



Full Observation Report

Stuart Jenkins – Licensing Consultant
Leveche Associates Limited

Merkur Slots

48 King Street South Shields NE33 1HZ

Executive Summary

1. Observations were conducted on Merkur Slots 48 King Street South Shields NE33 1HZ and the surrounding area between 19:50 hours on Wednesday 25th May 2022 and 06:00 hours on Thursday 26th May 2022, between 20:00 hours on Thursday 26th May 2022 and 06:00 hours on Friday 27th May 2022, between 22:50 hours on Friday 27th May 2022 and 05:00hrs Saturday 28th May 2022 and again between 13:00 hours and 14:10 hours on Saturday 28th May 2022. Four covert visits were made to the premises which showed them to be well run and operating correctly with no issues. From the observations it is clear that the premises operating 24-hours a day will not increase anti-social behaviour, noise or any other crime and disorder that would have a negative impact on nearby residents, the environment, local infrastructure or wider local community.

Introduction

2. I have been instructed to conduct independent observations on the Merkur Slots premises at 48 King Street, South Shields NE33 1HZ and the surrounding area.
3. Merkur Slots UK have made a Section Sec 73 (Town and Country Planning Act 1990) application to vary condition of Planning Permission to extend the opening hours of the premises from 08:00 hours – 00:00 hours to 24-hour opening.
4. The premises have a 24-hour licence to operate and come under the jurisdiction of the West Shields and Riverside Ward in Northumbria Police area and South Tyneside Council.

Personal – Stuart Jenkins

5. I am a former Police Officer having retired from the Metropolitan Police after completion of over 30 years exemplary service.
6. Throughout my police career the majority of my service was spent on specialist units engaged on proactive operations :- 1993–1997 Central Territorial Support Group (TSG) - Level 1 Public Order, firearms officer and dedicated surveillance officer; 1997–1998 CO14 Clubs & Vice Unit – test purchase officer and street offences investigations; 1998-2000 Charing Cross Division on promotion – overt and covert licensing operations; 2000-2008 CO14 Clubs & Vice Unit – lead officer for the investigation of serious criminal offences within licensed premises across London, test purchase officer, Pan-London licensing tactical advisor, Licensing Policy Development and Implementation for the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and intelligence unit supervisor; 2008-2018 Marine Policing Unit (MPU) – licensing lead for the MPU; licensing tactical advisor Notting Hill Carnival, covert licensing operations and intelligence unit supervisor. Marine intelligence and accreditation lead for the Queens Diamond Jubilee River Pageant and intelligence lead for the London Olympics 2012.
7. I was a Home Office qualified Crime Prevention Design Advisor.
8. I am the holder of the BTEC Level 3 Certificate (Security Industry Authority) – Close Protection Operative in the Private Security Industry.
9. I am the holder of a Personal Licence under the Licensing Act 2003.

Observations

10. I carried out my observations of Merkur Slots 48 King Street, South Shields NE33 1HZ and the surrounding area over four deployments. The first deployment was between 19:50 hours on Wednesday 25th May 2022 and 06:00 hours on Thursday 26th May 2022, a second deployment between 20:00 hours

on Thursday 26th May 2022 and 06:00 hours on Friday 27th May 2022, a third deployment between 22:50 hours on Friday 27th May 2022 and 05:00hrs Saturday 28th May 2022 and a fourth deployment on Saturday 28th May 2022 between 13:00 hours and 14:10 hours.

11. The weather was overcast during the deployments.
12. The area felt safe with members of the public going about their business, working, shopping, and socialising.
13. The area is well lit and illuminated from street lighting and shop front lights. I had clear and unobstructed views throughout the observations.
14. During observations I concentrated on the pedestrian footfall, signs of criminality, begging, anti-social behaviour including any additional noise, vulnerable persons, other persons at risk and the general environment.
15. The Merkur Slots premises is situated at 48 King Street South Shields NE33 1HZ near the junction with Salem Street and Russell Street, within South Shields Town Centre. King Street itself runs east to west and is pedestrianised with no vehicular traffic. Pedestrians can pass the premises in either direction on foot - (Image A1).
16. The pedestrian zone is in force at all times except for loading by delivery vehicles Monday to Saturday between 07:00 hours and 10:00 hours and 16:00 hours to 19:00 hours. During the observations I saw no motorised vehicular traffic apart from emergency service vehicles and pedestrian traffic was varied - (Images A22 & A23).
17. Pedestrian traffic passing the venue greatly reduced in the late evening and in the early hours of the morning there was no pedestrian traffic for the majority of the time.
18. King Street is 0.3 miles (5-minute walk) from the junction with Market Place in the west to the crossroad junction with Ocean Road, Fowler Street and Mile End Road in the east.
19. East of and next to the premises is a Santander Bank which is on the junction with Salem Street. To the west of and next to the premises is Veterans at Ease Charity Shop - (Images A1, A33, A34, A35 & A36).
20. On the opposite side of the pedestrianised street is New Look Clothing Store 49 King Street junction with Russell Street and Salem Street.
21. The area of observations is densely populated with a large number of retail premises, that include supermarkets, mini supermarkets, clothes stores, banks, pubs, nightclubs, casinos, butchers, cafes, hairdressers, estate agents, bars, charity shops, bookmakers, restaurants and fast-food shops which service the transient and residential population alike.

22. The area of observations took place in King Street from Market Place in the west to the crossroad junction with Ocean Road, Mile End Road and Fowler Street; Ocean Road to the junction with Woodbine Street; Mile End Road to the junction with Costan Drive; Fowler Street to the junctions with Smithy Street and Keppel Street.
23. On King Street itself are gaming premises, betting shops, charity shops, mini supermarkets, a pawnbroker, fast food shops, restaurants, clothing stores and conveyance stores.
24. King Street is a busy street between 09:00 – 17:00 (normal trading hours) but after this time with the vast majority of the shops closed it was quiet leaving just one betting shop open until 22:00 hours, a McDonalds open until 22:45 hours and two gaming premises open until 00:00 hours. Ocean Road and Mile End Road were the hubs for social gatherings, clubbing, consuming alcohol and eating.
25. Ocean Road and Mile End Road have the main concentrations of licensed alcohol premises. They house nightclubs, pubs, restaurants, hotels, and late-night fast-food outlets.
26. The area has a Morrisons Supermarket in Ocean Road near the junction with Anderson Street – (Image A21)
27. The nearest licensed alcohol premises is a 2 min walk from Merkur Slots to the crossroad junction of the Ocean Road, Mile End Road, and Fowler Street. These premises include the Ship and Royal Public House 1-3 Ocean Road, Hogarths 14 Mile End Road, The Wouldhave Public House (JD Wetherspoons) 16 Mile End Road, Clover and Wolf Eatery Brigham Place and Life of Riley Mile End Road.
28. Latterly in the week, on Friday 27th May other late licensed premises were open which included Industry Nightclub 18-26 Ocean Road, Arbeia Bar 16 Ocean Road, The Lounge 30-32 Ocean Road, Club Del Mar 12 Ocean Road, and Roxanne's Nightclub Ocean Road junction with Anderson Street. This concentration of premises was well away from and to the east of Merkur Slots.
29. There were several fast-food takeaway venues open over the four deployments, the nearest of these to Merkur Slots were: McDonalds 3-5 King Street, Arba Pizza 37 Mile End Road, Burger Bar Mile End Spice 10 Mile End Road and Chicken N Grill in Fowler Street.
30. There were other ex-licensed premises that remained closed throughout my four deployments which included The Scotia Public House, 4 Mile End Road, Platinum Bar & Events Ocean Road and The Kirkpatrick Ocean Road.
31. The area has a diverse community living together in a mixture of privately owned, local authority and rental accommodation.

32. The Town Centre is well served by public transport with a variety of bus routes, the Bus and Metro Interchange and taxis. There was ample car parking available in a nearby pay and display car park and restricted parking in the side roads. These transport mediums allow the public to arrive and leave the area safely and quickly.
33. There were taxis available on taxi ranks throughout the day and night in Anderson Street, Mile End Road, and Smithy Street opposite the Bus & Metro Interchange.
34. In the area of my observations there are two betting premises not licensed to serve alcohol and two gaming premises – Adult Gaming Centres (AGC) and Bingo Premises not licensed to serve alcohol.
35. There is one other gaming venue in South Shields Town Centre with a similar business model to Merkur Slots UK. The premises are Admiral Casino 11-13 King Street NE33 1DA which is advertised as operating Monday to Saturday 09:00 hours to 00:00 hours and Sunday 10:00 hours to 00:00 hours.
36. Close to the Merkur Slots premises are two traditional betting premises: - Betfred 30 King Street which is advertised as operating Monday to Saturday 08:00 hours to 22:00 hours and Sunday 09:00 hours to 20:00 hours and Ladbrokes Bookmakers 2 Ocean Road which is advertised as operating Monday to Thursday 08:00 hours to 22:00 hours, Saturday 07:30 hours to 22:00 hours and Sunday 09:00 to 22:00 hours.
37. Mega Bet Bookmakers in Fowler Street junction with Smithy Street was permanently closed.
38. Throughout my observations in King Street and the surrounding area I saw no begging taking place in the street, no street drinkers, vagrants, or drug dealing taking place.
39. Photographic images of what was seen during the observations at King Street and the surrounding area were taken to support my findings and are documented in Appendices A (83 Images), B (72 Images), C (55 Images) and D (10 Images).

Covert Observations

First Deployment

40. On my first deployment I conducted my covert observations from 19:50 hours on Wednesday 25th May 2022 and 06:00 hours on Thursday 26th May 2022.
41. At 19:50 hours I arrived in the area of the Merkur Slots 48 King Street and started my observations by monitoring the venue, the immediate area around it and the pedestrian footfall.

42. At this time the entire length of King Street was very quiet with only Merkur Slots, Admiral Casino, Betfred and McDonalds open. Pedestrian traffic was very light. The main pedestrian activity was concentrated around the crossroad junction of King Street, Ocean Road, Mile End Road, and Fowler Street which appeared to be the main thoroughfare for pedestrians travelling north, south, east and west in the pedestrianised centre. (Images A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, A6, A7, A8, A9, A10, A11 & A12)
43. McDonalds and the Ship and Royal Public House were the busiest premises in the town centre at that time. There were very few people in the streets. I saw that McDonalds had one SIA door supervisor on duty policing the front entrance.
44. At 22:15 hours the Ship and Royal Public House and McDonalds were quiet with very few customers as McDonalds was due to close at 22:45 hours and the pub at 23:00 hours.
45. Between 22:30 hours and 22:50 hours I conducted a covert visit to the Admiral Casino 11-13 King Street. The rear of the premises was on Smithy Street.
46. At 22:30 hours I went to the open front door of the premises and entered. As I entered through the open double doors before turning right to enter the gaming machine area, I saw signage stating no under 18's, CCTV in operation and no alcohol.
47. I saw the premises was a large deep open space with a variety of gaming machines on either side of the room. At the far end of the room, I saw two smartly dressed female members of staff in corporate clothing. At that time there were no other customers in the premises.
48. On seeing me one of the female members of staff approached me and welcomed me to the premises. She asked if I needed any help with the gaming machines or choosing one to play. I declined her offer and looked around the premises deciding which gaming machine to play.
49. I found a traditional style fruit machine to play on the left-hand side of the premises.
50. Once I was seated, after a couple of minutes, the first female staff member offered me free soft drinks, coffee, water, and snacks. I asked if I could buy an alcoholic drink, but the staff member explained they weren't licensed to sell alcohol. I accepted a coffee and carried on playing the gaming machine I was using.
51. Whilst playing the machines the second female member of staff engaged me in casual conversation. She explained about the facilities on site and that the premises had a tanning shop on the first floor for customers use. In the images you can see the tanning facility above Admiral Casino, which is called Kwik Tan. The entrance to the tanning area is via a staircase where I entered Admiral.

52. Before leaving I used the toilets which were clean and tidy. Whilst visiting the toilets I saw at the far end of the premises were further gaming machines in a side area off to the left on a lower level.
53. At the time of my visit there were no other customers in the premises. There were no vulnerable or drunk people in or outside the premises.
54. There were no alcoholic drinks available. The hot and soft drinks were prepared at a desk area which was clean and tidy.
55. Whilst I was in the venue, I saw the staff cleaning and completing a low-profile patrol around the premises checking on my needs and making sure I wasn't underage or vulnerable.
56. Whilst inside the premises I felt safe, I was not pressurised to use the machines or to spend vast sums of money. The staff were friendly, polite, informative and I found the premises clean and tidy.
57. At no time during my observations did I see anyone hanging around the premises. Customers arriving went straight into the premises and customers leaving left the area straight away. I left the premises at 22:50 hours - (Image A39).
58. Between 22:53 hours and 23.37 hours I conducted a covert visit to the Merkur Slots 48 King Street – (Image A41).
59. At 22:53 hours I went to the closed front door of the premises and entered. As I entered, I saw clear signage on the door stating no smoking, over 18's only, no alcohol and CCTV.
60. Once inside I saw the premises was an open space with a variety of gaming machines on each side of the room and down the middle. On the left-hand side was a reception desk.
61. Almost immediately I was approached by a smartly dressed female member of staff in corporate clothing. At that time there were no other customers in the premises.
62. She welcomed me and asked if I needed any help with the gaming machines or choosing one to play. I declined her offer and looked around the premises deciding which gaming machine to play.
63. Initially I found a traditional style fruit machine to play on the left-hand side of the premises but after a short time I moved to the right-hand side to play a higher stake machine.
64. Once I was seated, after a couple of minutes, the female staff member offered me free soft drinks, coffee, water, and snacks. I asked if I could buy an alcoholic drink, but the staff member explained they weren't licensed to sell alcohol. I accepted a coffee and carried on playing the gaming machine I was using.

65. Whilst playing the machines the female member of staff engaged me in casual conversation. She explained about the facilities on site.
66. Before leaving, I used the toilets which were clean and tidy. The toilets were regularly checked as shown by the toilet check sheet and there were Gamcare leaflets available for customers to take away – (Images A42 & A43).
67. At the time of my visit there were no other customers in the premises. There were no vulnerable or drunk people in or outside the premises.
68. There were no alcoholic drinks available. The hot and soft drinks were prepared at the desk area which was clean and tidy.
69. Whilst I was in the venue, I saw the staff cleaning and completing a low-profile patrol around the premises checking on my needs and making sure I wasn't underage or vulnerable.
70. Whilst inside the premises I felt safe, I was not pressurised to use the machines or to spend vast sums of money. The staff member was friendly, polite, informative and I found the premises clean and tidy.
71. At no time during my observations did I see anyone hanging around the premises. Customers arriving went straight into the premises and customers leaving left the area straight away. I left the premises at 23:37 hours - (Image A44).
72. At 00:01 hours there were no incidents of anti-social behaviour and pedestrian traffic was less in King Street– (Images A45, A46, A47, A50, A54, A55 & A56).
73. The licensed premises that remained opened were Hogarths and The Wouldhave Public House in Mile End Road however any customers from these premises left the area on foot travelling north along Mile End Road or along Ocean Road and Fowler Street or by taxi from the taxi ranks in Mile End Road or Smithy Street.
74. The images I have taken clearly show how quiet the area was during the night. There was no anti-social behaviour, drug dealing, drunkenness, vulnerable or begging taking place in King Street or the area of my observations – (Images A59, A60, A61, A62, A63, A64, A65, A66, A67, A68, A69, A70, A71, A72 & A73).
75. At 04:00 hours pedestrians and cycle traffic started again as people made their way to work. This steadily increased when the Bus and Metro Interchange opened for commuters – (Images A74, A75, A76, A77, A78, A79, A80, A81 & A82).
76. I remained in the area until I completed my observations at 06:10 hours when I left.

Second Deployment

77. On my second deployment I conducted my covert observations from 20:00 hours on Thursday 26th May 2022 to 06:00 hours on Friday 27th May 2022.
78. At 20:00 hours I arrived in the area of the Merkur Slots 48 King Street and started my observations by monitoring the venue, the immediate area around it and the pedestrian footfall.
79. At this time the entire length of King Street was very quiet with only Merkur Slots, Admiral Casino, Betfred and McDonalds open. Pedestrian traffic was very light. The main pedestrian activity was concentrated around the crossroad junction of King Street, Ocean Road, Mile End Road, and Fowler Street. (Images B1, B2, B3, B4, B5, B6, B7, B8, B9, B10, B11 & B12)
80. McDonalds and the Ship and Royal Public House were again the busiest premises in the town centre at that time. I saw that McDonalds had two SIA door supervisors on duty policing the front entrance.
81. Between 20:48 hours and 22:54 hours I conducted a covert visit to the Buzz Bingo which is situated in an Arcade on Fowler Street – (Images B19 & B20).
82. At 20:48 hours I went to the front door of the premises and entered. Through the door I came into a large reception area with a staffed reception desk. I walked past the desk into an area with a large selection of gaming machines. As I walked deeper into the premises to my right was a glass door which led into a very large room where traditional bingo calling was taking place.
83. I was approached by a female member of staff who asked me if I needed any help with the gaming machines or choosing one to play. I declined her offer and looked around the premises deciding which gaming machine to play.
84. I found a traditional style fruit machine to play on in the centre of the room and started to play the machine.
85. At the time of my visit there were seven customers playing the machines and a further fifty playing traditional bingo calling. There were no vulnerable or drunk people in or outside the premises.
86. Whilst I was in the venue, I saw the staff completing a low-profile patrol around the premises checking on customers' needs and making sure I wasn't underage or vulnerable.
87. Whilst inside the premises I felt safe, I was not pressurised to use the machines or to spend vast sums of money. The staff were friendly, polite, informative and I found the premises clean and tidy.
88. At no time during my observations did I see anyone hanging around the premises. Customers arriving went straight into the premises and customers leaving left the area straight away. I left the premises at 20:54 hours.

89. At 20:55 hours I saw a group of youths, some on bikes, outside McDonalds in King Street at the crossroads junction. These youths were not causing any problems but were drawn to McDonalds as a meeting place. They were in the area for about 20 minutes before leaving – (Image B21).
90. At 22:15 hours the Ship and Royal Public House and McDonalds were quiet with very few customers as McDonalds was due to close at 22:45 hours and the pub at 23:00 hours.
91. At 22:00 hours Betfred and Ladbrokes Bookmakers both closed.
92. At 22:45 hours McDonalds closed followed by the Ship and Royal Public House at 23:00 hours. Customers from both premises left the area without incident.
93. At 00:01 hours there were no incidents of anti-social behaviour and pedestrian traffic was less in King Street – (Images B46, B47, B48, B49, B50 & B51).
94. The licensed premises that remained opened were Hogarths, The Wouldhave Public House and Life of Riley in Mile End Road however any customers from these premises left the area on foot travelling north along Mile End Road or along Ocean Road and Fowler Street or by taxi from the taxi ranks in Mile End Road or Smithy Street. These premises were all closed between 01:00 hours and 0200 hours – (Images B52, B53, B54 & B55).
95. The images I have taken clearly show how quiet the area was during the night. There was no anti-social behaviour, drug dealing, drunkenness, vulnerable persons or begging taking place in King Street or the area of my observations – (Images B62, B63, B64, B65, B66, B67, B68, B70, B71 & B72).
96. At 04:23 hours pedestrians and cycle traffic started again as people made their way to work. This steadily increased when the Bus and Metro Interchange opened for commuters.
97. I continued my observations until 06:15 hours when I left the area.

Third Deployment

98. On my second deployment I conducted my covert observations from 22:55 hours on Friday 27th May 2022 to 05:00 hours on Saturday 28th May 2022.
99. At 22:55 hours I arrived in the area of the Merkur Slots 48 King Street and started my observations by monitoring the venue, the immediate area around it and the pedestrian footfall.
100. At this time the entire length of King Street was very quiet with only Merkur Slots and Admiral Casino open. Pedestrian traffic was very light. The main pedestrian activity was concentrated around the crossroad junction of King Street, Ocean

Road, Mile End Road, and Fowler Street - (Images C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6, C7, C8, C9, C10, C11 & C12)

101. McDonalds was closed and the Ship and Royal Public House was in the process of closing for the night.
102. At 00:01 hours there were no incidents of anti-social behaviour and pedestrian traffic was less in King Street,
103. The licensed premises that remained opened were Hogarths, The Wouldhave Public House and Life of Riley in Mile End Road however any customers from these premises left the area on foot travelling north along Mile End Road or along Ocean Road and Fowler Street or by taxi from the taxi ranks in Mile End Road or Smithy Street.
104. On Friday night other late licensed premises opened for the first time since I started my observations. These premises were Industry Nightclub 18-26 Ocean Road, Arbeia Bar 16 Ocean Road, The Lounge 30-32 Ocean Road, Club Del Mar 12 Ocean Road, and Roxanne's Nightclub Ocean Road junction with Anderson Street. They were well away from Merkur Slots in King Street.
105. These premises' closing times varied but the latest opening venues were Life of Riley until 03:00 hours with The Industry Nightclub and Roxanne's Nightclub closing around 04:00 hours. I observed at least ten heavily intoxicated males and females leaving Life of Riley in Mile End Road between 00:32 hours and 03:05 hours. At times customers took a long time to disperse from outside the venue – (Images C25, C27, C28, C39 & C41).
106. When the Life of Riley closed, and customers left, a large group made their way to towards the two remaining open night clubs in Ocean Road.
107. At 03:48 hours I was aware of police attending Industry Nightclub and detaining a male for assault or public order offences – (Image C43).
108. Some areas in Mile End Road and Ocean Road remained busy whilst the nightclubs were open, however King Street was very quiet which remained quiet throughout the night with virtually non-existent pedestrian traffic. There was no anti-social behaviour, drug dealing, drunkenness, vulnerable persons or begging taking place in King Street – (Images C31, C32, C33, C36 & C37).
109. I continued my observations until 05:00 hours when I left the area.

Fourth Deployment

110. On my fourth deployment I conducted my covert observations from 13:00 hours on Saturday 28th May 2022 to 14:15 hours on Saturday 28th May 2022.

111. At 13:00 hours I arrived in the area of the Merkur Slots 48 King Street and started my observations by monitoring the venue, the immediate area around it and the pedestrian footfall.
112. At this time the entire length of King Street was very busy with the vast majority of retail premises open and trading. Pedestrians were busy going about their day-to-day business, shopping, commuting and socialising – (Images D1, D2, D3 & D4).
113. Between 13:23 hours and 23.43 hours I conducted a covert visit to the Merkur Slots 48 King Street – (Images D5, D6 & D7).
114. At 13:23 hours I went to the closed front door of the premises and entered. As I entered.
115. Almost immediately I was approached by a smartly dressed female member of staff in corporate clothing. This member of staff was a different person to my visit on 25th May 2022. At that time there were no other customers in the premises.
116. She welcomed me to the premises and asked if I needed any help with the gaming machines or choosing one to play. I declined her offer and looked around the premises deciding which gaming machine to play.
117. Initially I found a traditional style fruit machine to play on the right-hand side.
118. Once I was seated, after a couple of minutes, the female staff member offered me free soft drinks, coffee, water, and snacks. I accepted a coffee and carried on playing the gaming machine I was using.
119. Whilst playing the machines the female member of staff engaged me in casual conversation. She explained about the facilities on site.
120. Before leaving, I used the toilets which were clean and tidy. The toilets were regularly checked as shown by the toilet check sheet and there were Gamcare leaflets available for customers to take away.
121. At the time of my visit there were no other customers in the premises. There were no vulnerable or drunk people in or outside the premises.
122. There were no alcoholic drinks available. The hot and soft drinks were prepared at the desk area which was clean and tidy.
123. Whilst I was in the venue, I saw the staff cleaning and completing a low-profile patrol around the premises checking on my needs and making sure I wasn't underage or vulnerable.
124. Whilst inside the premises I felt safe, I was not pressurised to use the machines or to spend vast sums of money. The staff member was friendly, polite, informative and I found the premises clean and tidy.

125. At no time during my observations did I see anyone hanging around the premises.
126. I left the premises at 13:34 hours.
127. Between 13:49 hours and 14:02 hours I conducted a covert visit to the Admiral Casino King Street – (Images D8 & D9).
128. At 13:49 hours I went to the open front door of the premises and entered. Almost immediately I was approached by a smartly dressed female member of staff in corporate clothing.
129. She asked me if I needed any help with the gaming machines or choosing one to play. I declined her offer and looked around the premises deciding which gaming machine to play.
130. I found a traditional style fruit machine to play on the left-hand side of the premises.
131. Once I was seated, after a couple of minutes, the female staff member offered me free soft drinks, coffee, water, and snacks. I asked if I could buy an alcoholic drink, but the staff member explained they weren't licensed to sell alcohol. I politely declined her offer of a non-alcoholic drink and snacks and carried on playing the gaming machine I was using.
132. Before leaving, I used the toilets which were clean and tidy. Whilst visiting the toilets I saw at the far end of the premises were further gaming machines in a side area off to the left on a lower level. In this lower-level area, I saw a male member of staff again dressed in smart corporate clothing.
133. At the time of my visit there were nine other customers in the premises. There were five males and four females aged between 30 and 60 years of age who were all casually dressed. None of these customers were vulnerable or drunk. There were all quietly enjoying playing the machines.
134. There were no alcoholic drinks available. The hot and soft drinks were prepared at a desk area which was clean and tidy.
135. Whilst I was in the venue, I saw the staff cleaning and completing a low-profile patrol around the premises checking on customers' needs and making sure they weren't underage or vulnerable.
136. Whilst inside the premises I felt safe, I was not pressurised to use the machines or to spend vast sums of money. The staff were friendly, polite, informative and I found the premises clean and tidy.
137. At no time during my observations did I see anyone hanging around the premises. Customers arriving went straight into the premises and customers leaving left the area straight away. I left the premises at 14:02 hours.

138. There was no anti-social behaviour, drug dealing, drunkenness, vulnerable persons or begging taking place in King Street or the area of my observations.

139. I continued my observations until 14:15 hours when I left the area.

Summary

140. I found the three premises I carried out covert visits to, Merkur Slots 48 King Street, Admiral Casino King Street and Buzz Bingo in the Arcade in Fowler Street to all have smart, well-lit, and professional looking frontage. At the time of my visits to these locations, I saw no evidence of crime and disorder, anti-social behaviour, excessive noise, littering, street drinking, drug dealing, begging or groups of youths hanging around.

141. People entering these premises were vetted on entry to ensure drunken or other vulnerable people didn't gain access.

142. The issues in relation to drunkenness, anti-social behaviour and begging did not occur in King Street. There was no evidence of anyone waiting for public transport or hanging around the area in groups.

143. It is clear the existing adult gaming centres don't lead to or result in people, who have been on a night out, staying in the town centre any longer than they had planned to.

144. I have visited several Merkur Slots premises that operate 24 hours a day and it is clear the existing 24-hour adult gaming centres don't lead to or result in people, who have been on a night out, staying in the town centre any longer than they had planned to.

145. Merkur Slots UK takes safer gambling seriously. This can be evidenced with the use of safeguarding programs such as:

- Merkur 360 Program - To achieve higher standards of player protection Merkur have worked with G4 Global Gambling Guidance Group, which focuses on the provision of responsible gambling and has also implemented its own 360 responsible gambling program.
- Think 25 Policy – Strict Over 18 Policy. All venues operate a Think 25 Policy whereby photographic ID is required to gain entry.
- In View Tools – Staying in control is a key part of messaging in the Merkur venues. Leafleting and posters such as BeGambleAware and GamCam, can be found in the venues main area and in private places such as toilets.
- Time-Out - Merkur venues are part of the PlayRight app scheme whereby customers can download an app to set the days and times of play they want to play or the amount of time they want to be in the venue. If customers show

signs of or feel they need to take a break, Merkur staff help customers achieve this through their Self-Exclusion scheme.

- Staff Training – Merkur Slots has developed a detailed training programme for all staff members including its own City and Guilds accredited training developed in partnership with YGAM and Betknowmore.

139 From my visits to many Merkur Slots Premises across the UK, I have found professional and attentive staff managing them. The premises are well run and there are clearly defined systems in place to ensure the premises operate in support of the gambling objectives and don't attract or take advantage of juveniles or other vulnerable persons.

140 The demographic is much older and doesn't attract young people or children. The environment is very different to a loud busy arcade, it is a low-key carpeted style lounge with no more than a handful of mature customers in at any one time.

141 Merkur Slots UK and their premises operate in support of the principles of Secured by Design, the company recommended by the Chief Officers of UK Police Forces for Crime Prevention standards.

142 In conclusion, from my visits it is my opinion that Merkur Slots UK Limited are well run premises and significantly reduce the risk of crime and disorder and the vulnerable being taken advantage of.

143 From my observations I cannot see any evidence to support any objection to Merkur Slots operating 24-hours 7 days a week, this increase in hours will not impact on the environment, infrastructure, or local community.

144 I believe the facts in my report are honest and true. The opinions I have expressed are made in good faith and in my best judgement. The fee for this report is not conditional on the outcome of any future case, application or finding.

Stuart Jenkins
Licensing Consultant
Leveche Associates Limited
28/06/2022



LEVECHE
ASSOCIATES LIMITED

Appendix A

Observation Images
25-26/5/2022

Merkur Slots

48 King Street
South Shields
NE33 1HZ

Leveche Associates Ltd

Nightingale House
46-48 East Street
Epsom
Surrey KT17 1HQ



Image A1

19:58hrs - Merkur Slots 48 King Street NE33 1HZ



Image A2

20:02hrs - Rear Entrance to Admiral 777 Slots
Smithy Street.



Image A3

20:03hrs - South Shields Bus and Metro Interchange



Image A4

20:04hrs - Rear of Admiral 777 Slots Smithy Street looking east towards Fowler Street



Image A5

20:05hrs - South Shields Bus and Metro Interchange Keppel Street



Image A6

20:05hrs - Megabet - Smithy Street J/W Fowler Street



Image A7

20:06 hrs - Ladbrokes Bookmakers 2 Ocean Road
J/W Fowler Street.



Image A8

20:06hrs - Ship and Royal Public House
1-3 Ocean Road.



Image A9

20:07hrs - Pedestrian crossroads between Ocean Road, Kings Street, Mile End Road and Fowler Street looking east along Ocean Road



Image A10

20:07hrs - Pedestrian crossroads between Ocean Road, King Street, Mile End Road and Fowler Street looking north along Mile End Road



Image A11

20:08hrs - The Scotia Public House 8 Mile End Road
- closed premises



Image A12

20:08hrs - Hogarths Public House 14 Mile End Road

25th / 26th May 2022



Image A13

20:10hrs - The Wouldhave Wetherspoons
Public House 16 Mile End Road.



Image A14

20:11 hrs - Mile End Road looking south towards the
crossroads with Ocean Street, King Street
and Fowler Street



Image A15

20:12hrs - Burger Bar Mile End Spice
10 Mile End Road



Image A16

20:15hrs - McDonalds 3-5 King Street



Image A17

20:16hrs - Admiral Casino 11-13 King Street
- front entrance.



Image A18

20:17hrs - Ramsdens Pawnbrokers 20 King Street



Image A19

20:17hrs - Betfred 30 King Street



Image A20

20:17hrs - King Street looking west towards Merkur Slots



Image A21

21:12hrs - Morrisons Supermarket Ocean Road



Image A22

21:14hrs - Start of the Pedestrian Zone Ocean Road looking west



Image A23

21:14hrs - Ocean Road looking west



Image A24

21:16hrs - The Kirkpatrick, Ocean Road
- premises closed



Image A25

21:17hrs - Ladbrokes Bookmakers 2 Ocean Road



Image A26

21:17hrs - McDonalds 3-5 King Street



Image A27

21:18hrs - Ship and Royal Public House Ocean Road



Image A28

21:19hrs - Hogarths 14 Mile End Road



Image A29

21:20hrs - The Wouldhave Public House
16 Mile End Road.



Image A30

21:20hrs - Abra Pizza 37 Mile End Road



Image A31

21:25hrs - Clover and Wolf Brigham Place NE33 2DL
off Mile End Road - premises closed



Image A32

21:27hrs - Front of Admiral Casino King Street



Image A33

21:28hrs - Betfred King Street



Image A34

21:32hrs - King Street looking west



Image A35

21:32hrs - King Street looking east towards Merkur Slots



Image A36

21:32hrs - Merkur Slots 48 King Street



Image A37

22:15hrs - Ladbrokes Bookmakers 2 Ocean Road



Image A38

22:15hrs - Ship and Royal Public House
3-5 Ocean Road.



Image A39

22:50hrs - Admiral Casino King Street



Image A40

22:51hrs - Betfred King Street



Image A41

22:51hrs - Merkur Slots 48 King Street

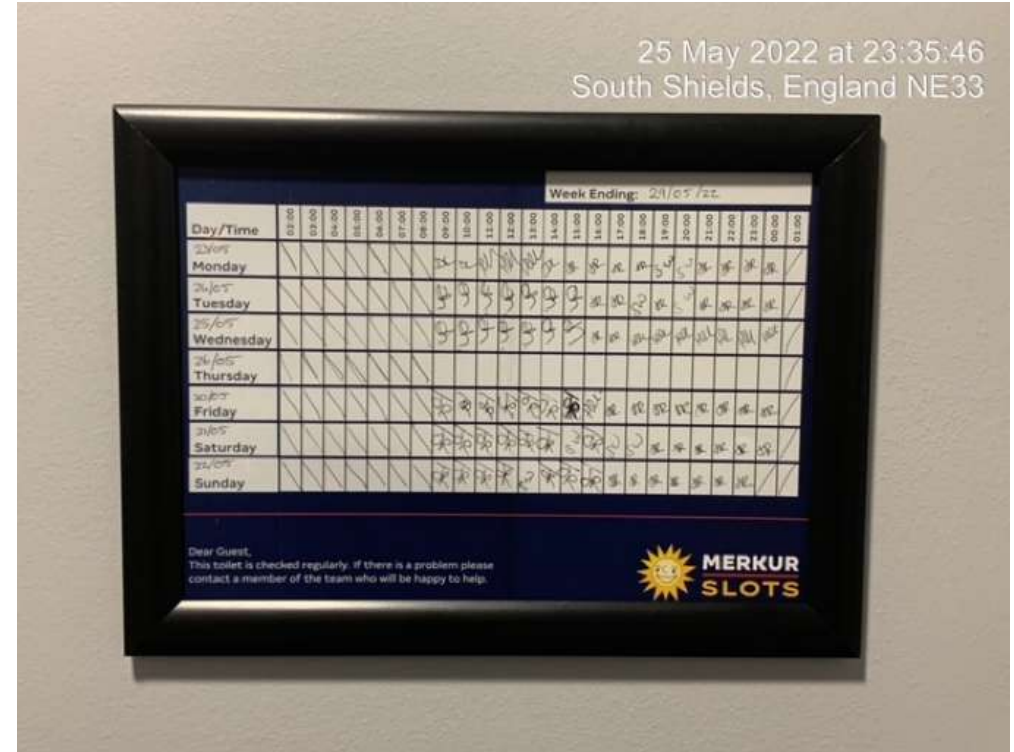


Image A42

23:35hrs - Merkur Slots Toilet Check Wall Record - King Street



25 May 2022 at 23:35:59
South Shields, England NE33

Image A43

23:35hrs - Gamcare Leaflets in Merkur Slots Toilets - King Street.



25 May 2022 at 23:37:35
South Shields, England NE33 1DH

Image A44

23:37hrs - Merkur Slots - King Street



25 May 2022 at 23:37:47
South Shields, England NE33 1DH

Image A45

23:37hrs - King Street looking west away from Merkur Slots.



25 May 2022 at 23:38:33
South Shields, England NE33 1DH

Image A46

23:38hrs - King Street looking east towards McDonalds



Image A47

23:38hrs - King Street looking west towards Market Place



Image A48

23:47hrs - Hogarths Public House
14 Mile End Road



Image A49

23:47hrs - Burger Bar Mile End Spice
10 Mile End Road



Image A50

23:47hrs - Ship and Royal Public House
1-3 Ocean Road.



Image A51

23:48hrs - McDonalds 3-5 King Street



Image A52

23:50hrs - The Wouldhave PH Mile End Road



Image A53

23:55hrs - South Shields Bus & Metro Interchange



Image A54

00:03hrs - Admiral Casino 11-13 King Street



Image A55

00:05hrs - Merkur Slots King Street



Image A56

02:27hrs - King Street looking east from Admiral Casino



Image A57

02:28hrs - King Street looking west from central crossroads



Image A58

02:28hrs - Fowler Street looking south from central crossroads.



Image A59

02:29hrs - Admiral Casino 11-13 King Street



Image A60

02:30hrs - Merkur Slots 48 King Street



26 May 2022 at 02:30:32
South Shields, England NE33 1HZ

Image A61

02:30hrs - King Street looking west
from Merkur Slots



26 May 2022 at 02:30:40
South Shields, England NE33 1HZ

Image A62

02:30hrs - King Street looking east
from Merkur Slots



Image A63

02:33hrs - South Shields Bus and Metro Interchange



Image A64

02:36hrs - Abra Pizza Mile End Road



Image A65

02:36hrs - The Wouldhave PH Mile End Road



Image A66

04:10hrs - Mile End Road looking north towards
The Wouldhave PH.



26 May 2022 at 04:10:22
South Shields, England NE33

Image A67

04:10hrs - Mile End Road looking south
towards the crossroads



26 May 2022 at 04:11:18
South Shields, England NE33 1TA

Image A68

04:11hrs - Crossroads looking south
along Fowler Street

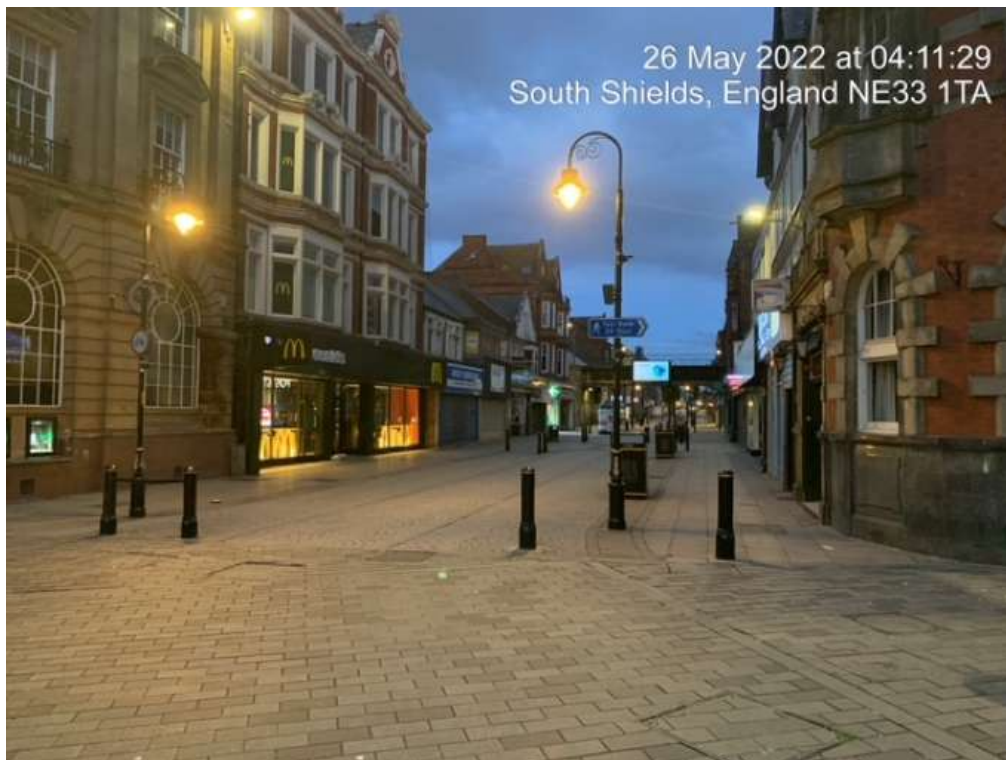


Image A69

04:11hrs - Crossroads looking west along King Street



Image A70

04:12hrs - Admiral Casino King Street



Image A71

04:13hrs - Betfred King Street



Image A72

04:14hrs - Merkur Slots 48 King Street



Image A73

04:14hrs - King Street looking east away from Merkur Slots towards Betfred



Image A74

06:02hrs - Mile End Road looking south towards the crossroads



Image A75

06:03hrs - Crossroads looking west
along Ocean Road



Image A76

06:03hrs - Crossroads looking south
along Fowler Street



Image A77

06:03hrs - Crossroads looking east along King Street



Image A78

06:04hrs - Admiral Casino King Street



Image A79

06:05hrs - Betfred King Street



Image A80

06:06hrs - Merkur Slots King Street



Image A81

06:06hrs - King Street looking west



Image A82

06:07hrs - South Shields Bus and Metro Interchange



Image A83

06:08hrs - South Shields Bus and Metro Interchange



LEVECHE
ASSOCIATES LIMITED

Appendix B

Observation Images

26-27/5/2022

Merkur Slots

48 King Street

South Shields

NE33 1HZ

Leveche Associates Ltd

Nightingale House

46-48 East Street

Epsom

Surrey KT17 1HQ



Image B1

20:01hrs - Merkur Slots 48 King Street NE33 1HZ



Image B2

20:01hrs - King Street looking west from Merkur Slots



Image B3

20:01hrs - King Street looking east from Merkur Slots



Image B4

20:03hrs - South Shields Bus and Metro Interchange



Image B5

20:04hrs - South Shields Bus and Metro Interchange Keppel Street



Image B6

20:04hrs - Megabet Smithy Street J/W Fowler Street



Image B7

20:04 hrs - Chicken N Grill Fowler Street



Image B8

20:05hrs - Ship and Royal Public House
1-3 Ocean Road.



Image B9

20:06hrs - Pedestrian crossroad between Ocean Road, Kings Street, Mile End Road and Fowler Street looking east along Ocean Road



Image B10

20:06hrs - Ladbrokes Bookmakers Ocean Road



Image B11

20:07hrs - Hogarths Public House 14 Mile End Road



Image B12

20:07hrs - Hogarths Public House and Burger Bar
Mile End Spice Mile End Road



Image B13

20:08hrs - Life of Riley Mile End Road



Image B14

20:08hrs - Clover & Wolf Public House Mile End Road



Image B15

20:09hrs - The Wouldhave Public House
Mile End Road.



Image B16

20.09hrs - Abra Pizza 37 Mile End Road



Image B17

20:11hrs - The Scotia Mile End Road
- premises closed



Image B18

20:11hrs - McDonalds King Street



Image B19

20:48hrs - Buzz Bingo in Arcade off Fowler Street



Image B20

20:54hrs - Buzz Bingo entrance to Arcade off Fowler Street.



Image B21

20:55hrs - Crossroads looking towards
McDonalds in King Street



Image B22

20:57hrs - Betfred King Street



Image B23

20:57hrs - King Street looking west
towards Merkur Slots



Image B24

20:59hrs - King Street looking west



Image B25

21:00hrs - King Street looking east back towards Merkur Slots



Image B26

21:10hrs - King Street looking west towards the Market Place

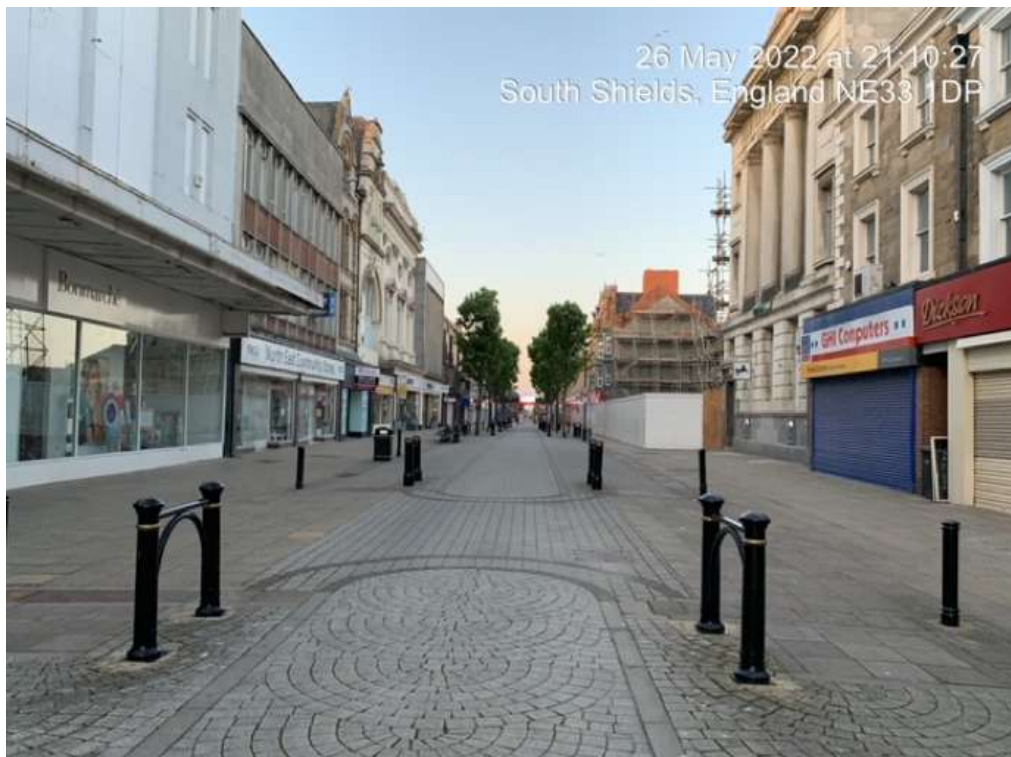


Image B27

21:10hrs - King Street looking east from the Market Place



Image B28

21:14hrs - Admiral Casino King Street



26 May 2022 at 21:15:46
South Shields, England NE33 1TA

Image B29

21:15hrs - Hogarths PH and Burger Bar Mile End Spice Mile End Road.



26 May 2022 at 21:18:57
South Shields, England NE33 2HT

Image B30

21:18hrs - Pedestrian Area Ocean Road looking west



Image B31

21:19 - Platinum, Bar & Events Venue Ocean Road
NE33 2JQ - premises closed.



Image B32

21:21hrs - Radhuni Indian Restuarant
84-94 Ocean Road NE33 2JD



Image B33

22:29hrs - Ocean Road looking east



Image B34

22:30hrs - Ladbrokes Bookmakers Ocean Road



Image B35

22:30hrs - McDonalds King Street looking east towards Merkur Slots



Image B36

22:30hrs - Ship and Royal PH Ocean Road



Image B37

22:30hrs - Chicken N Grill 3 Fowler Street



Image B38

22:31hrs - King Street looking west



Image B39

22:31hrs - King Street looking east



Image B40

22:33hrs - Merkur Slots King Street looking west



Image B41

22:36hrs - Abra Pizza 37 Mile End Road



Image B42

22:37hrs - The Wouldhave PH Mile End Road



Image B43

22:38hrs - Life of Riley Mile End Road



Image B44

22:39hrs - Hogarths Mile End Road



Image B45

22:39hrs - Burger Bar Mile End Spice
Mile End Road.



Image B46

00:00hrs - King Street looking east
towards McDonalds



Image B47

00:01hrs - King Street looking west



Image B48

00:03hrs - McDonalds King Street



Image B49

00:03hrs - Crossroad junction with Ocean Road,
King Street, Fowler Street and Mile
End Road

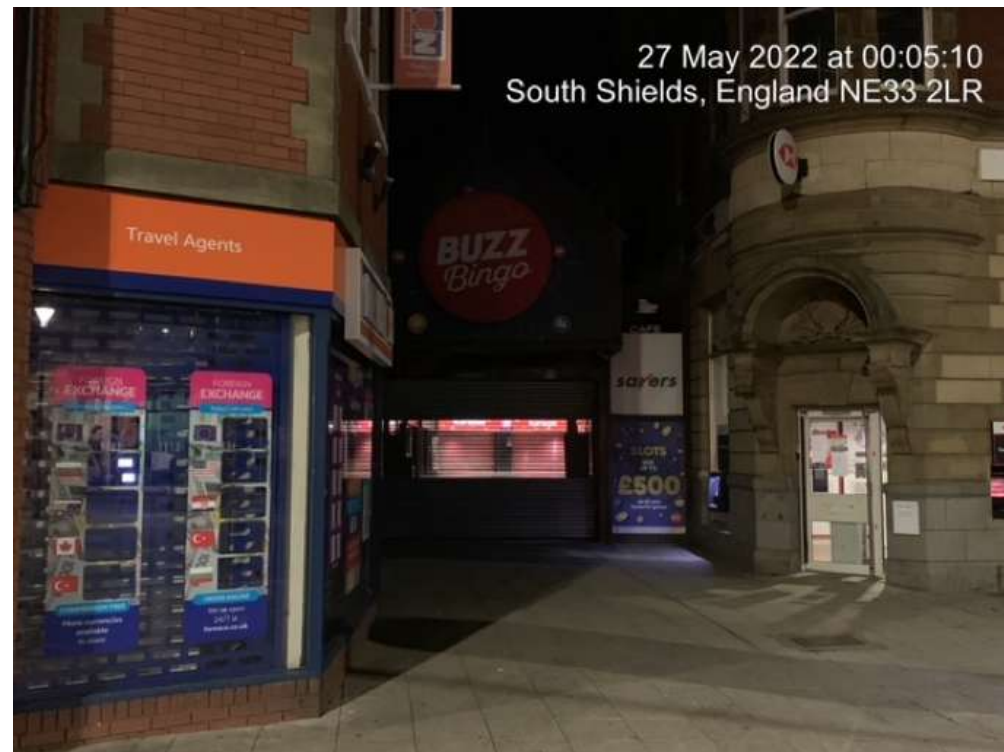


Image B50

00:05hrs - Buzz Bingo Arcade off Fowler Street



Image B51

00:05hrs - South Shields Bus & Metro Interchange



Image B52

00:06hrs - Life of Riley Mile End Road looking north



Image B53

00:10hrs - Hogarths PH and Burger Bar
Mile End Road.



Image B54

00:11hrs - Arba Pizza 37 Mile End Road



Image B55

00:11hrs - The Wouldhave PH Mile End Road



Image B56

01:36hrs - King Street looking west



Image B57

01:36hrs - King Street looking west



Image B58

01:36hrs - King Street looking east



Image B59

01:39hrs - Ocean Road looking east



Image B60

01:44hrs - Hogarths PH and Burger Bar Mile End Road



Image B61

01:46hrs - Abra Pizza 37 Mile End Road



Image B62

03:11hrs - Life of Riley Nightclub Mile End Road



Image B63

03:12hrs - Crossroads looking east
along Ocean Road



Image B64

03:12hrs - Crossroads looking south
down Fowler Street



Image B65

03:15hrs - King Street looking east towards Merkur Slots.



Image B66

03:18hrs - South Shields Bus & Metro Interchange



Image B67

03:20hrs - Abra Pizza 37 Mile End Road



Image B68

05:10hrs - King Street looking west



Image B69

05:10hrs - King Street looking east



Image B70

06:09hrs - King Street looking west



Image B71

06.09hrs - Mile End Road looking north



Image B72

06:12hrs - King Street looking west towards Merkur Slots



LEVECHE
ASSOCIATES LIMITED

Appendix C

Observation Images
27-28/5/2022

Merkur Slots

48 King Street
South Shields
NE33 1HZ

Leveche Associates Ltd

Nightingale House
46-48 East Street
Epsom
Surrey KT17 1HQ



Image C1

22:56hrs - Merkur Slots 48 King Street NE33 1HZ



Image C2

22:58hrs - King Street looking east away from Merkur Slots



27 May 2022 at 22:59:31
South Shields, England NE33 1DA



27 May 2022 at 22:59:54
South Shields, England NE33 1DA

Image C3

22:59hrs - Admiral Casino King Street

Image C4

22:59hrs - McDonalds King Street



Image C5

23:00hrs - Ship & Royal PH Ocean Road



Image C6

23:01hrs - Ladbrokes Bookmakers and Chicken N Grill, Ocean Road J/W Fowler Street



Image C7

23:01 hrs - Life of Riley Mile End Road looking north



Image C8

23:02hrs - Hogarths PH Mile End Road



Image C9

23:02hrs - Burger Bar Mile End Spice 10 Mile End Road



Image C10

23:03hrs - Clover & Wolf Mile End Road



Image C11

23:04hrs - The Wouldhave PH Mile End Road



Image C12

23:04hrs - Arba Pizza 37 Mile End Road



Image C13

23:10hrs - South Shields Bus & Metro Interchange



Image C14

23:10hrs - Buzz Bingo Fowler Street

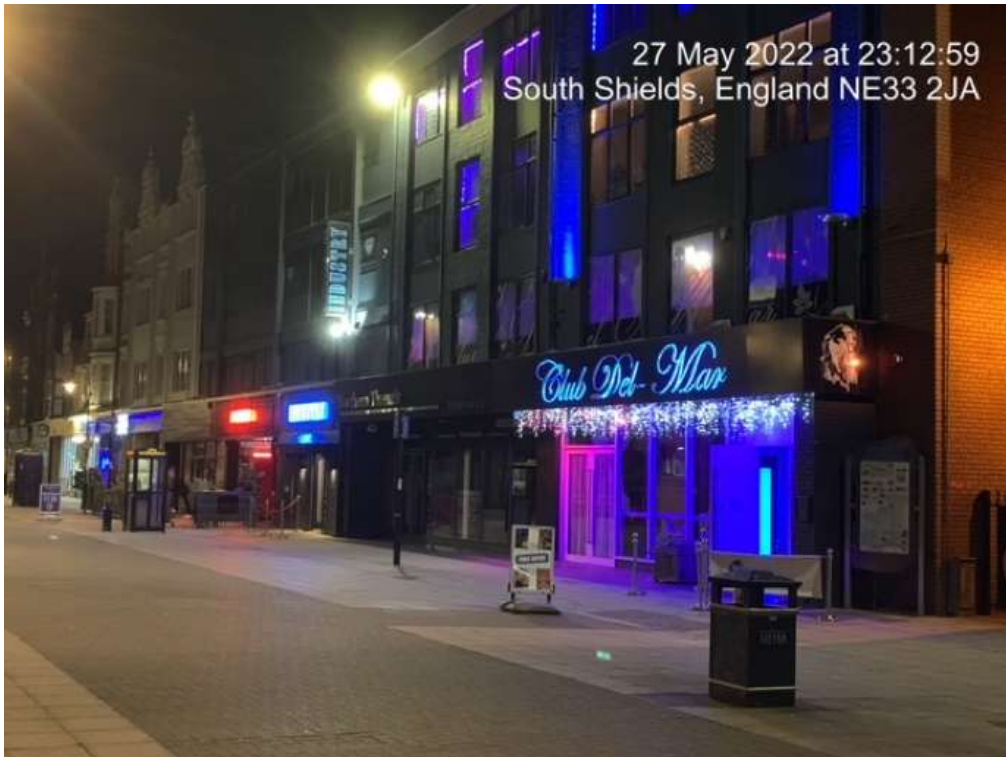


Image C15

23:12hrs - Club Del Mar 12 Ocean Road



Image C16

23:13hrs - Club Del Mar 12 Ocean Road

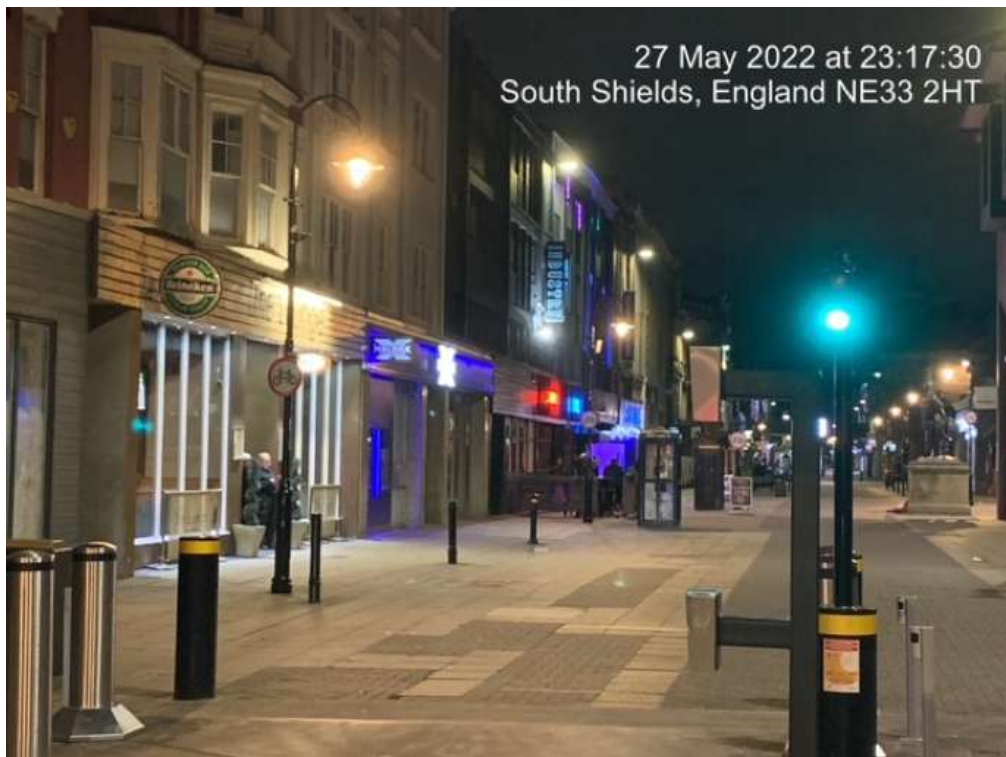


Image C17

23:17hrs - Ocean Road looking west towards The Lounge, Arbeia Bar and Industry Nightclub.



Image C18

23:20hrs - Roxanne's Nightclub Ocean Road



Image C19

00:16hrs - Roxanne's Nightclub Ocean Road



Image C20

00:18hrs - Ocean Road looking west



Image C21

00:22hrs - Ladbrokes Bookmakers & Chicken N Grill,
Ocean Road J/W Fowler Street



Image C22

00:22hrs - Mile End Road looking north



Image C23

00:28hrs - King Street looking west towards Merkur Slots.

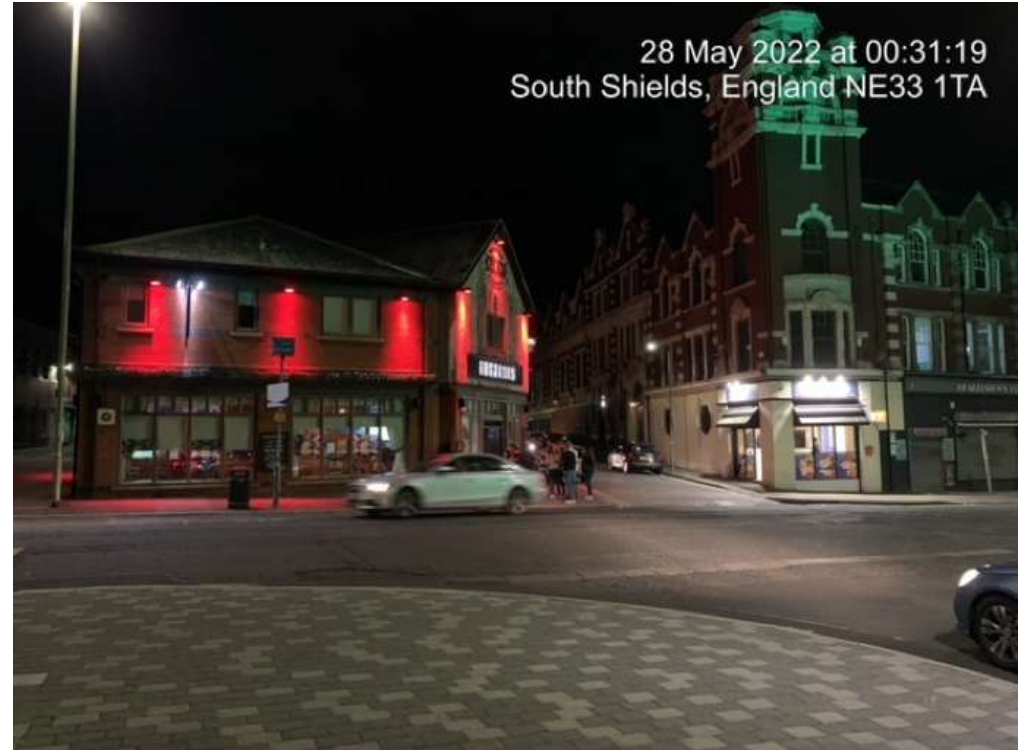


Image C24

00:31hrs - Hogarths PH and Burger Bar Mile End Road



Image C25

00:32hrs - Life of Riley Mile End Road



Image C26

00:33hrs - The Wouldhave PH Mile End Road



Image C27

00:36hrs - Footway immediately outside
Life of Riley Mile End Road



Image C28

02:45hrs - Footway immediately outside
Life of Riley Mile End Road



Image C29

02:45hrs - Hogarths PH Mile End Road



Image C30

02:45hrs - Burger Bar Mile End Spice Mile End Road



Image C31

02:47hrs - Crossroads looking west along King Street



Image C32

02:47hrs - Crossroads looking east along Ocean Road



Image C33

02:47hrs - Crossroads looking south along Fowler Street



Image C34

02:51hrs - Ocean Road looking east towards open nightclubs.



Image C35

02:54hrs - Late Night Takeaways in Ocean Road



Image C36

03:01hrs - Merkur Slots King Street



Image C37

03:02hrs - Rear of Merkur Slots in Queen Street



Image C38

03:04hrs - Arba Pizza 37 Mile End Road



Image C39

03:05hrs - Footway immediately in front of
Life of Riley Nightclub Mile End Road



Image C40

03:06hrs - Burger Bar Mile End Spice 10 Mile End Road



Image C41

03:37hrs - Life of Riley Nightclub looking south along Mile End Road



Image C42

03:46hrs - Roxanne's Nightclub 56 Ocean Road



Image C43

03:48hrs - Industry Nightclub 18-29 Ocean Road



Image C44

04:00hrs - Taxi Rank, Anderson Street (A183)
looking north towards Ocean Road



Image C45

04:49hrs - Late Night Takeaways Ocean Road
- now closed



Image C46

04:50hrs - Roxanne's Nightclub Ocean Road



Image C47

04:51hrs - The Lounge 30-32 Ocean Road



Image C48

04:51hrs - Arbeia Bar 16 Ocean Road



Image C49

04:51hrs - Industry Nightclub 18-26 Ocean Road



Image C50

04:52hrs - Ocean Road looking towards King Street and the crossroad junction



Image C51

04:53hrs - Mile End Road looking north from the crossroads



Image C52

04:53hrs - Fowler Street looking south from the crossroads



Image C53

04:55hrs - King Street looking west
towards Merkur Slots



Image C54

04:55hrs - Merkur Slots 48 King Street



Image C55

04:56hrs - Merkur Slots 48 King Street



LEVECHE
ASSOCIATES LIMITED

Appendix D

Observation Images

28/5/2022

Merkur Slots

48 King Street

South Shields

NE33 1HZ

Leveche Associates Ltd

Nightingale House

46-48 East Street

Epsom

Surrey KT17 1HQ

28th May 2022



Image D1

13:01hrs - Fowler Street looking south
from the crossroads



Image D2

13:01hrs - Mile End Road looking north
from the crossroads

28th May 2022



Image D3

13:01hrs - King Street looking west
from the crossroads



Image D4

13:01hrs - Ocean Road looking east
from the crossroads

28th May 2022



28 May 2022 at 13:22:34
South Shields, England NE33 1HZ



28 May 2022 at 13:26:06
South Shields, England NE33 1DH

Image D5

13:22hrs - Merkur Slots 48 King Street

Image D6

13:26hrs - Merkur Slots Toilet Checks Record

28th May 2022



Image D7

13:43hrs - King Street looking west towards Merkur Slots



Image D8

13:48hrs - Admiral Casino King Street

28th May 2022



Image D9

14:03hrs - Hogarths PH Mile End Road



Image D10

14:04hrs - South Shields Bus & Metro Interchange