

GREAT YARMOUTH REGIONAL/RESORT CASINO

1.0 TYPE OF AREA

- 1.1 Great Yarmouth has a diverse maritime heritage based around activities such as fishing, shipping, offshore oil and gas etc, however since Victorian times the area has primarily been synonymous with the tourism, holiday, leisure and pleasure industry.
- 1.2 Great Yarmouth first started attracting visitors following the publication of Dr Russell's book 'Seawater – The Universal Cure' in the 1750's. However it was the introduction of the railways in the 1840's and 1850's that really propelled Great Yarmouth into the realms of mass tourism. In the early 1890's through to the 1940's Great Yarmouth developed its seafront infrastructure to create much of the resort we know today
- 1.3 Today the borough is the third most popular seaside destination in the UK, providing approximately 90,000 available bed spaces, accounting for over 5 million visitor nights per annum. Tourism in Great Yarmouth today accounts for 1.33 million staying visitors plus 3.7 million day visitors, generating a direct and indirect spend of £420 million per annum. This directly or indirectly provides 32% of all employment within the borough¹. The vast majority of tourism activity is between April and September which therefore creates a highly seasonal effect upon the employment and the local economy.
- 1.4 Visitor numbers peaked in the 1970s at over 12 million tourist nights. By the start of the 1990s this had fallen to just under 7 million and by 2003, just over 5 million. Although the figures now appear to be static there is a real risk that further decline will significantly affect the viability of many operators within the sector. Great Yarmouth's loyal, core markets are not high spending, and this lack of higher spend has stifled strong investment.
- 1.5 Great Yarmouth is located in the North- East of the East of England Region, and is approximately 120 miles from London. The population base is 92,435 for the Borough (OPCS – 2004). There is a 3% BME resident population. The closest major city is Norwich, which is 21 miles west, and has a population approaching 175,000. The town of Lowestoft (Waveney District Council) is 10 miles to the south and has a resident population of 50,000.
- 1.6 Currently Great Yarmouth is home to a Racecourse, Greyhound Stadium, 2 casinos', 3 bingo clubs, and over 30 amusement arcades. There are 14 arcades within the main tourism seafront area. There are over 120 Hotels offering over 2,500 bed spaces. None of which are above a three star rating. Extending gaming provision is seen as being congruous with the development of the overall tourism and hotel offer. The "Pleasure Beach Complex" is

¹ East Of England Tourist Board – Economic Impact of Tourism - 2003

currently the top non charging attraction in the East of England within excess of 1.5m visits per annum.² It is co-terminus with the “Golden Mile” and has accessible, all-year-round public transport links.

- 1.7 Within the draft “Tourism Strategy for Great Yarmouth” exists a shared vision for Great Yarmouth:

“By 2016 we want ...

- 12% more jobs in tourism, with more security, better career development, higher levels of skill and consequent reward
- visitors bringing £650 million p.a. into local economy
- year-round profitable tourism business
- to be a dynamic, vibrant, safe, clean and exciting destination”

The strategy has been jointly developed by the Great Yarmouth Tourist Authority and the Borough Council, and it is currently progressing through the consultation process.

- 1.8 Over recent years there has been a shift in the pattern of holidays and breaks that the British take. In the face of competition from airlines offering cheap flights to predictably sunny destinations there has been a decline in the traditional seaside holiday. However this has been mitigated by a shift towards more short breaks and day trips.
- 1.9 The traditional catchment for the area currently extends across the Eastern region and includes the East and West Midlands, London, Home Counties, Essex, and Tyneside and even Scotland. With the advent of the outer Harbour we anticipate a significant increase in (current 8%) continental visitors. Approximately 33% of all visitors originate within the Eastern region.³
- 1.10 Casinos are currently represented in Great Yarmouth. Two small casinos are operating with five other small casinos with planning consent. Planning consent was also granted recently for a casino located at the Pleasure Beach.
- 1.11 With a significant economic reliance upon tourism, the economy of the town suffers greatly from the seasonal effects on employment. For the last three consecutive months for the whole borough had the highest levels of unemployment across the whole UK (5.7%). There is a strong regeneration case for Great Yarmouth which is demonstrated in numerous ways, including tourism & regeneration strategies, planning and licensing policies. These are detailed later in this proposal.
- 1.12 There are circa 28,000 working age males (16-64), and 29,000 females in the borough. 51% of residents, 49% males. Over 20% of all residents are over the age of 65.⁴

² East of England Tourism Evaluation Report – Nov 2003

³ East of England Tourism Evaluation Report – Nov 2003

⁴ Office National Statistics – Estimated Resident Population: Mid 2001 - percent

1.13 The profile of employment is:⁵

	GY	Norfolk	UK
	%	%	%
▪ Agriculture & fishing	0.9	0.8	0.9
▪ Energy & Water	2.3	0.8	0.8
▪ Manufacturing	10.6	15.4	13.4
▪ Hotels & Catering Distribution	31.3	26.1	24.6
▪ Transport & Communication	6.2	4.9	6.1
▪ Banking, Finance, Insurance	13.0	16.9	19.5
▪ Public, Education, Health	27.3	25.5	24.9
▪ Other Services	6.2	5.1	5.3

1.14 The above table identifies that we have a strong tourism, energy & water focus and a relatively low manufacturing and financial services base.

1.15 In addition to the existing river port a new deepwater outer harbour is being developed (£49m) that will see the return of passenger ferries and large scale commercial and industrial activity during 2009. The town is 100 nautical miles from the Dutch coast, and as such we see the future of the town becoming a significant gateway to Europe and Scandinavia. It is anticipated that around 300,000 people will use the new port each year. This will provide important opposites to lever in economic activity that other wise would not choose a peripheral location. We possess a rich base of natural assets to build from. We have over 17km of prime sandy coastline and can boast a 24hr prime tourism beach. We also have advanced programmes for developing the cultural and heritage base of the borough, and we are the connection between the North and South Broads's (National Park) network.

1.16 Recognising that dramatic improvements in the quality of the public realm will help to create confidence amongst potential investors and redefine the town, there has been a £16m investment programme in a number of projects in important tourism, retail, and heritage areas of the town. Negotiations are currently underway with the East of England Development Agency to supplement this further through a £20m joint investment programme with the Borough Council over the next 5 years. There is evidence that these programmes have led to over £50m worth of investment from the private sector.

1.17 The ambitious new owners of the town centre shopping centre have cited that one of the main reasons they were attracted to the area was that the council was extremely positive, creative, and supportive in helping bring forward regenerative investment.⁶

1.18 One of the biggest challenges we face is raising the aspirations of the local population. We have endemic health problems such as high take up of acute care and low take up of preventative care. Alongside the low wage economy is a correlation in the quality of diet, low participation in exercise, higher rates of teenage conceptions etc.

⁵ Annual Business Enquiry 2002 – Crown © December 2004

⁶ Centenary Investments – February 2006

1.19 The average weekly earnings are also low:⁷

Area	All Males (£)	All Females (£)	All (£)
Great Yarmouth	437.60	(unavailable)	417.46
Norfolk	446.88	348.85	512.62
East of England	528.41	382.72	475.90
England	533.51	400.92	483.39

1.20 We have repeatedly had the highest drop out rate from further education colleges in the whole country. One of our urban secondary schools has a SEN rate of over 50%. In general terms education attainment is poor. For example for the 2003 year the GCSE/GNVQ results were:⁸

	%+ A*-C	%A*-G	No Passes
▪ England	52.9%	88.8%	5.2%
▪ Norfolk County	50.3%	89.4%	4.6%
▪ Great Yarmouth	42.8%	86.3%	6.0%

1.21 The above outlines the challenges we face and identifies the need for continued regenerative investment. In terms of raising the aspirations of the young people of Great Yarmouth there are a range of targeted initiatives in the areas of skills development stemming from the Education Action Zone and Sure Start Programmes. Two of our six secondary schools are fully extended schools; one has sports college status and one arts college status. These initiatives are showing signs of progress, however seismic investments such as the Regional/Resort Casino will help regain the wider sense of civic pride and self confidence in the future of the town and its economic prospects.

1.22 We have all forms of gambling currently available, a low wage economy and a population many of which suffer intense deprivation. Given all of these factors one may expect to encounter social problems relating to existing gambling – however there are none evident. Plus given the high levels of visitor ‘stays’ this suggests that a Regional/Resort Casino would very much be a destination Casino.

2.0 SOCIAL IMPACT

2.1 It is our contention that even though all forms of licensed gambling are currently available locally; there is no evidence that there is any adverse effect upon the local population. Information from the Citizens Advice Bureau does not indicate a specific local problem with gambling.⁹ Similarly investigations with Norfolk Constabulary do not reveal any specific local issues relating to crime fuelled by gambling or excessive gambling.¹⁰

⁷ New Earnings Survey; 2003 Crown ©

⁸ DFES – January 2004

⁹ Great Yarmouth CAB – March 2006

¹⁰ Norfolk Constabulary – Area Commander - March 2006

- 2.2 Given the strong emphasis upon multi agency and cross sector partnership working we are committed to ensuring that all of the various support agencies and voluntary groups that interface with gambling related social issues are involved in shaping how a Regional/Resort casino would be implemented and what support infrastructure needs to be in place. The Great Yarmouth Local Strategic Partnership will co-ordinate these actions.
- 2.3 The Problem Gambling Foundation of New Zealand developed a useful model to develop community indicators model to assess, monitor and evaluate the impact of gambling opportunities on communities. This model is one that community groups could utilise to serve their own purposes, take the local context into account and is able to be translated into simple action steps. To this end, a model (The Community-Owned Model for the Assessment of Gambling (COMAG)) was developed. Appendix 1
- 2.4 COMAG is a simple broad framework that uses two broad sets of measures, one which uses a householder questionnaire, and the other which uses available data on the community. The emphasis is on economic, social and personal impacts of gambling, and relates to three levels of community life: **the individual, family/relationships, and the whole community**. The harmful impacts of gambling are seen as largely associated with electronic forms of gambling, notably slot machines, although all gambling products are included. The driver for harm associated with gambling is primarily seen as emanating from financial losses, with stress, crime and other such matters stemming from this. However, there are other factors too, such as the way people use their time, neglect of children, impact on recreational patterns in communities etc.
- 2.5 This is the 'model' we propose to use for community impact assessment of gambling. It will be managed by the Local Strategic Partnership. The model consists of looking at the economic and social impacts of gambling in a given community by assessments done through (a) a householder survey, and (b) usage of a variety of statistics and data available from local and other agencies, or from direct observation. It is felt that this dual analysis using a balanced combination of qualitative and quantitative information and data is an optimal one. The information can be used for assessment, monitoring and evaluation. This then feeds into a gaming industry liaison forum where key actions can be progressed and managed.
- 2.6 If selected as the preferred location for a Regional Casino we will progress the implementation of the model and develop appropriate local support and advice networks, educational material, and monitoring processes to ensure that problem gambling is not allowed to develop unchecked. This will be funded by the local gaming industry.
- 2.7 From a public credibility and confidence perspective, any feelings of unfamiliarity towards the establishment of regional casinos would be dissipated by the comfort drawn from the involvement already of two of the UK's most powerful and trusted leisure brands Hilton & Ladbrokes. GamCare have been quoted as saying "Ladbrokes consistently demonstrates strong commitment to

its social responsibility and has taken a lead role in promoting policy and practice in this regard. Ladbrokes has been strong supporters of the charity GamCare and have championed its work in the field of the social impact of gambling”¹¹ We would argue that a firm proposal from companies with such high social credibility offers a significant advantage to this proposal.

- 2.8 If successful in obtaining preferred status Great Yarmouth College have given a firm commitment to develop an Academy offering training facilities for those working in the gambling industries and the wider hotel and leisure sector.¹² We see specific training for staff, supported by the Casino operator, in recognising and dealing with potential issues surrounding problem gambling as crucial. This will be an essential part of obtaining full support of the council, through a detailed options appraisal process. The Regional Casino would provide the critical mass of participants to make this viable and to the benefit to the gaming/leisure industry generally. Funding towards the establishing the course/ other initiatives will from part of our operator contribution negotiations.
- 2.9 The Great Yarmouth Tourist Authority already co-ordinate an NVQ based training programme which aims to improve the skills base of the working in the Hotel industry. In the 2006 tourism brochure for Greater Yarmouth the Tourist Authority have taken the decision not to allow any premises to be included that is not independently quality assessed in some form.
- 2.10 Ensuring the well being of the community of Great Yarmouth, through achieving a balance of physical and social investment is central to the key priorities of the Borough Council. By adopting a firm monitoring and social responsibility programme around the development it is felt that any negative social effects can be managed and minimised.
- 2.11 We firmly believe that Great Yarmouth offers an opportunity to demonstrate true destination gambling with minimum risk to the local population.

3.0 REGENERATION NEED

- 3.1 The decline of domestic tourism has contributed having the highest unemployment rate of all 354 English local authorities. We have the lowest employment rate for 16-59 year olds, the highest claimant level, and exceptionally pronounced seasonality of employment. Over 30% of local employment is related to the tourism industry the seasonal unemployment effect in some areas of the resort about 16% (national average 2.3%).
- 3.2 When the Index of Deprivation 2000 was published, it set out for the first time in a universally accepted way the relative status of the country’s 8,414 electoral wards, and it allowed comparison between districts. Great Yarmouth ranked as follows:
- 5th worst in terms of intensity of deprivation
 - 43rd in terms of the scale of deprivation

¹¹ Paul Bellringer OBE, Director – GamCare

¹² Robin Parkinson – College Principal – March 2006

- 3.3 Items 1.12 and 1.19 above outline some of the gender issues within the employment structure of the area.
- 3.4 We attract regeneration funding for both physical projects and social capacity and cohesion issues. We have received and managed Single Regeneration Funding, EU Objective 2 funding, neighbourhood renewal and other over the past 7 years. We are very experienced in targeting resources to communities in need. However one off grants are difficult to sustain, as is bending mainstream budgets. Only by lifting the economic base of the town by creating more, better paid jobs will we really be able to break the deprivation cycle.
- 3.5 We will ensure that all such relevant future funding is targeted a complimentary way to the investment that will be generated by a Regional Casino. This includes how we will use developer contributions to further wider regenerative and social impact aims.
- 3.6 Great Yarmouth is identified as a 'Priority Area for Regeneration' in the draft East of England Plan. During the recent Examination in Public (EIP) for the draft RSS appropriate submissions were made to The Panel (Matter 8E) on 8 December 2005.
- 3.7 Whilst the town is making progress in mitigating the impact of a low wage declining economy, much resource is spent managing the symptoms of the condition. A Regional Casino offers a real opportunity to create a step change in 'lifting' the local economy in a way that would be otherwise virtually impossible to achieve.
- 3.8 The influential Sheffield Hallam University, 'The Seaside Economy' (June 2003) is a study of economic change in British Seaside Resorts, examining all of Britain's 43 principal seaside towns. This states "*Great Yarmouth stands out as facing acute difficulties. It has the highest rate of claimant unemployment amongst the 43 principle seaside towns, and the highest estimated rate of unemployment as well*".¹³
- 3.9 A sub regional study highlighted the "need to promote radical change in the local economy through developing niche markets in tourism".¹⁴
- 3.10 "*The region has one of the highest employment rates in the UK but this masks a disparate pattern across the region. For example, claimant unemployment in Great Yarmouth is treble the regional average and a recent study concluded that its 'real' rate of employment- 20 % in January 2002 –was the highest of all the principal seaside towns*"¹⁵
- 3.11 Due to significant changes in domestic tourism the borough's resort role has declined over the past decades, although we still retain our position as one of the UK's top three premier resorts when measured by visitor number.

¹³ Sheffield Hallam University Study – The Seaside Economy 2003

¹⁴ SQL Great Yarmouth & Waveney Study – April 2003

¹⁵ East of England Regional Economic Strategy – EEDA, December 2004

- 3.12 The East of England Development Agency (EEDA) sees Great Yarmouth as becoming a prime gateway to Europe and Scandinavia for the region. EEDA financially support a number of key local investment initiatives which aim to establish confidence in the local economy through regeneration. Initiatives such as the new Urban Regeneration Company, Outer Harbour, and a £16m public realm (InteGREAT) investment programme all are supported by EEDA.
- 3.13 The EEDA Board are minuted as saying that “the region will need to keep the single preference option under review (i.e. for one regional casino within the East of England) should the Government or market context change”¹⁶. The Great Yarmouth submission is seen by EEDA as being consistent with our joint regenerative ambitions and they recognise that it will address key economic aims within the borough.
- 3.14 The Greater Yarmouth Tourist Authority is a partnership between the private sector and the Council. The GYTA Board formally support this proposal. They have facilitated two detailed workshops with existing local Gaming operators that have established that there is industry confidence that a Regional/Resort Casino would create increased overall visitor numbers and would not be detrimental to existing business.¹⁷ They believe that strong customer loyalty exists. It is estimated that the existing 20-25,000 Casino members account for 200-240,000 visits per annum. This is a sound basis upon which we feel qualified to demonstrate our business and social responsibility case.
- 3.15 The facets of the towns decline are now widely apparent in the poor quality of some of the town’s urban fabric and the general lack of investment both in refreshment of existing businesses and in the introduction of new attractions. There is clearly a pressing need for the introduction of a major new attraction to the resort, one that will have benefits not just for GY but for this part of the Eastern Region, and one that will reduce the effects of seasonality.
- 3.16 The current statutory local plan for the area¹⁸ allows for inward investment and redevelopment of ‘prime commercial areas’ in or adjoining the seafront. The plan also allows for casino development.
- 3.17 In connection with the local plan, the appropriateness of Policy TR21(d), which states that the Council will “subject to proven need, permit additional gaming facilities, including a Casino”, was reviewed in 2003/04. This review endorsed the policy and added a correction as follows “*Casino subject to the likely effect on adjoining or neighbouring land uses, permit additional gaming facilities such as Casinos*”.¹⁹
- 3.18 In our view a regional casino would provide the anchor for other major leisure and hotel developments. It has the potential to bring rapid, large scale change that will substantially increase visitor numbers to the resort. It will also reduce

¹⁶ EEDA Board Meeting June 2005

¹⁷ GYTA Consultation workshops February – March 2006

¹⁸ Great Yarmouth Borough-Wide Local Plan– see www.great-yarmouth.gov.uk

¹⁹ Great Yarmouth Local Plan

the economy's reliance upon seasonal tourism, replacing it with a more sustainable year round economy.

- 3.19 Currently there are 120 hotels, providing 2,500 serviced rooms that support the main seafront economy. However none are rated above three star. The advent of the Regional Casino would stimulate the development of four star hotels that would provide a much needed improvement to the quality of accommodation. Hilton has confirmed that they would develop a new hotel; however other companies have also expressed an interest. The new four star hotel developments are seen as critical in maximising the opportunities presented by wider regeneration programmes and the new outer harbour.
- 3.20 It is anticipated that a Regional Casino would attract circa 4,000 visits per day (weekdays) and 10,000 + per day (weekends). This equates to over 2.0 million visits per year. Along with the new Outer Harbour, which is predicted to bring an additional 200,000 tourists to the area an iconic development would help create a new sense of destination that would appeal to foreign tourists as well as those from the UK. Currently 8% of all visitors to the area are foreign.
- 3.21 The knock on benefits to the town through additional tourism and retailing, will lead to a step change level in confidence amongst the wider business and investment community. It is likely that such a development would provide the catalyst for wider investment from other businesses in the borough.
- 3.22 New transport facilities are envisaged through links with the East Port Outer Harbour Scheme. In addition, a Third River Crossing (projected construction 2012-2015) will provide direct access to the regional trunk road network. The Local Authority has committed £100,000 to fund initial studies. Direct links of both single and dual carriageway standard will provide good access to regional centres, such as Ipswich and Cambridge, by both car and coach. Norwich International Airport (21 miles) and its direct links to the Netherlands and Western Europe will also be enhanced. It is anticipated that the developer will be expected to contribute to key transport infrastructure enhancements directly related to the scale of the proposal (e.g. Park and Ride). We see Norwich as being the City Region focus for retailing and would seek to jointly promote the two destinations.
- 3.23 We see three main economic effects of the operation of a Regional casino:
- (i) **direct** effects are primarily the jobs and incomes that accrue due to the everyday operation of casinos;
 - (ii) **indirect** effects relate to flows of income (other than labour income/client spending) arising from the operation of casinos; and
 - (iii) **induced** or multiplier effects represent the process through which the spending of staff, clients and casinos (i.e. both the direct and indirect income flows) helps to support other businesses, contributing to the wages and salaries of employees and covering material overheads.

- 3.24 We recognise that an element of any 'new' resource expended on casino gambling may be diverted from spending elsewhere in the gambling sector and spending on other goods and services both locally, regionally and beyond regional boundaries. However this is mitigated by overall growth in the market.
- 3.25 Given that 35% of all visitors to Great Yarmouth stay overnight and that the new Outer Harbour will generate 300,000 additional visitors per annum we anticipate minimal displacement of existing activity and trade. As an area with large existing tourism flows it is implicitly assumed that we can successfully attract significant numbers of new tourist visitors.
- 3.26 We anticipate indirect economic effects relating to flows of income (other than labour income) to the local area arising from the operation of a Regional Casino. These effects are likely to reflect the purchase of goods and services covering items such as materials, supplies and business and professional services. Again the Pion study²⁰ anticipates patterns of indirect spend across differing casino structures. In the context of regional, large and small casinos the operating indirect spend figures used are £46m, £9m and £6m respectively.
- 3.27 In its 1970's heyday of 9 million visitors per annum, there was a growth in out of town holiday camps and the traditional guest houses behind the seafront were full. Over time a number of factors have conspired to reverse the fortunes of the main seafront industry. Overall staying visitor numbers are declining, holiday parks are extremely successful at keeping guests within their parks, and there is a related trend away from the guest house style of holiday. This has resulted in wide areas of former guesthouse property falling into alternative use including houses of multiple occupation and along with them certain social pressures. In addition the seafront night time economy has suffered greatly and declining trend continues.
- 3.28 A Regional Casino will re-establish a thriving hotel sector which in turn will lead to investment in restaurants and other leisure facilities, which could dramatically improve the quality and value of seafront tourism and the night-time economy.
- 3.29 We believe that a small casino will not create the sense of destination that will attract large numbers additional visitors and is most likely to displace existing trade given that estimates are that 90%²¹ of the client base is likely to be resident in nature. Similarly it is assumed that 80% of the tourism client base of a Large Casino is assumed to take the form of existing tourists. Although small casinos would serve to supplement Regional Casinos.
- 3.30 It is estimated that, at local level, a regional casino may generate somewhere in the region of £50m of GVA per annum with large and small casino generating some £12m and £7m.
- 3.31 Direct effects are primarily the jobs and incomes that accrue due to everyday operations. It is anticipated that there would be 1,200 employees in the

²⁰ Pion Economics – Casino Market Demand Study June 2005

²¹ Pion Economics – Casino Market Demand Study June 2005

regional casino, 400 for a large casino and 200 for a small casino. Staff numbers are distributed across work groups reflecting the type of casino operation. In the case of regional casinos, work groups include:

- (i) casino staffing:
 - a. table and machine, sports book, VIP services and cage staff;
- (ii) hotel staffing
 - a. housekeepers, porters, management, supervisory, front service representatives, guest service, call centre and concierge staff;
- (iii) service staff:
 - a. food, beverage and entertainment staff;
- (iv) other staff:
 - a. finance, human resources, IT, purchasing, security, surveillance, sales, promotion and facilities staff.

3.32 We feel that the borough and sub region are able to meet the employee numbers and skill sets needed to staff a Regional Casino and other related developments.

3.33 The Hilton/Ladbrokes Group's assumed salary bill is £21m for 1,200 employees within the Great Yarmouth Regional Casino and associated hotel complex. Large and small casino structures have a substantially reduced set of activities, staffing and costs with the latter (for Pion's modelling purposes) reduced to £6.5m and £3.7m respectively. Industry research has revealed that development of large or small casinos will not lead to the knock investment in terms of hotels etc. The estimated multiplier effect on the economy is 1.51 for local employment and 1.15 for regional employment.

3.34 The local economy will directly benefit from the spending of casino employees disposable income. This in turn will provide indirect employment in supporting industries, retail, leisure etc.

3.35 Not all local spending will remain in the Great Yarmouth due to leakages from goods and services imported from outside the local area. The economic benefit will however remain in the sub region largely benefiting areas such as Norwich and Lowestoft. Only part of the direct jobs in the Regional Casino are assumed to be filled by Great Yarmouth residents – some will be filled by commuters and are thus a sub regional as opposed to local gain - constraining induced/multiplier effects for the borough but benefiting the sub region. For the regional level estimates, however, all of the direct jobs are assumed taken by residents within the region.

4.0 WILLINGNESS TO LICENCE

4.1 Great Yarmouth Borough Council formally backs the proposal for a regional casino within Great Yarmouth. This support was reaffirmed by its Cabinet in December 2005.

- 4.2 In addition the council has granted planning consent for five small casinos. Planning consent was also granted in 2005 for a leisure complex, including casino, located on the seafront adjacent to the "Pleasure Beach".
- 4.3 The fact the existing local plan has policies that support the development of casino's itself indicates and embedded council belief that they are complimentary to the economy of the area.
- 4.4 Additional confidence has been gained from workshops held with all of the local gaming, casino operators which established a consensus level of support for securing a regional casino. Furthermore, wider consultation with the Tourism industry demonstrates 73% support for this proposal.²²
- 4.5 There is already one site on the main tourism seafront that has outline planning permission for a casino development and involves quality development partners, Henry Boot Ltd, and the Hilton/Ladbrokes Group. In addition other PLC casino operators have expressed interest developing a Regional Casino in alternative seafront locations. Whilst the council has the benefit for this process of being able to identify a funded proposal with no land assembly issues, and planning permission; it also is able to use this process to maximise the community benefit through negotiating developer contributions.
- 4.6 Two local businesses have also expressed interest in securing licences for both large and small casinos. They see these as being complimentary to a new Regional Casino and the evolution of existing business. This application is primarily focussed upon a Regional Casino.
- 4.7 There has been a great deal of local press comment surrounding the potential for a Regional Casino. This started when the Parliamentary Select Committee chose Great Yarmouth as the location for a site visit to help shape their thoughts on how such developments could aid regeneration. Over the past two years we have not picked up any adverse local reaction to the proposal from the local population. We have not tested the public's view through specific formal consultation however in developing the URC Master Plan, and the LDF proposals no objections have arisen. We plan to conduct a full consultation process as part of the COMAG initiative outlined in section 3.
- 4.8 Following discussions with our main public sector partners, Police in particular, the Great Yarmouth Borough Council see no difficulty in granting the necessary permissions/licence to operate a Regional Casino.

5.0 PROBABILITY OF IMPLEMENTATION

- 5.1 We already have a proposal within the main seafront "Pleasure Beach" area that has outline planning permission and the support of the Borough Council²³. The approved local scheme includes a 10 screen cinema, ten-pin bowling, health/fitness centre, restaurants, bars/cafes and additional car parking.

²² Greater Yarmouth Tourist Authority – Local Gaming Industry Consultation March 2006

²³ GYBC Executive Meeting December 2005

- Currently the town has an under provision of such facilities, and this development would provide much needed additional opportunities for both visitors and the local population across a broader range of leisure interests. This proposal is not simply about a Casino, but more about how a range of wider community benefits can be drawn from such a development.
- 5.2 Given that the developers of the above scheme have stated that their Regional Casino proposal is fully funded, is on a site that they own, and they have the benefit of outline planning permission for; there is the strongest possible case to suggest that this is a deliverable scheme.
- 5.3 The current “Pleasure Beach Complex” is currently the top non charging attraction in the East of England within excess of 1.5m visits per annum.²⁴ It is co-terminus with the “Golden Mile” and has accessible, all-year-round public transport links. These will be subject to improvement as part of the scheme.
- 5.4 Given that tourism is such a major part of the local economy, and it is the one thing that Great Yarmouth has a ‘brand’ name for it is entirely consistent with all of our existing policies and strategies to focus this development within the main tourism seafront. When you add the fact that it will be co-terminus with the new Outer Harbour we feel that we can create a new sense of destination for both domestic and European visitors.
- 5.5 Support for a Regional Casino, as well as the provision of large and smaller casinos, has come from both local and national interested companies. The principal supporter(s) for a Regional Casino is a consortium of the Pleasure and Leisure Corporation (Great Yarmouth) and the Hilton Group. In addition, the scheme has broad community support, including that of Anthony Wright MP, East Port (Great Yarmouth) Limited, the Greater Yarmouth Tourist Authority, the Norfolk Tourist Attractions Association, Great Yarmouth Borough Council, Norwich City Council, and the local gaming industry. Full copies of supporting testimonials can be provided upon request.
- 5.6 Existing public transport infrastructure is provided by a range of both seasonal and non-seasonal bus services. These will be subject to modest enhancement. There is also a bus-rail link in the summer season which passes the site. Part of the Outer Harbour development entails constructing a new transport hub that will allow large scale park and ride facilities that will transfer visitors in a loop along the seafront, into the retail area, and through the heritage area. The intention is clear in that we do not wish to become like “Dover” or “Holyhead” in the sense that the vast majority of ferry passengers simply pass by the town. We want to make it easy for people to arrive early and enjoy some light entertainment and relaxation whilst waiting for their ferry. In that sense Great Yarmouth will become part of their travel plans and not incidental to them. This approach will also work to the ports benefit as it provides added value to the overall offer. The port currently acts as an international gateway for foreign visitors to the Broads Network.

²⁴ East of England Tourism Evaluation Report – Nov 2003

- 5.7 Clearly the council is keen to ensure that the location of the Regional casino meets a range of tourism, transport, social impact, planning, and regeneration tests. We are looking at a consistency of use that is complimentary to the area, but hopefully marking a new era in terms of investment and innovation. The council is working closely with the new Urban Regeneration Company (1st East) to develop a masterplan for the town that hardwires many of the relationships and initiatives mentioned above, and also sets out a shared agenda for future investment and regeneration.
- 5.8 In undertaking an impact assessment we thought it useful to use the methodology employed by Pion Economics in their 'Assessment for Market Demand study for the North West Region'. This helps to identify the numbers of both residents and visitors likely to use Casinos. We felt it necessary to share the detail of this assessment to demonstrate the robustness of our understanding in dealing with the likely numbers of people affected by any wider social impact issues.
- 5.9 The main difference between the tourism and residential envelope lies in the participation assumptions employed to generate potential casino visits. The residential analysis assumes an aggregate future participation rate of 10% (current 3%). However, simply adopting the same approach in the case of tourism may underestimate potential participation where the pursuit of a leisure experience is more to the forefront of activity than it is in everyday working life.
- 5.10 The study examined potential market demand by matching information from the British Gambling Prevalence Study (2000) with 2001 Census age-band demographics. This enables an assessment of current casino gambling participation across age-bands. Overall casino participation is assumed to rise from the current 3% to 10% in line with assumptions previously made by the gambling sector Cross Industry Group (CIG), with actual visit numbers assessed across four gambling types - non-gamblers, minimal interest, moderate interest and multiple interest gamblers – also defined in the Study.²⁵

5.11

Participation In Gambling Activities Within Previous Year by Age-Band (% of GB 16+ Adult Population)								
	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	All
Casino	4	5	3	2	1	-	-	3
Bingo	7	7	7	6	7	9	10	7
Machines	32	22	15	8	6	3	1	14
Horse Races	12	19	15	14	11	9	5	13
Dog Races	6	7	4	4	2	1	1	4
Other Bookmaker Betting	5	5	3	2	2	1	-	3
Football Pools	4	9	8	11	13	10	6	9
National Lottery	52	71	72	72	69	61	45	65
Other Lotteries	8	9	8	9	9	8	6	8

Source: British Gambling Prevalence Study (2000)

²⁵ Pion Economic Report – Casino Market Demand Study June 2005

5.12 From the above table we can determine a baseline for local resident participation in gambling. The Gambling Prevalence Study also uses cluster analysis to define four types of gamblers – based on the extent of participation across numbers of different gambling activities:

(i) non-gamblers:

- *prominent within the youngest (16-24) and oldest (65+) age-bands*

(ii) minimal interest gamblers:

- *accounting between 30% - 40% of all age groups apart from the youngest with levels peaking in the 45-64 age-bands;*

(iii) moderate interest gamblers:

- *most prominent among the youngest age-bands with prevalence declining directly with age;*

(iv) multiple interest gamblers:

- *defined as accounting for 11% to 12% of the 16-34 years adult population but declining significantly with age.*

5.13 In terms of these groups, casino gambling is defined as an activity that is primarily undertaken by multiple interest gamblers in that it is typically one of several types of gambling (including the National Lottery) that such individuals pursue.

5.14

Gambling Interest Groups by Age-Band (% of UK 16+ Adult Population)								
	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	All
Non-Gamblers	34	22	23	22	26	34	48	28
Minimal Interest Gamblers	19	31	35	39	38	35	30	33
Moderate Interest Gamblers	36	35	34	33	32	30	21	32
Multiple Interest Gamblers	11	12	8	6	4	2	1	7

Source: British Gambling Prevalence Study (2000)

5.15 The methodology and ratios contained in the Prevalence Survey has been used to construct estimates of likely casino gambling participation by the residents of Great Yarmouth.

5.16

Gambling Interest Groups by Age-Band (% of Great Yarmouth 16+ Adult Population)								
	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+	Ave
Non-Gamblers	3,086	2,224	2,895	2,672	3,312	3,196	4,295.	2,710
Minimal Interest Gamblers	1,725	3,135	4,405	4,737	4,842	3,290	2,685	3,102
Moderate Interest Gamblers	3,268	3,539	4,280	4,008	4,077	2,820	1,880	2,984
Multiple Interest Gamblers	998	1,214	1,007	728	510	188	89	592

British Gambling Prevalence Study (2000) Methodology

- 5.17 The above suggests that approximately 70% of the residents of the borough have only a minimal interest in gambling, and that only 5% have a multiple interest. This underlines the earlier comment that even though every form of gaming and gambling is currently available this is not detrimental in terms of resident participation.
- 5.18 Pion estimate that 30% of Regional Casino gamblers would be existing casino gamblers and that 70% would be new to casino gambling. Of the latter 25% are assumed to switch funds from other forms of gambling and 75% from other areas of leisure activity²⁶. BY achieving an overall increase in visitor number to the area we envisage that this will mitigate the possible negative commercial effect upon existing business. However it means that existing businesses will need to become part of the overall social monitoring framework.
- 5.19 In constructing a baseline of potential residence-based casino participation Pion converted estimates of 'relevant population' into estimates of visits. For this they adopted a simple and relatively conservative protocol. Non-gamblers are assumed to pay no visits to a casino, minimal interest gamblers are assumed to pay one visit per annum, moderate interest gamblers three visits per annum and multiple interest gamblers nine visits per annum.
- 5.20 Great Yarmouth Tourism research identifies approximately 5m²⁷ visitor nights annually within the borough. Plus if we assume a conservative growth of 1m additional visitors per annum we can use 6m visitors as the baseline for the overall visitor assessment. The British Gambling prevalence Study also identified a breakdown in the age and type of gambling participation. The below table uses those ratios to estimate visitor participation in gambling within Great Yarmouth.

5.21

Gambling Interest Groups by Age-Band (% of Great Yarmouth 16+ Visitors)							
	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	All
Casino	29,376	70,530	42,462	14,796	4,572	0	161,736
Bingo	51,408	98,742	99,078	44,388	32,004	30,672	356,292
Machines	235,008	310,332	212,310	59,184	27,432	10,224	854,490
Horse Racing	88,128	268,014	212,310	103,572	50,292	30,672	752,988
Dog Racing	44,064	98,742	56,616	29,592	9,144	3,408	241,566
Other Bookmaker betting	36,720	70,530	42,462	14,796	9,144	3,408	177,060
Football Pools	29,376	126,954	113,232	81,378	59,436	34,080	177,060
National Lottery	381,888	1,001,526	1,019,088	532,656	315,468	207,888	3,458,514
Other Lotteries	58,752	126,954	113,232	66,582	41,148	27,264	433,932

British Gambling Prevalence Study (2000) Methodology

- 5.22 When compared with item 5.15 the above table shows clearly that Great Yarmouth really does offer destination gambling that should not be detrimental to the local population in terms of social impact. If all of the resorts visitors who

²⁶ Pion Economics – Casino Market Demand Study - June 2005

²⁷ East Of England Tourist Board – Economic Impact of Tourism - 2003

already participate in the top 5 gambling activities visited the Regional casino once a year this would exceed 2m casino visitors per annum. This is consistent with the Commercial estimates that during weekdays visitor numbers would be circa 4,000 per day (1m p.a.) and at weekends 10,000 per day (1m p.a), giving a total of 2m p.a. Whilst this demonstrates commercial viability it also crucially demonstrates that it can be achieved without a dramatic change in current behaviours.

5.23 Overall this means that gambling spend in the borough will increase, but primarily through attracting additional visitors rather than displaced existing spend.

5.24 The InteGREAT programme of public realm investment has extended higher levels of lighting and CCTV down to the Pleasure beach site. Part of the developer contribution will be to extend this provision to ensure that visitors to the night time economy have reduced perceptions and fears of anti social behaviour and crime.

6.0 REGIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXT

6.1 This submission is made as a sub regional one. The benefits of lifting the economy of Great Yarmouth through such a development would have knock on benefits to the wide area. Norwich is the fifth most popular shopping destination in the UK and next to Cambridge is seen as a regional destination in its own right.. Great Yarmouth sits at the connection between the North and South Broads network. Access to the National Park Waterways, and the wider heritage and tourism base of Norfolk and Suffolk would provide much needed wider investment and business opportunity.

6.2 Norwich City Council and neighbouring Waveney District Council both support this submission. We recognise that Norwich is one of the UK's premier retailing destinations and see that as a major strength of this application. Similarly we are working to jointly promote and develop tourism with Norwich, the Broad Authority and Waveney DC. Great Yarmouth and Lowestoft share the new Urban Regeneration Company (1st East). The URC Board support this proposal.

6.3 Great Yarmouth is located in the North- East of the East of England Region, approximately 130 miles from London and 84 miles from Cambridge. The population base is 92,435 for the Borough (OPCS – 2004). The closest major city is Norwich, which is 21 miles west, and has a population approaching 175,000. The town of Lowestoft (Waveney District Council) is 10 miles to the south and has a resident population of 50,000. The boroughs of Great Yarmouth and Waveney District enjoy sub regional status in the context of the East of England Regional Spatial Strategy. In developing the new local development framework specific policies will be included supporting Casino development.

- 6.4 Great Yarmouth is already identified as a 'Priority Area for Regeneration' in the draft East of England Plan (RSS). During our representations within the East of England Examination in Public session we presented our case that the policies for GY should also include reference to Casino led regeneration, in addition to other forms of regeneration. We are pressing our case with both the East of England Regional Assembly and East of England Development Agency to secure support for our submission. Both bodies have yet to implement an open process that will determine the most favourable location in the region.
- 6.5 Great Yarmouth already benefits from good transport links to the rest of UK and Europe. Norwich is just 25 minutes to the west via the A47, with proposals to widen the remaining single carriageway stretch noted in the Highway Agency's Targeted Programme of improvements. There are two train links via Norwich, taking 32 minutes, with onward connections to London and the North. Norwich also has one of the fastest growing regional airports. It is an international airport from which Fly-be are offering connections to many domestic and European destinations. European visitors to Great Yarmouth will soon be able to use both sea and air links. Great Yarmouth does have a heli-port which is predominantly used for connections to the off-shore industry but does have upper end tourism potential. The existing transport network is already therefore well established to serve the sub region as a major tourist destination.
- 6.6 The East of England Regional Assembly is aware of and has noted our intentions. The Chief Executive of the Assembly recognises the regeneration needs of Great Yarmouth.

7.0 Community Benefits

- 7.1 Numerous community benefits have been referred to through the previous sections of this proposal. Apart from the obvious economic benefits gained through employment and secondary spending; there are a range of regeneration benefits through both capital and revenue developer contributions.
- 7.2 In general terms we believe that a Regional Casino will have a positive overall net effect upon the area. To some extent the smaller the number of casinos allowed the potentially greater the benefits initially as there will be a uniqueness factor. However we believe that if it serves as purely a regional casino the benefits outlined in this submission will be achievable. For example, the increased footfall along the seafront will anchor leisure, health & fitness facilities, and restaurants.
- 7.3 The knock on effects of such an investment will trigger a renaissance in the tourism based economy of the town. This will lead to increased public realm and private investment across the area, such as improved transport infrastructure.

8.0 Unique Characteristics

- 8.1 Great Yarmouth has a fully funded Regional Casino scheme, with no land assembly or planning constraints and a local workforce with the capacity and skills to operate it. This proposal is clearly capable of being implemented.
- 8.2 Given that 35% of all visitors to the borough actually stay, this means that a Regional Casino would stimulate the development of much needed four star quality hotel and other developments; hence it would truly serve as a destination casino with minimal risk of increased local resident problem gambling.
- 8.3 We are able to offer a unique international multi modal gateway proposition that will maximise the opportunity of increasing the number and spend of foreign visitors. As a destination location is unlikely to provide significant opportunities for casual and convenient gambling that could develop into problem gambling.
- 8.4 We already have all forms of gaming and gambling available, yet have no adverse social impacts.
- 8.5 This proposal has the universal support of the local gaming industry and Tourism community. Item 5.5 outlines the depth of support locally for this proposal.
- 8.6 There are a number of regeneration projects underway that can dovetail with this development to create added value from the investment i.e. transport hub, public realm. Many of these projects are public sector led; we see this proposal as an opportunity to introduce a private sector led investment which will renew business confidence.
- 8.7 Great Yarmouth has a strong track record of working in partnership across the public/ community/ voluntary sector which will ensure ongoing community impact management processes are robust.
- 8.8 As a pilot Great Yarmouth would offer an excellent opportunity to measure the regenerative impact of such a development given our severe long term deprivation issues.
- 8.9 This is a significant opportunity to reverse the decline of the resort. A Regional Casino will be transformational to the area, bringing along the potential for a branded quality hotel, leading to further interest in the tourism sector for renewal and investment

Mark Barrow
Corporate Director & Deputy Chief Executive
Great Yarmouth Borough Council
March 2006