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Labour Members for Withington Ward

To MCC Planning,

We are writing in strong support of the planning application 141642/JO/2024-9 submitted by Something More Productive (SMP). Please note the omission of our ward colleague Councillor Angela Gartside, who sits on the planning committee and is therefore precluded from commenting on planning applications publicly.

Since SMP opened in October 2023, it has been a welcome addition to Withington. The café's owner, Theo, has gone to lengths to ensure that the business is operating responsibly and is a benefit to the local community.

Theo has constructively and proactively engaged with residents and residents groups to agree on the proposed hours. He has also engaged extensively with the council's planning and licensing departments throughout this process. Becky has been supporting him since summer 2024 and it is clear that he is keen to work with the council responsibly to reach a positive solution for all.

It is worth noting that as councillors we have never received any representations or correspondence from residents that might indicate any issues - whether that be noise disturbance, waste issues or operating hours. On the contrary, we have had many conversations with local residents and groups who have enjoyed the café and hope to see it remain in Withington for many years to come.

SMP's feasibility as business and the retention of staff relies on this modest extension to operating hours and permission has already been granted in licensing terms. They make a positive contribution to the local economy, culture and community in Withington.

We strongly support this application.

Kind regards,

Chris and Becky