

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development

Planning Committee: 6 September 2011

Subject: Consultation from Glasgow City Council: Erection of non-food retail warehouse (50,000sq ft) and formation of associated parking – amendment of condition NC(b)(a) of planning permission 97/02406/DC to amend the restriction limiting sales from bulky goods only to the sale of any non-food items.

1. Purpose

- 1.1** The purpose of this report is to inform the Committee of a consultation received from Glasgow City Council in respect of the above planning application and to agree the Council's response to the consultation.

2. Background

- 2.1** Great Western Retail Park (GWRP) is located on Great Western Road, in the Drumchapel area of Glasgow, adjacent to the West Dunbartonshire Council boundary and just over 1 mile from Clydebank town centre. The retail park currently hosts a large DIY retailer, several smaller retail warehouses and a large foodstore. The proposed site is vacant land to the south east of the retail park. It currently has detailed planning permission for 50,000sq.ft of non-food retail subject to conditions requiring no unit to be less than 10,000 sq.ft and restricting the sale of goods to DIY, furniture, carpets, soft furnishings, electrical, motoring products, gardening goods and sporting goods ("bulky goods").
- 2.2** An application has been received to amend the conditions of the existing permission to allow for the sale of any non-food items, therefore removing the current restriction bulky goods restriction. There is no change to the floorspace proposed or the unit size restriction.

3 Main Issues

- 3.1** It is considered that the supporting information submitted with the planning application is deficient in that it does not consider sequentially preferable opportunities available in Clydebank town centre and its edge-of-centre commercial centres and fails to quantify the retail impact associated with the proposal, particularly upon these Clydebank centres. It is considered that given the passing of time since the first application for this site was made (in 1999) it would be appropriate for the application to be supported with a full retail impact assessment. Notwithstanding this lack of information, the following comments can be offered.

- 3.2** Scottish Planning Policy and the current Structure Plan require a sequential approach to the selection of sites for retail investment and this includes applications to amend a condition of a consented development. Town centres are the preferred location, followed by edge-of-centre sites, then commercial centres and finally out-of-centre sites easily accessible by a choice of transport modes. In terms of the retail statement submitted with the application the applicant has only taken Drumchapel into account when considering sequentially preferable locations, and has discounted opportunities therein. Clydebank was not considered within the sequential test carried out by the applicant. Clydebank town centre and the edge-of-centre commercial centres (Clyde and Kilbowie retail parks) are in our view part of the catchment that would be served by the proposed development and sequentially preferable to Great Western Retail Park. These locations have available floorspace that could accommodate the floorspace currently proposed at Great Western Retail Park. The applicant should consider these opportunities before this application is determined.
- 3.3** Notwithstanding the suitability of opportunities, consideration should also be made of the impact of proposed new retail investment on the vitality and viability of town centres. The applicant has not provided a detailed assessment of the impact of the development on other centres. However, it is stated that trade will be drawn from Clydebank town centre, although this is not quantified. Further the proposals have the potential to attract retailers that would otherwise consider locating in the sequentially preferable Clydebank locations, and could result in some existing retailers withdrawing from Clydebank. The proposal therefore has potential to detract from the vitality and viability of Clydebank.
- 3.4** The location of the site, adjacent to the A82, is such that it will attract shoppers from a wide area mostly travelling by private car. It is therefore a less sustainable location than Clydebank town centre which is accessible by a choice of means of transport.

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** There are no personnel issues associated with this report.

5. Financial Implication

- 5.1** There are no financial implications associated with this report.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** No risks have been identified in relation to this report.

7. Equalities Impact

- 7.1** There are not considered to be any equality issues associated with this report.

8. Strategic Assessment

- 8.1** The regeneration of Clydebank town centre is a priority of the Council, and there is concern that the proposed development could impact adversely upon the vitality and viability of the town centre.

9. Conclusion and Recommendation

- 9.1** The removal of the bulky goods condition from the proposed floorspace at Great Western Retail Park could result in the loss of trade and current and potential occupiers of retail floorspace in the sequentially preferable Clydebank town centre and edge-of-centre commercial centres.
- 9.2** It is recommended that the Committee agree that this Council object to this planning application and submit Section 3 of this report as the Council's representation.

Elaine Melrose

Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development

Date: 23 August 2011

Person to Contact: Pamela Clifford, Planning and Building Standards Manager,
Housing, Environmental & Economic Development,
Rosebery Place, Clydebank,
G81 1TG.
Tel: 01389 738656
Email: Pamela.Clifford@west-dunbarton.gov.uk

Appendices:

Background Papers:

Wards Affected: All