

Australian architects add finishing touches to new Swansea casino

An Australian team of architects and designers is overseeing the final stages of a casino project in Swansea.

The GBP 30m Aspers casino will open next month at Salubrious Place off Wind Street.

Architectural practice Bates Smart has overseen the flagship project from its Melbourne head office over the past 18 months.

Aspers bosses have now brought the team to Swansea to ensure the finishing touches are of the highest standard.

Founded in 1852, Bates Smart is one of the oldest architectural firms in the world and is a global leader in innovative architecture and interior design, having helped to shape modern Australia.

It has a strong background in casino work across Australia and in the Asia-Pacific region, working on flagship casino projects in locations such as Hong Kong and Malaysia.

The Crown Casino and Entertainment Complex in Melbourne, which the company worked on in 1997, is the largest in Australia.

Polly Gee is UK project leader for Bates Smart at Aspers in Swansea. Having overseen the project from afar, she has made the city her base for the last two months to ensure the GBP 3m fit-out goes to plan.

She said. "Our brief was to create a bespoke casino for Aspers that would raise the bar in the UK in terms of casinos, taking it to the standards that are commonplace back home in

Australia or in some of the Asian territories where Bates Smart has worked.

“Back home, the laws surrounding casinos are somewhat different to the UK, in that membership isn’t required, so the venues encourage walk-up trade and offer something for everyone.

“They are all-round entertainment venues, destinations for a night out and not just somewhere you go at the end of the evening. It is this line of thinking that we have brought to Aspers in Swansea.”

The Australian vision behind Aspers has already seen more than GBP 13m pumped into the Welsh economy, with the company making its stated aim to involve local businesses and suppliers wherever feasible.

Manager of Aspers at Salubrious Place, Richard Noble, said, “We may have turned to Australia for the inspiration, but it is Welsh businesses that are turning the ideas into reality, and who will benefit.

“Wherever possible, we have looked to companies in the area to provide us with their expertise and knowledge and we have already invested more than £10m locally in the construction and fit-out phase. This will remain the case after we open for business, as we intend to continue utilising local suppliers wherever possible.

“We have also established ourselves as a major employer in the area, with almost 200 new positions created to date for local people, which in itself has provided a major economic boost for the city.”