

Ms J Bransby
Secretary to the Casino Advisory Panel
Department for Culture, Media and Sport
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Date: 9 December 2005

Dear Ms Bransby

Thank you very much for your letter to Torbay Council of 11 November, 2005 and for confirmation of the potential of 17 new casinos of various sizes in Great Britain. Your letter has been passed to me in the Torbay Development Agency. My organisation has responsibility for the economic regeneration of Torbay, and I write to confirm that we believe that the assignment of one of the casinos to our area would have a significantly beneficial effect on our regeneration efforts.

It is our belief that the resort areas of the UK with an established visitor profile, and with the appropriate tourism infrastructure, accommodation and support facilities, are well placed not only to deliver the casinos effectively, we also have considerable regeneration benefit to gain from them.

Torbay has a very considerable commitment to tourism with over one third of the employed population directly engaged in the industry. We acknowledge that almost all UK resorts have suffered declining visitor numbers over the last thirty years, but take pride in the fact that Torbay has suffered very much less than almost all other resorts. We base the success of this industry very much upon the outstanding natural beauty of the bay, but also on the reputation of our tourism offer which is encapsulated in our brand – the English Riviera.

It is also has to be acknowledged that this reputation based upon the sophistication of the resort and the "Riviera" image has been tarnished in recent years by a decline in our built environment and slippage in our overall quality standards. This period has coincided with the loss of some of our most prestigious manufacturing base (Nortel, Bookhams) leading to quite poor economic performance and increasing levels of deprivation in some wards.

This deterioration has been acknowledged by Torbay Council through the formation of the Torbay Development Agency in 2003 with the very specific goal of the economic regeneration of Torbay. Considerable progress has already been made, and we have enjoyed the support of the Government Office South West, and the South West Regional Development Agency in investment into upgraded public realm, and the development of major capital investment programmes. It is within this context of regeneration that we feel that a new style casino will have an ideal fit.

We have already identified two prestige locations in Torquay that would be entirely appropriate. We also already have all of the core infrastructure associated with our current tourism industry. Most of all, we are convinced that the asset of a major casino would have an ideal fit with both the ethos of the "English Riviera" and the quality and sophisticated tourism offer that we are anxious to restore, and for which Torbay is rightly famous.

On behalf of Torbay Council I would therefore request consideration for either one large casino (preferred) or one small as second choice. We have already identified this request to both GOSW and the SWRDA who have remained extraordinarily supportive of our regeneration proposals. We will follow as requested with a formal proposal by March of next year. In the meantime perhaps you would provide details of the composition of the proposal that will be required in March, and such other details as we will need to complete a formal application.
With our thanks

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R Morgan', written over a white rectangular area.

R MORGAN
Chief Executive

cc Elizabeth Raikes, Chief Executive, Torbay Council
Nick Bye, Elected Mayor, Torbay Council
Councillor Jeanette Richards
Councillor Gordon Jennings