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Blackpool Council

5 June 2020

To: Councillors Baker, D Coleman, Hugo, Jackson, O'Hara, Owen, Robertson BEM, Stansfield and L Williams

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Update Note and Public Speakers List

Please find attached the Update Note and Public Speakers List for Tuesday, 16 June 2020 meeting of the Planning Committee.

Agenda No	Item
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1a	<u>UPDATE NOTE AND PUBLIC SPEAKERS LIST</u> (Pages 1 - 16)
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Yours sincerely

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Planning Application Reports – Update Note

Listed below are changes to the planning reports made as a result of additional information received since the publication of the agenda for this meeting.

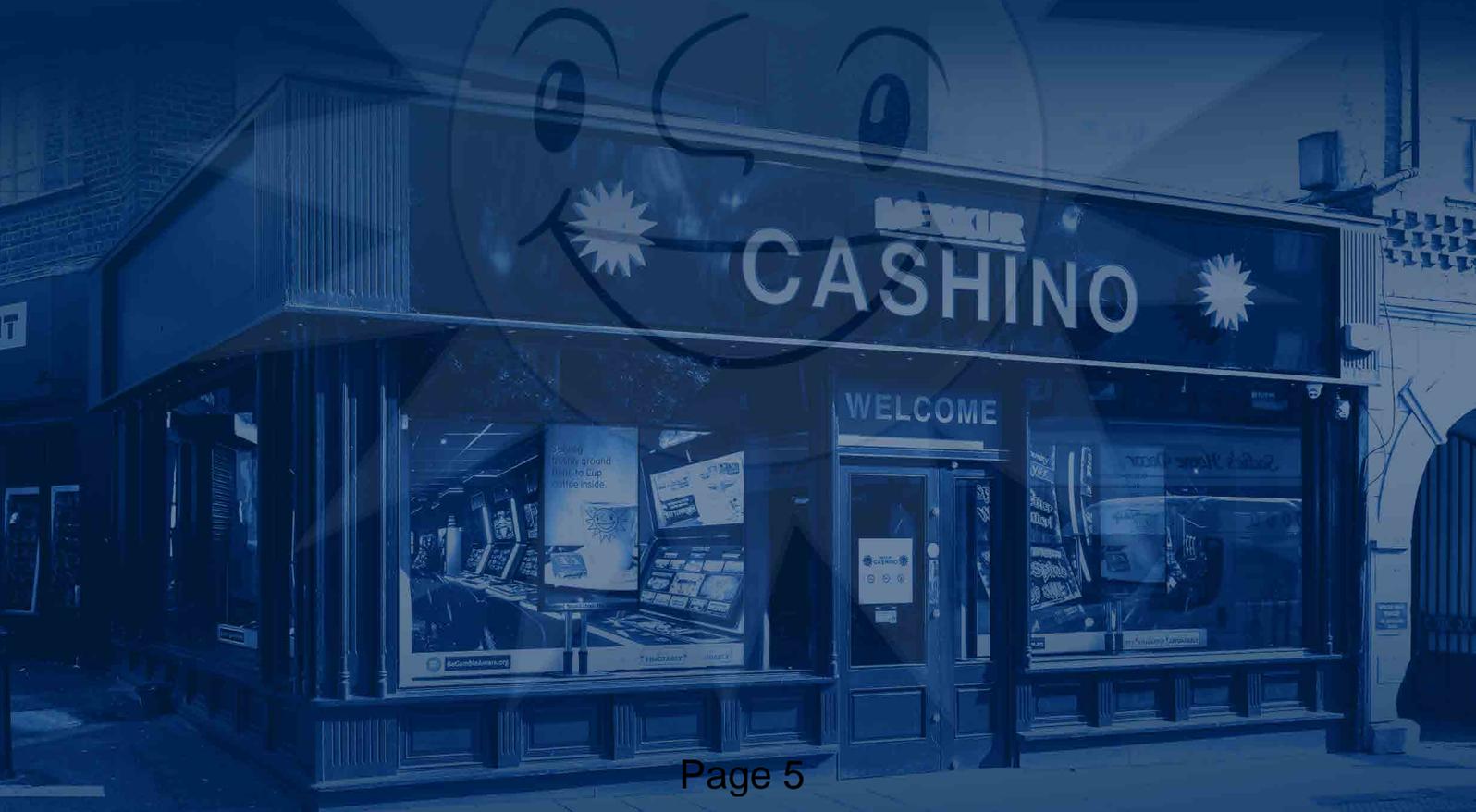
Case:	Address:	Update:
20/0187	40 ABINGDON STREET	<p>The agent has submitted a Praesepe Group brochure, which has been attached for Members to assist their understanding of the proposal and the nature of the operation.</p> <p>A letter has been circulated to members from the owner of the adjacent premises 42 Abingdon Street:</p> <p>“Dear Councillor I set out below some of the points about this application I hope you will consider relevant. Obviously my objection is commercially motivated but the substance of this objection is not. It is based on the application of planning policy and the merits of the case.</p> <p>I would ask you to note that although the application has been processed during ‘lockdown’ when only 2 businesses in the street have been open both they and a number of other traders object.</p> <p>My planning points are:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning Policy – Saved Local Plan policy SR6 says that ‘Proposals which would be detrimental to the character of the area as one that caters primarily for the pedestrian/ shopper/café user will not be permitted.’ <i>The supporting paragraph 3.31 says ‘..the aim is to extend the range and variety of facilities which contribute to the Town Centre’s overall attraction to the shopper.’</i>- this would duplicate, not extend, facilities because the site is next to an

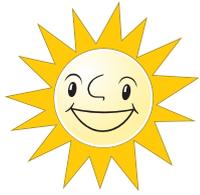
		<p>identical establishment. It would provide nothing new or different or attract any new trade or customers into the street.</p> <p>2. Precedent – The applicants support their application by pointing to ‘precedent’ set by the decision to permit a similar arcade on appeal next door in 2018. There were (before ‘lockdown’) 3 other vacant shops in the street to which exactly the same arguments could be applied. There may be more vacancies after normality resumes – the council should not feel obliged to permit this proposal for more arcades on the back of the original 2018 appeal. Normally each application is treated on its merits. Bear in mind that the frontage and the floor area of these proposed premises are both 50% greater than the existing arcade.</p> <p>3. Trading Hours – Despite the residential uses nearby the applicant seeks 24 hour trading contrary to the ‘precedent’ of the 2018 decision and the following hours are being recommended if permission is granted – Monday - Wednesday 07:00 – 00:30; Thursday 07:00 – 01:30; Friday – Saturday 07:00 – 04:30; Sundays & Bank Holidays 07:00 – 01:30. Interestingly the reason for the condition is said to be <i>‘In order to safeguard the amenities of nearby residents’</i>. In imposing the condition limiting trading hours 09:00 to 21:00 Monday to Sunday in the May 2018 appeal decision next door the planning inspector says <i>‘Conditions are <u>necessary, in the interests of the character and amenity of the area, to secure sound and vibration proofing measures and to control the use and opening hours</u>’</i> (paragraph 16) Circumstances in the area have not changed since then. The comparison with Molloy’s is a false one. To the north of Talbot Road (as Molloy’s is) is the focus of the town’s late night premises – not in this part of Abingdon Street.</p>
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		<p>4. Residential Occupation – As the officer’s report acknowledges there are residential uses nearby. In fact there are 6 flats in the short section of Abingdon Street up to the junction with Talbot Road. Further, there are other vacant upper floors (including over the subject property) which have that potential but which will be unlikely ever to become flats if these hours are permitted.”</p> <p>John Warwick Tunnicliffe</p>
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THE PRAESEPE GROUP





PART OF THE GAUSELMANN GROUP.

A strong partner for more than 60 years.



of employees
are Male.



of employees
are Female.

Praesepe is a subsidiary of the family run **Gauselmann Group** who are based in Espelkamp (Germany). Over the last 60 years the group has grown to operate more than 700 venues across Europe under the Merkur Brand.

Millions of enthusiastic guests at home and abroad know our logo, the laughing MERKUR Sun , is a guarantor for the best Entertainment.

Praesepe employs over 1,600 people (61% female*) over the 5 Bingo Clubs, 160 High Street Gaming centres (73 High Street Bingos and 87 Adult Gaming Centres) and 5 Family Entertainment Centres under three main brands:

Merkur Cashino is an established brand in the UK and represents the very best in terms of exciting "slot gaming" entertainment through delivering to our customers the latest in venue product and atmosphere. These venues are known for their highly trained teams and first class face to face service.

Merkur Slots is a new up and coming brand in the UK bringing the latest fun slots & bingo experience in smaller sized High street locations.

Beacon Bingo clubs are very important to our customers in their local communities. Our teams strive to deliver not just great service but a bingo experience which focusses on ambience, safety and fun in a modern environment. The flagship venue at Cricklewood, in North London, is the largest in Europe.

MYTHBUSTERS

“We are not betting shops”

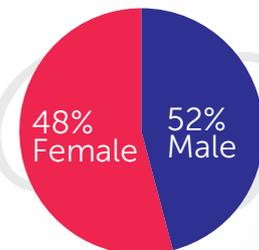


Praesepe is one of the UK's largest operators of High Street Adult Gaming Centres (AGCs). AGCs are often, unfortunately, put into the same category as betting shops. This is because there is a widespread misunderstanding of how AGCs operate and who our customers are. We want to address these misconceptions and demonstrate that a new AGC on your local high street is a good thing.

- Public concerns surrounding betting shops was largely due to the presence of Fixed Odds Betting Terminals (FOBTs). Our venues do not offer these types of machines. Our machines offer low stakes ranging from 10p to a maximum of £2. The average stake from our customer is between 30-40p. These machines have been around for many, many years.
- Our AGCs are where people come to spend their spare change, have a game of bingo and enjoy their favourite pastime in convenient locations.
- The market on the high street has evolved with venues now providing electronic bingo tablets.
- Our teams remain with the customers on the venue floor rather than behind a counter.
- We provide complimentary refreshments, teas and coffees, to customers and do not sell alcohol. Our staff will not allow anyone into the premises who appears to be intoxicated.
- Our venues operate a Think 25 policy whereby any person's who look under 25 have to produce a form of photo ID.
- Our venues appeal to all ages with our membership gender database split of 52 % male / 48% female.



**30-40p
Average
Stake**



**Database
Customer
Split**



OUR OPERATION

“We are not noisy neighbours”

Whilst we sit within the leisure sector noise levels are very low and limited from our venues. We currently operate 24 hours in over 90 venues. Our customer base after midnight is predominantly the local entertainment workforce and shift workers who like to relax after their busy shifts.

- Our machines generate low levels of noise .
- We do not have tannoy systems that you find in seaside amusement centres .
- We only play background music like at any other high street shop.
- Customers tend to visit on their own or in couples. We rarely see large groups
- We are immensely proud of the fact that we have never had a licence revoked or even reviewed . Incidents are extremely rare. We simply do not generate noise and anti social behaviour.

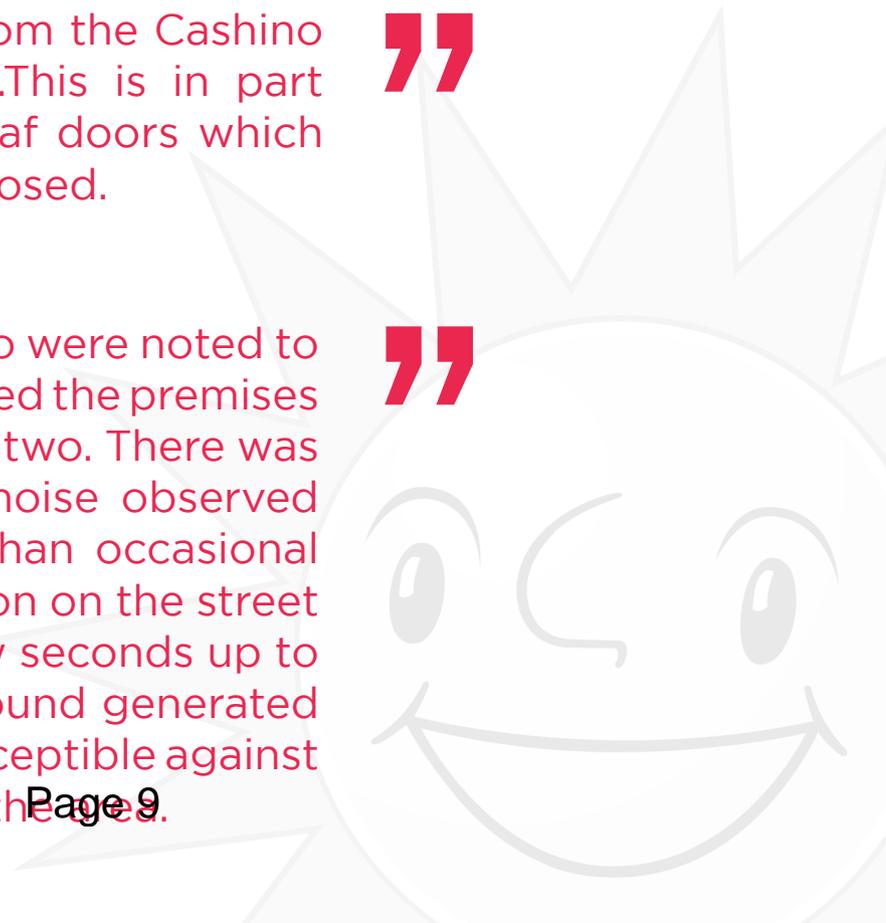
OUR OPERATION

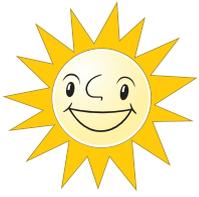
“We are not noisy neighbours”

Below are some quotes from a recent operational/patron noise assessment undertaken on one of our existing Cashino units seeking to extend their opening hours:

“ No breakout noise from the Cashino could be perceived...This is in part due to the double leaf doors which were nearly always closed.

“ Patrons of the Cashino were noted to be very quiet and visited the premises alone or in a group of two. There was no shouting or any noise observed from patrons other than occasional mid range conversation on the street which lasted for a few seconds up to a minute only. Any sound generated by patrons was imperceptible against the ambient noise in the area.





BENEFITS

To the High Street

Benefits for your High Street include:

- Investment from **£100,000** to **£250,000** in long standing vacant units.
- Increased footfall to the High street.
- Linked trips with other shops helping to support other businesses.
- Local Jobs of between 6-12 people depending on the hours of operation.
- We provide an important natural surveillance on the High Street, particularly late into the evenings.



Inspector appeal quotes have highlighted the following:

“ The site's location close to the other shops and services would result in the potential for linked trips and associated footfall. ”

Hull

“ I also consider that the proposed use of the appeal site as an adult gaming centre would be of greater benefit to the health of the shopping area than the use of the site as a betting office. ”

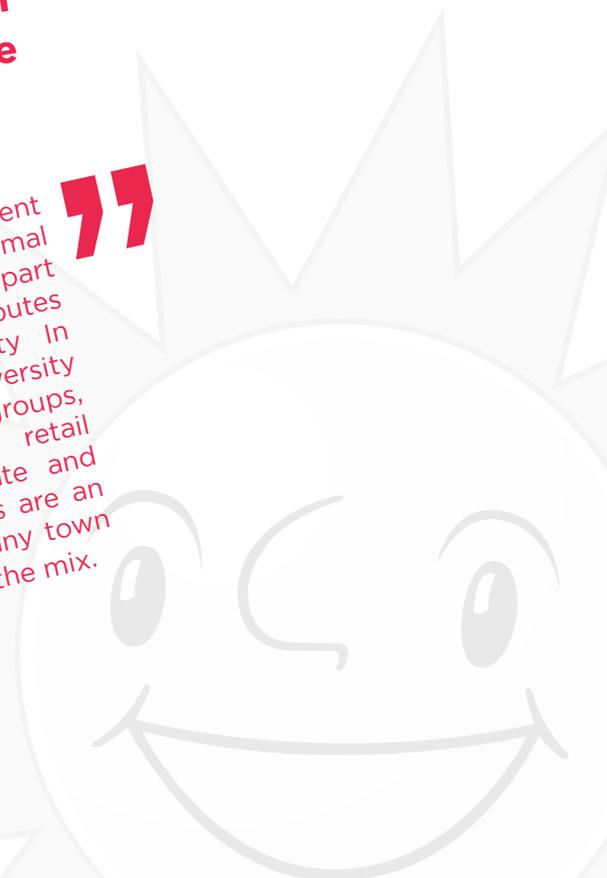
Bournemouth

“ Leisure and entertainment uses are accepted and normal in town centres and form part of a mix that contributes to viability and vitality appealing to a wide diversity of age and social groups, a broad range of retail offering is appropriate and adult gaming centres are an accepted part of many town centres as a part of the mix. ”

Chiltern

“ AGCs Attract customers in comparable numbers to the shops around them and are designed to compliment the shopping experience in town centres. ”

Bexley



COMMUNITY & CHARITY



Praesepe has raised in excess of £1.2m for good causes since 2005 and currently supports the Bacta Charitable Trust.

Praesepe PLC

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Please contact us.

**PLANNING COMMITTEE
16 JUNE 2020 – ORDER OF BUSINESS**

AGENDA ITEM NO /Recommendation	DESCRIPTION	ORDER OF BUSINESS	DETAILS
Agenda Item 7 Application 20/0187 Officer's recommend: Grant Permission Pages 31 to 44	Alterations to front elevation and use of ground floor premises as altered as an adult gaming centre. 40 ABINGDON STREET, BLACKPOOL, FY1 1DA	INFORMATION FROM OFFICERS	
		OBJECTORS	Roger Etchells- Agent on behalf of Objectors (Zoom)
		APPLICANT/AGENT/SUPPORTER	Mr Sam Deegan – Agent (Zoom)
		WARD COUNCILLOR	
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEBATE BY COMMITTEE • DECISION 	

