

Green light could be given to demolish former station master's house in Clarkston

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Courtesy The Extra

By Drew Sandelands, Local Democracy Reporter

Planners at East Renfrewshire Council have recommended the proposal for the Busby Road site is given the go-ahead.

More than 20 people have objected to the development, raising concerns over the loss of a "building of character" as well as the viability of retail outlets.

But a planning report reveals the building is not listed so the council has "limited control over its demolition".

There have been 10 letters of support for the application, which has been submitted by Sabah Hassan.

Councillors will meet on Wednesday to make a decision.

Supporters say the proposal would improve a derelict site and increase job opportunities in Clarkston.

Objectors believe there is not the demand for the development, and it would have an adverse economic impact on the town centre.

They also feel the plans are at odds with the work of the Clarkston Business Improvement District (BID) "where businesses vote to invest collectively in local improvements to boost economic growth.

The "I Love Clarkston" BID, a collective of over 130 businesses, aims to promote the town as a place to visit, shop and socialise.

One objector said: "I have no wish to halt much needed development of this building, however the local council and BID has gone to the trouble of setting out a strategy, and guidelines are in place to preserve irreplaceable heritage in the area. This application pays no respect to that."

They added: "To demolish it completely and replace with a soulless block doesn't benefit the area in the slightest. The building may be dilapidated but not irretrievable."

Another concerned resident added: "Are you really proposing demolition of the characterful station master's house to build four new box-like shops there is no requirement for?"

An economic assessment submitted with the application states 10 to 20 new jobs could be created by the development.

It concludes the "development will result in a net benefit to the town centre and will have no adverse impact on its vibrancy and vitality", the council's planning report states.

One supporter of the scheme said: "The shops will increase vitality and viability to Busby Road therefore making a positive contribution and bringing benefits to the local area.

"More local jobs, more variety for consumers and making use of an unused and overgrown site."

The sandstone cottage is currently "rather dilapidated", the council report states.

It adds the proposed development is "acceptable in appearance".

"It is in keeping with the character and design of the single storey retail unit to the south-east and to the general character and design of the larger, established shopping parade with its roof-top car park to the north-west."

The proposal is described as a "logical extension to the town centre in terms of its visual character".

It is considered to comply with the East Renfrewshire Local Development Plan and “therefore should be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise”.

Any food or drink use of the proposed units would require a change of use application.

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