

**From:** Krupesh Hirani <Krupesh.Hirani@london.gov.uk>

**Sent:** 23 April 2026 11:34

**To:** Business Licence <business.licence@brent.gov.uk>

**Subject:** Formal Objection – Application for a New Bingo Premises Licence: 131-135 Kilburn High Road, NW6 7HS (Golden Slots Southern Limited / Macau Casino Slots)

Dear Sir / Madam,

As the London Assembly Member for Brent and Harrow, I am writing to formally submit my objection to the application for a new bingo premises licence at 131-135 Kilburn High Road.

The proposal seeks to operate a gambling facility—trading under the name ‘Macau Casino Slots’—on the ground floor of a residential building, with proposed opening hours from 08:00 to 23:00 on weekdays and 09:00 to 23:00 on weekends. Despite the ‘bingo’ classification, the trading name and floorplans clearly indicate a commercial slot-machine operation.

I believe granting this licence would be entirely inconsistent with Brent’s Statement of Licensing Principles and the statutory objectives of the **Gambling Act 2005**. My concerns are outlined below:

## **1. Preventing Crime and Disorder**

The applicant’s own Local Area Risk Assessment acknowledges that Kilburn is a high-footfall area with an elevated baseline risk for crime. In 2026 alone, there have been **915 reported offences** of violence and sexual offences in the vicinity. Furthermore, theft from the person in this area is recorded at **8.11 times the national average**.

Introducing a premises that inherently involves high volumes of cash handling and late-night activity risks attracting further disorder. The proposed safeguard of just two staff members is, in my view, insufficient to mitigate the risks of money laundering, drug-related nuisance, and anti-social behaviour already prevalent on the High Road.

## **2. Protecting Children and Vulnerable Persons**

This is my primary concern. Kilburn High Road is not a neutral environment; it is a sensitive community hub.

- **Proximity to Education:** The site is less than 0.1 miles from Kilburn Grange School, with several other primary schools and colleges within a short walking distance.
- **Support Services:** The premises would sit near vital services for vulnerable residents, including the Integrated Camden Drug Service, Kilburn Streets Kitchen, and St Mungo's.

Brent's **Joint Strategic Needs Assessment** shows that 6.2% of our residents are already gambling at the highest level of risk—more than double the national average of 2.9%. We cannot ignore the fact that the economic cost of gambling harm in Brent has soared from £2 million in 2012 to **£14.3 million in 2022**. Adding another venue simply normalises gambling for the children who pass it daily and places further temptation in the path of those struggling with addiction.

### **3. High Street Over-Concentration**

Kilburn High Road already hosts **eight licensed gambling premises**. Our community is reaching a breaking point. National research from the Social Market Foundation and the *More in Common* report highlights that residents would often prefer an empty shop unit over another gambling venue, which many perceive as a "blight" on the local area.

There is a clear national shift towards giving local authorities stronger powers to resist such applications through Gambling Impact Assessments. It is difficult not to view this application as an attempt to "bolt the door" before these stronger local protections are fully enacted.

### **Conclusion**

Brent has been at the forefront of the campaign for gambling reform because our residents should not have to constantly fight to protect their high streets from over-concentration. This application does not offer a benefit to Kilburn; instead, it threatens to deepen the deprivation and crime risks already identified by the applicant's own assessment.

I strongly urge the Licensing Authority to uphold the statutory objectives and **refuse this application**.

Best wishes,

Krupesh

**Krupesh Hirani AM**

London Assembly Member for Brent and Harrow

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