

My Ref: POL 23 Proposed LDP
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Dear Sirs

**RENFREWSHIRE PROPOSED LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN
THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (SCOTLAND) ACT 1997
THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING (DEVELOPMENT PLANNING) (SCOTLAND)
REGULATIONS 2008
PROPOSAL TO ADOPT THE PROPOSED RENFREWSHIRE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT
PLAN**

In accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Scotland) Act 1997 (the Act), section 19 (10), Renfrewshire Council propose to adopt the Proposed Renfrewshire Local Development Plan as modified (the Plan).

The Proposed Renfrewshire Local Development Plan

The Plan as modified seeks to deliver on the Scottish Government's central purpose, by assisting in making Scotland a more successful country. The Plan provides a framework that will facilitate investment, promote opportunities for development, support sustainable economic growth, regeneration and help deliver well-designed, sustainable places. The Plan will also support the implementation of the recently announced Glasgow City Deal.

The Council is delighted that the vast majority of the Plan was accepted by the Reporters examining the Plan, and we seek the support of Scottish Ministers in confirming that our Plan is correct and provides clarity and certainty, not only in directing development to the most appropriate locations but also as a means of securing economic investment.

Notwithstanding this, the recommendations and significant modifications as set out in the Examination Report in relation to Braehead's Town Centre status are a major challenge for the Council to accept.



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Braehead

Braehead is the most important retail centre in Renfrewshire. It attracts 17 million visitors per annum supporting over 4,000 jobs. There is a commitment, from the owners, to invest a further £200 million in the area thus creating a significant number of new jobs. The vision for Braehead is to be a place that can fulfil its potential, as a driver of the Renfrewshire economy and the regeneration of the wider Clyde Waterfront. This augments its role as a vibrant and vital town centre where people can choose to stay and invest benefiting from the employment opportunities, range of housing, public transport, shopping and community facilities and attractive environment.

By modifying the Plan in accordance with the Reporters' recommendations as set out in the Examination Report, the Council consider that this will delay and deter significant and important investment at Braehead. It would fail to provide the clarity and certainty that the Plan sets out to do in accordance with Scottish Planning Policy and that the confidence to secure substantial economic investment at Braehead, creating high quality, diverse and sustainable places will be adversely affected and potentially lost.

Braehead is an integral element of the Glasgow City Region City Deal, part of a £1.35bn infrastructure fund that supports significant growth opportunities as well as assists in the delivery of 29,000 potential new jobs. Investment in and around Braehead plays a fundamental part in facilitating the delivery of a few of the 20 strategic infrastructure projects that have been set out in the City Deal proposals. The City Deal, set up to invest in transport improvement, site remediation to enhance the industrial, commercial and housing offer as well as public realm enhancements is exactly what the owners of Braehead are trying to achieve.

In this respect, having assessed the statements set out in the Examination Report, it is considered that the Reporter's overall conclusion that Braehead does not merit town centre status is unreasonable and perverse. The grounds for the legal challenge to this are set out below. More generally, Renfrewshire Council is concerned that the Reporter's conclusion will compromise the delivery of the Renfrewshire Community Plan and SOA and will prove to be a major restriction in this Council and the Government's shared objective to deliver economic growth and create jobs through investment in Renfrew Riverside and the wider Clyde Waterfront.

Grounds for Declining Recommendations

The Council consider that the Reporters recommendations in relation to Braehead – Issue 8 are based on conclusions that could not reasonably have been reached based on the evidence considered at the Examination. In this respect, the Council's grounds for declining to follow the recommendations in relation to Braehead are as follows:

- The Reporter has misinterpreted and/or failed unreasonably to give any weight to certain relevant evidence available to her, and did not seek clarification on determining issues through the examination process.
- The Reporter relied upon (i) a perceived lack of analysis of retail capacity and (ii) a lack of evidence on demand context. However, these issues were not raised by the Reporter as matters that were considered significant and on which further input from the parties was required.
- The recommendation by the Reporter is contrary to the intention set out in the Glasgow and the Clyde Valley Strategic Development Plan, in that the Reporter's approach denies the LDP the opportunity to take forward the delivery of a Network of Strategic Centres.
- The Reporter has applied the wrong test to determine Braehead's status, by using a test, which would apply in the event of a retail application for an "out of centre" location, rather than an appropriate test for designating a new town centre.
- The Reporter erred in her conclusion that town centre status for Braehead would not facilitate other development in the wider Renfrew North area.

In compliance with section 19(12) of the Act, please find attached the following documents and information:

- The Proposed Renfrewshire Local Development Plan as we wish to adopt;
- The modifications made following receipt of the Examination Report;
- A statement setting out the recommended modifications that Renfrewshire Council has not made and an explanation for this in accordance with Regulation 2 of the Town and Country Planning (Grounds for declining to follow recommendations) (Scotland) Regulations 2009 and section 19(12)(b) of the Act;
- The Report of the Examination;
- The advertisement of our intention to adopt the plan.

In relation to section 19(11) and section 19(12) (e) of the Act, the opinion of the authority is that there is no need to carry out an environmental assessment of the proposed plan as modified, as the modifications made are acceptable in regards to the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005. The modifications will be included within the post-adoption SEA statement when submitting to the SEA Gateway.

I trust that the above is in order. Please advise if any further information is required.

Yours faithfully

Mary Crearie
Director of Development & Housing Services