

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

**Report by the Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and
Environmental Services (Housing & Regeneration Services)**

Planning Committee: 7 March 2007

PLANNING APPLICATION REPORT

APPLICATION NUMBER: DC07/001/COU

PROPOSAL: Change of use of vacant retail unit to betting shop

SITE: 119 High Street
Dumbarton
G82 1LF

APPLICANT: Ladbrokes PLC

AGENT: Richard Raper Planning Ltd

WARD: Dumbarton Central

DATE REGISTERED: 12.01.2007

PUBLICITY:

Category	Published	Expiry	Publication
Bad Neighbour Development	31/01/07	21/02/07	Reporter
Contrary to the Development Plan	24/01/07	14/02/07	Reporter
Neighbour Notification	24/01/07	14/02/07	Reporter

REPORT:

A. SITE DESCRIPTION

The application relates to a vacant shop unit on the south side of High Street, Dumbarton adjacent to the Burgh Bar public house. The unit has been vacant for

approximately 1 year. Although the unit is part of a two-storey building, this application relates only to the ground floor. The neighbouring buildings are all in commercial use, although there are some flats on upper floors of buildings in the vicinity. To the rear of the building is a small service yard accessed from Riverside Lane.

B. DEVELOPMENT DETAILS

Permission is sought for the use of the unit as a bookmaker's. Apart from the works already approved under DC06/313 as detailed in Section F and new signage, which is to be subject to separate application for advertisement consent, no additional external alterations to the building are proposed.

C. CONSULTATIONS

West of Scotland Archaeology Services	No known archaeological issue raised by this application.
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D. REPRESENTATIONS

One letter of representation has been received from Silverton and Overtoun Community Council, who object to the proposal on the following grounds:

1. Dumbarton has no need for an additional betting shop

Response- the application is required to be assessed against the development plan and the issue of whether there is need is not material to determining this application. It has to be considered whether this is an acceptable town centre use and this is addressed in Section E.

2. Further provision of betting shops would increase the likelihood of gambling addiction and the social problems which this can create.

Response- the moral implications are not material to determining this application.

E. ASSESSMENT AGAINST THE DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Dumbarton District, District Wide Local Plan 1999

The site lies within the Existing Town Centre Area and Policy R1A encourages retail and commercial development to locate within the town centre in order that it remains the focus for retail and commercial development. Policy R2A is also relevant as the site is located within the Prime Retail Frontage area of the High Street. This policy indicates that only retail uses will be permitted at ground floor level and that changes of use of vacant shop units to non-retail uses will be resisted.

The proposed use is contrary to the Local Plan however there are a number of vacant units within Dumbarton Town Centre and recent government guidance in SPP8 encourages town centres to have a diverse mix of commercial and retail uses to reflect people's changing needs. Therefore it is considered an exception to policy can be justified in this instance.

F. ASSESSMENT AGAINST MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

West Dunbartonshire Local Plan (Consultative Draft)

The site lies within the Dumbarton Town Centre area and Policy RET1 encourages significant retail development to locate in the town centre in order to sustain and improve its vitality and viability. However, unlike the adopted local plan this part of the High Street is no longer secured for retail uses and is outwith the area to be protected as the retail core. As a consequence there is no presumption against non-retail uses within this part of the town centre and the proposal would not conflict with the policies of the consultative draft plan.

Scottish Planning Policy 8 Town Centres and Retailing

Scottish Planning Policy Guideline 8 sets out the Scottish Executive's policy for town centres and retail developments. It also addresses other non-retail uses which have a role in contributing to the vitality and viability of town centres. The broad objectives are to sustain and enhance town centres as the most appropriate locations for retailing and related commercial activities. Town centres should be the principal locations for retail uses but other uses can help to bring life into the town centre throughout the day and evening.

Planning History

DC06/313: Planning permission was granted for a replacement shopfront and a single storey rear extension in October 2006. This development is presently being implemented on site.

Consultations and Representations

The consultation process has not raised any negative comments and the concerns of the Community Council are not considered material in the determination of this development and would not warrant a recommendation of refusal.

G. CONCLUSION

Although the proposal is contrary to Policy R2A of the adopted local plan in that it would involve a non-retail use within the Prime Retail Frontage area it is recognised that Dumbarton town centre has suffered a decline in its role as a comparison retail destination in recent years. Like other towns, Dumbarton has suffered a loss of trade to edge-of-centre retail parks. There are a number of vacant units within the High Street and in recognition of this the Retail Core defined in the West Dunbartonshire Local Plan covers a smaller area of the town centre than the previous Prime Retail

Frontage policy. Furthermore the unit has lain vacant for approximately one year. The proposed use will introduce a commercial use within the town centre that would complement the town centre. It is therefore considered that the use of the unit for a non-retail use would be acceptable at this location.

H. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the application be approved, subject to the conditions listed below.

I. CONDITIONS

- 1. The development hereby approved shall commence within a period of 5 years from the date of this consent.**

Irving Hodgson
Acting Director of Housing, Regeneration and
Environmental Services (Housing and Regeneration Services)
22 February 2007

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Appendix: None

Background Papers:

1. Copy of planning application received 04/01/07.
2. Copy of consultation response from West of Scotland Archaeology Service received 22/01/07.
3. Copy of objection from Silverton and Overtoun Community Council received 08/02/07.

Wards affected: 15

HOUSING, REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

COMMITTEE: PLANNING

DATE OF MEETING: 7 March 2007

REPORT TITLE: DC07/001/COU

AUTHOR: Pamela Clifford

Chief Officers Consulted

Chief Executive's Department

(tick as appropriate then delete this text)

- Legal Services
- Personnel Services
- Information Services
- Finance Services

Education and Cultural Services

Social Work

I confirm that the attached report has been proof-read by me personally, has been discussed with the appropriate Director/Heads of Service and is, in my opinion, of a quality suitable for submission to Committee.

Signature: **Date:**

