

REPORT TO: PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE – 28 AUGUST 2000
REPORT ON: PROPOSED RETAIL STUDY
REPORT BY: DIRECTOR OF PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION
REPORT NO: 373-2000

1 PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 The purpose of the Report is as follows:

- a to advise the Committee of the need for a specialist study on non food retail matters with the intention of:
 - i rolling forward estimates of retail capacity;
 - ii inputing to the review of the Structure and Local Plan retail policy framework
- b to seek the Committee's approval to approach a specific planning consultancy to negotiate terms for the study.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- a authorises the Director of Planning and Transportation to approach the consultant's DTZ Piedad PLC to obtain the cost and terms for a retail study as outlined in this report;
- b authorises the Director of Planning and Transportation to spend a maximum of £10,000 on the study;

3 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

3.1 It is estimated that a sum of up to £10,000 will be required to undertake the study. These costs will be contained within the Planning & Transportation Department's 2000/01 Revenue Budget.

4 LOCAL AGENDA 21 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The Local Agenda 21 implications of this report cover the following key themes:

- Resources are used efficiently and waste is minimised: The proposed study will define the scale of non food retail floorspace which the city can realistically expect to support over the next 5-10 years. This framework will assist the City Council in resisting pressures for over-provision of floorspace which could have damaging consequences for the vitality and viability of existing shopping centres both within and outwith the City.
- Local needs are met locally: The study will provide an objective assessment of the potential for different types of retail provision within the City. This could include the scope for the introduction of retailing not currently available in the City. This could help offset the need for trips to other shopping destinations outwith the City by meeting these requirements locally.
- Diversity and local distinctiveness are valued and protected: As indicated above, the study will provide evidence which will assist the protection of existing shopping centres and ensure that they continue to provide a valuable service to the community.

5 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The study will assist the City Council in providing a development plan policy framework to address future pressures for non food retail developments. This would include ensuring that policies direct new development to locations accessible to the community as a whole, including those without access to a car.

6 BACKGROUND

- 6.1 In 1996 the Consultants Pidea were appointed by the City Council to assess the capacity for non-food retail floorspace in Dundee over the period up to 2001. This study was completed in February 1997 and its findings were adopted by the City Council. The study provided an important input to the Dundee Local Plan and provided the strategic context for the City Council's approach to major non food proposals under consideration at that time and on subsequently emerging proposals. Given that the study was based on a 2001 horizon it is now appropriate to seek to roll forward the guidance on non food floorspace provision to provide a framework for the post 2001 situation. With regard to future opportunities, there is a need to explore the scope to further develop the City's regional shopping role and to capitalise on improved perceptions and other spin-off benefits offered by the new Overgate Centre. There is also a need for advice as to how new retail floorspace can be introduced in a manner which provides for rationalisation involving the removal of existing floorspace which is either outdated or poorly located by current standards.
- 6.2 In addition to guidance on the current retail situation and future opportunities, there is a need for specialist advice on the site allocated for retail warehouse development in the East Marketgait area. This is a site which is consistent with the sequential approach to new retail development as embodied in NPPG8 (Town Centres and Retailing) and valuable in terms of its ability to accommodate types of retailing which are best located close to the city centre. Detailed goods range and related controls have been in place since December 1997 with a view to safeguarding its role for this type of retailing. However, the lack of progress over this period in securing the development of the site may suggest that the current controls are over prescriptive and hindering the ability to positively market the site and secure suitable operators. While the broad planning aims behind the identification of the site remain valid, there is a need for specialist advice regarding the current control framework and an indication of the measures necessary to stimulate development progress.
- 6.3 Finally there is the need for an overview of retailing trends which will have a bearing on the evolving retail scene and will impact on the nature of future retail developments and shopper behaviour. This would include issues such as:
- the impact of globalisation (already evident in the Walmart takeover of Asda);
 - pressures likely to arise from evolving retail formats (eg Woolworth's Big W, Matalan)
 - retailers responses to restraint on out of centre development embodied in National Planning Policy Guidance; (for example, a refocusing of interest on sites at the edge of district centres)
 - the impact of the growth in "on-line" shopping

7 CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 It is considered that there is a need for specialist retail planning advice to address the issues raised in this report. This advice would provide the basis for the City Council's approach to non-food retailing over the coming years. It would also provide crucial inputs to the following:
- the Dundee and Angus Structure Plan (currently under preparation);
 - the Review of the Dundee Local Plan; and
 - assist with the consideration of proposals for major retail developments.

- 7.2 Given their involvement in the 1997 study and in other follow up studies, DTZ Piedad offer certain advantages for the work now required. In addition to their familiarity with the local retailing scene and their ability to “roll forward” their previous work, DTZ Piedad are not currently involved in potentially conflicting work on behalf of other clients. On this basis, it is felt that they should be asked to submit a proposal for this project.

8 CONSULTATIONS

- 8.1 The Chief Executive, Director of Finance, Director of Support Services, Director of Corporate Planning and Director of Economic Development have been consulted and are in agreement with the contents of this report.

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 There are no background papers to this report.

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4 August 2000

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