community and to approve their application for extended alcohol serving hours.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Kind regards,
[REDACTED]

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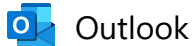
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14/03/2025, 11:51

Mail - Holly Wright - Outlook

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Fw: planning ref 141642/Jo/2024

From Planning <[REDACTED]>
Date Fri 14/03/2025 11:45
To Holly Wright <[REDACTED]>

Information, Delivery & Support Team
Planning, Building Control & Licensing
Growth & Development Directorate
Postal address: Manchester City Council, P O Box 532, Town Hall, Manchester M60 2LA
Location address: Level 6 Town Hall Extension, Manchester M2 5DB
Tel: 0161 234 4516

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 March 2025 10:34
To: Planning <[REDACTED]>
Subject: planning ref 141642/Jo/2024

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I am writing to express my support for this planning application for extended licensing

This business brings an enormous amount the community day and night. By night it makes what is an otherwise unlit, dirty, quiet and unsafe street feel Frequented and safe, especially for women

These businesses need to be supported in this area of Withington not penalised. Things close down all the time it's heartbreaking and not good for the area.

The whole community loves , uses and is behind this business but they need the councils support on this to sustain the business as they are tiny .

Kind regards
[REDACTED]

X
[REDACTED]

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14/03/2025, 11:51

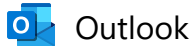
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Fw: Commenting on Planning Application 141642/JO/2024

From Planning <[REDACTED]>
Date Fri 14/03/2025 12:02
To Holly Wright <[REDACTED]>

Information, Delivery & Support Team
Planning, Building Control & Licensing
Growth & Development Directorate
Postal address: Manchester City Council, P O Box 532, Town Hall, Manchester M60 2LA
Location address: Level 6 Town Hall Extension, Manchester M2 5DB
Tel: 0161 234 4516

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From: [REDACTED]
Sent: 14 March 2025 11:56
To: Planning <[REDACTED]>
Subject: Commenting on Planning Application 141642/JO/2024

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Good Afternoon,

My name is [REDACTED], and I am writing to you to comment on the application 141642/JO/2024 made by Something More Productive. As a resident of Withington myself, having lived in the area for around 4 years now, supporting independent local businesses really matters to me. SMP is a gift to the community, not only offering delicious food and drink sources from local providers but also serving as a hub for events like jazz nights, barista classes, carol singing and more. Since it opened, I have had lovely times with friends here, and it feels like such a special part of the local community. It would be great for the cafe and local community if they were granted permission to extend their opening hours so that more of these events can take place and the cafe can be more financially stable with the extra hours of service. I have never had any issues with or at SMP and cannot see these extended hours causing any issues for surrounding residents. Withington is a lovely place, and it has the potential to be even greater if the council continues to support the local businesses here. I still feel devastated by the loss of Cafe Blah last year, somewhere I frequented all through my undergraduate course, and I would hate to see another cafe like it be lost. Therefore, I am thoroughly in support of SMP's application and hope my comments can be listened to and added to it.

Thank you and best wishes,



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