



Report of:	Meeting	Date	Item No.
Councillor Barry Birch, Economy Portfolio Holder and Garry Payne, Chief Executive	Cabinet	14 September 2011	5

Fylde Coast Retail Study (2011)

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1** To inform Cabinet of the recently completed Fylde Coast Retail Study (2011) and seek endorsement of the Study's content for Planning Policy formulation and Development Management purposes.

2. Outcomes

- 2.1** An approved Fylde Coast Retail Study (2011) will be used to develop policy content of the Wyre Local Development Framework, particularly the Core Strategy and Site Allocations and Development Management documents which are anticipated to be completed by the end of 2012 and 2014 respectively. An approved Study will also be used in the determination of planning applications for major retail development.

3. Recommendation

- 3.1** That Cabinet approves the Fylde Coast Retail Study (2011) as part of the evidence base for the Wyre Local Development Framework and for Development Management purposes.

4. Background

- 4.1** A Fylde Coast Retail Study was originally produced by specialist consultants in 2008; however, an update of this became necessary due to changes in national and local economic conditions, study methodology and national advice. Consequently, Wyre, Blackpool and Fylde Councils jointly commissioned Roger Tym and Partners to update the 2008 Study and this was completed in Summer 2011. It comprises three volumes with the Main Report (Volume 1) being available in the Members Room.
- 4.2** National planning advice in Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (2009) indicates that local authorities

should prepare and maintain a robust evidence base to understand existing business needs and likely changes in the market. This should assess the detailed need for land or floorspace for economic development, including town centre uses. Town centre uses include retail, leisure, entertainment, offices, arts, culture and tourism and a detailed assessment of the former is required for two main reasons. First, to enable the development of robust policies to be incorporated into planning documents that form part of the Wyre Local Development Framework (LDF), particularly the Core Strategy and the Site Allocations and Development Management documents. Secondly, to allow the proper consideration and determination of planning applications for major retail development.

- 4.3** The Wyre LDF comprises a series of documents that, along with Minerals and Waste documents produced by Lancashire County Council, will provide the planning policy context for the Borough. The Core Strategy is currently the most important planning document that the Council will produce and will form the main consideration when deciding planning applications. It is currently in the process of being drafted and will be subject to several stages of public consultation before it is adopted as Council policy which is anticipated to be before the end of 2012. The Site Allocations and Development Management document will be subject to similar public consultation and is anticipated to be adopted two years later.
- 4.4** Whilst the Thornton centre permission was the last major retail application to be considered by the Council's Planning Committee in August 2010, officers also receive periodic pre-application enquiries regarding potential major retail proposals. It is important that there is a suitable evidence base to enable both appropriate pre-application advice to be given and recommendations to be confidently made regarding planning applications for such use. Reference to the Study will also be made by other officers in looking to promote development opportunities and inward investment in Wyre.

5. Key Issues and Proposals

- 5.1** The Fylde Coast Retail Study (2011) identifies future available shopping expenditure across the Fylde Coast sub-region and using this suggests amounts of convenience (broadly meaning food) and comparison goods (broadly meaning non-food) retail floorspace that should be planned for in the future in the sub-region, by individual local authority and, importantly, for main centres. It covers the period up until 2026. In Wyre, those centres identified are Fleetwood, Cleveleys, Poulton-le-Fylde, Garstang and Thornton district centre which has a grouped allocation with Wyre's local centres. Floorspace figures are supported by overall recommendations for these centres.
- 5.2** The Study was based upon a variety of assumptions and several were underpinned by a telephone survey of over 1,800 households that was

used to establish shopping habits. The main Study findings of most relevance to Wyre were as follows:

- There is no need to plan for an increase in retail floorspace in out of centre locations (defined by national advice as usually being greater than 300 metres from primary shopping areas of a town centre).
- There is no quantitative need for additional convenience goods retail floorspace across the Fylde Coast in the time period to 2021, however there would be a need for an additional 2,014 sq.m (gross) in the later period to 2026 which is equivalent to one medium sized supermarket. National advice defines a supermarket as being less than 2,500 sq.m sales floorspace.
- Notwithstanding this, occasional local gaps in foodstore provision have been identified that may justify additional provision. The first priority identified for the Fylde Coast should be development of a new food superstore (greater than 2,500 sq.m sales floorspace) at Talbot Gateway. It is of note that this scheme already has planning permission.
- The next identified priority for the sub-region is the improvement of the foodstore offer in Poulton-le-Fylde town centre which would be best achieved by the enhancement and/ or replacement of one of the existing supermarket facilities. This could be accomplished in conjunction with a redevelopment of the Teanlowe Centre.
- In rural areas, small scale enhancements to foodstore provision of an appropriate scale may be appropriate where they do not undermine a centre's existing offer and only on sites that relate well to existing centres.
- The Study identifies indicative figures for additional comparison goods retail floorspace over and above existing commitments as follows, for which provision should be made:

Centre	Additional comparison goods floorspace (sq.m gross) by time period (rounded)		
	2010-2021	2021-2026	2010-2026
Fleetwood	2,070	2,210	4,290
Cleveleys	2,070	2,210	4,290
Poulton-le-Fylde	2,070	2,210	4,290
Garstang	1,250	1,330	2,570
Remaining District and Local Centres	830	890	1,710
Wyre Total	8,290	8,850	17,150

In this context, the priority for other main centres in Wyre are:

- Encouraging the diversification of retail uses in Fleetwood town centre and ensuring that there is a presumption against further retail floorspace at Freeport as the consultant considers that the decline of the town centre is attributable to the popularity of

Freeport.

- Maintaining the strength of Garstang town centre including by protecting the existing retail offer.
- Improving the comparison goods offer of Cleveleys and consolidating the physical extent of the centre through some degree of contraction.

5.3 Next Steps

Subject to Cabinet endorsement of the Fylde Coast Retail Study (2011) the intention would be to incorporate the Study's findings into the Wyre Local Development Framework (LDF) through the Core Strategy and appropriate site allocations in the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD. The drafting of the Core Strategy and Site Allocations documents will require public consultation with Parish and Town Councils, residents and others. It would be advisable to update the Retail Study approximately every 5 years to ensure that the evidence base for producing the LDF and considering planning applications for major retail development against is kept up to date.

IMPLICATIONS	
Finance	The total cost of the Fylde Coast Retail Study (2011) was £26,938 with this being funded equally by the three Fylde Coast authorities of Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre. The cost to Wyre was therefore circa £8,980 of which £6,286 was incurred in 2010/11 with the balance due in 2011/12 for which budget provision has been set aside.
Legal	The Study is part of the evidence base for the Wyre Local Development Framework (LDF). Failure to have an up to date Study would be likely to result in the Core Strategy and Site Allocations documents that form key parts of the LDF being found unsound by the Planning Inspectorate. It would also be extremely difficult to decide applications for major retail development or provide appropriate pre-application advice without this evidence.
Community Safety	Not applicable.
Equality and Diversity	Documents comprising the Wyre Local Development Framework will be subject to equality impact assessments.
Sustainability	The Study's recommendation that that there should be a presumption against new out of centre retail development should ensure that major future development takes place in sustainable and accessible town centre and edge of town centre locations.
Health and Safety	Not applicable.
Risk Management	Failure to provide a sound evidence base could result in the Core Strategy and Site Allocations documents being found unsound by the Planning Inspectorate. Planning applications for major retail development would be very

	difficult to determine and, if refused, could be overturned on appeal without the correct evidence for decision making.
Asset Management	Whilst the Study makes no direct recommendations regarding the allocation of sites for future retail use, the process of allocating sites through the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD could affect the Council's portfolio of assets.
Climate Change	See comments above regarding sustainability.

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List of Background Papers:		
Name of Document	Date	Where available for inspection
Planning Policy Statement 4 (Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth) DCLG	2009	Planning Policy Section
Fylde Coast Retail Study Volume 1: Main Report	2011	Members Room or Planning Policy Section
Fylde Coast Retail Study accompanying Volumes 2: Statistical Tables and 3: Detailed Health Check Reports	2011	Planning Policy Section
Fylde Coast Retail Study (White Young Green)	2008	Planning Policy Section

LIST OF APPENDICES

None

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