

Local Development Plan – Development Management Policy Note - protection of employment sites and buildings

1 Introduction

1.1 This is the first version of a Development Management Policy Note to support LDP policy GN.8, Protection of Employment Sites and Buildings.

1.2 The policy says that:

Proposals to redevelop, or use, business, general industrial, storage or distribution sites or buildings for other purposes will only be permitted where one of the following criteria is met:

- 1. The present use is inappropriate for the locality;**
- 2. There is adequate alternative provision for employment land in the vicinity;
or**
- 3. The continued use of the site or premises has been shown to be unviable.**

1.3 LDP paragraph 6.42 explains that the purpose of policy GN.8 is to ensure that existing employment sites (in Use Classes B1, B2 and B8) are not lost to other uses, unless there is a clear justification for accepting an alternative use.

2 Viability

2.1 Regarding point 3 of the policy, paragraph 6.46 says that '*evidence of a lack of viability should include evidence of a lack of financial profit (for example from published accounts) and evidence of an inability to sell / rent the site*'. The paragraph notes that '*further advice will be provided (in a Development Management Policy Note) on marketing requirements, including length of time on the market*'.

2.2 In that context, the Council will expect a developer or agent to demonstrate that a site or premises currently in employment use but proposed for a change to another use:

- Has been offered for sale or rent on the open market at a realistic price. An indicative marketing period of three months has been set for this, but this may be varied. For instance, a longer period may be deemed necessary if the asking price or the nature of the advertising has not maximised the opportunity to secure a successful outcome. Conversely, it may be that a similar site at a nearby location has recently been marketed, or that other information is available, which would justify a shorter advertising period, or in exceptional cases no advertising at all.
- Has been advertised for sale at several locations within south-west Wales and also on at least one web-site dedicated to property marketing.

2.3 The Council will take advice from its Property Division on what a realistic sale price might be, on a case-by-case basis, taking into account the prevailing economic conditions at the time of application, the type of existing use and the location of the site or premises.