

**Hilary Smith**

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**Subject:**

FW: Representation regarding Adult Gaming Centre at 1 East Street Havant

Dear Hilary

I would like to make a representation regarding the proposed Adult Gaming Centre at 1 East Street, Havant. I am making this representation on behalf of local residents who have contacted me as their Borough Councillor.

I am making this representation regarding two of the licensing objectives, and I believe this application will increase gambling as a source of crime and disorder, and will not protect children and other vulnerable people from harm.

1. Preventing gambling from being a source of crime and disorder:

The proposed location is in a prominent town centre location, being less than 60 metres from licensed premises at the Old House at Home, 80 metres from the Robin Hood and 160 metres from the Six Bells. Anti-social behaviour is already the largest crime category in Havant (33% of all crime). The prominent nature of the site will mean that pedestrians leaving licensed premises will be passing this site. There is further potential for crime, as the cashpoints for the high street banks are located across the road, and potential clients of the venue will be highly visible to criminals.

2. Protecting children and other vulnerable people from harm:

The premises selected is at a key location within the town centre, highly visible to passing traffic and pedestrians. It is less than 300metres from both Fairfield Infant School and Bosmere Junior School, and the home to school route for many children passes this location. It is also less than 800metres from Warblington Secondary School. Any mention of gambling on the outside of this premises would be an encouragement to many hundreds of children passing this location daily.

The location is also highly visible to the many vulnerable adults who come to the centre of Havant to meet with their support services, find solace and support at the churches, and who just wish to come to an area busy with people. Just opposite the proposed site is St. Faith's Church, which does much to support children and vulnerable adults – and many vulnerable adults dwell in the area outside of the church, in direct line of sight to the proposed premises. Many of these vulnerable adults are in financial difficulties and are being supported by one of the churches, and any encouragement to gamble in such a prominent location will reduce the likelihood of them overcoming their difficulties.

In summary, I believe that any conditions imposed on the licence may go some way to reducing the harm caused by a new gaming centre at this location, but that the prominent location of this site means that any gambling centre in this location will be a potential source of anti-social behaviour, and harm to children and vulnerable people.

In the event of this application being decided by the Licensing Committee, I would wish to speak regarding my representation.

Kind regards

Tim

Tim Pike  
Councillor, St. Faith's Ward  
Havant Borough Council

Tel: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

**Hilary Smith**

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**Subject:** FW: FW: 1 East Street

**From:** Tom Kennar [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** 10 October 2015 17:20  
**To:** Hilary Smith  
**Cc:** Gerry Thorne; Jackie Branson; David Guest; Tim Pike  
**Subject:** Re: FW: 1 East Street

Dear Ms Smith,

Thank you very much for the details of the application for a Premises Licence Under the Gambling Act 2005 for 1 East Street, Havant, PO9 1AA (the former White Hart' public house). I should be most grateful if the Licensing Authority would take the following representation into consideration when considering whether to grant the license. I hope I have understood the correct technicalities about making such a representation.

I write as the Rector of St Faith's Church, which is (under the terms of the legislation) a charitable business which might be affected by the authorised activities. Our *business* at St Faith is at least partly the help, aid and comfort of vulnerable people - a *business* which derives its income from the donations and gifts of our supporters. I believe that this business will be substantially affected if a license is granted.

I oppose the granting of a license on the following grounds:

**1) It will cause vulnerable people to be exploited by gambling.**

Our 'business' at St Faith's is the charitable business of serving the local community (carried out at considerable cost in terms of money and volunteer time). That local community includes the long-established 'Gamblers Anonymous' group which meets in The Pallant, just behind the former White Hart pub - no more than 100 yards away as the crow flies. I believe that the opening of a licensed gambling venue so close to where addicted gamblers have sought help for so many years would potentially cause great harm to vulnerable people (namely the members of Gamblers Anonymous) by bringing severe temptation directly into their orbit.

As a senior clergyman in Havant, I am also painfully aware of how much pressure the current economic circumstances are placing on Havant residents. On a very regular, almost daily basis, I encounter people in St Faith's church whose lives have been turned upside down by income reduction, joblessness or homelessness. The church building is a natural magnet and place of mental tranquillity for people in desperate need of help many of whom are seeking speedy solutions to the crises they find themselves in. The negative impact of an 'adult gaming centre' only a few feet from the church door is terrifying to contemplate. It will have, I confidently predict, catastrophic consequences for many of the vulnerable people who seek our help - who may (and will) turn to the vain hope of a gambling win to solve their problems. The evidence of similar facilities is that many will simply gamble away their benefits, with horrific consequences for themselves and their families. These are the sort of people who can't access internet gambling - because they have neither credit cards nor internet access. To put easy-use slot machines in their way is an invitation to wreck families and lives.

**2) Gambling by slot-machines is not fair and open gambling.**

I object in principle to all slot-type gambling machines. The Gambling Act 2005 has at its core the idea that gambling should be conducted in a fair and open way. I argue that there is nothing fair, nor open, about a mechanical system of gambling in which the odds are pre-stacked, by design and programming, against the player. All slot-machines are set up to deliberately pay out less money than is put in over a pre-determined number of plays. The house always wins.

The argument is made by the gambling industry that machines must legally display the 'return-to-player' odds of winning. This, they argue, makes the business of systematically stacking the odds in their favour somehow fair and open. However, research by Mori suggests that public understanding of percentages and ratios is very variable. For example, in a 2013 survey, Mori found that only 58% of respondents could give an accurate answer to the question "If you spin a coin twice, what is the probability of getting two heads". (see <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Polls/rss-kings-ipsos-mori-trust-in-statistics-topline.pdf> ).

In other research, in 2010, Ipsos-Mori demonstrated that 35% of respondents could not accurately express a percentage as a fraction. (See <https://www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/researcharchive/2682/Ipsos-MORI-Statistics-Research.aspx> ).

This means, quite simply, that between 35% and 42% of all people who use slot machines will have no understanding of the 'return-to-player' ratio. They do not understand it, and are therefore being exploited by it.

In the strict terms of the Gambling Act 2005, it is neither fair, nor open, to allow a system of gambling into the centre of Havant in the certain statistical knowledge that at least 35% of the people who will use it will be vulnerable and therefore exploited by it.

### **3) It is likely to have a substantial negative impact on the business of the Church, directly opposite.**

St Faith's church has been building its reputation as a beautiful place for weddings, funerals and other significant events (including civic services and commemorations). As well as being a general service to the community, these events also bring a substantial income to the church, in terms of fees and donations. This income is essential for the long-term survival of the ancient, crumbling church building - albeit, probably the most important public building in Havant. Part of the attraction of the church, at present, is its location and pleasant surroundings. I genuinely fear that many would-be brides would be significantly put-off by the close proximity of an adult gaming centre, directly opposite and in full view of the church. Bridal parties spent significant amounts of time making sure that everything is 'just right' for the special day. An adult gaming centre is not likely to be 'just right'.

Whilst this following comment is not directly commensurate with the possible grounds for objection under the Gambling Act 2005, I would also (and finally) make the point that at the annual gathering of the town around the War Memorial, the immediate presence of an 'adult gaming centre' would be incongruous at best, and perceived as a real insult at worst.

In conclusion, I very much hope that the licensing authority will take account of these representations when considering whether to grant the license under consideration. I am optimistic enough to hope that the points I have made above will give local councillors sufficient cause to reject it. I understand entirely the desire of the Council to regenerate East Street - but this is certainly not the way to begin such an endeavour.

I am copying this representation to the St Faith's Ward Councillors, in the hope that they may support my position - one that I know is shared by the vast majority of members of St Faith's church.

I trust that you will, in due time, cause this representation to be put in front of the Licensing Committee. I am about to leave the country to work for a short while in West Africa. However, if the Committee Meeting which will decide this matter takes place after I return on the 27th of October, I should be very glad to attend it and, if possible, address the committee.

Many thanks for your help and assistance.

Yours sincerely,

Canon Tom Kennar

**Canon Tom Kennar**

Rector of Havant - St Faith with St Nicholas, Langstone

Parish Website: [stfaith.com](http://stfaith.com)





## Hilary Smith

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**Subject:** FW: Objection to Gaming Licence at 1 East Street.

-----Original Message-----

From: Tim Dawes [REDACTED]

Sent: 29 October 2015 10:04

To: Hilary Smith

Subject: Objection to Gaming Licence at 1 East Street.

Dear Mrs Smith

As a resident of South Street, a owner of a business premises at 11 The Pallant and another at 44 North Street I consider myself an interested party with respect to the gaming licence application for 1 East Street.

Furthermore I am a trustee of Havant Community Homeless Trust and so an interested party in that regard also.

In both these positions I wish to object to the granting of the gaming licence for the premises at 1 East Street (The White Hart).

With respect to the first interest my daily life revolves around the part of the town centred on the premises concerned. I pass it daily, often several times a day. The businesses my wife and I operate currently - a high class upholstery and art gallery - attract and rely upon a character of customer that will be repelled by such an establishment in such a prominent position in the town. The health and future prosperity of these businesses, and indeed many like them. is directly linked to the attractiveness of the town centre and the quality of what it offers.

As a resident I attend the annual war memorial service which takes place directly in front of this premises. Other important civic events also use this space or the area adjacent to it - for example the recent funeral of the local soldier killed in Afghanistan when the area all around the church including the pavement space in front of this premises was crowded with local citizens. The presence of a large frontage behind which gaming activity wholly unrelated to any kind of sport or pass-time is being conducted would be anathema to these kind of activities.

Our three children all attended both Fairfield and Bosmere School and, as the is case now with scores of young children, passed these premises twice daily on their way to and from school. As a parent, I would not want a child of mine to be exposed to such gaming at such close proximity. As I understand it the proposed activity will take place just a step or two from the pavement and will no doubt be visible and advertised from the windows and doors of what is a listed building not suitable for and with no planning permission granted. for any kind of window blockage.

So as a resident and local business person I feel my reasonable enjoyment of life will be seriously damaged and my business interests threatened by the granting of such a licence.

Turning to the other interest.

You will be aware that Havant has a number of social problems.

Homelessness is increasing and we currently have a growing number of rough sleepers in the town. The community has responded to these issues with help and support. Examples include a food bank drop in centre currently located in the Beacon Church in the Meridian Centre, a free meal and washing facility located in the Havant Meeting Place (The URC). Longer term supported provision includes mental health services and supported living facilities, of which there are several, located in town and its immediate suburbs. As well as supported living for vulnerable persons in West Street and the area immediately north of the Railway there is now Homewell House, operated as a supported facility by Havant Housing Association and very close to the premises concerned.

All of the service users involved here are highly vulnerable people.

Gambling Industry initiatives such as Self-Exclusion are going to have little or no effect in preventing this highly visible and accessible facility enticing these susceptible people in to operate the games provided. Whilst the clients of the book-makers locally are generally regulars and unexpected entrants will be readily picked up by their staff, an establishment of the kind proposed will not only draw in these individuals, but will, by the irregular nature of their custom, be unable to differentiate between the many vulnerable persons from their no doubt stated target customers merely choosing rationally to spend a little money for amusement. Many of these vulnerable people will be seriously harmed as a result. These people don't go to Gamblers Anonymous and they don't have the real opportunity to choose to gamble. It is essential to their health and well-being, and by extension to that of the wider community, that they are protected. This is exactly what licensing is for. If such gambling establishments are to be licensed, this is not the place to do. The fact that these premises are so prominent, easily accessible and central leads them to be particularly dangerous in this regard. I fear that will be very serious consequences for many of the large number of highly vulnerable people who live or habitually frequent this area of the town. Please note that the social services and voluntary organisations like the one I am representing here are already struggling to deal with the scale of the social problems we are facing. We really don't need them to be further exasperated.

I urge the licensing authority to reject this application.

Please acknowledge receipt.

Kind regards,

Tim Dawes

Objecting personally and on behalf of Havant Community Homeless Trust

55 South Street,  
Havant  
PO9 1BY