



CAMBUSLANG
Community Council

25 Burn Terrace
Cambuslang
G72 7DN

Ms Pauline Elliott
Head of Planning
South Lanarkshire Council
Almada Street
Hamilton ML3 0AA

22 January 2018

Dear Ms Elliott,

Objection to Planning Applications by Wm Morrison Supermarkets: CR/18/0003 and CR/17/0231

We refer to the above planning applications and hereby submit objections on behalf of Cambuslang Community Council.

First, our primary objection to the planning application is the **adverse impact that it will have on the viability of Cambuslang Main Street**. As you will be aware, Cambuslang town centre is under major pressure because of the lack of footfall and trade which have both declined in recent years.

A survey of all businesses on the Main Street conducted by Cambuslang Community Council in 2016-17¹ found that a significant proportion of retailers (40%) have experienced declining business performance over the past three years. Almost a quarter assess their current performance as poor, and 20% have considered closing down or moving out of Cambuslang.

The potential damaging economic impact is clear from the data analysis undertaken for the Business Survey. The Main Street retail sector supports some 350 jobs and an estimated turnover of between £8 million and £11 million. Losing more shops would accelerate a vicious cycle of decline.

The Survey showed that it is particularly shops selling food and drink (cafes, restaurants, fast food takeaways) that are on tight margins and have experienced a decline in turnover and profitability. The Morrisons' proposal for units involving a drive-through fast-food business and possibly coffee shop is very likely to cause a diversion of trade from town centre businesses, not just reducing their trade but with a high probability of closures.

¹ See: <http://www.cambuslangcommunitycouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Cambuslang-Business-Survey-final.pdf>



There is a strong public interest in ensuring that this damaging impact on the Main Street does not happen. In 2015, Cambuslang Community Council undertook a survey of the community yielding almost 1,100 responses, the largest known community survey in Scotland.² The survey demonstrated huge public concern with the state of the Main Street and a very strong desire to improve the commercial basis of the town centre in terms of provision of retail services. Respondents were very critical of previous decisions to allow supermarket development off the Main Street and were keen to ensure that the town centre retains its viability as a local shopping centre and focus of civic pride.

You will be aware that Cambuslang Community Council is working with the business community on the Main Street, South Lanarkshire Council and other partners to develop a business improvement plan as well better parking, improved appearance of the Main Street and other measures. This strategy would be undermined were the Morrisons project to go ahead and reduce the goodwill of Main Street businesses to support the strategy.

The potential negative impacts would contradict South Lanarkshire Council's own Local Development Plan (and the 'preferred spatial strategy proposals' in the updated LDP2 version) with respect to SLC's objective of "continued support and safeguarding of town, neighbourhood and village centres...in accordance with the town centres first principle", the latter also being Scottish Government policy. This is reinforced by the commitment to investing in sustainable growth and regeneration of town centres in South Lanarkshire Council's latest 'Connect 2017-2023' strategy document.

It is important, therefore, that South Lanarkshire Council follows through on these objectives and commitments by rejecting the proposal.

Second, we object to the planning applications on the material grounds of the **impact on local infrastructure**. The junction of the Morrisons car park entrance/exit at Bridge Street already has traffic congestion at peak times, with cars having to queue for some time to enter into or exit from the car park. The creation of retail units, especially a drive-through fast-food unit and car-related services (and associated delivery requirements), presupposes use by car which will mean extra traffic at the Bridge Street junction which, we believe, has insufficient capacity. South Lanarkshire Council also has objectives to increase active travel and reduce reliance on car use which would again be contradicted by the Morrisons proposals which pre-suppose that the majority of customers for the planned units would travel by car.

Third, we object to the planning applications on the following material grounds relating to **adverse impact on local residents**.

- The proposed siting of the retail units would cause **noise**, especially in the evenings, from the operation of the units and their use by customers. The plans foresee access to the drive-through fast-food unit running parallel to the wall with the Morrision Park housing estate, only metres from residential housing, with the potential for disruptive noise from moving and idling cars.

² See: <http://cambuslangcommunitycouncil.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Cambuslang-Community-Survey-Report-final3.pdf>

- These traffic impacts would also have adverse impacts on **air quality** from traffic fumes in direct proximity to the residential housing. You will be aware of research showing that an idling engine can produce up to twice as many exhaust emissions as an engine in motion. Residents would be exposed to increased exhaust emissions containing a range of air pollutants such as carbon monoxide, nitrogen dioxide, and particulate matter.
- There would also be associated impacts relating to **litter**. The operation of existing fast-food units in Cambuslang and elsewhere involves a problem of packaging being thrown onto the street despite the provision of litter bins, as well as partially eaten food that has the potential to attract vermin. Some of this would inevitably end up in the property of residents of the Morriston Park housing estate.
- A further potential impact is **anti-social behaviour (ASB)**, a persistent and prevalent problem in Cambuslang. The priority of the local police team is to control this on the Main Street and in Cambuslang and Holmhills Parks. Creating a fast-food unit in the car park of Morrisons would inevitably attract an element of ASB that would either be unchecked or whose control would divert local police from current foci.

On all these grounds, we urge you strongly to reject the applications.

Yours sincerely,



David Thomson,
Chair, Cambuslang Community Council