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

Date / *Dyddiad:* 12<sup>th</sup> March 2010

**Mr T Smith**  
**Lidl UK GmbH**  
**Waterton Industrial Estate**  
**Off Cowbridge Road**  
**Bridgend**  
**CF31 3PH**

Dear Mr Smith

### Proposed redevelopment at Village Farm, Pyle

I refer to the exchange of correspondence between ourselves and my assistant, Stuart Ingram, regarding the above and would respond as follows.

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 retailing is either ancillary or complementary.

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 Lidl Store 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 smaller, retail units elements of the proposal, I am content that, in the absence of a retail allocation covering the site, the provision of a small amount of complementary retailing activities to serve the wider industrial area could be justified. However, the uses of these new units would be strictly controlled. Elsewhere, similar developments have been restricted to the following uses: banks / building societies, turf accountants, laundrettes, job centres, industrial opticians, bakers, hot food sales or telephone sales purposes. In permitting these uses, the Local Planning Authority would not expect the retail floorspace area of these individual units combined in future to be used to justify further large-scale retailing on the site.

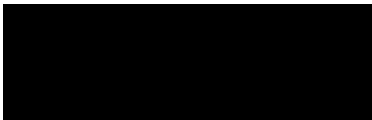
In addition, I am concerned to note that the scheme does not contain any general employment (B1, B2 and B8) development provisions, in particular on that area to the north of the site which is within the control of the current landowner. Bearing in mind that the retail elements of the scheme are out-of-accord with the Development Plan, any application would need to demonstrate that the proposal accords with the provisions of the UDP as much as possible. At the very least it should provide for serviced plots on this part of the site with the possible transfer of ownership to the Council to provide industrial / employment uses there in the future. If this was not feasible, any application would need to demonstrate why the sale of a substantial area of land to a national retailer, and the construction of new retail units could not cross-subsidise such provision.

This leads me to conclude that the whole of this area would properly benefit from an outline planning application covering the proposed uses of the site with perhaps the details submitted for the foodstore with all remaining matters reserved. Separate applications for the individual elements will not enable the Authority to consider the comprehensive redevelopment of this site. This advice concurs with the opinion of the Highway Authority who consider that the additional retailing activity may require further improvements to take place in order to make the complete scheme acceptable in highway terms. This can only be properly assessed by the submission of a Transport Assessment covering the whole site.

I do not consider, therefore, that a piecemeal approach to planning applications as you suggest would be appropriate in this instance.

The advice in this letter concerns retail and employment 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,



**David Llewellyn**  
Group Manager – Development