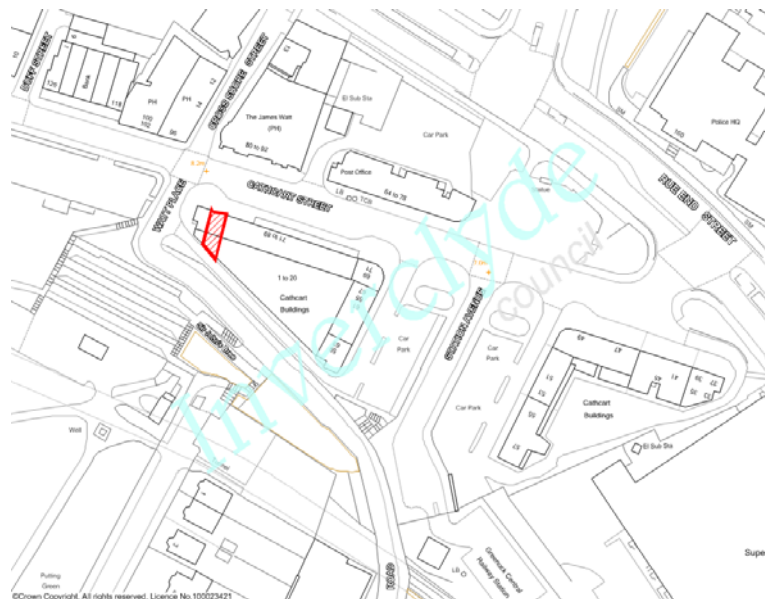


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|-----------------------------|--|--------------------|--|
| <b>Report To:</b>           | <b>The Planning Board</b>  | <b>Date:</b>       | <b>5 December 2012</b>                   |
| <b>Report By:</b>           | <b>Head of Regeneration and Planning</b>   | <b>Report No:</b>  | <b>12/0309/IC<br/>Plan 12/12</b>         |
|                             |  |                    | <b>Local Application<br/>Development</b> |
| <b>Contact<br/>Officer:</b> | <b>David Ashman</b>  | <b>Contact No:</b> | <b>01475 712416</b>                      |
| <b>Subject:</b>             | <b>Change of use of Class 1 shop unit to form an extension to adjoining library at<br/>Former Craft Shop, 83 Cathcart Street, Greenock</b> |                    |  |

**SITE DESCRIPTION**

The application site consists of a former retail unit on the ground floor of a four storey residential building. There is a mix of retail and public administrative use of the ground floor along the length of the building.



**PROPOSAL**

The applicant seeks planning permission to extend the adjacent library premises by converting the former shop unit into a training suite. This is primarily to allow public internet access. An internal opening will be formed between the unit and the library. The current entrance doors to Cathcart Street will be removed and replaced with fire exit doors. These are to be set behind the existing metal gates which will be closed at night but open during working hours.

## LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

### Local Plan Policy R1- Designated Centres

The following Centres are designated:

#### 1. Town Centres, as defined on the Proposals Map:

- (a) Greenock, subdivided into a 'Central Shopping Area' and 'Outer Mixed/Commercial Area';
- (b) Port Glasgow;
- (c) Gourock; and

#### 2. Local Centres, as defined or indicated on the Proposals Map:

- (a) Kilmacolm (defined);
- (b) Dubbs Road, Port Glasgow (defined);
- (c) Sinclair Street, Greenock;
- (d) Belville Street, Greenock;
- (e) Lynedoch Street, Greenock;
- (f) Barrs Cottage (Inverkip Road/Dunlop Street), Greenock;
- (g) Ravenscraig (Cumberland Walk), Greenock;
- (h) Cardwell Road, Gourock (defined);
- (i) Main Street, Inverkip;
- (j) Ardgowan Road, Wemyss Bay;
- (k) By Station/Pier, Wemyss Bay.

Inverclyde Council, as Planning Authority, will seek to assist urban regeneration and sustainable travel patterns. This will be achieved by encouraging each Centre to serve its own retail and service catchments without detriment to other Centres and to the overall roles of Greenock, Port Glasgow and Gourock as the principal Centres serving the Authority.

### Local Plan Policy R2 - Support for Designated Centres

The designated Centres identified in Policy R1 will be protected, enhanced and developed, where resources allow, through a range of initiatives aimed at achieving the following:

- (a) encouraging a diversity of retail, leisure, civic, public administration, office, residential and other uses, of the type which the Council, as Planning Authority, considers to be appropriate to the development of the individual Centres, in order to support their vitality and viability, particularly through mixed use developments and through the use of upper floors of commercial premises;
- (b) identifying and promoting opportunities for new development and for the redevelopment and reuse of existing premises, both within and on the edge of the defined Centres;
- (c) improving the quality of the urban environment through implementing programmes for the improvement of individual properties, the streetscape and open spaces;
- (d) improving accessibility and integration of services by bus, train, ferry and taxi;
- (e) improving accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists through the provision of safe and convenient facilities and routes both into and within the town centres;
- (f) managing provision of freight access and of car, motorcycle and cycle parking for residents, visitors, workers and shoppers in accordance with an approved strategy;

- (g) managing traffic flows to minimise congestion and pollution and to give priority to the disabled, pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and service vehicles; and
- (h) developing Town Centre Action Plans in partnership with other agencies.

#### Local Plan Policy R3 - Town Centre Uses

The following town centre uses will be directed towards the Central Shopping Area of Greenock, the other two Town Centres (Port Glasgow and Gourock) and the Local Centres:

- (a) Use Class 1 (Shops);
- (b) Use Class 2 (Financial, Professional and other Services);
- (c) Use Class 3 (Food and Drink);
- (d) Use Class 11 (Assembly and Leisure); and
- (e) Related uses such as public houses, hot food take-aways, theatres, amusement arcades and offices for taxis for public hire.

Outside these designated Centres, the above uses will be permitted in principle in the Outer Mixed/Commercial Area around the Central Shopping Area of Greenock Town Centre, according to the specification in Policy R5. Applications for any of the uses listed will be considered subject to the criteria outlined in Policy R10. Proposals for other uses in designated Centres will be considered on their merit.

#### Local Plan Policy R10 - Assessing Development Proposals for Town Centre Uses

Any proposal for a development of one or more of the town centre uses identified in Policy R3, or for any other commercial use within a defined centre, will be required to satisfy the criteria listed below:

- (a) for developments on the edge of, or outside, the designated Centres, and retail developments on the edge of, or outside, Greenock's Central Shopping Area, the applicant should have adopted a sequential approach to site selection, including consideration of sites identified under Policy R6;
- (b) the applicant having demonstrated that there is a capacity for the development in terms of expenditure compared to turnover in the appropriate catchment area, or a qualitative deficiency in existing provision;
- (c) the proposal should not have a detrimental effect, including cumulatively, on the vitality and viability of existing Centres;
- (d) the size and format of the development is appropriate to the Centre for which it is proposed;
- (e) the proposed development should be accessible by a choice of means of transport from its forecast catchment, make provision for improved infrastructure where deemed necessary, not result in unacceptable changes in travel patterns and, where required, be supported by the production of a Transport Assessment;
- (f) the proposed development should be to a high standard of design and its scale, siting and relationship to the surrounding townscape and land uses should make a positive contribution to the quality of the urban environment;
- (g) the proposal should not have a detrimental effect on residential amenity or on the amenity and effective operation of existing businesses;
- (h) the proposal should be consistent with other relevant national, Structure Plan and Local Plan policies and guidelines, including any Town Centre Strategy or other relevant initiative

which may have been instigated, the Council's Roads Development Guide, 1995 and any other standards; and

- (i) in Greenock Town Centre the proposed development should be consistent with Policies R4 and R5.

Where the proposal includes either a convenience retail development of over 1,000 square metres gross; comparison retail development of over 2,000 square metres gross; or Use Class 11 (Assembly & Leisure) developments that will attract a large number of users, it should be accompanied by a statement of justification addressing the above criteria and the criteria set out in the Structure Plan and NPPG8. At the Council's discretion, applications for development within designated Centres or small-scale development of town centre uses outwith the designated Centres may be exempted from the requirement to be justified against criteria (a)-(d).

## **CONSULTATIONS**

No consultations were required.

## **PUBLICITY**

The nature of the proposal did not require advertisement.

## **SITE NOTICES**

The nature of the proposal did not require a site notice.

## **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

The application was the subject of neighbour notification. No representations were received.

## **ASSESSMENT**

The primary material consideration in determination of this application is the Local Plan.

The application site is within Greenock Town Centre, as defined by the Local Plan under Policy R1. The proposed use is related to the diversity of uses identified by Policy R2, including those to be directed towards the central shopping area under Policy R3. With respect to the relevant criteria of Policy R10, it will support the vitality and viability of the town centre in bringing a vacant unit back into use (criterion (c)), it is in an accessible town centre location (criterion (e)), it is not anticipated that residential amenity or the effective operation of existing businesses will be compromised (criterion (g)), and it is consistent with other Local Plan policies (criterion (h)).



The proposal therefore merits support although details of the fire doors should be submitted for approval before their installation. This matter may be addressed by condition.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That the application be granted, subject to the following condition:

Condition

That prior to their installation, full elevational details of the fire exit doors shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority.

Reason

To allow the Planning Authority to retain control in the interests of visual amenity.

Stuart Jamieson  
Head of Regeneration and Planning

## **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

1. Application form and plans.
2. Inverclyde Local Plan.



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