

Report To:	The Planning Board	Date:	4th March 2009
Report By:	Head of Planning and Housing	Report No:	09/0029/IC Plan 03/09
Contact Officer:	Guy Phillips	Contact No:	01475 712422
Subject:	Proposed erection of a 3 storey Class 2 office at 30 Regent Street and formation of 16 car parking spaces adjacent to 39 Regent Street and 10 Bank Street, Greenock at 30 Regent Street Greenock PA15 4PB		

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is in two parts, comprising the Council's Alcohol Services building on the north east junction of Regent Street and Bank Street, Greenock and a cul-de-sac (part of Bank Street), lying to the south of Regent Street. The Alcohol Services site extends to approximately 0.95ha while the cul-de-sac site, opposite, has an approximate area of 0.89ha.

The single storey, flat roofed Alcohol Services building dates from the Second World War and is in a poor state of repair. It occupies a level platform contained by retaining walls at its boundaries with the steeply sloping Bank Street to the west and the grade B listed Jericho House (hostel) to the north. The Wellpark forms the east boundary which is defined by an approximately 1.4m high random rubble wall. The random rubble wall has been undermined by tree roots in the neighbouring park and has a pronounced lean. Vehicular access to the site is from Regent Street.

The cul-de-sac part of the site is bound by Regent Street to the north, Bank Street to the east and south and by the Highland Star Chinese Restaurant and a tenement at 10 Bank Street to the west. There is a vehicular access into a yard at the rear of the restaurant from the cul-de-sac. The carriageway of the cu-de-sac is contained by pavements to the north, east and west. The pavement to the north is broad and is used to site a group of council recycling bins. The eastern part of the cul-de-sac site comprises an area of grassed open space, containing a small item of play equipment.

PROPOSAL

At the February meeting of the Planning Board, following a site visit, Members decided to continue consideration of planning application 08/0203/IC for the erection of a 3 storey, class 2 office at 30 Regent Street and formation of 14 car parking spaces adjacent to 39 Regent Street and 10 Bank Street Greenock to allow the submission of an amended planning application. Copies of my reports to the January and February meetings of the Planning board on 08/0203/IC are attached.

Planning application 08/0203/IC has been withdrawn and replaced by the application under consideration in this report.

It is proposed to replace the Alcohol Services building with a new three storey building with a monopitched roof, providing Class 2 office accommodation for Health Authority and Social Services workers. A statement has been supplied explaining the background to the planning application and the proposed use of the building (copy attached).

Vehicular access to the proposed building would be from Regent Street. It is proposed to provide 23 parking spaces. 7 spaces would be provided within the site of the proposed building. Another 16 spaces are proposed to be provided at the cul-de-sac on Bank Street with end on parking bays being formed. The proposed parking spaces on Bank Street would be part of the public road and as such would be available for use by all motorists, thus increasing parking facilities within the area.

In the previous planning application, 27 off street parking spaces were proposed. This figure has reduced to 23 spaces in the current planning application. Members were concerned by the design of undercroft parking in the proposed building and it has been replaced by office accommodation in the design now under consideration.

It is further proposed to take down and rebuild the random rubble wall at the boundary wall with the Wellpark. Four mature trees within the park, which have caused the existing wall to subside, are proposed to be felled and replacement specimens planted.

LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

Local Plan Policy LR1- Safeguarding Open Space

Inverclyde Council, as Planning Authority, will support, safeguard and where practicable, enhance:

- (a) areas identified as 'Open Space' on the Proposals Map
- (b) other areas of open space of value in terms of their amenity to their surroundings and to the community and their function as wildlife corridors or wedges; and
- (c) where appropriate, encourage other relevant and compatible development for the purposes of leisure, recreation and sport.

Local Plan Policy H1 - Safeguarding the Character and Amenity of Residential Areas

The character and amenity of existing residential areas, identified on the Proposals Map, will be safeguarded, and where practicable, enhanced. New residential development will be acceptable, in principle, subject to other relevant Local Plan policies.

Local Plan Policy H8 - The Character and Amenity of Residential Areas

Proposals for residential development that are acceptable in principle in terms of the Development Strategy of the Local Plan will still be required to satisfy the following development control criteria:

- (a) compatibility with the character and amenity of an area in terms of land use, density, design and materials used;
- (b) visual impact of development on the site and its surroundings;
- (c) landscaping proposals;
- (d) open space proposals (see also Policy H11 and guidance in Policy DC1);
- (e) proposals for the retention of existing landscape or townscape features of value on the site;
- (f) assessment against the Council's Roads Development Guidelines 1995 with regard to road design, parking and traffic safety;
- (g) provision of adequate services; and

(h) accommodation of, in appropriate cases, the requirements of bus operators regarding road widths, lay-bys and turning areas.

Local Plan Policy H9 - Non-Residential Development Proposals within Residential Areas

The introduction of new, or the extension of, non-residential uses in existing residential areas will be acceptable only where such uses are compatible with the character and amenity of the area and satisfy other relevant policies of the Local Plan.

CONSULTATIONS

Head Of Environmental Services - No objections

PUBLICITY

The application was advertised in the Greenock Telegraph on 9th February 2009 as Development by Planning Authority and as a Development Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building.

SITE NOTICES

A site notice was posted on 10th February 2009 for Development Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

One letter of objection to this planning application has been received (copy attached). The objector considers that:

1. The development of car parking on the area of open space will be to the detriment of residents and is contrary to the Inverclyde Local Plan.
2. The priority should be for increased public transport and not additional car parking.
3. The size of the proposed car park is insufficient, as it will attract use by other town centre visitors making parking more difficult for residents.
4. Parking spaces will be lost during construction.
5. The recycling facility, which is well used by residents, may be lost as a result of the development.
6. The proximity of the site to the front door of 10 Bank Street is unacceptable, and assurance is required from the principal contractor that issues of noise, housekeeping, hygiene and general nuisance will be mitigated.
7. There are already perceived problems associated with the users of the facility, therefore questions arise over the impact of increased use.
8. Assurance is required over the impact from asbestos during the demolition works.

Copies of the representations received in response to the planning application considered at the January and February meetings of the Planning Board are enclosed with my two previous reports and are attached.

ASSESSMENT

The material considerations in the determination of this planning application are the Development Plan, the consultation responses, the previous planning application for the site and design.

Although on the border of the commercial town centre and the residential area surrounding, Policy H1 applies. It seeks to safeguard and, where practicable, enhance the character and amenity of residential areas. The best measure, I consider, of whether or not the proposal satisfies this aim is

to assess it against Policy H9 which requires the introduction of new, non residential uses in existing residential areas to be compatible with the character and amenity of the area. Key to this issue is recognition that the existing Alcohol Services office occupies the site. The existing building is of single storey construction while that proposed would have three storeys. Staffing levels at the existing office are 14, 6 of whom provide an itinerant service around Inverclyde. The proposed office would have a staff complement of 22, of which 8 would operate itinerantly. It therefore falls to consider what impact the proposed building and increased staff complement would have on residential amenity and character. With regard to the increased level of activity I consider that the greatest potential impact arises from demand for car parking. The Council's Roads Development Guide advises that 2 parking spaces should be provided per 100 square metres of floorspace . In this instance the requirement is for 23 spaces, including approximately 100 square metres of office space designed as undercroft parking in the previous planning application. A total of 23 spaces are proposed; 7 within the office site and 16 in a car park to be formed on Bank Street. The proposed Bank Street car park is available for public use and on street parking is generally available during the day. The car park would be available to users of the proposed office during its core hours of 9am to 5pm. Limited evening use of the proposed office is, I consider, unlikely to make significant demand on the proposed parking at Bank Street as 7 spaces are available at the office itself. The increased amount of car parking at Bank Street would be to the benefit of residents wishing to park near to their homes during the evening. Access to the rear of the Highland Star Chinese Restaurant is maintained.

I note the concern of the objector over car parking and the consequential impact on the area of open space and potential loss of the recycling facility. Policy LR1 of the Local Plan seeks to safeguard areas of open space of value in terms of their amenity to their surroundings and to the community and their function as wildlife corridors or wedges. I also note that the Wellpark, which constitutes a significant public amenity, lies opposite. Overall, however, I consider that the proposal offers to opportunity to rationalize the area, increase parking, and improve the visual amenity of the area, including the impact of the recycling facility, which is to be retained.

While the proposed modern building is significantly larger than the dilapidated wartime structure presently on site, I consider that its scale and design are sympathetic to neighbouring properties, including the Grade B listed Jericho House and to the setting of the Wellpark. The deletion of the undercroft parking overcomes one of the design issues raised by the Police in their observations on the previous planning application. Benefits to be accrued from having an improved design and quality of building require to be balanced against the impact which the removal of 4 mature trees from the Wellpark shall have. While the trees within the park are not afforded any formal protection they are an important component in the overall amenity that the park affords to the public. On balance, I consider the benefits of having an improved quality of building adjacent to the public park outweigh the adverse impact on character and amenity arising from the proposed felling.

Overall, I am satisfied that the proposed building design satisfies the requirements of policy H9 and there is no conflict with the aims of Policies LR1 and H1.

I am, however, required to consider if there are other material considerations that persuade against following development plan policy. In this respect I have examined the points of objection to the application. As previously informed, I am satisfied that the impact on residential amenity of the proposed parking facility will be acceptable, and that the level of parking is appropriate. Site management and health and safety matters relative to construction and demolition are controlled by non planning legislation, and I am not persuaded that perceptions of the impact from greater use of the building merits refusal.

Scottish Government PAN 82 advises that in the case of planning applications by planning authorities the Scottish Ministers should be notified where the planning authority considers the strength of opposition is a significant material consideration taking into account the number of representations, the extent to which they are representative of the community and their relevance in planning terms. A substantial body of objections was received to the previous planning application, which the application under consideration substitutes. Although the application under

consideration has been the subject of neighbour notification and press and site advertisements, at the time of writing only one written representation has been received. The concerns raised by objectors to the previous application remain relevant, however, and I consequently consider that the planning application under consideration requires to be referred to the Scottish Ministers in the event that the Planning Board is minded to grant planning permission.

RECOMMENDATION

That the application be Granted Subject to Conditions

Conditions

1. That the development to which this permission relates must be begun within five years from the date of this permission.
2. The office hereby approved shall not be occupied until the parking layout detailed on docquetted drawing 07 126 101 has been completed.
3. No development shall commence until details of tree planting to replace the 4 trees to be felled in the Wellpark have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Planting shall take place in the first planting season following completion of the office and any specimens that in the subsequent 5 years die, become diseased or are damaged shall be replaced in the next planting season with a similar specimen unless the Head of Planning and Housing gives prior approval to any alternatives
4. Development shall not begin until samples of materials to be used (on external surfaces of the buildings) or (in construction of hard standings/walls/fences) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. Development shall thereafter be carried out using the approved materials or such alternatives as may be agreed in writing with the Head of Planning and Housing.
5. No development shall commence until details of measures to improve the security and natural surveillance of the side and rear footpaths and the provision of 2m high boundary treatment to the east and north site boundaries have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Planning & Housing. Development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details or such alternatives as may be agreed in writing with the Head of Planning and Housing.

Reasons

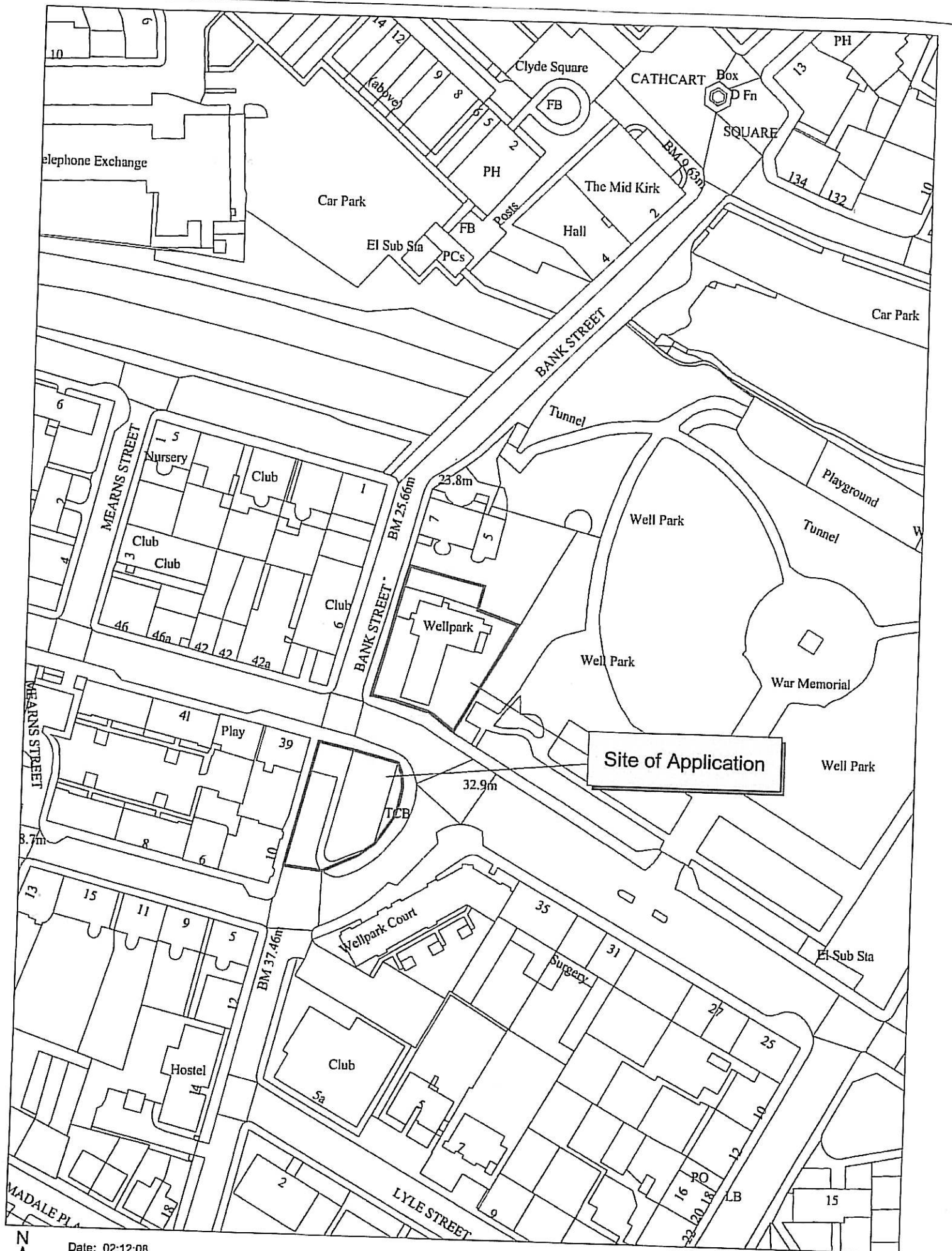
1. To comply with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997
2. To prevent obstructive parking on Regent Street and Bank Street.
3. To ensure a quality tree setting for the office and the Wellpark

4. To ensure a continuity of materials in this part of Greenock
5. To improve the security of the building hereby approved and to accord with Police advice.

F. K WILLIAMSON
Head of Planning and Housing

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Application form
2. Application plans
3. Inverclyde Local Plan
4. Consultation responses
5. Written representations
6. Planning Application 08/0203/IC



Date: 02:12:08

Drawn: JML Drg. No. 08/0203/IC

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APPENDIX

Inverclyde
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AGENDA ITEM NO.

1 (b)

Report To:	The Planning Board	Date:	4 th February 2009
Report By:	Head of Planning and Housing	Report No.	08/0203/IC Plan 02/09
Contact Officer:	Guy Phillips	Contact No.	01475 712422
Subject:	Proposed erection of a 3 storey Class 2 office at 30 Regent Street and formation of 14 car parking spaces adjacent to 39 Regent Street and 10 Bank Street, Greenock at 30 Regent Street Greenock PA15 4PB		

INTRODUCTION

At the previous meeting of the Planning Board on 7th January consideration of the above planning application was continued to allow Members to carry out a site visit. The site visit was conducted on 20th January when the physical characteristics of the site and its surroundings were observed and the rationale behind the submitted design explained.

RECOMMENDATION

I recommend that, subject to referral to the Scottish Ministers in accordance with The Town & Country Planning (Notification of Applications) (Scotland) Direction 2007, the application be granted subject to conditions.

Conditions

1. That the development to which this permission relates must be begun within five years from the date of this permission.
2. The office hereby approved shall not be occupied until the parking layout detailed on docquetted drawing 07 126 101a has been completed.
3. No development shall commence until details of tree planting to replace the 4 trees to be felled in the Wellpark have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Planting shall take place in the first planting season following completion of the office and any specimens that in the subsequent 5 years die, become diseased or are damaged shall be replaced in the next planting season with a similar specimen unless the Head of Planning and Housing gives prior approval to any alternatives.

4. Development shall not begin until samples of materials to be used (on external surfaces of the buildings) or (in construction of hard standings/walls/fences) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. Development shall thereafter be carried out using the approved materials or such alternatives as may be agreed in writing with the Head of Planning and Housing.
5. No development shall commence until details of measures to improve the security of the under cover parking area, security and natural surveillance of the side and rear footpaths and provision of 2m high boundary treatment to the east and north site boundaries have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Planning & Housing. Development shall thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details or such alternatives as may be agreed in writing with the Head of Planning and Housing.

Reasons

1. To comply with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
2. To prevent obstructive parking on Regent Street and Bank Street.
3. To ensure a quality tree setting for the office and the Wellpark.
4. To ensure a continuity of materials in this part of Greenock.
5. To improve the security of the building hereby approved and to accord with Police advice.

N. McIver

np Fraser Williamson
Head of Planning & Housing

BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. Application form
2. Application plans
3. Inverclyde Local Plan
4. Consultation responses
5. Written representations



APPENDIX

Inverclyde
council

Agenda Item
No.

1(b)

Report To:	The Planning Board	Date:	7th January 2009
Report By:	Head of Planning and Housing	Report No:	08/0203/IC Plan 01/09
Contact Officer:	Guy Phillips	Contact No:	01475 712422
Subject:	Proposed erection of a 3 storey Class 4 office at 30 Regent Street and formation of 14 car parking spaces adjacent to 39 Regent Street and 10 Bank Street, Greenock at 30 Regent Street Greenock PA15 4PB		

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is in two parts, comprising the Council's Alcohol Services building on the north east junction of Regent Street and Bank Street, Greenock and a cul-de-sac (part of Bank Street), lying to the south of Regent Street. The Alcohol Services site extends to approximately 0.95ha while the cul-de-sac site, opposite, has an approximate area of 0.89ha.

The single storey, flat roofed Alcohol Services building dates from the Second World War and is in a poor state of repair. It occupies a level platform contained by retaining walls at its boundaries with the steeply sloping Bank Street to the west and the grade B listed Jericho House (hostel) to the north. The Wellpark forms the east boundary which is defined by an approximately 1.4m high random rubble wall. The random rubble wall has been undermined by tree roots in the neighbouring park and has a pronounced lean. Vehicular access to the site is from Regent Street.

The cul-de-sac part of the site is bound by Regent Street to the north, Bank Street to the east and south and by the Highland Star Chinese Restaurant and a tenement at 10 Bank Street to the west. There is a vehicular access into a yard at the rear of the restaurant from the cul-de-sac. The carriageway of the cu-de-sac is contained by pavements to the north, east and west. The pavement to the north is broad and is used to site a group of council recycling bins. The eastern part of the cul-de-sac site comprises an area of grassed open space, containing a small item of play equipment.

PROPOSAL

It is proposed to replace the Alcohol Services building with a new three storey building with a monopitched roof, providing Class 2 office accommodation for Health Authority and Social Services workers. A statement has been supplied explaining the background to the planning application and the proposed use of the building (copy attached).

Vehicular access to the proposed building would be from Regent Street. It is proposed to provide 27 parking spaces. 13 spaces would be provided within the site of the proposed building, including 6 underneath the first floor. The remaining 14 spaces are proposed to be provided at the cul-de-sac

on Bank Street with end on parking bays being formed. The proposed parking spaces on Bank Street would be part of the public road and as such would be available for use by all motorists, thus increasing parking facilities within the area.

It is further proposed to take down and rebuild the random rubble wall at the boundary wall with the Wellpark. Four mature trees within the park, which have caused the existing wall to subside, are proposed to be felled and replacement specimens planted.

LOCAL PLAN POLICIES

Local Plan Policy LR1- Safeguarding Open Space

Inverclyde Council, as Planning Authority, will support, safeguard and where practicable, enhance:

- (a) areas identified as 'Open Space' on the Proposals Map; *
- (b) other areas of open space of value in terms of their amenity to their surroundings and to the community and their function as wildlife corridors or wedges; and
- (c) where appropriate, encourage other relevant and compatible development for the purposes of leisure, recreation and sport.

Local Plan Policy H1 - Safeguarding the Character and Amenity of Residential Areas

The character and amenity of existing residential areas, identified on the Proposals Map, will be safeguarded, and where practicable, enhanced. New residential development will be acceptable, in principle, subject to other relevant Local Plan policies.

Local Plan Policy H8 - The Character and Amenity of Residential Areas

Proposals for residential development that are acceptable in principle in terms of the Development Strategy of the Local Plan will still be required to satisfy the following development control criteria:

- (a) compatibility with the character and amenity of an area in terms of land use, density, design and materials used;
- (b) visual impact of development on the site and its surroundings;
- (c) landscaping proposals;
- (d) open space proposals (see also Policy H11 and guidance in Policy DC1);
- (e) proposals for the retention of existing landscape or townscape features of value on the site;
- (f) assessment against the Council's Roads Development Guidelines 1995 with regard to road design, parking and traffic safety;
- (g) provision of adequate services; and
- (h) accommodation of, in appropriate cases, the requirements of bus operators regarding road widths, lay-bys and turning areas.

Local Plan Policy H9 - Non-Residential Development Proposals within Residential Areas

The introduction of new, or the extension of, non-residential uses in existing residential areas will be acceptable only where such uses are compatible with the character and amenity of the area and satisfy other relevant policies of the Local Plan.

The Scottish Government SPP23 advises on when Planning Authorities are required to seek the views of Historic Scotland on planning applications. The Government expects local authorities and others to maintain and strengthen their commitment to stewardship of the historic environment, and to reflect this planning guidance in their policies and their allocation of resources.

CONSULTATIONS

West Of Scotland Archaeology Service - No objections

Strathclyde Police – No objections, however, alterations to design required to improve security of under cover parking area, security and natural surveillance of side and rear footpaths and to provide 2m high boundary treatment to the north and east site boundaries.

Landscape Architect – It is difficult to imagine how the wall neighbouring the Wellpark could be rebuilt without damage to the trees root systems.

Head Of Environmental Services - No objections

Head of Street Scene, Burial Grounds and Registrars – No objections.

PUBLICITY

The application was advertised in the Greenock Telegraph on 28th November 2008 as a Potential Departure from the Local Plan and on 26th September 2008 as a Development Affecting the Setting of a Listed Building and as a Development by the Planning Authority

SITE NOTICES

A site notice was posted on 26th September 2008 for Development Affecting the Settings of a Listed Building.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A petition bearing 27 signatures, 11 copies of a standard letter and 4 individual letters of representation have been received (copies attached). One individual has submitted two letters.

The objectors are concerned that :-

1. The car parking proposed is insufficient to meet the needs of the proposed development and those of existing residents. Parking should be provided within the site of the existing alcohol Services building or extended.
2. Access for the collection of refuse from 10 Bank Street will be restricted.
3. The land adjacent to 10 Bank Street may be used as a site compound during construction works, giving rise to perceived problems of noise, housekeeping, hygiene, obstructive parking and alleged criminal activities
4. There are perceived problems with the clientele of the existing Alcohol Services facility which shall increase due to the numbers the proposed facility can accommodate.
5. There is a potential for harm from asbestos contamination from the demolition of the existing building.
6. There would be a loss of open space, contrary to the Local Plan.
7. Existing recycling facilities may be lost.
8. The proposal conflicts with the Council's "Strategy For Inverclyde's Town Centres" which identifies a requirement for a green travel plan to meet sustainable transport objectives and reduce both need and demand for long term parking in central Greenock. In the light of the aims of the Local Plan and the location of the site on a bus route and close to train stations, better facilities for public transport should be the main consideration as opposed to providing parking spaces.
9. The proposed parking layout would prevent access to the Highland Star Chinese Restaurant's car park.

10. Initial neighbour notices issued failed to describe the proposed car park adjacent to 10 Bank Street. Further neighbour notification has incorrectly described the proposal as a Class 4 office.
11. The proposed car park may attract undesirables.
12. A disabled person lives at 10 Bank Street and requires quick access to her car. Parking would be unavailable for the duration of the site works.
13. Residents who work nightshift would have their sleep disturbed by site works.
14. Property values would be adversely affected.
15. Construction works would interrupt deliveries to and refuse collection from 10 Bank Street.
16. Congestion would increase.
17. The address status of 10 Bank Street would be affected if the street is developed as a car park.

ASSESSMENT

The material considerations in the determination of this planning application are the Development Plan, the consultation responses, the written representations and design.

Although on the border of the commercial town centre and the residential area surrounding, Policy H1 applies. It seeks to safeguard and, where practicable, enhance the character and amenity of residential areas. The best measure, I consider, of whether or not the proposal satisfies this aim is to assess it against Policy H9 which requires the introduction of new, non residential uses in existing residential areas to be compatible with the character and amenity of the area. Key to this issue is recognition that the existing Alcohol Services office occupies the site. The existing building is of single storey construction while that proposed would have three storeys. Staffing levels at the existing office are 14, 6 of whom provide an itinerant service around Inverclyde. The proposed office would have a staff complement of 22, of which 8 would operate itinerantly. It therefore falls to consider what impact the proposed building and increased staff complement would have on residential amenity and character. With regard to the increased level of activity I consider that the greatest potential impact arises from demand for car parking. The Council's Roads Development Guide advises that 2 parking spaces should be provided per 100 square metres of floorspace which in this instance is 22 spaces. A total of 27 spaces are proposed; 13 within the office site and 14 in a car park to be formed on Bank Street. The proposed Bank Street car park would be for public use and on street parking is generally available during the day. The car park would be available to users of the proposed office during its core hours of 9am to 5pm and limited evening use of the proposed office is, I consider, unlikely to make significant demand on the proposed parking at Bank Street as 13 spaces are available at the office itself. The increased amount of car parking at Bank Street would be to the benefit of residents wishing to park nearby to their homes during the evening and access to the rear of the Highland Star Chinese Restaurant is maintained.

While the proposed modern building is significantly larger than the dilapidated wartime structure presently on site, I consider that its scale and design are sympathetic to neighbouring properties, including the Grade B listed Jericho House and to the setting of the Wellpark. Benefits to be accrued from having an improved design and quality of building require to be balanced against the impact which the removal of 4 mature trees from the Wellpark shall have. While the trees within the park are not afforded any formal protection they are an important component in the overall amenity that the park affords to the public. On balance, I consider the benefits of having an improved quality of building adjacent to the public park outweigh the adverse impact on character and amenity arising from the proposed felling.

Policy LR1 of the Local Plan seeks to safeguard areas of open space of value in terms of their amenity to their surroundings and to the community and their function as wildlife corridors or wedges. While the proposal would form car parking spaces on part of the grassed area at the cul-de-sac on Bank Street I do not consider the reduction of this grass to be unreasonable. The Wellpark, which constitutes a significant public amenity, lies opposite.

Overall, I am satisfied that the proposed building design satisfies the requirements of policy H9 and there is no conflict with the aims of Policy LR1. The aim of Policy H1 of safeguarding residential amenity and character is achieved.

Objectors have raised points not directly relating to the Local Plan policies. I am required to consider if these are such that refusal of planning permission is merited contrary to policy. The development will have no impact on refuse vehicles, which will continue to operate at Bank Street as at present. Potential issues arising from asbestos are matters most appropriately considered under Health & Safety legislation. Recycling facilities at Bank Street are to be maintained. The location of the proposed development means that it is accessible by a choice of means of public transport. However the Council is in the early days of preparing its Travel Plan which shall address travel to work issues. Neighbour notification procedures have been corrected. Impact from site works is a fact with any construction project and is not a justification for refusing planning permission. Finally, property values are not a Town Planning consideration.

In response to the security issues raised by the Police in their observations, the applicant has confirmed that a condition requiring changes to the design, incorporating security improvements would be acceptable to him.

Scottish Government PAN 82 advises that in the case of planning applications by planning authorities the Scottish Ministers should be notified where the planning authority considers the strength of opposition is a significant material consideration taking into account the number of representations, the extent to which they are representative of the community and their relevance in planning terms. I consider that the number of representations received in this case determine that the planning application should be referred to the Scottish Ministers in the event that the Planning Board is minded to grant planning permission.

RECOMMENDATION

That subject to referral to the Scottish ministers in accordance with The Town & Country Planning (Notification of Applications) (Scotland) Direction 2007, the application be granted subject to conditions.

Conditions

1. That the development to which this permission relates must be begun within five years from the date of this permission.
2. The office hereby approved shall not be occupied until the parking layout detailed on docquetted drawing 07 126 101a has been completed.
3. No development shall commence until details of tree planting to replace the 4 trees to be felled in the Wellpark have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Planning Authority. Planting shall take place in the first planting season following completion of the office and any specimens that in the subsequent 5 years die, become diseased or are damaged shall be replaced in the next planting season with a similar specimen unless the Head of Planning and Housing gives prior approval to any alternatives.
4. Development shall not begin until samples of materials to be used (on external surfaces of the buildings) or (in construction of hard standings/walls/fences) have been submitted to and approved in writing by the planning authority. Development shall thereafter be carried out using the approved materials or such alternatives as may be agreed in writing with the Head of Planning and Housing.
5. No development shall commence until details of measures to improve the security of the under cover parking area, security and natural surveillance of the side and rear footpaths and provision of 2m high boundary treatment to the east and north site boundaries have been submitted to and approved in writing by the Head of Planning & Housing. Development shall

thereafter be carried out in accordance with the approved details or such alternatives as may be agreed in writing with the Head of Planning and Housing.

Reasons

1. To comply with Section 58 of the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997.
2. To prevent obstructive parking on Regent Street and Bank Street.
3. To ensure a quality tree setting for the office and the Wellpark.
4. To ensure a continuity of materials in this part of Greenock.
5. To improve the security of the building hereby approved and to accord with Police advice.

F. K. Williamson

F. K WILLIAMSON
Head of Planning & Housing

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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Wellpark Centre

Introduction

Inverclyde currently has two alcohol related units, one in the existing Wellpark Centre and the other in Ravenscraig Hospital. With the planned closure of Ravenscraig Hospital the inpatient service will be moved to Glasgow and the day patient service will be amalgamated with the existing Wellpark service. It is therefore necessary to develop the Wellpark Centre to accommodate the combined needs.

The proposed Wellpark Centre will provide a base for the Alcohol Team and accommodation for counselling and therapy to service users and their families who are suffering from alcohol related problems. The Alcohol Team meet with individuals, and those supporting them, to enable them to move away from, and remain away from the problems related to their drinking. It must be stressed that the service users are not under the influence of alcohol and in fact are turned away if they arrive in such a state.

Staff Levels

The existing Centre currently accommodates 14 staff however six are outreach providing an itinerant service within the area. Ravenscraig Hospital currently houses eight staff, 2 to 3 of which are outreach. The combined staff level proposed is 22, eight of which are outreach.

Service Users

Service users will attend the Centre for individual or group counselling. There are approximately 25/30 service users per day and this will rise to about 40 users per day in the new accommodation. The main business is conducted between 9.00am and 5.00pm. Many of those not able to attend during the working day are in employment and a skeleton staff of about four are available to provide the service outwith this period. It is possible for individuals to attend as early as 7.00am and as late as 9.30pm.

Parking Provision

The total staff level is 22 people but eight are not regularly in the building and rarely together. As the service users have alcohol related problems, and this may be reported to the Vehicle Licensing Centre, it is not normal for them to use a car. Parking provision is therefore only necessary for staff.

John & Morag McEleny
Craigdhu
22 Shore Road
SKELMORLIE
PA17 5DR

30th September 2008

Inverclyde Council
Head of Planning
Housing and Transportation
Cathcart House
6 Cathcart Square
GREENOCK
PA15 1LS

Dear Sirs

Re: Proposed Development at 30 Regent Street, Greenock

We refer to the above proposal and would like to lodge our objection.

As an owner/landlord at 10 Bank Street, Greenock, we object to the proposal as it looks as if it is removing any parking space for that property.

Therefore, it will limit the access for the collection of refuse.

I trust you will consider this objection and look forward to receiving amended plans.

Yours faithfully


John & Morag McEleny

23 OCT 2008
✓ (u)

Your ref 08/0203/IC

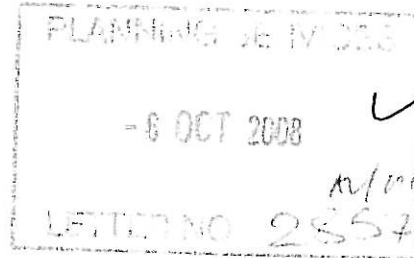
Our ref SY

Date 02 October 2008

Flat 1/2
10 Bank Street
Greenock

Tel 07946451277

Guy Phillips
Inverclyde District Council
Municipal Buildings
GREENOCK
PA15 1LY



Dear Guy

I would like to advise that as a resident of 10 Bank Street Greenock, I object to the planned development at 30 Regent Street. My reasons for this are as follows.

Whilst it is not correct to assume, it would be logical to say that the proposed car park outside number 10 Bank Street is being developed to house the transport of employees of the proposed build.

The area outside 10 Bank Street is currently used for a number of cars local to the area and not just the residents of number 10. This includes people using this parking area for the town due to its proximity to the town buildings, shopping centres and other employers. Therefore, the proposed capacity will still not be enough and will only act as an attractive area for non-employees of the proposed build to park in. This means that whilst there could be an argument to say that parking is being provided for use, the reality is that there is unlikely to be space for the local residents to use these spaces so forcing us to park elsewhere in an already saturated area.

Therefore, considering the size of the building proposed and the residents in the area, the car park will not be sufficient for the needs of either local residents or employees and as such will put additional pressure on an already at capacity area.

Furthermore, by barriering this area off throughout construction at least 9 car parking spaces will be lost for the duration of the works. In addition, the staff and operatives of the site will all likely be car drivers and again will put pressure on the local area.

The proximity of the site to the front door of the property is unacceptable. It is likely that the area immediately outside the front door will be the site compound bringing with it the associated issues of noise, housekeeping, hygiene and general nuisance. The issue of whether this will act as a potential beacon for thieves is a concern which is something that we do not wish to encourage in our neighbourhood.

Therefore, we would be keen to seek assurance that the principal contractor will be taking all measures to mitigate the environmental nuisance from the proposed site to eliminate disturbance to residents.

Following on from this, there are already perceived problems in the area associated with clientele of the current facility. Therefore, questions arise as to what kind of degree of social problems can local residents expect from an increase in the number of people being seen at the proposed facility.

In addition, there are concerns related to the demolition of the existing building. We would like to be assured that the principal contractor for the site is in receipt of a full asbestos management plan for the existing building, that appropriate asbestos surveys have been carried out prior to the demolition and that local residents are assured of proposals to mitigate the release of asbestos into the atmosphere in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations.

In addition, from an amenity point of view, the residents of this area will lose the green living space in front of the property. The Inverclyde Local Plan (ILP) states that there is "currently a shortfall of open space in Inverclyde. Given this apparent shortfall, which is recognised in the Structure Plan, any attempt to make adequate provision should start by safeguarding existing open space, **whatever the size**". (ILP, page 159)

Furthermore, a question arises as to whether the recycling facilities currently available at Bank Street will still be available after the development. These are used regularly by the residents of the local area and a loss of this would be substantial and lead to increased general waste.

In October 2000 'A Strategy for Inverclyde's Town Centres' was produced. One of the actions arising from this consultation was the requirement for green travel plans stated within table 8.1, page 121 of the ILP. The ILP goes on further to state that the aims are "to meet sustainable transport objectives and reduce both need and demand for long term parking in central Greenock.

Therefore, the provision of this proposed number of car parking spaces does not complement the local plan for the area. In light of the aims of the ILP, should better facilities for public transport not be the main consideration here as opposed to simply providing car parking spaces? Considering the prime location of the proposed building on the bus route and within less than 5 minutes walk of train stations, this would seem to be an ideal opportunity to ensure that this requirement is met as identified in the Local Plan.

I anticipate that shall the proposal go to a committee, residents of Bank Street and other interested parties shall be invited to the committee meeting.

Yours sincerely



Sharon Young

474

At 1/10

✓ (u)

Your ref 08/0203/IC

Our ref SY

Date 03 October 2008

Flat1/2
10 Bank Street
Greenock

Tel 07946451277

Guy Phillips
Inverclyde District Council
Municipal Buildings
GREENOCK
PA15 1LY

Dear Guy

I would like to advise that as a resident of 10 Bank Street Greenock, I object to the planned development at 30 Regent Street. My reasons for this are as follows.

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Furthermore, a question arises as to whether the recycling facilities currently available at Bank Street will still be available after the development. These are used regularly by the residents of the local area and a loss of this would be substantial and lead to increased general waste.

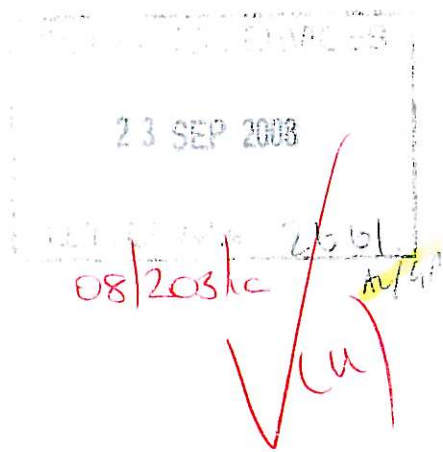
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I anticipate that shall the proposal go to a committee, residents of Bank Street and other interested parties shall be invited to the committee meeting.

Yours sincerely

Sharon Young



New Highland Star Ltd

39 Regent Street

Greenock

PA15 4PL

23rd Sept 2008

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am writing to object the development at 30 Regent Street.

My only concern is the formation of the 14 parking spaces adjacent to 39 Regent Street which completely blocks the entrance to our car park.

Also we would require putting our large trade refuse wheelie bin on the pavement next to the entrance for collection by the council. According to the plan, the parking space would also prevent us from doing that.

I would appreciate if you could look into the possibility of altering the plan to give us access to the car park and space for the trade refuse bin.

Yours faithfully,

Mr Sung Yuen YAU

Residents of 1 – 24 Wellpark Court
Roxburgh Street
Greenock
PA15 4AG

Head of Planning, Housing & Transportation
Cathcart House
6 Cathcart Square
Greenock
PA15 1LS

2778
27/9/08

26th September 2008

To Whom it may Concern

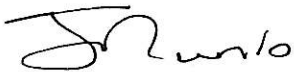
Application No. 08/0203/IC

With regard to the above planning application we the residents of 1 – 24 Wellpark Court, Roxburgh Street, Greenock PA15 4AG wish to lodge the following objections for the proposed development:-

1. "3 storey office block" – On reading proposed plans it appears that there is only 6 offices within this development. The rest of the development is proposed counselling rooms (6), treatment room, large group rooms, small group rooms, kitchen, dining room, sitting room, children's play area etc. So this development is not an office block.
2. Facade of proposed development does not lend itself to the architecture of the surrounding areas.
3. The trees surrounding the proposed development area will clearly have to be lopped or felled to accommodate the proposed plans. The established trees within the Wellpark area are of a considerable age.
4. The erection of a 3 storey building will not only obscure our current river views – the reason many owners purchased these flats- but may also cause a depreciation in the value of our property.
5. There are concerns that if this building is to house NHS workers & Social workers, is this building earmarked as some sort of rehabilitation or drop in centre for drug or alcohol abusers? As this area has enough drug/alcohol problems already, this could result in an increased deposit of discarded needles and alcohol containers especially as it is to be situated beside a public park which is frequented by the public especially young children.
6. We would also like to know if the proposed car park under the first floor of the building will be secured in the evenings and weekends. We are extremely concerned if this area is not secured this could provide a sheltered congregating place for undesirable groups of people.

7. We feel this poorly designed proposed development will damage the quality of life in our community which does not encourage a positive change or protect our assets and will not be in our long term interest. This clearly does not meet with the objectives set out in your Planning Standards Handbook.
8. We also object to the council spending this money on a new building when it is already seems to be facing a considerable deficit in its funds when there is already a lot of empty properties within the Inverclyde area which could be utilised to accommodate this proposed development.
9. We are extremely concerned about the increased volume of traffic this proposed development will cause on already very busy roads – Regent Street/Roxburgh Street/Upper & Lower Bank Street - which have heavily congested junctions already even more so at peak periods and is already hazardous for pedestrians crossing, especially for the elderly, children and disabled people living within this area.
10. We are concerned about the proposed split car park development. One situated within the development and one situated across the street which is to accommodate both office workers and tenants of 10 Bank Street. We feel that the private residential car park at the rear of our property - which is already being abused by surrounding properties and people working within the town centre area – will become an overspill for this project.

For and on behalf of the residents of Wellpark Court



Joyce Munro – Flat 14

Please find attached residents signatures.

NAME	SIGNATURE	FLAT NO.
Joyce mules	J Mules	14
James MArthur.		15
ROBERT McCLERNY	R McCLerny	10
MARGARET McCLERNY	M McCLerny	10
to Jan al	-	No 7
E. FRANK	E Frank	No 7
Cath Watt	Cath Watt	no. 8
Mugh Watt	Mugh Watt	no 8.
C. CAITHNESS	C. Caithness	No 3
M. LOVE	Mary Love	No 5
S Ellis	Susan Ellis	No 1
F BOLAND	Frank Boland.	No 1
M. S. MITCHELL	M. S. Mitchell	No 19.
J. Miller	J. Miller	No 20
A. BLAICKIE	A. Blairkie	No 19
C ALLAN	Caughan.	No. 17
Scott Rahn	Scott	No 18
A. PRICKET	A. Pricket	No 23
H. McGUINNESS	H. McGuinness	No. 23
JOHN DENTER	J. Denter	No 13
R. FERGUSON	R Ferguson	11

**THE FOLLOWING LETTER HAS BEEN SUBMITTED IN PRO FORMA STYLE BY
11 PERSONS AND THE ORIGINAL LETTERS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR
INSPECTION AT THE MEETING**

- We would like clarification on the purpose of the new building as the description advises it a Class 4 office build, meaning that they are not intended for members of the public to visit, however the descriptions of the rooms on the plans indicate there are treatment rooms etc which would indicate otherwise. We would therefore be worried about the types of people who would be frequenting the facility.
- Several residents work shifts, including night shift, and this building work would greatly impact on their sleep pattern.
- We also feel that, if built, this project could be detrimental to the value of our properties as being a public car park could put off any potential buyers.
- There are also health and safety issues here. If the proposed build were to go ahead then there would be no access for the emergency services to attend to our building both during and after construction.
- There would also be no access for deliveries to the property, or collection of refuse.
- The area outside can take up to, depending on the size of the vehicles, approximately twelve vehicles at present, you are only adding two more spaces through this proposed build. Surely this can't be cost effective not to mention a waste of public money.
- There will also be an increase in traffic flow on an area that can at peak times be congested. Obviously, as the new build is for office staff, they will be entering and leaving the car park during these peak times making the situation worse.
- As the street would no longer technically exist, would that not affect our address status?
- We would also like to request a face to face meeting with the people responsible for the proposal of this new build to air our objections directly to them.

We sincerely hope our objections are taken seriously as there is no doubt about the negative impact this build would have on us.

**THE FOLLOWING LETTER HAS BEEN SUBMITTED IN PRO FORMA STYLE BY
11 PERSONS AND THE ORIGINAL LETTERS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR
INSPECTION AT THE MEETING**

**Proposed new build on existing Wellpark Centre site: address 30 Regent Street and
formation of 14 car parking spaces at 10 Bank Street**

We, the twelve residents of 10 Bank Street, would like to forward our objections to the proposed development of 30 Regent Street, this being the address of the Wellpark centre.

- We feel no consideration has been afforded to us regarding this build.
- You failed to mention in the first notification to us that you were planning a car park outside our front door. After contact was made with the council planning department, we were informed that your application to them was worded differently to our notification, we all received an updated letter which did state a new car park was planned. This is very poor communication.
- Parking is very difficult at the best of times nowadays, and while we know it is not private parking outside on Bank Street, it is nevertheless our only option to park immediately outside our front door.
- This car park would have to be a public car park, as we have already stated it is public parking on Bank Street, therefore all and sundry would use this facility, which would make parking for us practically impossible. This would be a bad enough situation, however if the car park was for private use by the office staff, this would be an even worse.
- We would also be concerned about the safety aspect of having a car park on our front door. Would there be sufficient lighting, as there is concern that this may attract undesirables?
- One of our residents is registered disabled with multiple sclerosis and has a mobility car for which there is a designated driver who also lives within the property. The implications for her are quite horrendous as she needs quick access to her car and shouldn't have the real possibility of walking any great distance to get to the car. The area outside would be, I presume, unusable while work was being carried out which means we would be at logger heads with nearby neighbours fighting for car park spaces.
- If this build gets the green light then our front door would become a building site bringing with it all the usual disturbances of noisy, heavy machinery in constant use, noisy workforce, dirt and grime etc. We feel that due to the close proximity of the build this would be unacceptable to us.
- We should point out that we do not have a problem with a new centre being built, but as to why we should be facing a lot of upheaval to our daily lives because the area directly outside our front door is being made part of this build. Surely the area the existing Wellpark Centre stands on should be big enough to incorporate a car park or even part of the Wellpark itself being utilized.

Handwritten signature and date
1/11/11

**THE FOLLOWING LETTER HAS BEEN SUBMITTED IN PRO FORMA STYLE BY
11 PERSONS AND THE ORIGINAL LETTERS WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR
INSPECTION AT THE MEETING**

The residents of 10 Bank Street are as follows

1. Barry Moore
2. Elizabeth Neil
3. Mark Fulton
4. Kevin Archison
5. Sharon Young
6. William Allan
7. Laura Reynolds
8. Susan Griffin
9. Alexander Jackson
10. Sheila Kettles
11. David Donaldson
12. Amanda Way

1(f)

Fraser Williamson

From: ANN DINNING [anndinning59@yahoo.co.uk]
Sent: 05 January 2009 15:27
To: Fraser Williamson
Subject: Wellpark Centre

Good afternoon Mr Williamson

I wish to lodge an objection to the proposed Wellpark Centre development in Regent Street.

I wish to say that my objection to this development is to do with the car parking, this area is already oversubscribed with cars, I live in Regent Street and find that at any time of day I cannot manage to get parked at my home.

I am aware that I do not have a right to park at my home, but sometimes I have to park quite a bit away from where I live, which can be inconvenient when I have to carry bags of shopping. The other parking problem with this area is that there is now a dance studio next to where I live and there are cars parked there when the children are at their dancing

I would like to know if there is going to be provision for car parking, can we the residents, who live next to this development, have designated car parking on one side of the street for residents only.

Thank you for your help in this matter.

Kind Regards
Ann Dinning
44 Regent Street
Greenock
Inverclyde PA15 4PL

Your ref 09/0029/IC

Our ref SY

Date 23 February 2009

Flat1/2
10 Bank Street
Greenock

Tel 07946451277

Guy Phillips
Inverclyde District Council
Municipal Buildings
GREENOCK
PA15 1LY

Dear Guy

I would like to advise that as a resident of 10 Bank Street Greenock, I object to the planned development at 30 Regent Street. My reasons for this are as follows.

From an amenity point of view, the residents of this area will lose the green living space in front of the property. The Inverclyde Local Plan (ILP) states that there is "currently a shortfall of open space in Inverclyde. Given this apparent shortfall, which is recognised in the Structure Plan, any attempt to make adequate provision should start by safeguarding existing open space, **whatever the size**". (ILP, page 159)

In October 2000 'A Strategy for Inverclyde's Town Centres' was produced. One of the actions arising from this consultation was the requirement for green travel plans stated within table 8.1, page 121 of the ILP. The ILP goes on further to state that the aims are "to meet sustainable transport objectives and reduce both need and demand for long term parking in central Greenock".

Therefore, the provision of this proposed number of car parking spaces is not in line with the local plan for the area which I believed the planning committee were required to comply with. In light of the aims of the ILP, should better facilities for public transport not be the main consideration here as opposed to simply providing car parking spaces? Indeed, the revised planning proposal increases the number of car park spaces from the previous application. Considering the prime location of the proposed building on the bus route and within less than 5 minutes walk of train stations, this would seem to be an ideal opportunity to ensure that this requirement is met as identified in the Local Plan.

The area outside 10 Bank Street is currently used for a number of cars local to the area and not just the residents of number 10. This includes people using this parking area for the town due to its proximity to the town buildings, shopping centres and other employers. Therefore, the proposed capacity will still not be enough and will only act as an attractive area for non-employees of the proposed build to park in. This means that whilst there could be an argument to say that parking is being provided for use, the reality is that there is unlikely to be space for the local residents to use these spaces so forcing us to park elsewhere in an already saturated area.

Therefore, considering the size of the building proposed and the residents in the area, the car park will not be sufficient for the needs of either local residents or employees and as such will put additional pressure on an already at capacity area.

Furthermore, by barriering this area off throughout construction at least 9 car parking spaces will be lost for the duration of the works. In addition, the staff and operatives of the site will all likely be car drivers and again will put pressure on the local area.

Furthermore, a question arises as to whether the recycling facilities currently available at Bank Street will still be available after the development. These are used regularly by the residents of the local area and a loss of this would be substantial and lead to increased general waste.

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I anticipate that shall the proposal go to a committee, residents of Bank Street and other interested parties shall be invited to the committee meeting.

Yours sincerely

Sharon Young