

# Off licences allowed more room for alcohol sales

**Two off-licences have been given permission to have larger spaces for alcohol display and broaden their range of alcohol sales with an interior revamp of their shops.**

West Lothian Licensing Board met on Friday and awarded a variation of premises licence to stores in Whitburn and one in Livingston.

The Scotia convenience shop at 60 Norwood Avenue in Whitburn was recently taken back into the ownership of the Jamil family.

Gary McMullen, clerk to the board, told the meeting: "The report details the variations put forward which include an increase to the capacity of the premises from 9.35 sqm to 26.28 sqm. The application also requests an increase to licensed hours on a Sunday currently between 10am and 6pm. The application seeks to extend the licence to 9pm on a Sunday."

No objections or adverse comments have been received and site visit was not considered necessary.

An agent representing the Jamil family told the board: "My client took on the premises in May 2022, and this is part of a redevelopment upgrade. The store has had little investment over the last 35 years."

He added: "Ironically Mrs Jamil's father owned the premises 35

years ago and this is her family taking it back again. The pandemic has given convenience stores greater opportunity for customers to shop more locally and this refurbishment is designed to ensure customers have as wide a range as possible.

“The increase of the alcohol display is designed to accommodate the ever increasing range of beers, spirits, wines and keg beers now on the market.”

The redesign has been done in conjunction with Spar, which is the symbol operator.

In Livingston, Ashwood Commercial Investments Ltd, were also granted permission to extend the Bankton Convenience Store's alcohol sales capacity.

The store, in Bankton Centre, Murieston applied for a variation of premises licence to extend the off-sales from 29sqm to 35.8sqm.

Having taken on the store just over a year ago the firm plans to upgrade the interior space and widen the range of beers, wines and spirits.

Neither licence variation applications received objections from the council's licensing standards officer or the police. As with the Whitburn store no site visit was deemed necessary to the Bankton store. Councillors agreed to the changes.

by Stuart Somerville Local Democracy Reporter

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