



CAERPHILLY TOWN CENTRE MANAGEMENT GROUP – 3RD DECEMBER 2008

SUBJECT: PLANNING APPLICATION, UNIT 5 GALLAGHER RETAIL PARK

REPORT BY: CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides information on the future use of Focus Unit 5, Gallagher Retail Park, Pontypandy (Crossways Retail Park).

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The council, in respect of the above mentioned site has received a series of Planning Applications relating to works that would facilitate the reopening of the vacant Focus retail unit as a food store. In response to these submissions, there has been widespread concern amongst people in Caerphilly town centre about the future of the Tesco store in Cardiff Road.

3. LINKS TO STRATEGY

- 3.1 The Council has agreed to a ten-year regeneration programme entitled "The Smart Alternative". The proposals within the plan are based on 6 regeneration principles, one of which is "to re-establish town centres as a focus of economic activity".

4. THE REPORT

- 4.1 A series of four Planning Applications (08/1202, 08/1203, 08/1208, 08/1209) have been submitted to the council by DPP (Cardiff) on behalf of Tesco stores. These all relate to the former Focus site at Unit 5 Gallagher Retail Park (Crossways). The details of the applications are as follows:
- Install ATM Pod – 08/1202
 - Extend car park and carry out ancillary works - 08/1203
 - Install shop front and ancillary works - 08/1208
 - Erect extension to service yard and ancillary works - 08/1209
- 4.2 You will note that these planning applications are for peripheral matters – additional car parking, signage and an ATM point and do not concern the use of the building. Because of a previous planning approval granted for this site there is no requirement for the applicant to obtain further planning consent to convert the current Focus DIY store into a food store.
- 4.3 When the unit was opened in 1988 (originally as Great Mills) the planning consent that was obtained for the DIY store was an open A1 consent, without any associated conditions restricting it to particular uses.

- 4.4 Therefore, any company wishing to change the use of the premises to a food store does not need planning consent because food-stores also fall into the fairly wide A1 classification.
- 4.5 Further, it should be noted that according to the planning legislation in Wales, the installation of a mezzanine floor in the existing store does not require planning consent.
- 4.6 In response to the submission of these planning applications there has been concern expressed by a number of people in the town centre as to the future of the Tesco store in Cardiff Road. To clarify the situation, the Town Centre Development Manager has met with the management of the Tesco store in Cardiff Road. At the meeting he was told that the management of the Cardiff Road store had been assured by Tesco's personnel office that the Cardiff Road store is to remain open and that there will be no job cuts.
- 4.7 As a company Tesco have sought, where possible, to retain town centre stores, even when a new larger town store Tesco has opened up. Therefore, there is every reason to believe that the two stores would trade alongside each other.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no financial implications.

6. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no personal implications.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The report is submitted for the perusal and information of the members of the Caerphilly Town Centre Management Group.

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