

MINUTE EXTRACT CABINET (18 JULY, 2016)

32 CORE STRATEGY LOCAL PLAN - WIRRAL RETAIL & LEISURE STUDY UPDATE



Thriving small businesses is one of our 20 Pledges, and is a fundamental part of creating the vibrant and successful economy we all want to see in Wirral. We are making great progress already – the plans for the regeneration of Birkenhead are incredibly exciting, and the developments at New Brighton show us what can be achieved when we aim high.

We also know where our challenges are: we are determined to work with local people, businesses and employers over the coming year to make sure Wirral's high-streets are prosperous, healthy and thriving.

Councillor Phil Davies

Purpose:

The Leader of the Council introduced a report of the Principal Forward Planning Officer. It stated that in 2015 Wirral Council asked its retained retail consultants - Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners (NLP) to prepare a Borough-wide Retail and Leisure Study Update ('the NLP Retail Study'). The NLP Retail Study updated the evidence base, replacing the existing Strategy for Town Centres, Retail and Commercial Leisure prepared by Roger Tym & Partners and the Wirral Retail Study Update prepared by GVA Grimley.

The Council would use the findings of the report to shape their approach to supporting small businesses and high-streets to succeed. It provided a helpful evidence base on which the Council could design plans and interventions, enabling them to target their activity and support on those areas which would make the biggest impact.

The retail study highlighted the strength of the New Brighton redevelopment which, along with the Croft Retail Park, was now Wirral's main commercial leisure destination. The study also highlighted retail areas in Wirral with space for expansion, including Birkenhead.

Reason for decision:

To approve an up to date retail evidence base to inform the preparation of the Council's Core Strategy Local Plan and assist with the consideration of planning applications.

To comply with the legal and procedural requirements for the preparation and adoption of an up-to-date Core Strategy Local Plan for Wirral, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

RESOLVED:

That:

- (1) Cabinet RECOMMENDS to Council that the findings of the NLP Retail Study Update be used to inform the content of the Council's emerging Core Strategy Local Plan and subsequent site-specific Local Plan.**
- (2) Cabinet RECOMMENDS to Council that the NLP Retail Study be approved as a material consideration for use by Planning Committee in the determination of planning applications.**