

Chesterfield

1 Type of area

- **Please provide details of BME representation in the local population**

The 2001 Census indicates that people classified as BME make up 1.9% of Chesterfield's population. This compares to 1.5% BME representation in Derbyshire as a whole. The largest ethnic group was classified as 'mixed' (0.7%) followed by 'Asian or Asian British' (0.6%).

There are a number of organisations representing a variety of BME groups in the Chesterfield area with whom the Council has well established links.

2 Social Impact

- **Have you reviewed the potential social impact of a large casino and if so may we have sight of the findings and any policies you have or are developing?**

Whilst a full independent review of the potential social impact of a large casino has not been carried out, the draft East Midlands Development Plan (RSS) requires that a full assessment of social, environmental and economic impact is carried out. The council is keen that the review of social impact is one of the first pieces of work to be undertaken should Chesterfield Borough progress through the shortlist stage.

It has not been possible to do this work in the short timescale since Chesterfield has been added to the shortlist, so in some respects we are at a disadvantage. However, discussions within the council and with the site owners have concluded that an independent organisation should be appointed to carry out a full, detailed review of the potential social impact that the development of a large casino might have on the surrounding area. The review will go further and assess the impact of the casino as part of a regional destination resort, for example, the effect of the casino on other elements of the resort that might be considered to be family oriented.

In order for this review to be considered independent, the council will enlist the help of the Chart Local Strategic Partnership, of which the council is a partner, to commission and oversee the work of the review. It is anticipated that the CHART LSP will manage the tendering process to ensure an appropriately qualified and independent organisation is selected to carry out the review. The CHART LSP will then oversee the delivery of the review with regular feedback meetings between themselves and the chosen consultant. The consultant will report their findings to the CHART LSP. These findings will then influence the development of the casino.

It is hoped that the findings of the review will be presented in such a way that will provide ideas for practical ways to help mitigate the potential

negative social impacts whilst drawing out the positives in order that they are capitalised on.

- **As the pattern of social impact for a large casino is said to differ from that of a regional casino what would you regard as the main catchment area for a large casino in the Chesterfield area?**

Whilst it is not anticipated that a large casino will attract as many visitors, from as far afield as a regional casino, the proposal to locate a large casino on the edge of the Peak District and as part of a regional destination resort will provide a wider catchment than a large casino located independently in for example, a town centre location, which might attract the majority of its visitors from a relatively local catchment area.

As a resort destination with its advantageous position on the edge of the Peak District it is expected that visitors will travel from around the country to utilise the facilities on offer at the resort. Whilst not all visitors will stay at the resort with the sole purpose of visiting the casino, many visitors will incorporate it into their stay. In addition, as part of a larger resort, it is anticipated that day visitors will travel from around a 2 hour drive time to use the casino and other facilities on offer.

3 Need for regeneration

- **It is stated the proposal for a regional casino will be the catalyst to the development of a far larger regional destination resort which has the potential to deliver transformational change in an area of significant regeneration need. As an alternative to a regional casino, what do you consider are the main benefits to regeneration that could be achieved by a large casino in your area?**

A large casino has the potential to deliver significant regeneration benefits for Chesterfield. These regeneration benefits are similar to those for a regional casino, for example diversification of the economic base, delivering a positive change in the image of the area, employment creation and skills training opportunities for local people. The key difference between a regional and large casino is the scale of benefits delivered. The original market appraisal, undertaken on behalf of East Midlands Tourism, envisaged an overall employment impact of 2,500 for a regional destination resort (incorporating a large casino) as opposed to over 4,000 for a resort including a regional casino.

Following the initial failure to secure a position on either the regional or large casino shortlist, the developer has modified the proposal to support the delivery of the resort on a phased basis. It must be noted that later phases of the development could be adversely affected should the Council be unsuccessful in securing the right to licence a large casino. The proposed phasing is set out under the following question, including

estimates of the direct employment impact associated with the revised scheme.

- **It is stated in the proposal that a regional casino “can therefore catalyse a significant reduction in local unemployment levels, perhaps moving us from a relatively worse position compared to the regional average, to a relatively better than average position”. The proposal also provided information relating to direct and multiplier effects of a large casino rather than a regional casino with an assessment of the GVA impact and employment gain arising from the resort development if it contained a large casino rather than the regional casino. Are the resort development employment gains wholly dependent on the large casino?**

The resort development employment gains are not wholly dependent on the large casino, but are linked to them in terms of increasing the visitor appeal (and therefore viability) of the wider resort package. The first phase, for which detailed planning permission is to be submitted in the next few months (having already secured outline planning permission), incorporates the following elements:

- 250 woodland lodges each accommodating up to 4 people.
- The PGA (Professional Golfers Association) National Academy, 18 hole championship golf course, 9 hole practice course and golf clubhouse with a 25 suite hotel.
- A wellness spa and sports clinic.
- A 50 unit ‘apart-hotel’, providing 150 rooms in total.

A large casino would form the basis of a second phase of development and this in turn would facilitate the development of a 300 room hotel and conference facilities. A final phase of development would incorporate a waterpark, urban extremescape facility and further hotel accommodation.

In terms of employment, the developer has estimated that phase 1 will directly support in the region of 300 FTE (Full Time Equivalent) jobs. It is estimated that the following phase, incorporating the large casino, could create a further 700 jobs on-site. This figure has been calculated on the basis of 350 employed by the large casino (figure provided as part of original market appraisal undertaken on behalf of East Midlands Tourism), 300 employed at the hotel (based on 1 job per room) and 50 people employed in connection with the conference facility. It is accepted that the 350 jobs associated with a large casino is a ‘best-guess’ and it is not our intention to claim that a large casino will directly employ more people in Chesterfield than it would elsewhere.

In addition to direct job creation, the resort will generate additional economic activity in the wider area through the local purchase of goods and services, visitor spend outside of the resort, and the associated

multiplier effects. An example of the potential additional benefits is provided by a recent inquiry to Council from a company specialising in the construction of lodge-style accommodation looking to re-locate to the area and create approximately 40 new job opportunities.

4 Willingness to licence

- **Are you yet in a position to report on the extent and outcome of local consultations occurring as part of the process leading to the adoption of a Licensing Policy Statement?**

The Council is currently consulting on its draft licensing policy statement with the consultation period due to close at the end of November. A report will then be taken back to council incorporating a summary of responses. A copy of this report can be forwarded to the CAP when it becomes available.

- **Several statements in your proposal suggest a preference for a specific site. Could you please confirm the Council's intention to hold a competition in accordance with the provisions of the Gambling Act**

The Council is fully committed to holding an open competition to award the licence to operate the casino in accordance with the provisions of the Gambling Act. Whilst the Council has a preference for a particular site, the owner / developer of that site is not tied into any agreement with a specific casino operator.

5 Probability of Implementation

- **The proposal suggests that with the significantly reduced revenues arising from a large casino there is "a question mark over the deliverability of the wider scheme" and it is further stated that the scheme "might still go ahead". Please provide further specific evidence to support the probability of implementation of a large casino regardless of any potential wider scheme.**

As noted above, the Council's preference is for a casino to be co-located alongside other leisure based activities to create a regional destination resort in an 'edge of urban area' location. This preference is based on the belief that any negative social impact associated with a casino can be both minimised and better managed in this particular location. However this preference will not prevent the Council from giving full and proper consideration to developer proposals for alternative sites, should such proposals come forward.

Notwithstanding the above, there is strong probability that a large casino can be delivered in the preferred location as part of a wider scheme. The developer has demonstrated commitment by continuing to progress the proposal despite Chesterfield not being initially shortlisted for a casino. Whilst it is true that success with a regional casino would have enabled the whole development to have been built in a single phase, the developer has made it clear that the proposal can be delivered on a phased basis. The

developer is currently working towards the submission of a detailed planning application for phase 1 of the scheme incorporating the golf academy, health spa, sports clinic and hotel / lodge accommodation. The developer has commitments from operators for each of these elements, which will progress to management contract, subject to the developer successfully securing detailed planning permission (having already secured outline planning consent).

6 Regional context

- **In what way does the location described in this proposal fit well with the RSS? Please support your answer with relevant extracts for the RSS.**
- **What is the current status of RSS in the Region?**

The Draft East Midlands Regional Plan (the RSS) was published on the 28th September 2006. The public consultation period runs until December 2006 followed by an Examination in Public in May 2007. It is intended that the final Regional Plan will be issued in early 2008.

The draft Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) contains a number of policies which are relevant to our proposal. These include 'Policy 8 – Regeneration of the Northern Sub-Area' which highlights the economic, social and environmental regeneration of the Northern Sub-Area as a regional priority (the Northern Sub Area comprises the former North Derbyshire and North Nottinghamshire Coalfield). This will be achieved by 'significantly strengthening the Sub-Regional Centres of Mansfield-Ashfield, Chesterfield, Newark and Worksop by providing new jobs, houses, services and facilities in and around their urban areas'. The RSS notes that the Northern Sub-Area has been subject to major industrial structural change and that whilst progress has been made in recent years to address this issue, 'it is crucial that the Sub-Area develops a viable new economic base that will support healthy and vibrant communities'.

The position of Chesterfield as a focus for regeneration is further reinforced by Policy 19 'Regional Priority Areas for Regeneration' which states that:

'Regeneration activity should be focussed on areas of greatest identified need. These include:

- The Region's Principal Urban Areas and Sub-Regional Centres that exhibit very high and concentrated levels of deprivation.
- The Northern Sub-Area, with its concentration of economic, social and environmental problems linked to the decline of the coal industry.'

The draft RSS contains a specific policy (Policy 22) on regional priorities for casino development. This states that:

'Local Authorities, *emda* and Sub-Regional Strategic Partnerships should work together to ensure that proposals for new casinos licensed under the 2005 Gambling Act benefit the regeneration areas identified in Policy 19 and are subject to a full assessment of social, economic and environmental impact'.

Whilst the supporting text does not reference Chesterfield specifically, reflecting the fact that the policy has been drawn up following publication of the initial shortlist, it is clear that Chesterfield, as a sub-regional centre (with a high level of deprivation) located in the Northern Sub-Area, would be a priority location for casino development under the terms of this policy.

The development of the larger regional destination resort is supported by Policy 24 'Regional Priorities for Tourism' which states:

'Local Authorities, *emda*, Sub-Regional Strategic Partnerships and other relevant public bodies should seek to identify areas of potential for tourism growth which maximise economic benefit whilst minimising adverse impact on the environment and local amenity. Measures should include:

- Provision for additional tourist facilities including accommodation close to popular destinations that have adequate environmental and infrastructure capacity;
- Improvements in the quality of existing facilities and services; and
- Improvements to accessibility by public transport and other non-car modes.'

Our proposal provides an 'ideal fit' with this policy given that Chesterfield is perfectly positioned to benefit from the further tourism growth associated with the Peak District and can physically accommodate additional leisure facilities and visitor accommodation without detriment to this environmentally sensitive resource.

The supporting text also notes that 90% of domestic tourists to the region are day visitors spending on average only £10 per trip. Increasing the proportion of visitors who stay overnight (and who as a result spend considerably more) is therefore seen as a regional priority.

- **In what specific ways does your tourism strategy indicate the need or opportunity for a casino?**

The Council does not have a separate tourism strategy. Tourism policies are contained in the Economic Development Strategy (2005-2015) which is a joint strategy with the neighbouring authority of North East Derbyshire District Council. The Strategy highlights the tourism strengths of the area (central location, existing tourism product etc) but also recognises

particular weaknesses such as a low tourism profile relative to other towns in Derbyshire.

The Strategy does not specifically reference the development of a casino as the document was approved in July 2005, prior to the casino application process. However the Strategy includes the core programme objective 'support the development of, and encourage investment in, the area's tourism product and infrastructure'. The annual Economic Development Programme (2006/07) includes an action in support of the regional destination resort 'work with the private sector to bring forward the Birchall Estate proposal'.

- What other projects have already emerged from these strategies that would support / augment the casino development? What is the programme for these projects and what is their status? What other projects are planned as a result of these strategies that would support / augment the casino development?**

The inclusion of tourism as a key element of the Economic Development Strategy recognises the potential growth in this sector. In addition to the tourism related activities highlighted in the original submission, a number of tourism projects have been developed in order to meet the aims of the Economic Development Strategy. These include:

Integrated Tourism Marketing Project (operational)	Delivers an integrated programme of marketing tools/events to raise awareness and take up of the North Derbyshire area as a tourist attraction.
Destination Management System & Marketing Initiative (operational)	Will build on the work that is currently undertaken through the Integrated Tourism Marketing project. Seeks to further develop the 'Peak District's Historic Border Country' brand through the provision of an expanded Destination Management System (DMS) and the introduction of banners on major gateway routes within the area.
Chesterfield Town Centre Events Programme (ERDF) (operational)	Seeking to provide a range of good quality cultural events within Chesterfield town centre to raise the tourism profile of the area. To include additional markets at key times of the year e.g. Bank Holidays, medieval market, august fireworks, well dressing and additional funds for the market festival.
Chesterfield Tourism Connectivity & Visitor Enhancement Scheme (operational)	Seeks to deliver a range of activity that will enhance the visitor experience and tourism connectivity of the area. Includes: Improving connectivity between the main public transport interchanges and town centre; Enhancing the heritage offer of the town through targeted improvements to street scene and improving public realm at key gateway locations; and Developing an integrated signage and interpretation scheme.

With regard to the broader economic development of the Chesterfield area, the council remains committed to the delivery of the initiatives outlined in the original submission to the Casino Advisory Panel. The most significant of which being development along the A61 Sheffield – Chesterfield – Alfreton corridor. This area has potential for a high quality, high density mixed use development, alongside the Chesterfield Canal and the River Hipper. Proposals include an ‘urban village’ centred around a new canal basin and up to 60,000 sqm of employment floorspace. Since the original submission progress on this scheme has moved forward with the creation of a joint company between Chesterfield Borough Council and the private sector land owners and developers. The Council’s preferred site for a regional casino lies two miles further north along the A61 corridor.

- **While the remit of the Panel is to consider local authority areas rather than specific sites, you choose in your proposal an area on the edge of the Peak District National Park. In respect of this location, do you wish to respond further to the policy preference in PPS6 for casinos to be located in town centres?**

The Borough of Chesterfield is a predominantly urban area located on the edge of the Peak District National Park, therefore any site chosen to locate a casino would be considered to be on the edge of the Peak District National Park.

The casino forms an integral and complementary part of a far larger regional destination resort which is wholly reliant on its particular location to be able to deliver the range of facilities that will appeal to both the leisure and business markets, thus increasing the overall attractiveness (and viability) of the scheme. Whilst the casino element alone could, in all probability, be accommodated in or on the edge of the town centre, it is the Council’s view that the potential negative social impacts associated with a casino can be both minimised and better managed in the preferred location. Although not a town centre location, the site could still be considered ‘sustainable’ as it is located on the edge of the urban area and within a transport choice corridor. The site is served by the local bus network and is only 3 miles from Chesterfield’s railway station. As part of a comprehensive Green Travel Plan, the developer has committed to running a shuttle bus service between the railway station and the resort.

7 Community benefits

- **Community benefits have been indicated but it is not clear if these related to a regional casino only. What is your assessment of the community benefits of a large casino? Please give any previous examples of the Council securing benefits through the planning process.**

- **The Authority's further submission refers to community benefits including improved infrastructure and a multi purpose community facility in Unstone. Will you provide more details of these provisions and confirm if they are envisaged in the case of a large casino?**

The community benefits outlined in the supplementary information supplied to the Casino Advisory Panel in August will remain as stated. This is as a result of the casino being part of a larger regional destination resort. The developer has expressed commitment to all of the community benefits as outlined below:

- Community Engagement and Pre-Employment Skills Development. This will include mentoring and basic employability skills, CV writing, application and interview support. Providing flexible, accessible skills development support packages deliverable in the community and aligned directly to the opportunities available at the resort. It also works to keep communities informed of sub-contracting tendering opportunities available on the site regarding aspects such as security, transport maintenance, catering etc.
- A joint initiative with the Chesterfield College and associated universities to provide accredited courses in the tourism and leisure industry. The college will deliver courses to provide local people with the skills and qualifications necessary to take advantage of employment opportunities in the tourism, leisure and hospitality industry.
- Wherever possible, labour and services will be sourced locally in the first instance. This will be ensured through a local labour market agreement which will form part of the Section 106 agreement. Local contractors will also be offered the opportunity to tender for contracts to deliver on site services. Wherever possible, the Source Derbyshire procurement initiative will be used. These initiatives will help to ensure that local companies and residents are able to take advantage of the economic benefits accruing from the scheme.
- The developers will contribute to Chesterfield's award winning *Per Cent for Art* scheme which requires developers to provide 1% of the development costs for public works of art.
- The developer will be required to improve the transport infrastructure of the surrounding area. In addition the developer will implement road safety improvements, improvements to rights of way, leisure footpaths and cycle routes. This has already been agreed as part of the Green Travel plan which accompanied the outline planning application and subsequent approval for the site.
- Local residents will benefit from preferential rates for the use of the leisure facilities at the site.

- As a result of the findings of the benchmarking survey, the casino operator will be required to contribute towards the cost of delivering Citizen Advice Bureau activity should the survey results prove that demand for services such as debt counselling have increased.
- The developer intends to become an integral part of the local community and as such intends to contribute to the well being of the community wherever possible. This will include, for example, sponsoring events which benefit the local community.
- The developer is committed to providing a multi-purpose community facility in the nearby village of Unstone.

The Council has a track record of securing community benefits through the planning process. Examples include: securing affordable housing provision as part of residential developments; the provision of an urban park and skateboard facility as part of a mixed use development; provision of on-site and off-site play facilities; improvements to local allotments; and the provision of cycle routes and footpaths.

8 Unique characteristics

- **It is noted that 22 million people visit the Peak District each year and that 35% of these stay overnight. What, so far as you now, is the annual number of visitor overnight stays in Chesterfield currently and what is the prospect of a significant increase of overnight stays as the result of a large casino being developed in the town?**

The latest tourism impact assessment (based on the STEAM model) estimated that there were 119,000 visitors to Chesterfield in 2005 who stayed one or more nights in serviced/non-serviced accommodation (the total number of visitor nights was 227,000).

There is a realistic prospect of a significant increase in the number of overnight stays as a result of the phased development of the regional destination resort.

Phase 1 of the scheme incorporates the following accommodation: 250 woodland lodges, an 'apart-hotel' comprising 50 3 bedroom units and a golf club house with a 25 suite hotel. Accommodation will be sold to individuals and investors on a long lease basis, with buyers able to let their unit as well as making personal use for weekends / longer stays.

Phase 2 / 3 would involve the further provision of 300 hotel bedrooms and associated conference facilities.

Phase 4 would involve the further provision of 300 hotel bedrooms.

The market appraisal of the original proposal, undertaken on behalf of East Midlands Tourism, provided an assessment of the likely visitor appeal of each of the main elements of the resort. The assumptions underpinning that appraisal have been applied to the revised accommodation profile to determine the number of overnight stays.

Phase 1

Woodland Lodges – 250 lodges at a four person capacity and adopting the 'conservative' scenario of 70% occupancy (the 'envisaged' scenario originally assumed 80% occupancy). Further assumption that 40% of lodges operate at full capacity (4 persons) and 60% at half capacity (2 person). This equates to 178,850 visitor nights.

Apart-Hotel – 50 three bedroom units and conservatively assuming 65% occupancy (the original 'envisaged' scenario assumed 75% occupancy). Further assumption that 40% of accommodation operates at full (6 person) capacity, 40% with 4 people and 20% with 2 people. This equates to 52,195 visitor nights.

Golf Club House – 25 hotel suites and conservatively assuming 65% occupancy. Further assumption that 80% will be double occupancy and 20% single (reflecting the leisure focus of the accommodation). This equates to 10,676 visitor nights.

Combining these three elements gives a total of 242,000 (rounded) overnight stays, linked to the first phase of the development.

Phase 2 / 3

Hotel – 300 bedrooms and conservatively assuming 65% occupancy. Further assumption that 65% will be single occupancy and 35% double occupancy to reflect the business focus of the hotel. This equates to 96,000 (rounded) overnight stays linked to the second phase of development.

Phase 4

Hotel – 300 bedrooms and conservatively assuming 65% occupancy. Further assumption that 80% will be double occupancy and 20% single occupancy to reflect the leisure focus of the hotel. This equates to 128,000 (rounded) overnight stays linked to the fourth phase of development.

Combining each phase of accommodation results in an additional 466,000 bed nights in Chesterfield, a 200% increase over the current level. Almost 100,000 of this total is facilitated by the provision of a large casino.

In terms of displacement, the market appraisal noted that the hotel leisure market was not over-represented in the East Midlands, particularly in the form of quality hotels offering a distinct spa-leisure product. A moderate

level of displacement may occur (for example people switching from existing hotel accommodation in and around the Peak District), however the consultants felt this would be restricted to around 25% of the market. In terms of business visitors, the consultants considered that the level of displacement could be around 40% due to a greater representation in the area.

The most obvious competition for the woodland lodges would be Center Parcs Sherwood Forest, however the consultants noted some distinct differentiating features between the two, with the Birchall Estate incorporating a golf course and having easy access to the Peak District. Also it was the view of the consultants that the number of proposed lodges did not represent a significant increase in terms of supply in the region and therefore assumed a regional displacement effect of 20%.

Applying displacement effects results in a net increase of 344,000 visitor nights for the region. Given limited range of current provision actually within the Borough, these displacement effects would be reduced if focussing solely on Chesterfield.

- **What could you do that would make your area more uniquely positioned vis-à-vis other similar areas wanting a large casino?**

Chesterfield is already uniquely positioned to maximise the benefits offered by a large casino:

It is centrally located with five of the country's six largest cities within a two hour drive time.

A former coalfield area but occupying a key gateway location on the edge of the Peak District National Park. The sites locational attributes offer the opportunity for tourism led regeneration without detriment to this environmentally sensitive resource.

The Peak District is a long established national visitor destination (22 million visits a year) and local access to this national customer base is a key distinguishing feature of our proposal.

The large casino forms one part of a regional destination resort which has the potential to deliver significant regeneration benefits for the wider coalfield area.

An identified site that already benefits from outline planning consent for a large scale leisure based attraction. A phased development proposal with a high probability of implementation.

The opportunity to test the social impact of casinos in an edge of urban, gated resort location.

Support from a range of organisations at local, county and regional level.