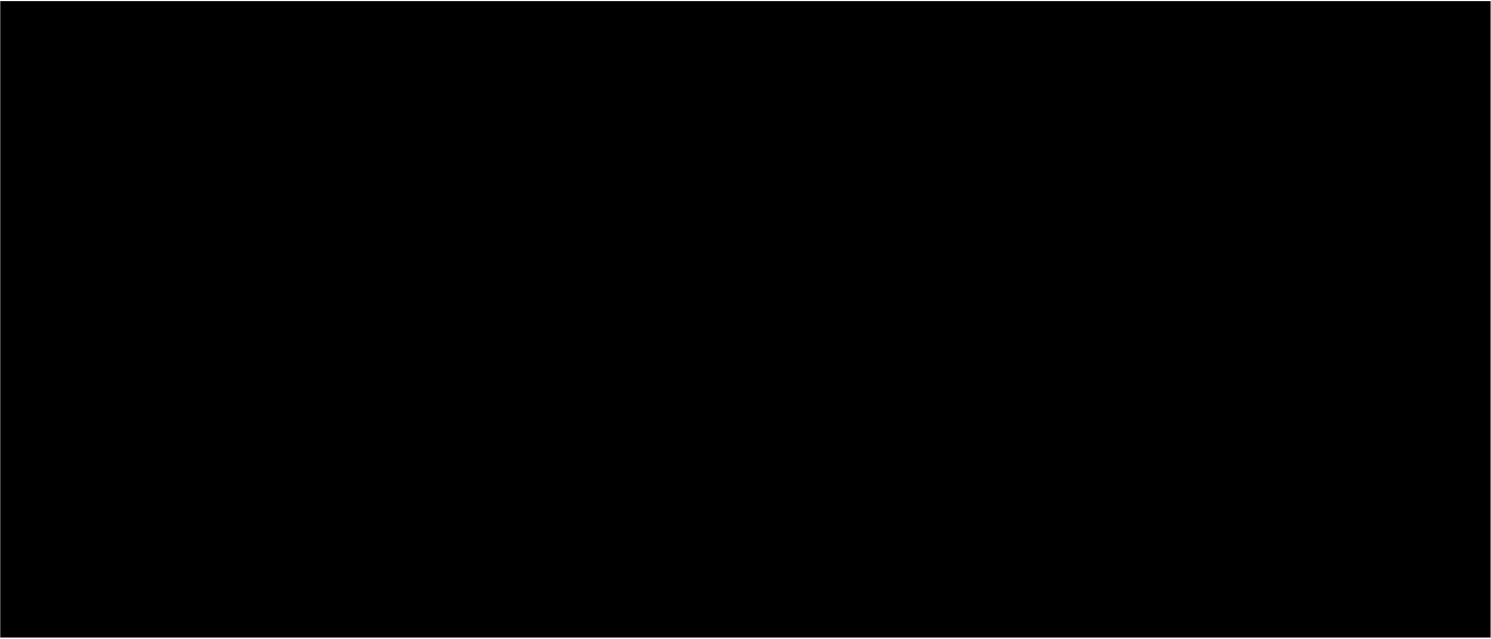




From: Des Dunlop [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 July 2014 17:35
To: Simon Davis
Subject: Review of RIA for BE/23/14

Simon

Further to my recent email, I would respond as follows: -

- i. GL Hearn accept that there is no adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the town centre from retail proposals comprising bulky goods and mixed use comparison.
- ii. GL Hearn indicate that the impact on the town centre from food retailing is acceptable.
- iii. GL Hearn have a concern about the impact around clothing and footwear where they conclude that £4.7m would be diverted from the town centre. This is almost double our estimate and seems particularly high but in any event it would mean that the town centre trades almost £5m above 2012 levels in 2013.
- iv. With regards the sequential assessment this relates to the Hothampton car park site which appears to being proposed for a mixed use development. St Modwen suggest that interest from retailers have requirements for between 15,000 sq ft to 18,000 sq ft. The indication is that the site could accommodate the Aldi food store format or clothing and footwear.

The applicants have interest from a wide range of retail end users which is why they have applied for Open Class A1 retail following pre application discussions. However the proposal is for a single unit of 2,450sqm with associated car parking and servicing. The Hothampton car park is clearly not large enough to accommodate such a single user if restricted to bulky goods/or mixed use comparison. The applicant is prepared to restrict the retail consent to the end users. Accordingly the proposals in that context meet the sequential assessment i.e. the Hothampton site cannot accommodate this size of unit.

We would add however that whilst the applicants are prepared to make that concession this should not be taken as an indication that we accept the GL Hearn conclusion in respect of food and clothing and footwear.

Finally, we are somewhat surprised by the Economic Development Officer's comments for a number of reasons: -

- i. They are particularly late in the consultation process;
- ii. She provides no evidence of demand for these units, if she has evidence can it be provided;

- iii. The fact that the units have been vacant and marketed for a considerable period of time is ignored;
- iv. The inconsistency between her comments and GL Hearn on the impact of proposals on the town centre. She either did not see the GL Hearn comments or simply ignored them;
- v. There is no interest for these units; and
- vi. There is no recognition from the Economic Development Officer of the economic benefit of the proposals in terms of investment and job creation in the area.

I trust that these comments will be taken into consideration and would be happy to meet to discuss them with you.

If you require any further clarification then do not hesitate to contact me.

Regards

Des

Des Dunlop

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