

Carlisle City Council

Proposal to the Casino Advisory Panel

March 2006

The information set out below follows the format of the 'Call for Proposals' paper issued on Jan 31st 2006 - sections 18-29

1 Type of Area

1.1 Description of the Area

Carlisle is a Cathedral City and county town of Cumbria. It serves an extensive but sparsely populated rural area of around 450,000 people that extends over much of Cumbria and the Lake District, into south-west Scotland and the northern Pennines.

Carlisle City Council is one of 6 District Councils in Cumbria. Its population is just over 100,000, 30% of which is rural. The District is over 1,000 sq kilometres and adjoins Dumfries & Galloway and Scottish Borders Council areas to the north, Northumberland to the east and the Solway estuary to the west. The northern edge of the Lake District National Park is within the 5 km of the District's southern boundary.

Carlisle is the hub of communications in the area. It is on the West Coast Mail Line and the M6 motorway. Carlisle Airport, although without scheduled services at the moment has been acquired by the parent company of Eddie Stobart Ltd., and substantial investment is planned.

Carlisle is an historic city with a 2000- year heritage and is the western gateway to Hadrian's Wall. It is the principal employment, retail and service centre on the west side of the country between Preston and Glasgow and will become the headquarters of the new University of Cumbria in 2007.

Over the past year Carlisle has been recovering from one of the most serious civil emergencies ever experienced in the UK. 2005 also saw the highest level of redundancies in the City for over a decade. The floods of January 2005, together with Carlisle's economic circumstances gave rise to the Carlisle Renaissance prospectus for the regeneration of the City that is referred to throughout this proposal. An explanation of Carlisle Renaissance begins in section 1.5 below.

1.2 The population base of the area

The population of Carlisle district is 103,500 [NOMIS mid-year pop. estimates 2004]. Population structure shows a higher proportion of the population is aged 60 or over [23.4% compared to 21.3% for the NW region] and a lower proportion of people under 14. [16.8% compared with 18.4% in the NW.]

Population change saw modest growth of 1.1% between 1994 and 2004, slightly lower than the rate of growth for Cumbria as a whole but better than the NW region which saw a decline of 0.2% over the same period.

Although Carlisle has a higher proportion of its working age population economically active than the NW [79.3% compared with 76.3%], it has a below average proportion of people [compared with the NW] working at higher level occupations and more people in 'elementary' occupations. [Annual Population Survey April 2004-March 2005 quoted by Pieda]

Unemployment - in terms of the claimant count – has traditionally been lower than regional and national levels. However the rate now stands at 2.4% for February 2006, up from 2.0% in Feb 2005. This is expected to rise further as people made redundant in 2005 begin to qualify for benefit.

There is a low proportion of Carlisle's resident working age population with higher level qualifications [19% at NVQ 4+] compared with regional and sub-regional benchmarks which both stand at 23.1%. However the proportion with NVQ 3 is relatively high at 18.4% compared with the NW at 14.8%. The proportion of people with no qualifications is also lower than the NW. [Local Area Labour Force Survey March 2003 – Feb 2004 quoted by Pieda]

Carlisle has a small proportion of its population from ethnic minorities with 97.8 of the resident population classifying themselves as 'white British' in the 2001 Census.

1.3 Tourism – vision and activity

An annual Tourism Priority Plan for the Carlisle & Hadrian's Wall Country area is produced in partnership with the industry locally. The Plan identifies the priorities for Tourism to 2010 including brand development, the retail and city centre experience, business tourism, events, Christmas, urban & rural heritage and infrastructure. [Carlisle & Hadrian's Wall Tourism Priority Plan 2005/06 pub Carlisle City Council]

Tourism revenue in the Carlisle district in 2003 was £105.39million. In the Urban area this was equal to £70.12million with £15.75million spent on Food, Drink and Recreation. Food, Drink and Recreation account for 448 FTE's (Full Time Equivalent) jobs in the urban area. Each year these figures increase by between 3% and 5% and are based on STEAM data collected in 2003 by Global Tourism Solutions UK Ltd. [Full details available from The Tourism Priority Plan 2005/06 – above].

In 2003 1,400 businesses [35.6% of all businesses] were in the 'Distribution, Hotels and restaurants sector' [Source ABI], and these employed 29.3% of

the working population – 15,300 jobs - [compared with 24.9% in the NW as a whole].[Source ABI]

The Cumbria Tourism Market Forecasts study, completed by Locum Destination Consulting outlines the changing markets for tourism showing the potential for growth. The Carlisle Visitor Profile (2002) shows that the majority of visitors to the city originate within 2 hours drive time. Carlisle's share of the tourism market in Cumbria has risen from 14.5% of the total trips in 2000 to 16.0% in 2003. Of the 15.5 million trips to Cumbria in 2003, 2.5 million were to Carlisle. By far the greatest number of Tourists visiting Carlisle are day visitors, comprising 81% of all trips, with 12% using serviced accommodation.

The City Council for many years has recognised that the quality of infrastructure is vital to Carlisle's tourism industry and improvements and continued maintenance are essential. Good access and accommodation, effective signing, clean streets, attractive street furniture and floral displays, good street-lighting, well-maintained toilets, good accessible car and coach parks all contribute to Carlisle establishing itself as a high quality tourism destination. These elements are fundamental to the enhancement of the visitors' experience and a key factor in attracting repeat visits and invaluable 'word of mouth' promotion.

The Council has actively sought to promote a number of initiatives to improve the prospects for the expansion of the Tourism Sector. These are being given added emphasis through Carlisle Renaissance. They include;

- Support for the provision of a four star hotel with a dedicated conference centre.
- Support the upgrading and development of Carlisle Airport
- Support, and liaison with, the relevant rail companies in relation to the enhancement of services into the City.
- Support the provision of strategic destination signing on M6 and support provision of new sign posting in the rural area.
- Support the provision of facilities for cyclists
- Encourage the continued upgrading of accommodation facilities and retain the use of nationally recognised inspections for classification and eligibility for inclusion in Carlisle's Holiday Guide and Carlisle's TIC booking service.
- Support for environmental improvements to historic sites and other key sensitive locations.

1.4 Local plans and strategies for the development of tourism, leisure or gambling in the area.

Policy EC15 of the Carlisle District Local Plan 2001-2016 [Redeposit Draft August 2005] recognises the importance of Tourism and states that

'Priority will be given for Tourism related development in the City of Carlisle in accordance with Structure Plan Policy EM15. Proposals supported in Carlisle and elsewhere where they contribute towards the economic and physical regeneration of an area provided the following criteria are met';

- 1 The scale and design of the development is compatible with the surrounding area; and

- 2 There would be no unacceptable adverse impact on the landscape/townscape; and
- 3 Adequate access by a choice of means of transport and appropriate car parking can be achieved; and [rural criteria 4 & 5 omitted],
- 6 The distinctive environment, culture and history of the area are safeguarded

A policy on Gambling is planned and is due to be submitted to Council in December 2006.

'Carlisle and Hadrian's Wall' is identified as a key 'development' brand in the NWDA Tourism Strategy for England's Northwest and the CTB's Destination Management plan, capable of being elevated to a primary 'attack' brand for the region through careful investment and development

Carlisle has also been selected by NWDA to be the subject of a study on how it can best realise its potential as a 'Heritage City'. This aims to show how heritage can be used to support the development of Carlisle as a visitor destination of regional and national significance and to stimulate and support economic regeneration. This work has been completed and its findings are being included in the development of the 'Carlisle Renaissance programme.

1.5 The principal needs of regeneration in the area

In January 2005, Carlisle suffered its worst floods in over a century. Over 2,000 homes and businesses were affected with the cost of damage estimated at more than £250M. In the aftermath of the floods, the City Council with support from a wide range of stakeholder partners at a local, regional and national level, including the ODPM, took the opportunity to establish a bold new vision for the regeneration of the City. This addresses the significant economic, physical and social challenges faced by Carlisle, both now and in the future.

As part of this process, we undertook to determine the principal needs of regeneration in Carlisle and the surrounding areas. All our partners were engaged in this process. From this we determined a set of strategic objectives which set out clearly where we should focus our regeneration activities. These are as follows:

- 1 Establishing Carlisle as a Learning City – the City suffers from poor levels of educational attainment at all levels and is a predominantly low skill, low wage economy. We intend to establish Carlisle as a Learning City, which is geared towards meeting the future needs of the economy where educational attainment is consistently improved with an expanded higher education sector and a focus on fostering entrepreneurial activity.
- 2 The City's economy needs to diversify. More than 1,100 jobs in the City were lost in 2005 and more have followed as a result of the floods, which continue to impact on investment decisions by the public

sector. Job losses and closures, particularly in the manufacturing sectors are a continuing trend. We are about to embark of the preparation of a new Economic Strategy for Carlisle and its City Region with the aim of strengthening the City's economic base by stimulating investment in higher added value businesses, new business creation and establishing sustainable growth clusters.

- 3 Tourism is a staple of the City's economy but it does not deliver the benefits in terms of employment business growth and image that it could. Tourism development has been broadly recognised as a growth sector, not only in Carlisle, but also in the Cumbrian sub region and the North-West region. It is therefore our intention to maximise the potential of Carlisle as a major destination for business and leisure tourism with a high quality tourism infrastructure and a range of cultural and leisure activities that build upon the City's unique heritage, environmental qualities and geographic location.
- 4 Several communities in the City suffer from high concentrations of deprivation where issues of long term unemployment and worklessness, poor health, a lack of access to services and crime and antisocial behaviour are growing. Recent evidence from the 2004 index of multiple deprivation has enabled us to build up a picture of need across Carlisle. Several urban Wards, particularly in the Central and Southern parts of the urban area, feature consistently at the top of several of the domains used to measure deprivation. It is our intention to focus attention on these communities to ensure that they are part of Carlisle's Renaissance, where individuals are capable of accessing new opportunities in education, training and employment and are able to secure tangible improvements in local housing, health, sport and other services.
- 5 We are currently undertaking a detailed exercise to establish a new Development Framework for the City Centre and a City-wide Movement Strategy. It is our intention to create a vibrant and bustling City Centre that helps to stimulate growth and projects a positive image of the City. We are also seeking to ensure that the revitalisation of the City Centre includes its expansion towards the South and the West to connect in with the City's most deprived communities as well as link the City Centre to the waterfront areas. We are working closely with the Environment Agency to ensure that their programme of flood defence works following last years floods are integrated with and accounted for in the expansion of the City Centre.
- 6 The City's infrastructure is struggling to meet the demands placed upon it. The road infrastructure in particular requires specific attention as well as efforts to improve the take up of public transport. Our aim is to improve movement into and around the City for all modes of transport and to promote sustainable development that reduces dependence on car travel. We also need to ensure that the infrastructure under the ground, particularly as it relates to the drainage infrastructure, is part and parcel of this process of regeneration. This element of the infrastructure had a significant part to play in exacerbating the flooding both in January 2005 and more recently in late 2005.

7 In terms of the City Centre specifically, we are focussing on the examples set through the Government's urban renaissance agenda and looking to introduce a mix of uses that are currently either under represented or for which the market has not yet made adequate provision. This includes the establishment or development of a City Centre office market and the introduction of facilities to attract a broader range of visitors, particularly business users. With this in mind, we are seeking to attract high quality hotel provision in the heart of the City Centre supported by conferencing, exhibition and other associated facilities. We will also be seeking to extend the City's retail offer, which is one of Carlisle's greatest strengths and a major draw for visitors along with our significant City Centre heritage assets.

1.6 Anything in the area which would make it a good ground for the testing of social impact.

Carlisle's relative isolation and current low level of gambling facilities may make it easier to isolate to impact of the casino than would be the case in more metropolitan areas. The effect on Tourism may also be easier to measure given the established performance measurement systems already in place.

2 Social Impact

2.1 What do you consider the social impact of your proposal will be?

The Council recognises that the development of a Casino may have negative social impacts. While it may extend Carlisle's 'offer' for recreation, leisure and tourism and provide jobs and training opportunities, there may also be an increased incidence of debt and addiction.

2.2 If your evaluation of some criteria are negative and some positive (for example economic and social criteria) how will you resolve this?

The Council will work with the Carlisle Advice Forum, whose membership includes statutory and voluntary agencies. These include the provision of Legal Services Commission 'Quality Marked' advice and information services which could be used to develop specific interventions related to gambling and debt.

2.3 What do you say to those who claim that the effects of your proposals would have a negative impact on social cohesion and the sustainability of your communities?

The negative impact on social cohesion can be minimised by the creation of tight controls and by the use of appropriate social support networks. The benefits of a casino can be measured not only by its impact on the entertainment and cultural offer but also by the financial benefits that can be diverted to social and welfare initiatives by the creation of a trust and/or Community Chest.

It would be the City Council's intention to work with the successful operator to ensure that there was a close working relationship with those agencies that may have to deal with the adverse affects of gambling. It would expect that on-going financial benefits from the Casino operation are made available not only to address the negative impacts but are also used positively in the wider community.

More specifically policies and action to combat potential negative impacts will be developed between the relevant statutory and voluntary agencies, including the City and County Councils, Police, Health Authority, Council for Voluntary Service, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Community Law Centre, Age Concern, Drug & Alcohol Support Agencies and Gamblers Anonymous, etc.

2.4 Existing and planned job creation and training programmes,

In partnership with the Carlisle Housing Association, a programme of training, personal development and employment experience is being piloted in the most deprived wards of Carlisle. The scheme, called 'Bringing Regeneration Home' is intended to tackle worklessness, poor life and social skills and has secured the support of several of Carlisle's larger employers. This programme is nearing the end of its first year and is undergoing evaluation. The City Council [which part funded the programme] is intending to support bids for continuation funding. Drawing from the experience of this project it should be possible use the casino to extend the range of work opportunities available to participants in the programme

2.4 Details of existing and planned relationships with relevant voluntary and public organisations which would support your social impact policies and activities.

The City Council has historically had strong working relationships with the community and voluntary sector and these relationships are managed through the Council's Community Support Unit. This Unit would take the lead in developing the relationship between the Casino operator and relevant community and voluntary agencies. The Council would also develop a formal plan and reporting mechanism to monitor the social impact and, if successful in obtaining a licence, would seek advice on the most effective way to do this.

3 Need for Regeneration

3.1 How do you expect your proposal to assist regeneration of your area and the wider area?

The Casino will help to extend and improve Carlisle's Leisure and Tourism offer and could also be instrumental in helping to improve the stock of accommodation in the area by being a catalyst for new hotel development. It will also support the development of the evening and night-time economies in Carlisle and add to the range of leisure and indoor attractions in Cumbria as a whole.

At a sub-regional level, the Cumbria economy is recognised as having been in decline for more than 15 years. During the 1990s gross domestic product

per head in Cumbria declined rapidly from a relatively healthy level enjoyed throughout the 1980s, when it had stood both above the European average and some 20% above the national average. By the end of the century it had fallen 20% below the national figure. This staggering deterioration was not a reflection of a downturn in the national or North-West economies. The Cumbrian decline was in stark contrast to Cheshire, for example, where gross domestic product per head rose from below to above average and to a position of 5th nationally

Moreover, the Cumbrian economy shows little scope to grow markedly in the immediate future. Major job losses in Barrow and on the West Coast over the past 20 years have not been replaced on any significant scale, and now more recent losses in Barrow, Ulverston and Kendal have further weakened the economic base. When those factors are added to the major losses in prospect in the nuclear sector at Sellafield in West Cumbria and the challenges faced as agriculture adapts to the changing support system and the EC Common Agricultural Policy, the precariousness of the Cumbrian economy is brought into further sharp relief.

If the performance of Cumbria is compared with all sub-regions of the EU including states recently added to enlarge European Union Cumbria is the only County in the UK in decline, but even more significantly is bracketed with but a handful of sub-regions in decline across Europe. The attached table illustrates the context.

GDP Growth (annual average % change), 1995-2001: Sub-Regions in Decline

EU Sub-Region	% Decline
Sud (Romania)	-2.3%
Sud-Est (Romania)	-2.0%
Centru (Romania)	-2.0%
Sud-Est (Romania)	-2.0%
Nord-Est (Romania)	-1.8%
Yuzhen Tsentralen (Bulgaria)	-1.7%
Sud-Vest (Romania)	-1.6%
Severozapad (Czech Republic)	-1.2%
Nord-Vest (Romania)	-1.2%
Berlin (Germany)	-1.0%
Cumbria (UK)	-0.9%
Moravskoslezsko (Czech Republic)	-0.7%
Guyane (France)	-0.4%
Vest (Romania)	-0.4%

Source: European Commission [taken from 'Sustainable Cumbria –the sub regional strategy for Cumbria Oct 2004 page 13. Produced by the Cumbria Strategic Partnership & pub by Cumbria CC. [www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/subregionalstrategy/]

In terms of sectors, tourism is one of the key priorities and in particular, improving the quality of tourism accommodation and the mix and range of tourism attractions. In terms of geographical priorities, Carlisle is clearly identified as one of the key areas of focus for Cumbria Vision¹ and they are

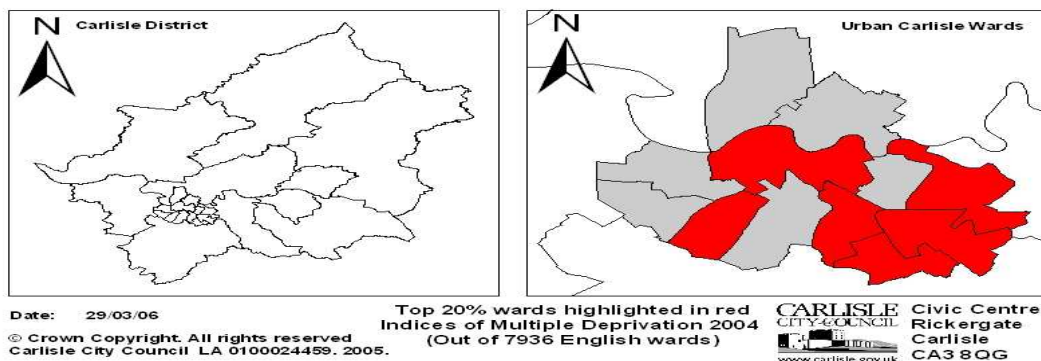
¹ Cumbria Vision is the partnership body tasked with the strategic co-ordination of economic development in Cumbria and the delivery of the economic elements of the sub-regional strategy and the RES in Cumbria

fully supportive of our objectives for the Renaissance of the City, particularly as they relate to tourism and its impact on the local economy. The opportunity to secure a licence for a casino will support and extend the tourism offer not just in Carlisle but in Cumbria as a whole.

The need for regeneration and economic growth is recognised in the Regional Economic Strategy for the North-west. Carlisle is identified as key town within the region, with significant growth and investment potential [Ministerial RES Submission pub NWDA Dec 05 pp 3,7,15,33, 36,48 and 51].

Within the Cumbria sub-regional strategy commissioned by the Cumbria Strategic Partnership, the need to develop Carlisle's potential and at the same time deal with the pockets of deprivation in the City, is recognised. Included within the 5 priorities for Carlisle is the improvement of its Hotel and Cultural offer [Sustainable Cumbria. Pub. Cumbria CC Oct. 2004 exec. summary p 21 www.cumbriacc.gov.uk/subregionalstrategy/]

3.2 Regeneration and Deprivation status



The maps above show the district area and the urban core. The map of the urban wards highlights in red the wards which are in the top 20% most deprived in England.

The combined population of these wards is approximately 34,200, which represents 34% of the total population of the district.

3.3 Additional economic value

No local work has been done on the economic value of a casino development to Carlisle. Using information from work commissioned by the NWDA², the indications are that the direct staffing profile for a 'large' casino could involved

² Casinos in England's North west – an assessment of market demand. Pion Economics June 2005.

some 400 staff with an annual salary bill of £6.7 million. In terms of goods and material purchases the indirect spending figures could be £9 million³

3.4 Are there parts of your area, the regeneration of which would particularly benefit from your proposal, and how would this come about?

The City Council recognises the need for regeneration initiatives that will benefit the areas with the highest IMD scores - as set out in paragraph 3.2 above. A programme of economic renewal for 'South Carlisle' has been worked up - of which the 'Bringing Regeneration Home' project referred to in paragraph 2.4 above was one element. Following the flooding in 2005 this programme is now being recast to enable it to be incorporated within Carlisle Renaissance. It is a specific aim of the Renaissance initiative to better connect these communities to the South and West of the City Centre so that the benefits of regeneration can be spread more widely. In addition employment and re-employment initiatives have been targeted at these wards - where most of the redundancies also impacted in 2005 - and it is the intention to secure funding to continue and develop these initiatives.

3.5 How and why do you expect that the "multiplier effect" of the additional economic activity to be created by your proposal would outweigh the potential leakage of money from the local economy?

The Pion report [Footnote below] suggests that where casinos are based in smaller localities the amount of expenditure that 'leaks' out of the local area will be higher because of the amount of goods and services that are sourced from outside the local economy. No work has been done in relation to Carlisle, but because of its isolated nature it may be reasonable to suppose that this may be less than would be the case for localities in more urbanised areas. It would be reasonable to assume that staff expenditure on housing and other localised services would be retained in the area.

3.6 Any other regeneration outputs and outcomes you are seeking to achieve from the development of a new casino.

Nothing further to add.

4. Willingness to licence:

4.1 Having regard to Section 166 of the Act, what strong evidence can you provide which demonstrates the willingness to license a casino in your area if it is selected?

The City Council debated the proposal to submit proposals to the Casino advisory panel at its meeting on March 7th and resolved as follows;

"RESOLVED – that the Motion of Councillor Mrs Bowman be agreed and the Director of Development Services respond to the Government's invitation and proceed to submit proposals to the Casino Advisory Panel indicating that Carlisle would wish to be considered as a location for casino development."
[Council resolution C62/06 March 7th 2006]

³ As Pion above pages 15 and 28

This report and debate generated some local press coverage. The local evening paper, the Evening News and Star and the weekly Cumberland News carried only a limited numbers of letters on the topic, most of which were in support. The Council debate did generate some opinions from Members concerned about the risk of gambling addiction and opposition on moral grounds.

Other than the press coverage no specific local consultations have been carried out, nor has any market research been done to test public opinion in more depth. However, the Council debate on the Casino followed an extensive public consultation during February 2006 on the Carlisle Renaissance prospectus when the need for regeneration in Carlisle was the subject of extensive public debate. Overall there appears to be public support on the need for change and, broadly, for the areas identified for regeneration.

The Local Strategic Partnership has not commented as it is in a period of change. Up to 2005 the LSP was a joint body with the neighbouring Eden District Council. By mutual consent this LSP has been dissolved and a Carlisle LSP is in the process of being formed.

The Council has not received any formal representations from national or local organisations for or against the Casino. There have been no letters from individuals other than those appearing in the press. The Cumbria Tourist Board, when asked for a view, provided an officer level note of support as follows;⁴

“Although we have not had the opportunity to raise the issue with the CTB Executive Board I am reasonably confident that it would want to support Carlisle's bid for the following reasons

- A casino would lead to an expansion of Carlisle's tourism offer
- It would provide some momentum for Carlisle's renaissance and act as a catalyst for other investment.
- It could help to support the development or redevelopment of a central hotel or leisure facility in the City
- It will provide a more diverse night time economy in the City
- A casino will provide a range of new jobs.

It would add to the range of leisure and indoor "attractions" in Cumbria. I am not aware of any rival bids from other parts of the County. However on the basis of its location and sub-regional role Carlisle would undoubtedly provide the most suitable and compelling location in Cumbria. It is a suitable distance from other potential Casino locations such as Blackpool, Newcastle and Glasgow.”

5. Probability of implementation:

5.1 Evidence can you provide to demonstrate the overall feasibility of your proposals?

The overall level of Tourism activity is set out in paragraph 1.3 above.

The City Council operates a bureau service on behalf of the Carlisle Conference Group with the intention of supporting the development of

⁴ E-mail from Richard Greenwood, Director of Development Cumbria Tourist Board 28.02.2006

business and conference visits to Carlisle. This shows evidence of a growing interest in Carlisle as a location for meetings and conferences. The Strategy for Tourism in England's North-West⁵ identifies Carlisle a location with 'strong conference and business tourism potential'. The availability of a casino would seem to add to Carlisle's offer as a business tourism destination.

The catchment area for comparison retail purposes is around 400,000 extending north to Dumfries and south to Ambleside/Kendal. This translates into a city centre footfall figure of 11.2 million for Jan – Dec 2004, an increase of 6% over the same period in 2003. The retail offer and the customer perceptions of Carlisle's City Centre are both very positive. The Pion study [footnote 2, page 10 above] concludes that 'major towns are feasible locations' for large casinos and on the basis of Pion's estimate of 1,500 to 2,000 visits per day, - this would seem to sit very well with Carlisle's level of City Centre activity.

5.2 Information on the criteria you would be using to identify appropriate and sustainable localities for the new casino,

The local planning policy context is being reviewed and the Council is progressing its Local Plan under transitional provisions. The plan recognises the need for regeneration of a number of areas around the centre of Carlisle but the emphasis is clearly on redevelopment of these areas in order to meet the sequential development tests of sustainable planning.

These sites would conform with the sequential tests in relation to retail, office and other uses but would also provide opportunity for a mixed use development including a casino.

There are a number of sites around the edge of the City Centre which are designated as mixed commercial areas. This designation would allow for sui generis uses including a casino should the location be appropriate. The nature of these areas caters for a variety of uses where residents still have the option of using alternative transport to the car for the central locations. This includes the already popular Botchergate area where entertainment and leisure uses have congregated. Alternatively there are other central areas as part of regeneration initiatives which could provide for a dispersal of night-time activities around the city centre.

Carlisle Renaissance is the vehicle through which proposals are being channelled to consider the most suitable land uses within a Development Framework and Movement Study. The detail being worked through the review of the local plan and subsequent LDF documents. Both the Framework and Study will be the subject of specific and extensive public consultation during Summer 2006.

It is easily anticipated that a large casino could be accommodated within the redevelopment of these city centre areas and could provide the mechanism to stimulate investment.

Given the scale of regeneration activities and the potential sites there are a number of options central to Carlisle that could be linked to development of a

⁵ Strategy for Tourism in England's North West pub NWDA June 2003[www.nwda.co.uk] para 3.6

casino. This includes the long-term plans for a higher quality hotel within the City into which a large casino could be integrated.

5.3 Existing and proposed transport infrastructure, so far as it would relate to your proposal

The City Council in partnership with the County Council is undertaking a City-wide Movement Strategy. As part of this strategy we are looking in detail at the implications on the transport infrastructure of development at a number of key transformational sites within the City Centre area, including a small number of sites that could be a potential location for the Casino. We will be undertaking detailed transport assessments for each of these sites for a mix of uses including residential, retail and particularly leisure use. Therefore, within the next six months we will have a reasonable understanding of the likely impact of large-scale development in these areas on the transport infrastructure and any requirement for additional transport infrastructure.

5.4 Current provision for gambling and competition issues.

There is currently no casino in Carlisle or within its catchment area.

It is acknowledged that Carlisle's current cultural and leisure offer needs to be enhanced. A study is underway on the feasibility of the development of a venue for the performing arts – looking in particular at a number of buildings that may be suitable for conversion. The Council's recent emphasis has been on the improvement of the athletics and sports provision. The casino would extend and enhance the choice of recreation for residents and would complement the current range of attractions for the Tourist. There are not seen to be any competition issues with other leisure activities.

5.5 Potential critical mass effect of a cluster

A key feature of our proposals for the revitalisation of the City Centre area, includes the potential to attract a range of leisure uses to increase the potential of the City to benefit from the visitor economy. Included in this are proposals for the establishment of a high quality hotel and associated conferencing and exhibition facilities. We would expect that a Casino opportunity would make it more likely for us to be able to attract such uses into the City Centre area, particularly as they might be expected to have a significant impact upon the viability of a hotel development. The City Centre currently has no four star hotels and therefore we would expect that in considering this site, potential operators could be encouraged by the financial opportunities offered by a Casino related development.

We are aware that for many Casino operators the close proximity of good quality hotel accommodation is an integral part of the offer. It is assumed that in seeking to maximise the usage of the Casino, operators would wish to locate within an area that contained a mix of associated facilities. These could broaden the appeal of the Casino and also present opportunities to attract a broader range of visitors to the casino and other leisure based activities.

5.6 Investment potential and level of investor interest

The Carlisle Renaissance prospectus has generated considerable investor interest in Carlisle, but clearly there has been no consideration of a casino provision to date. The proposals within Carlisle Renaissance are at the concept stage and issues of viability and levels of public sector intervention are being assessed.

The Council received one enquiry by a European casino operator in 2004 – before the Gambling Bill became law. This was exploratory in nature and no specific sites were discussed.

5.7 How would you anticipate gambling spend to change following the implementation of your proposal?

It is expected that the spend from gambling will increase but no studies have been carried out to assess the level of change.

6. **Regional and Local Context**

6.1 Regional Spatial Strategy [RSS] [currently in consultation]⁶

Carlisle is only one of three 'regional' towns and cities in Cumbria and North Lancashire. This indicates the importance of Carlisle in the settlement hierarchy in the north west as a sustainable location for new development in line with Policy RDF1.

In particular the RSS says that plans and strategies should support development to enhance the role of Carlisle as a Regional Town and City to ensure that the region continues to support a balanced network of strong and distinctive urban centres across the region. The RSS also aims to support development that would secure urban regeneration and economic growth.

RSS recognises the need to diversify the economy of Cumbria with an acknowledgement that there are prospects for growth in tourism in policies W1 and W6. Proposals should seek to deliver improved economic growth and quality of life through sustainable tourism activity. Policy W7 provides a number of principles for Tourism development and Carlisle is well placed to provide a location consistent with those principles.

RSS contains a specific policy for Regional Casinos. It is recognised that Blackpool is the preferred location for a casino for the north west region. In addition Manchester and Liverpool are seen as potential locations. Carlisle would not attempt to detract from the importance of these locations and is not seeking a Regional casino scale of development. Its location in the north west would be a prime opportunity to complement other proposals and cater for its own significant catchment.

⁶ Draft Regional Spatial Strategy – Draft Submitted North West Plan published for consultation from March to June 2006. [www.nwra.gov.uk]

The North West Regional Assembly has supplied the following text for inclusion in submissions;

“The NWRA, as Regional Planning Body for the NW supports the development of regional casinos in the following locations – Blackpool, Manchester and Liverpool with the preferred location for a single casino pilot being Blackpool. Outside of these locations the NWRA would expect casino development to be located within the key towns and Cities identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy [RPG 13] and to be within town centre location in accordance with PPS6 and in accessible locations in accordance with PPG13”⁷

6.2 Sub-regional context⁸

The spatial strategy supporting the Structure Plan includes a development emphasis towards the City of Carlisle and fostering the regional role. In particular policy ST8 promotes development in Carlisle, which would build on its role as a regional centre for business, commerce, shopping, leisure and tourism. The Structure Plan recognises that economic development in Carlisle should not be constrained below demand where this can be accommodated with environmental limits.

The Strategic regard to tourism proposals is to guide them to locations that enable the economic and physical regeneration of an area. However this should not prejudice the distinctive environmental, cultural and historic character.

6.3 Achieving regional economic objectives for employment, skills and regeneration

As set out in paragraph 3.1 above the Regional Economic Strategy strongly supports the development of Carlisle. It identifies growth opportunities for Carlisle - with Crewe, Chester, Warrington and Lancaster - as part of the overall vision for the region, complementing the emphasis on the metropolitan areas of the north-west identified in the Northern Way.

Carlisle's role in the sub-region as a potential driver of economic regeneration in Cumbria is also now acknowledged in sub-regional strategies.

7 **Community benefits**

Evidence from existing proposals for Casino developments in the UK suggests that the authority may be able to benefit considerably through Section 106 agreements and in particular, the opportunity to generate resources. This would not only be for on and off site infrastructure related to the development, but also to contribute towards our broader regeneration objectives, including skill development etc..

⁷ NWRA letter dated March 14th 2006 from Michael Gallagher, Director of Planning Housing and Transport

⁸ Based on 'Planning Cumbria' (Cumbria & Lake District Joint Structure Plan 2001-16 proposed modifications)

We would expect to acquire the developers of such a facility to make efforts to integrate into the local training infrastructure, providing construction training related opportunities and also to work with colleges in particular to develop pre-recruitment training programmes linked to employment opportunities created by the Casino and related developments.

8 Unique characteristics

The unique proposition for Carlisle lies

- in its geography - serving an extensive rural area,
- its location on the national communications network,
- the opportunities it presents in term of regeneration through Carlisle Renaissance,
- its community networks and relationships that will enable the impact of the casino to be monitored, and
- its Tourism potential.

§§§§

Proposals should be sent to:

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Email: Jane.bransby@culture.gsi.gov.uk

Who is also the contact with the Panel for any clarification needed.

