

22nd AUGUST - IMPORTANT CHANGES

How to Object to the Gambling Licence at 39 Church Road, Ashford.

Although the Planning Inspector limited the hours of operation when approving the premises, residents cannot rely on that decision when objecting under licensing rules. Licensing and planning are separate, and objections will only be valid if they are based on the Gambling Act objectives.

⚠ IMPORTANT: If you have already sent in an objection, you may wish to resubmit it to make sure it specifically refers to the risks of 24/7 opening under the Gambling Act objectives.

If you have not yet objected, you can download the updated templates from our website.

For clarity, valid objections can only focus on the concerns allowed under the Gambling Act:

- Increased risk of crime and anti-social behaviour at night (Objective: Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder)
- Risks to children and vulnerable people in Ashford's High Street (Objective: Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling)
- Why Ashford's High Street setting is different from other towns with AGCs (Local context to strengthen the above objectives)

Examples you can use in your own words:

- Ashford already has one of the highest crime rates in Surrey, and introducing a 24/7 gambling centre would further increase the localised risk to residents, especially during late-night hours. Unlike larger town centres, Ashford lacks the infrastructure to safely manage any of these risks.
- A gambling centre on Ashford's small High Street poses serious risks. It is in close proximity to local schools, residential areas, and community spaces, which means children, the elderly and vulnerable individuals could be at risk.
- Ashford High Street is not a large town centre. It is a small, local high street with a close-knit family community. Its scale and character make it unsuitable for a 24/7 Adult Gaming Centre (AGC).

✗ DO NOT say: "The Planning Inspector already approved limited hours 9am–11pm," as this could make your objection invalid.

✓ DO say: "24/7 opening increases risks of crime, disorder and harm to vulnerable people in Ashford."