

26-04-26

The application fails to adequately promote the statutory licensing objective of protecting children and vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling. The proposed premises is situated on a busy high street characterised by a high level of pedestrian footfall, including a significant presence of children and young people, not least due to the proximity of nearby schools like the Convent of Jesus and Mary and St Mary Magdalen and youth-oriented facilities like Willesden Gree Library. The introduction of an Adult Gaming Centre in such a location would, in my view, serve to normalise gambling behaviour and materially increase the exposure of children to gambling environments, contrary to the spirit and intention of the licensing objectives. The applicant has referenced standard mitigation measures, including CCTV and a Challenge 25 policy. However, these measures are baseline expectations for any such premises and do not sufficiently mitigate the heightened risks arising from this particular location. They do not address the broader issue of environmental exposure or the cumulative impact of gambling visibility on children and young people in the area. Furthermore, the locality includes individuals who may be particularly vulnerable to gambling-related harm, including those experiencing financial hardship or other forms of social vulnerability. The introduction of an additional gambling premises in this setting risks exacerbating existing harms, increasing the likelihood of problem gambling and associated social and economic consequences within the community. Given these concerns, I do not consider that the applicant has demonstrated how the operation of the premises would be consistent with the licensing objectives. On the contrary, there is a clear and foreseeable risk of harm. Accordingly, I respectfully request that the application be refused.