

1 September 2006

Nick Crowther
Casino Advisory Panel Secretariat
Department for Culture, Media and Sport
2 – 4 Cockspur Street
LONDON
SW1Y 5D

Dear Mr Crowther

Owned by Murray International Holdings, Scotland's largest privately owned company with 3,500 employees worldwide, Rangers Football Club has been an active member of the Govan community for over a century.

We have witnessed at first hand the areas decline from a bustling world renowned centre of expertise in shipbuilding and heavy engineering to one of the most deprived places in Europe with an unemployment rate of 14%.

Over the years we have joined with other members of the Govan community and local and national government agencies helping to pursue a number of initiatives aimed at halting the economic decline and today are active supporters of the Govan Initiative.

In 2003 when Glasgow City Council invited us to partner with them in identifying new initiatives to regenerate large areas of the local community we readily agreed.

Working together with the local community in the form of the Ibrox Community Trust and local councillors we identified a £200m master plan for the Hinshelwood area which will transform the site and regenerate the wider local community. The Regional Casino will be the catalyst for the master plan which will provide homes, new retail facilities, a hotel and conference centre alongside new and enhanced social amenities. We have identified private sector funding and have partners for all of the proposed facilities.

The centre piece of the leisure and recreation complex will be a regional casino and we have entered into a joint venture with entertainment company Las Vegas Sands (LVSC) with whom we will work to ensure our plans come to fruition.

The master plan received planning permission from Glasgow City Council in September 2005.

We actively support Glasgow's application for a regional casino believing that it will provide a unique opportunity to significantly enhance the quality of life in and around Govan while enhancing Glasgow's reputation as a single tourist destination and its role as a gateway to Scotland's wider tourist attractions.

Regeneration

The case for the regeneration benefits which would accrue to Glasgow from the siting of a regional casino within the city will be made by others from within the city council, the business community and the local population. Rangers believe that working in partnership with LVSC, the city council and, crucially, the local community we can transform the Govan area of the city into an economically viable and socially advantaged area, whose benefits will spread throughout the city and into the wider Scottish community.

Opportunity for all

Regeneration will not be achieved solely through bricks and mortar.

Long term sustainable regeneration will only be achieved by ensuring that local people are given the opportunity to be part of, and benefit from, regeneration projects. We must aim to instil optimism, confidence and a sense of citizenship into those who are currently economically inactive.

Rangers, working with our partners and the local community, will establish certified training courses at local colleges which will equip students with both an understanding of the employment opportunities on offer and a formal qualification, confirming successful completion of the course.

The course curriculum will be based upon the actual job specification of the roles available and an appreciation of the entertainments industry. This will ensure job applicants from the local community will be well prepared for their job interviews, which will be conducted locally in conjunction with the local development agency.

In support of this initiative LVSC have committed that 50% of the jobs offered by the Regional Casino will go to people from within the Govan travel to work area.

Personnel development

To help ensure long term sustainability it is important to have an ongoing personnel development programme, which refreshes and upgrades the skills of all employees. Our partners, LVSC has a dedicated training schedule for employees designed to nurture and enhance individual growth, opportunities, skills, abilities and levels of expertise.

Employees are empowered with a skill set, which is recognised by the gaming and leisure industries worldwide, allowing the individual to move to other organisations or geographics.

Tourism

As a name known throughout the world, Rangers play their part in attracting tourists to Glasgow mainly through the growing 'Sporting Weekend' market. This involves visitors spending a weekend in the city with a visit to a match at Ibrox Stadium as the centre piece of their stay.

LVSC owns and operates the Venetian Casino Resort and the Sands Convention Centre in Las Vegas. It also owns the Venetian Macao Limited, a developer of multiple casino hotel resort properties in the People's Republic of China's Special Administration Region of Macao.

Rangers and LVSC can therefore bring both a National and International perspective to Glasgow's and indeed Scotland's tourist Industry.

Rangers and LVSC will use their UK and global marketing power to promote Glasgow and Scotland as tourist destinations.

We believe that by establishing an internationally recognised standard in Glasgow, we will help Scottish tourism raise the standard throughout the country.

Addiction – research and measurement

We are conscious of and sensitive to the concerns raised in some areas around the issue of problem gambling. While we do not accept that casinos in themselves cause gambling addiction we will approach the issue responsibly and work with the Council to identify and support a Glasgow wide response to this issue.

Our partners, LVSC have funded research into the topic of problem gambling at a number of leading universities. This research will be made available to our community partners.

Community benefits

In addition to the economic benefits, of 1,600 full-time jobs a further 600 jobs will be created during the construction phase. Rangers will add to these figures with their own additional projects of hotel, conference and banqueting venue, fitness centre and further retail developments. We, at Rangers, and our partners at LVSC, believe that the development of the regional casino complex will provide the opportunity to boost the economic well being of the wider Govan community and be the driver of the resultant improvement in the health and social conditions of those within the local community and further a field.

To help ensure this end, we have been working with the local community to identify a range of facilities, which will benefit the local community in both the short and long term. The contribution made by the local community representatives has and will continue to be invaluable as we refine and advance the master plan.

While this is still work in progress and our discussion and consultations with the local community are on-going, we have delivered an extended master plan to the city council, which seeks to create a range of facilities which will support Glasgow's bid to be the host city of the 2014 Commonwealth Games, while providing opportunities for all members of the community, irrespective of age or ability level, to embrace the concept of a healthy lifestyle.

We share a vision with the community of a Govan which offers economic and employment opportunities complimented by a range of leisure and sporting facilities where individuals and families can enjoy their free time in ways which enhance their health and quality of life.

The Gambling Bill linking the regeneration of deprived areas with the granting of a regional casino license offers a unique opportunity to the Govan community to return to its former glory.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Martin Bain', with a large circular flourish at the end.

Martin Bain
Chief Executive

cc: Valerie Curtis
Kate Rounce