

## **WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **Report by the Executive Director of Housing, Environmental and Economic Development**

**Planning Committee: 3 April 2012**

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**DC12/025:                    Extension of Existing Car Park and Removal of Existing Lock Up Garages at Swindon Street, Dalmuir by West Dunbartonshire Council**

#### **1.        REASON FOR REPORT**

- 1.1**      This application relates to an application by the Council. Under the terms of the approved scheme of delegation it therefore requires to be determined by the Planning Committee.

#### **2.        DEVELOPMENT DETAILS**

- 2.1**      The application relates to a group of lock up garages between Dalmuir railway station and the recently built car park off Swindon Street. The garages serve the high rise flats which overlook the site, and are arranged in a 'roundhouse' type circular form. Within the circular garage block is an electrical substation, and backing onto the garages is a small newsagent's shop, both of which would be retained. The existing car park to the south of the site was built around 5 years ago and contains 37 spaces.
- 2.2**      Demand for parking by both station users and local residents is high and parking is limited within the adjoining streets, so the existing car park is of insufficient capacity. It is therefore proposed to extend it into the area where the lock-up garages are located. The lock-up garages were under used with only 30% of the garages occupied, and the garage block is run down and in need of repairs. The existing users of the lock-ups will use an adjacent garage block, and it is proposed to demolish the lock-ups to make way for the car park extension. The car park extension provides an additional 39 space (of which 4 would be dedicated disabled spaces), and would be surfaced in asphalt to match the existing car park. Access would be by way of the existing car park.
- 2.3**      The proposal would be carried out in partnership with the Council and Strathclyde Passenger Transport. Prior to the application the Roads Service undertook a separate consultation with nearby residents, including a leaflet drop to 583 households and discussions with the Dalmuir Multi-Storey Flats Tenants and Residents Association. No comments were received in response to this consultation.

#### **3.        CONSULTATIONS**

- 3.1**      West Dunbartonshire Council Roads Services has no objection to the proposal which would serve to satisfy high demand for parking within the surrounding area.

- 3.2 West Dunbartonshire Council Estates Service, Housing Service and Network Rail all have no objection to the proposed development.

#### **4. REPRESENTATIONS**

- 4.1 No representations had been received at the time of writing. The period for representations does not expire until 13 April.

#### **5. ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

##### West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010

- 5.1 The application site is within an area covered by Policy H5, which indicates that the character and amenity of Existing Residential Areas will be safeguarded and where possible enhanced. Non-residential uses will only be permitted where they can be considered ancillary or complementary to the residential area and would not result in a significant loss of amenity to the surrounding properties. In this particular case the site is currently visually unattractive due to the poor condition of the garages, which also attract anti-social behaviour. The proposed expansion of the car park would improve the appearance of the site and would serve local residents as well as railway station users. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposal complies with Policy H5.
- 5.2 Policy T1 supports measures to encourage sustainable travel, including footpaths, cycle facilities and improved access to public transport. The proposed parking spaces would serve as a park and ride facility for Dalmuir railway station, and would thus improve access to public transport. The proposal would therefore comply with Policy T1.
- 5.3 The Swindon Street location is designated as a Transport Scheme location where Policy T3 applies. This indicates that the Council will, in partnership with other agencies, endeavour to undertake or support the schemes as indicated in Schedule 3 (Transport Schemes). Dalmuir railway station is identified as a park and ride project. That particular designation was applied in relation to the development of the existing car park to the south of the site, which has already taken place, but the success of that project has contributed to the need to expand the car park. The proposal would result in a further improvement of the park and ride facilities at Dalmuir and is therefore in compliance with Policy T3.

#### **6. ASSESSMENT AGAINST MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

##### Acceptability of the Use

- 6.1 The existing car park is too small to cater for demand, and as a result some station users park on the nearby streets, which restricts traffic flow and causes inconvenience to residents. There are also limited disabled parking facilities at present, and the need for such facilities has increased as a result of the recent provision of a new station footbridge incorporating lifts, which makes Dalmuir station much more convenient for disabled passengers. The proposal would provide improved facilities in order to address these existing problems.

- 6.2** It is not anticipated that the additional spaces will encourage existing rail travellers who currently walk to the station to drive there instead. However, it is possible that the enhanced facility may generate some additional journeys by persons who currently do not use the station. By providing an enhanced park and ride facility, it is hoped to encourage people to take the train into Glasgow rather than drive to Glasgow. There are limited opportunities for rail-based park and ride within the Clydebank area due to the lack of dedicated car parking facilities at Singer and Clydebank Central stations, and as Dalmuir is the busiest station in the town with around ten departures to Glasgow each hour it is also the most attractive station for people to drive to by car. Improvement of the parking facilities at Dalmuir would therefore help to address an existing shortfall in rail station parking in the Clydebank area.

## **7. CONCLUSION**

- 7.1** The proposal would provide an improved parking facility for rail travellers, which would serve to promote sustainable travel and be in compliance with Council policy, whilst also addressing the existing overspill onto local streets and improve disabled parking facilities. The lock up garages would be lost however this would not have an adverse impact upon the overall area as existing users of the lock up garages will be accommodated elsewhere. It is considered that the benefits of the improved facility justify the loss of the lock up garages and also improve the visual appearance of the area.
- 7.2** The representation period for this application does not expire until 13 April and the application cannot be determined until it expires. The recommendation is therefore that the Committee indicate that it is minded to grant permission, and delegate authority to the Appointed Officer to issue the decision upon the expiry of the consultation period. If new representations are received within the period the application would require to be returned to a future Planning Committee for reconsideration.

## **8. RECOMMENDATION**

- 8.1** **Minded to Grant** full planning permission subject to no new representations being received within the consultation period, and to the conditions set out in Section 9 below.

## **9. CONDITIONS**

- 01.** The development hereby approved shall commence within a period of 3 years from the date of this decision notice.
- 02.** The developer shall submit to the Planning Authority in writing upon the forms specified for the purpose and attached to this decision notice:
- a) A Notice of Commencement of Development as soon as practicable once it is decided to commence the development hereby approved (which shall be prior to the development commencing);

- b) A Notice of Completion of Development as soon as practicable once the development has been completed.
03. Prior to work commencing on site, full details (including materials) of the hardstanding and pedestrian areas shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. These approved details shall be implemented prior to the new car park being brought into use.
04. A landscaping scheme for the amenity and boundary of the site shall be submitted to and approved by the Planning Authority prior to commencement of development on site and shall be implemented not later than the next appropriate planting season after the car park is brought into use. The scheme shall include details of the maintenance arrangements and the landscaping shall thereafter be maintained in accordance with these details.

**Elaine Melrose**  
**Executive Director of Housing, Environmental**  
**and Economic Development**  
**Date: 21 March 2012**

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**Appendix:** None

**Background Papers:** 1. Application forms and plans;  
2. West Dunbartonshire Local Plan 2010

**Wards affected:** Ward 6 (Clydebank Waterfront)