

SITE VISIT REPORT: MONDAY 20th June 2022

Committee Members: Alderman Baird, Boyle, Duddy, Finlay, S McKillop and McKeown; Councillors Anderson, Dallat O'Driscoll, Hunter, McGurk, MA McKillop, McLaughlin, McMullan (Chair), P McShane (Vice Chair), Nicholl and Scott

10.30am

LA01/2021/0090/F – 17 Taughey Road, Ballymoney

App Type: Full Application

Proposal: Extension to existing car sales compound

Present: Alderman McKillop, Councillors Hunter and Nicholl, Official E Hudson
Apologies: Alderman Baird and Boyle

Comments:

Viewed site from along site frontage on Taughey Road. Officials outlined the description of the proposed development which represents an increase of the site area by 560 sq m for the purpose of expanding the existing car sales area. A reduction in the originally submitted site area. Members asked if the existing car sales area had planning permission. Officials explained the planning history of the site referring to a 2018 planning permission which was retrospective permission for car storage compound, valeting workshop and existing car sales compound. This permission established the existing car sales area as it had been operating for a period time and would be immune from enforcement action. Officials explained that car sales is a form of retail development, established by previous planning applications and PAC decisions. As such the SPPS was the relevant policy context and the town centre first approach. A sequential assessment of a suitable catchment area is required with these types of applications which will consider sites/land/buildings in an order of preference. The countryside (where the application site is) is not included in the sequential assessment. Officials advised that the submitted sequential assessment was limited to the settlements of Balnamore and Ballymoney and only included economic development land in Ballymoney and Balnamore. For car sales we would consider a wider catchment area to appropriate. Therefore, it has not been demonstrated that there are no suitable town centre or sequentially preferable site for this development. Members asked that would exception not be made to an extension to an existing use or if

it was an extension for a non retail use would it be considered differently. Officials advised that the extension of the retail element would also be considered under the SPPS and the sequential approach which was confirmed by the recent Hallidays planning appeal for an extension of a similar percentage of the site area. An extension of a non-retail area would be a different application and considered on its own merits. If the applicant has outgrown the existing site in terms of size and scale he should look to re-locate to a more suitable site deemed acceptable under the SPPS. Also, it is not considered an exceptional use in the countryside and is also an inappropriate retail use in the countryside.

Officials also advised that the proposal to extend out into an open agricultural field was considered unacceptable in terms of integration when viewed from along Taughey Road and Macfin Rd. The existing car sales area was contained to an existing linear part of the road but incorporating additional parked cars on an extended area would further dominate this stretch of road and from Macfin Road. Officials confirmed there were no objections received on the application.

E Hudson 20/06/2022