

Ms Valerie Curtis
Head of the Casino Advisory Panel Secretariat
Department for Culture, Media and Sport
2 - 4 Cockspur Street
London SW1Y 5D

10 August 2006

Dear Ms Curtis

The regional casino at Greenwich at the heart of a flagship leisure and entertainment development within the Thames Gateway

I am writing to request that TGLP is invited to participate in the EIP on 30 August 2006 to discuss the possible location of a regional casino at Greenwich in the Thames Gateway.

The Thames Gateway London Partnership is the sub-regional regeneration partnership for the London area of the Thames Gateway. We focus on the whole of the Thames Gateway London, articulating at London and national levels the opportunity which Thames Gateway presents and the pressing needs which must be addressed so that the area lives up to its potential. We are an effective public-private partnership, working closely with our private sector colleagues (such as Ford and Canary Wharf). TGLP is supported by all 12 local authorities in the Thames Gateway London area (and including Dartford), by our five universities, by our local Learning and Skills Council and by our strategic health organisation. Where there is value in co-ordinating effort sub-regionally, we take the lead, complementing the work of our partners at local level.

We support the proposal for locating a regional casino in Greenwich and would like to participate in the discussion at the Examination in Public and make the following points:

1) London Moving Eastwards

The Thames Gateway London area is one of the largest regeneration projects in Western Europe. It is the main regeneration priority for the Government and Mayor of London. The area is key to accommodating London's projected growth over the next 20 years. This is estimated to include the need for around 200,000 new homes in the Thames Gateway area. It is essential that there are jobs, new services and facilities alongside the growth of homes and population.

The Greenwich Peninsula development is a major mixed-use scheme providing a new leisure and entertainment destination at the O₂, formerly the Millennium Dome, a commercial district creating 24,000 new jobs and over 10,000 new homes. This is a vital project within the Thames Gateway, well located, and far advanced in its implementation. It is a key driver of the process of shifting London's centre of gravity eastwards.

It is essential that the Peninsula development is successful. A key component in its success will be the creation of a world-class leisure and entertainment destination. The inward investment brought by a regional casino would deliver a new hotel, theatre and other entertainment facilities that would underpin the whole development and provide a critical mass of attractions ensuring the sustainability of the whole project.

In turn, the success of the Peninsula project will act as a catalyst for other developments further east along the Thames.

2) Jobs, Training and Skills

The Peninsula is located at the confluence of a number of areas suffering high levels of deprivation. Large parts of Tower Hamlets, Newham, Hackney and Greenwich all feature in the list of the worst 10% of areas suffering multiple deprivation in the UK.

The creation of these new jobs will provide genuine opportunities for local people. New training schemes will be provided and job brokerage schemes will be used to ensure that jobs are filled by local people. The area suffers from a low level of skills and this project will be used as part of a programme to raise the skill levels of residents within the area.

3) Changing the Image of the Gateway

East London has been seen as London's back yard containing most of its heavy industry and bad neighbour uses. This image needs to change if the Gateway is to be successful. People must want to come and visit and live in the area.


Dramatic improvements are already in place with the development of Canary Wharf, the ExCel Exhibition Centre and London City Airport. But more needs to be done. The development of a major world-class leisure destination with the country's first regional casino on the Peninsula will raise the profile of the area and create a cluster of major attractions and infrastructure that will support significant tourism in the area in the build-up to the London Olympic Games in 2012.

The casino development provides immense benefits in terms of leveraging private sector investment and generating local employment and tourist spend. This benefit takes place:

- At the local level to provide an key anchor to the Greenwich Peninsula development and local authority area.
- At the sub-regional level, as the development is located in the heart of the London Thames Gateway which is the largest regeneration area in Western Europe and is a national priority. The economic benefits of the casino will therefore be dispersed throughout the boroughs in the London Thames Gateway, which suffer from high deprivation.
- At the London level, as a major component of the leisure and tourism industry which accounts for 10% of the capital's economy. The development will cement London's status as a World City for the twenty-first century.
- At the national level as The O₂ is a venue for the 2012 Olympics and its leisure events and shows will be unique to the UK.

I hope this is helpful in summarising the reasons for the Partnership's support in the context of the EIP. I am copying this to Frances Dolan, Director of Strategic Planning, Greenwich Council.

Yours sincerely



Eric Sorensen
Chief Executive