

Supplementary Statement from Councillor Mary Mitchell, Ward Councillor for Willesden Green

Application 37891 – Adult Gaming Centre, 1 Walm Lane, NW2 5SN

Having reviewed the applicant's supplementary submission, I wish to draw the Committee's attention to a number of matters which I believe require careful consideration alongside the representations already submitted by residents and community organisations.

- 1. I am concerned by the applicant's characterisation of resident objections.** The fact that many representations raise similar concerns should not diminish the weight attached to them. Residents are responding to the same proposal within the framework of the statutory licensing objectives and it is therefore unsurprising that common themes emerge. The consistency of concerns relating to vulnerability, gambling harm, crime and anti-social behaviour is, in my view, indicative of the depth and breadth of local concern rather than evidence that those concerns should be discounted.
- 2. I am concerned by the extent to which the applicant seeks to challenge or minimise the relevance of Brent's public health evidence, including the severe risk of suicidality and mental health denigration linked to gambling addiction.** These documents have been developed to help the Council understand local need, deprivation and risk. The Committee should carefully consider whether the applicant has adequately engaged with this evidence when assessing the suitability of the proposed location and the effectiveness of the mitigation measures offered.
3. I ask the committee to consider the applicant's remarks about the regulatory framework as 'costly', citing initial fees of £1400 and annual regulatory costs exceeding £1500 alongside the true cost of gambling borne by the people of Brent. According to independent data from GambleAware, **gambling-related harm costs the Brent infrastructure an estimated £18 million annually** across emergency housing, mental health services and criminal justice interventions.
4. The applicant attempts to placate the committee by offering restricted opening hours. **However, it is a well-established tactical playbook for Adult Gambling Centres to secure a foothold in a community with compromised hours, only to apply for a 24-hour extension shortly after**, as demonstrated in the very case law the applicant cites. The applicant provides no binding permanent reassurance that they will not aggressively pursue a 24-hour rollout after the premise is up and running.

5. **Since my original representation was submitted, further incidents of anti-social behaviour, violence, and the tragic murder of a 15-year old boy** have been reported within the immediate vicinity of the proposed site, which compromise even further the position that a gambling premise would not cause harm to vulnerable individuals and increase crime and disorder.

These include:

- The murder of Jamal Ringrose, on Dudden Hill Lane on 30/05/26 (CAD9258/30MAY)
- An assault, under investigation, near Willesden Green train station on 31/05/26 (CAD6615/31MAY)
- An assault, under investigation, near Willesden Green train station on 07/06/26 (CAD 969/7JUN)

I do not suggest that the proposed premises would be directly responsible for such incidents. However, I believe the Committee should consider this evidence as part of its wider assessment of the local environment and whether the licensing objective of protecting vulnerable persons from harm can be adequately upheld at this location.

More than 200 representations have been submitted in opposition to this application. Taken together, these representations raise serious concerns regarding the suitability of this location for an Adult Gaming Centre and the potential impact on vulnerable members of the community.

I therefore respectfully ask the Committee to give careful consideration to the cumulative weight of the evidence before it and to satisfy itself that the licensing objectives can be upheld before any licence is granted.