

28-04-26

I am writing to formally object to the application for a new Adult Gaming Centre (AGC) licence at the proposed premises on Cricklewood High Street. Overconcentration of Gambling Premises The proposed AGC would be located within approximately 30 metres of an existing gaming centre, in an area that already has multiple gambling establishments within a 30-minute walking distance. This level of concentration significantly exceeds what can reasonably be considered appropriate for a local high street and raises serious concerns about cumulative impact, including reduced diversity of uses and harm to the character of the area. Conflict with the Government's "Pride in Place" High Street Strategy The proposal fundamentally conflicts with the Government's high street strategy of "Pride in Place," which seeks to regenerate town centres and high streets as vibrant hubs for residents, supporting social, cultural, and community-focused uses. The strategy emphasises places where people want to spend time, meet others, and participate in everyday community life. An additional Adult Gaming Centre, typically characterised by blacked-out windows and limited engagement with the public realm, does not align with this vision. Rather than fostering openness and social interaction, such premises tend to create inactive frontages that discourage positive footfall and weaken the overall vitality of the high street. Positive Local Example: Recently Opened Café A strong and contrasting example of what the "Pride in Place" framework encourages can be found in the recently opened café located next door to the proposed premises. Since opening within the last 12 months, this café has had a demonstrably positive impact on the high street, attracting families, young professionals, and local residents. The café has: Increased positive footfall throughout the day Encouraged informal social interaction and community engagement Contributed to a safer, more welcoming high street environment This type of use exemplifies how high streets can evolve into lively, inclusive spaces that serve a broad cross-section of the community. Negative Impact on High Street Vitality Introducing a second Adult Gaming Centre in such close proximity to an existing one is likely to: Further reduce active, transparent shopfronts Deter families and other non-gambling visitors Undermine recent positive investment and regeneration efforts Contribute to a monoculture of gambling uses inconsistent with a balanced high street Rather than supporting the long-term health and resilience of Cricklewood High Street, the proposal risks reversing recent progress and reinforcing negative perceptions of the area. Conclusion For the reasons outlined above—namely the overconcentration of gambling premises, the clear conflict with the Government's "Pride in Place" strategy, and the detrimental impact on high street vitality—I respectfully urge the Licensing Sub-Committee to refuse this application. Thank you for considering this objection.