

## **Objection 1**

**Subject: Strong Objection to Betting Company's Gambling License Application for Deptford High Street**

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to emphatically express my strong objection to the application made by the Betting Shop Operations Limited for a gambling license to open another betting shop in Deptford High Street. As a concerned resident, I firmly believe that allowing yet another betting shop in our local community would have serious consequences on various aspects of our neighbourhood, including socio-economic well-being, public safety, and the welfare of our school-going children.

### **Socio-economic Reasons:**

Deptford High Street is already grappling with an over-concentration of betting shops, which has the potential to exacerbate socio-economic challenges in our community. As highlighted by reputable sources like the Institute for Public Policy Research (IPPR), such clustering of betting establishments is linked to higher levels of deprivation and negative socio-economic outcomes. The addition of another betting shop could further strain already vulnerable households and impact the overall economic health of the area.

### **Negative Aspects of Gambling:**

The detrimental impacts of gambling, particularly in areas with numerous betting shops, cannot be ignored. Extensive research conducted by the Gambling Commission demonstrates that high concentrations of betting establishments are associated with an increased risk of problem gambling and its associated adverse effects. This includes financial hardships, mental health issues, and strained relationships. The well-being of individuals and families in our community is at risk if we allow further proliferation of betting shops.

### **Impact on Local Community and Residents:**

The presence of multiple betting shops on Deptford High Street poses significant concerns for the safety and security of our community. Studies by the Local Government Association indicate that areas with high numbers of betting shops may experience an increase in anti-social behaviours, including loitering, street disturbances, and an escalation in petty crime. These factors could potentially deter potential investors, negatively impacting the attractiveness of our high street to visitors and residents alike. An evidence of this type of activity can be seen on the Deptford Crime Map that is issued by Metropolitan police (<https://www.met.police.uk/area/your-area/met/lewisham/deptford/about-us/crime-map>) where we can see the majority of antisocial behaviour and shoplifting on or near the high street.

### **Proximity to Primary Schools:**

Adding another betting shop in such close proximity to two primary schools raises serious concerns about the well-being of our children. Research shows that the exposure of young people to gambling environments, especially at an impressionable age, can normalize the behaviour and potentially lead to harmful consequences. We must prioritize the safety and welfare of our school-going children by creating a wholesome environment that shields them from exposure to gambling establishments.

### **Incidents Involving Betting Shops in Deptford High Street:**

While I do not have direct access to current police records, I urge the Safer Communities Service to conduct a thorough examination of the police reports to fully comprehend the

potential impact that granting this license might have on public safety and law enforcement resources.

#### London Living Wage

The prospective proprietor does not pay its staff the London Living Wage. This directly contradicts Lewisham's stance on ensuring businesses within its constituency provide appropriate wages to their staff. This feels ever more important given the current cost of living crisis.

#### London Objectives

The Mayor of London has recognized the damaging effect of gambling on London's residents. Gambling shops negatively affect those most vulnerable. He has made a pledge to remove gambling adverts from the TfL network. Through supporting another betting shop in Deptford High St, Lewisham is directly supporting gambling and the negative effects this has on their residents who frequent these shops. As a Labour borough, supporting new betting shops on an already saturated high street contradicts Labour Objectives.

Furthermore adding an additional betting shop to an already saturated high st directly contradicts the

London Plan 2021 which advises that a high concentration of betting shops does not serve the local community or support a vibrant and diverse high street with services for all as stated 'It is important that boroughs plan positively to meet the needs of their communities'. Allowing further betting shops on Deptford High St would be in direct opposition to the London Plan 2021 and the evidence from the Healthy Town Centres study 2017.

In light of these compelling reasons, I implore the Safer Communities Service to carefully consider the implications of granting a gambling license to the Betting Company. Instead, I request the Council to prioritize the safety, well-being, and prosperity of our community by supporting diverse and sustainable businesses that contribute positively to our neighbourhood.

I trust that the Safer Communities Service will give serious consideration to this objection, which echoes the collective concerns of our community. We strive to maintain Deptford High Street as a vibrant, family-friendly, and safe place that can be enjoyed by all residents and visitors. Together, let us work towards fostering an environment that reflects the best interests and values of our community.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I anticipate a thorough review of this objection and your commitment to safeguarding our community's interests.

Kind regards