

Pennaeth Adfywio a Datblygu
Y Gyfarwyddiaeth Cymunedau
Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Pen-y-bont ar Ogwr
Swyddfeydd Dinesig
Stryd yr Angel
PEN-Y-BONT AR OGWR
CF31 4WB

Ffôn: 01656 643643
Ffacs: 01656 668249

Gwefan: www.bridgend.gov.uk



Head of Regeneration & Development
Communities Directorate
Bridgend County Borough Council
Civic Offices
Angel Street
BRIDGEND
CF31 4WB

Telephone: 01656 643643
Fax: 01656 668249

Website: www.bridgend.gov.uk

Direct line / *Deialu Uniongyrchol*: (01656) 643165

Our Ref / *Ein cyf*: 312A102/SAI

Ask for / *Gofynnwch am* : Mr S A Ingram

Date / *Dyddiad*: 16th February 2010

Mr C. Patten
Cliff Patten Planning Services
36 South Road
Porthcawl
CF36 3DG

Dear Mr Patten

Proposed redevelopment at Village Farm, Pyle

Thank you for your letter dated 1st February 2010 regarding the above which followed a meeting held between yourself and your clients of the 8th December 2009.

The site in question lies within the Village Farm Industrial Estate employment allocation which is allocated for B1, B2 and B8 purposes only by Policy E3(20) of the adopted Bridgend Unitary Development Plan (UDP). In addition, Policy E7 protects these allocations from developments which are not considered ancillary or complementary to the use of the site for employment uses. I do not consider that the use of the site for general convenience goods or garden centre type goods is either ancillary or complementary.

Therefore, other than the small element of 'trade-counter' units, the majority of your proposal is out-of-accord with the adopted Development Plan.

Notwithstanding the current use of the site for a garden centre, any planning application for the demolition and redevelopment of the site for further retailing uses would need to be considered against the current policy position for the site as outlined above.

In terms of the retailing element of the proposal, as you are aware, there are strict national and local planning policy tests which need to be undertaken when considering proposals for new out-of-centre retailing (this site lies outside any of the town and district centres currently defined in the UDP). The first of these tests is to identify the need for such a proposal. Primarily this should be a quantitative need, although a qualitative need may also be demonstrated.

In assessing quantitative need for new retailing proposals, the Council commissioned CACI Ltd to undertake a retail needs assessment in 2007. This concluded that, until 2021, taking into account the new retail foodstore in the Porthcawl Regeneration Area, that there would be no quantitative need for further convenience goods retailing in this area.

However, your proposal outlines the provision of a discount food retailer on the site accounting for approximately 1,100 sq m. I do consider therefore that as this site is highly accessible by walking, cycling and public transport; could contribute to a reduction in car journeys; and would contribute and enhance the existing retail provision in the area, that there is a case for proving that this element of the scheme meets a qualitative need in the area. However, this would need to be demonstrated by a Retail Assessment which should accompany any subsequent planning application.

With regards to the garden centre and other retail unit aspects of the scheme, the same retail need assessment concluded there was no need for comparison goods retailing in this catchment area up until 2021. Whilst a need was demonstrated for bulky comparison goods it is the Council's intention to make provision for this within the Porthcawl Regeneration Area and on sites to the south of Bridgend.

You mention in your letter the fact that the LDP is still under preparation. The Council is currently reviewing the boundaries of all the town and district centres in the UDP to inform the LDP. This may result in some or all of your site becoming an in or edge-of-centre site in planning policy terms.

However, you will know that proposals in the LDP need to be realistic, viable and deliverable. I therefore am concerned regarding your assertion that: "*if acceptable, the sale of land to the discount food operator would not, in itself, realise sufficient capital to develop the total site*". Therefore, given the policy context outlined above you are not presenting a proposal which could realistically feed into the LDP process. This is especially so considering the fact that the present garden centre site lease is not being renewed but in your letter you state that your clients are confident of delivering another garden centre on the site. (This appears to be contradictory)

Taking into account all the above, whilst I am satisfied that an application for the employment trade counter units and the small discount food operator could be acceptable on this site, the remaining elements would be contrary to both current local and national retailing planning policy whilst not providing evidence of need, viability and certainty required to change this position in the forthcoming LDP.

The advice in this letter concerns retail planning policy issues only and does not cover other, planning policy and development control issues, which would need to be addressed in the submission of a planning application. These observations are offered without prejudice to the outcome of a particular recommendation to the Development Control Committee on any subsequent planning application as that recommendation must take account of observations made and information disclosed during the processing of the application. Furthermore, no commitment to a particular planning decision can be made or implied on behalf of the Council.

Yours sincerely,



Stuart Ingram
Principal Planning Officer – Development Planning