Genting Casino, Manchester

Planning Statement

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Prepared on behalf of Genting Casino | October 25

REPORT CONTROL

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Boyer, on behalf of Genting Casinos UK, in support of an application for Full Planning permission for various external works and Advertisement Consent at Genting Casino, 110 Portland Street, Manchester, M1 4RL.

Figure 1. Genting Casino, Manchester

1.2 The proposed works seek to ensure the casino will continue to be a vibrant destination, assisting in helping to retain and attract new patrons.

1.3 This Planning Statement should be considered alongside the accompanying forms and drawings submitted with the application. This Supporting Statement covers planning and design and access.

1.4 This Statement provides an evaluation of the planning considerations and comprises:

- A description of the application site and surroundings (Section 2);
- An explanation of the proposed development (Section 3);
- An overview of relevant planning history at the site (Section 4);
- A review of relevant local and national planning policy (Section 5);
- An appraisal of the key considerations regarding the proposed development (Section 6);
- A conclusion (Section 7).

2. SITE AND SURROUNDING CONTEXT

2.1 The property is located at the junction of Oxford Street and Portland Street, within the city centre of Manchester. The site comprises a combination of three-storey buildings with the principal elevation fronting Portland Street.

2.2 The site entrance, subject to this application, is located within a modern building (The Circus), and adjoins a Boots the Chemist at the ground floor and Premier Inn at the upper floors.

2.3 Apart from the entrance, the majority of the casino is located in the adjoining Grade II Listed building (List Entry No. 1247062) fronting Portland Street. The listing is provided as below:

2.4 "Warehouses (probably textiles or clothing), now shops, offices, etc. c.1860-80; altered. Red brick with sandstone dressings, slate roof. Rectangular plan. Italian Renaissance style. Three storeys with basement and attic, 6 bays, symmetrical; with plinth, cornice to ground floor, sill-band to 2nd floor, prominent modillioned cornice, 2 small open-pedimented dormers and central chimney stack. Arcaded ground floor with round-headed arches, banded brick piers and moulded stone imposts: tall doorways to the outer bays with keystones and segmental pediments on brackets, and windows with keystones and original glazing in 2 round-headed lights (some covered or altered); segmental-headed windows at 1st floor, each in a raised brick architrave with stone cornice; round-headed windows at 2nd floor, recessed between pairs of short brick pilasters; small round-headed dormer windows. Rear and interior not inspected. Forms group with Nos 106 and 108-114 to right (q.v.) and Nos 120 to 126 to left (q.v.)."

2.5 The proposed works do not impact the listed building and all works are located within the modern adjoining building.

2.6 The surrounding area is a mix of commercial and leisure uses, focused along Portland Street.

2.7 The property is also subject to the following:

- Located within the George Street Conservation Area
- Located within Flood Zone 1

3. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.1 This application seeks Full Planning Consent for a series of external works to the main entrance for Genting Casino located within the modern 'The Circus' building, as well as Advert Consent. The minor proposed alterations have been designed to provide an enhancement to the current entrance and refresh the visual appearance. As noted, no works are required to the adjoining listed building.

3.2 All works proposed have been subject to careful consideration and shall not have any adverse impact on any features of historic significance. The scheme has therefore been sensitively designed to sympathetically integrate with the existing arrangements and intends to enable the current operations to be carried out in a more effective manner.

3.3 Full details of the proposed works are illustrated within the accompanying drawing pack, which also provides more technical information. A summary of the proposed works is provided below:

External

- Replacement of pixel wall at entrance with new like-for-like pixel panels
- New warm white LED illuminated strips within diffuser along existing ceiling canopy
- Retention of existing glazed canopy
- New 50-inch digital media screen
- New hanging sign with laser-cut lettering and opal acrylic back-illuminated letters (250 cd/m²)
- Fully glazed entrance doors with fixed glazing panels either side
- New warm white LED illumination within existing ceiling, aligned with fin details
- New security shutter

4. PLANNING HISTORY

4.1 There have been various Full Planning, Listed Building Consent and Advertisement applications at Genting Casino, Manchester, as set out below.

Application	Description	Decision & Date
141609/AO/2024	Installation of 3 x internally illuminated individual letter signs to canopy, 1 x internally illuminated projecting sign and 2 x internally illuminated digital signs	Withdrawn 29th January 2025
141368/FO/2024	External alterations including works to main entrance doors, recessed lobby, projecting canopy and windows.	Withdrawn 29th January 2025 Scope of Works: New entrance canopy Digital screen to replace the existing LED wall New casino signage New glass entrance doors New signage along frontage
141369/LO/2024	Listed Building Consent for internal and external alterations to existing main entrance doors, recessed lobby, projecting canopy and windows, minor alterations to reception desk and reception lobby, halo illumination and digital screens.	Withdrawn 29th January 2025
097971/FO/2011/C2	Alterations to shopfront / entrance	Approved 3rd April 2012 Scope of Works: Remove lower section of existing glazed shopfront

		Form new glazed shopfront (generally to match existing) New illuminated wall feature. New floor tiling
097973/LO/2011/C2	Listed Building Consent for alterations to shopfront / entrance and lobby area.	Approved 3rd April 2012
090930/AO/2009/C2	Installation of 1 no. set of individual letters on rails and 1 no. projecting sign externally illuminated	Approved 4th November 2009
090941/LO/2009/C2	Listed Building Consent installation of 1no. set of individual letters on rails and 1no. projecting sign (externally illuminated)	Approved 4th November 2009

5. PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires planning applications to be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

5.2 For completeness, the proposal is considered within the context of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2024 and any relevant National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG).

The Development Plan

Manchester City Council Core Strategy (2012)

5.3 The development plan for Manchester City Council comprises the Core Strategy (2012) and the following policies are considered relevant to the scheme:

- Policy CC9 – Design and Heritage
- Policy EN3 – Heritage

5.4 Alongside this, the following Supplementary Planning Documents were also considered:

- Shopfront and Signage Design Guide

Material Policy Considerations National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024)

5.5 Paragraph 11 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development and states that development proposals that accord with the development plan should be approved without delay.

5.6 Paragraph 85 outlines that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

5.7 Section 8: Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities supports the use of community facilities including leisure venues, to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.

5.8 Section 15: Conserving and enhancing the natural environment confirms that planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the local environment, including cultural heritage.

5.9 Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment confirms that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets, regardless of the level of harm. Paragraphs 207–215 provide guidance on assessing significance, weighing harm against public benefit, and supporting viable uses consistent with conservation.

6. KEY CONSIDERATIONS

6.1 This Section considers the key planning considerations arising from the proposal. It draws upon the site context, planning history and policy review, together with other relevant matters.

6.2 These evidence sources suggest that the following matters are relevant to the determination of the application:

- Principle of Development;
- Design and Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Listed Building and Surrounding Area;

Principle of Development

6.3 In terms of the principle of development, the proposals will not result in the loss or negatively impact upon the functioning of the casino, rather they will provide a refresh of the interior and exterior of the building entrance. The planning history demonstrates that previous works have been deemed acceptable, and this proposal builds upon that. The scheme simply looks to make more efficient use of the current space on site to enhance the overall customer experience and in doing so support Genting Casino's long-term vitality and viability in accordance with paragraph 90 of the NPPF.

6.4 For the avoidance of doubt, the works proposed to the building are limited in nature and do not adversely affect any overall aesthetic appearance of Genting Casino in any way. Furthermore, they are limited to the modern 'The Circus' building and there are no alterations to the adjoining listed building.

6.5 The proposed alterations will clearly retain the existing modern character of the casino, and there is no change in use or aspect of development that would potentially detract from the historic fabric of the adjoining listed building. Furthermore, any external modifications predominantly relate to modern interventions and therefore shall not have any impact on the original structure of the building.

6.6 On that basis, the proposed scope of works are limited to those necessary to improve the overall function of the existing casino access /entrance and in doing so shall contribute to the economic vitality of the local area.

6.7 When considered both individually and cumulatively, the proposed works shall not adversely impact the overall setting of the existing Grade II listed building. Paragraph 215 of the NPPF provides further guidance in that regard and states that where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use.

6.8 Any updates to the entrance layout will improve the accessibility to the ground floor premises to create a more functional and inclusive environment.

6.9 By virtue of the above, the proposed works are deemed acceptable and will sustain the long-term prosperity of the existing casino which provides a valuable service to the local community and city centre economy.

Impact on the Character and Appearance of the Listed Building and Surrounding Area

Use

6.10 The proposals do not involve any deviation from the existing use as a casino, rather they seek to improve the building's operation as a vibrant leisure venue through the upgrade of the interior and external entrance. This supports enhancing the sustainability of communities and improvement of existing facilities in accordance with the Development Plan.

Layout

6.11 Minor external layout changes are proposed on the ground floor premises which involve the replacement of entrance doors, new flooring, installation of an LED wall, and minor lobby area upgrades. For the avoidance of doubt, none of these changes involve any work to the original fabric of the building which accords with all relevant policy objectives.

6.12 In addition, the proposed signage scheme includes the removal of outdated elements and the installation of a new double-sided hanging sign to the left of the main entrance. This sign is to be manufactured in formed aluminium with a bronze RAL paint finish, featuring laser-cut 'CASINO' lettering backed with opal acrylic and internally illuminated to 250 cd/m². The signage will be affixed at fascia level and will not obscure architectural detailing or adversely affect the historic fabric of the listed building.

Design

6.13 The proposed external works have been designed to positively respond to the prevailing character and architectural vernacular. The interior and exterior entrance works would revitalise and enhance the street scene, and would not significantly impact upon the heritage features of the adjoining property.

6.14 The new entrance design is simply a refreshed design incorporating fully glazed entrance doors with full-height fixed glazing panels either side, translucent graphics, and warm white halo illumination to the perimeter. These elements are intended to modernise the frontage while remaining sensitive to the building's historic context. The canopy and fin details are retained and enhanced with recessed LED lighting, creating a cohesive and high-quality arrival experience.

6.15 Furthermore, the existing projecting sign is to be removed and replaced with a smaller, double-sided hanging sign positioned to the left of the entrance. This new sign is formed in aluminium with a bronze RAL finish, featuring laser-cut 'CASINO' lettering backed with opal acrylic and internally illuminated to 250 cd/m². The reduction in scale and repositioning of the sign responds directly to feedback received during the previously withdrawn application (ref: 141609/AO/2024). The revised scheme has been carefully calibrated to address concerns of visual clutter and visual cohesion while maintaining brand visibility.

6.16 The signage proposals have been carefully developed to ensure that all elements remain subservient to the host building. The materials, illumination levels, and mounting positions have been selected to respect the adjacent Grade II listed status of Genting Casino and its location within the George Street Conservation Area. The signage complies with Manchester City Council's Shopfront and Signage Design Guide, which encourages high-quality, well-proportioned signage that avoids visual clutter.

6.17 It is considered that the proposed development, overall, would improve the appearance of the casino entrance. The updated scheme proposes only necessary additions to modernise where required and does not impact the adjoining listed building retains all significant features of historic interest. Most notably this includes the discreet LED lighting, which are considered to provide significant betterment from a customer experience perspective. The removal of the outdated pixel wall and its replacement with 'like-for-like' panels ensures continuity with the existing digital infrastructure while improving visual clarity. The introduction of a 50-inch digital media screen within the entrance lobby further enhances the customer interface without detracting from the building's architectural integrity. The implementation of attractive alterations and additions would be of an appropriate scale of development that provides a high-quality design that sensitively responds to the local historic context and enhances the existing character and local distinctiveness of the listed building in compliance with Section 16 of the NPPF. The proposed signage enhances the building's visual presence while avoiding excessive illumination or clutter. All illumination levels have been designed to comply with planning policy and will not result in glare or visual intrusion. The signage remains proportionate to the scale of the building and is confined to established signage areas. Overall, the revised scheme reflects a more restrained and design-led approach than previously proposed, aligning with both local planning guidance and heritage sensitivities. It represents a betterment over the existing arrangement and contributes positively to the appearance of the building and wider conservation area.

Access

6.18 Access to the property will remain as existing. No changes are proposed to the entrance location.

Density, Scale and Massing

6.19 There would be no alterations to the existing amount of development in terms of density, scale or massing.

Materials

6.20 The proposed materials would seek to match the existing where possible and would complement the character and appearance of the modern building and surrounding area.

6.21 Signage materials include powder-coated aluminium, opal acrylic, and bronze finishes, all selected to reflect the palette of the existing building and ensure visual continuity.

6.22 The proposals will be constructed utilising appropriate materials and detailing that will positively contribute to the local character and appearance of the local area and not impact the distinctiveness of the adjoining listed building.

Summary

6.23 The design is reflective of the high-quality nature of Genting Casino's approach to their estate, and the proposals will form an attractive, bespoke, and inviting environment. The scheme will therefore reflect the existing high-quality design of the site, ensuring there is a sympathetic approach to both preserve and enhance the character and appearance of the host building and the surrounding area.

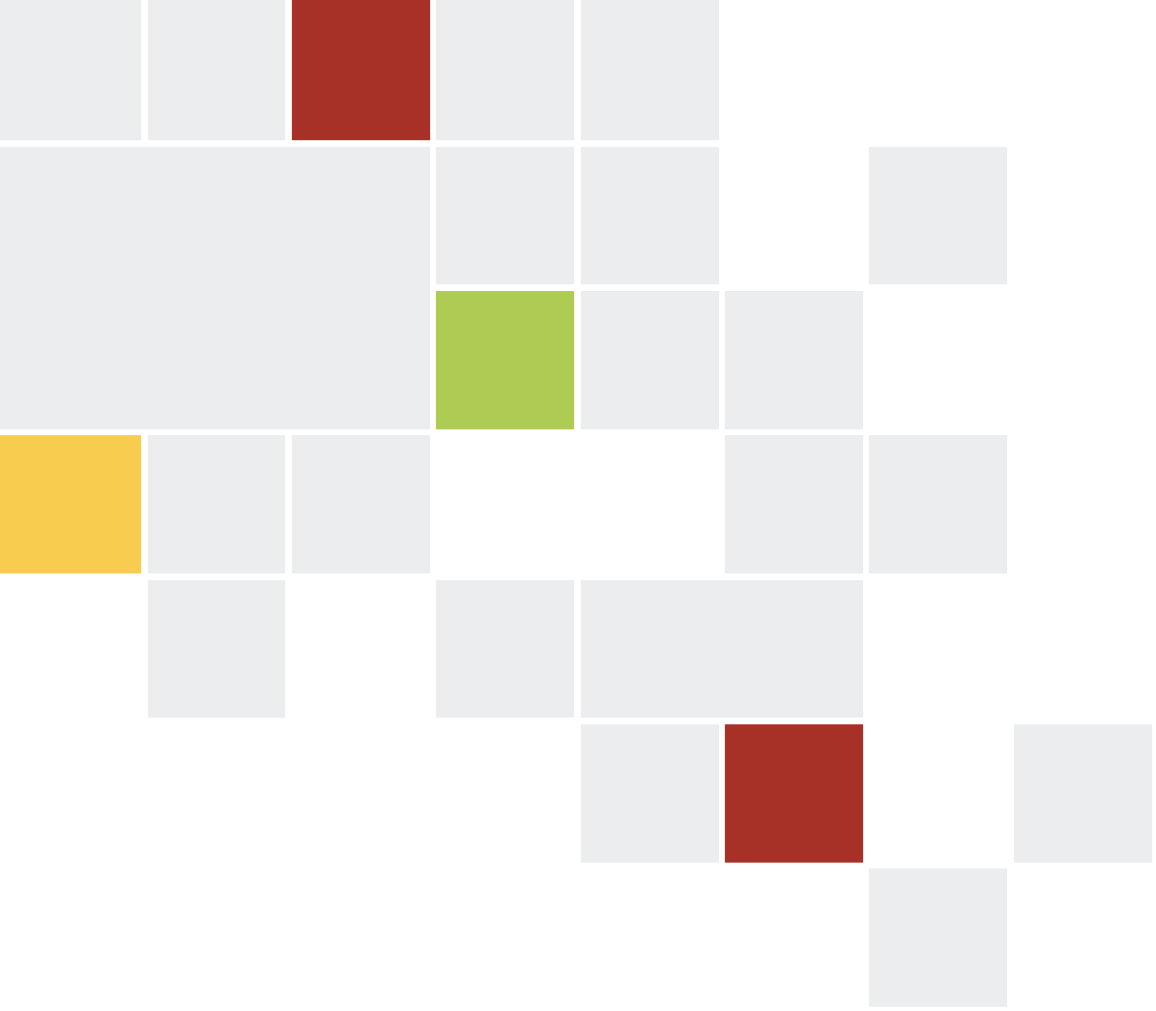
7. CONCLUSION

7.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Boyer, on behalf of Genting Casinos UK, in support of an application for Full Planning Consent for various external works at Genting Casino, 110 Portland Street, Manchester.

7.2 This report sets out the justification in planning terms for the proposed development, which is summarised as follows:

- The proposals will enable the existing building to be updated, sympathetically modernised and maintained, and thus contribute to the preservation and enhancement of Manchester City Council's heritage assets.
- Enabling significant investment into the continued use of the facility as a casino, ensuring its retention and enhancement as a local leisure destination and its long-term sustainability; and
- The proposed external alterations will not compromise the aesthetic, architectural or historic interest of the listed building and will maintain the operation and trade through the provision of a high-quality scheme that is sensitive to its surrounding context.

7.3 Therefore, full planning permission should be granted subject to any necessary conditions.



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