

06-04-2026

Dear Licensing Authority, I am writing to formally object to the granting of a gambling premises licence for the proposed site 1 Walm Lane, London, Brent, NW2 5SN. I understand that gambling is a lawful activity, but my objection is based on clear concerns that this application is inconsistent with the licensing objectives under the Gambling Act 2005 and Brent Council's Statement of Principles. One of the key licensing objectives is protecting children and vulnerable persons from harm or exploitation. Willesden High Road is a densely populated area with:

- High footfall, including young people and families
- A significant number of residents from economically disadvantaged backgrounds

Evidence shows that gambling premises are often disproportionately located in deprived areas, contributing to financial harm and addiction risks. The addition of another gambling venue near existing ones creates a clustering effect, increasing exposure and normalising gambling behaviour among vulnerable groups. This raises serious concerns that the applicant cannot adequately mitigate harm, particularly given the already high concentration of similar premises nearby. Another licensing objective is preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder. Areas with multiple gambling venues can:

- Attract anti-social behaviour
- Increase opportunities for crime (including theft and exploitation of vulnerable individuals)
- Place additional strain on local policing and community safety

Given that there is already a gambling premises just a few doors away and others along the same high street, the cumulative impact significantly heightens these risks. While I understand that "demand" alone cannot be used as a reason for refusal, Brent's own policy acknowledges the importance of protecting communities from gambling-related harm and balancing local impact. Furthermore, Brent's planning framework seeks to limit over-concentration of betting-related uses in town centres. The proposed premises would contribute to:

- An over-concentration of gambling venues
- A negative impact on the character and sustainability of the high street
- Reduced diversity of local businesses serving community needs

This clustering effect is widely recognised as harmful and undermines the licensing objectives, even if "demand" itself is not a valid standalone ground. The licensing authority must consider whether the application is reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives and local policy. Given:

- The proximity to existing gambling premises
- The vulnerability profile of the local population
- The cumulative social impact

It is difficult to see how granting this licence would align with Brent Council's duty to safeguard residents. There is growing national concern about the proliferation of gambling venues on high streets, particularly in areas like Brent, where councils have highlighted links to financial harm, public health issues, and community safety concerns. Granting additional licences in already saturated areas risks undermining community wellbeing and contradicts the spirit of the licensing objectives. For the reasons outlined above, I respectfully request that Brent Council REFUSE this application on the grounds that it is not consistent with the licensing

objectives, particularly: • The protection of children and vulnerable persons • The prevention of crime and disorder The cumulative impact of this proposal, in an already saturated area, poses a clear and unacceptable risk to the local community.