Session 5 Appendix B Economy Q12 a) to f)

GN 31 Town Centre and Local Retail Centre Development

~~**A. Within defined Town Centres, development will be permitted for the following land uses:**~~

~~**In a Primary Frontage: A1, A2, A3, D1 or D2 use with no residential use on the ground floor permitted, but residential use on upper floors accepted; and**~~

~~**In a Secondary Frontage: A1, A2, A3, D1, D2 and B1 use. Residential use on a ground floor will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will be accepted on the upper floors.**~~

~~**Elsewhere within Town Centres, a greater mix of uses will be permitted. Additionally:**~~

- ~~**In all Town Centre locations, development proposals for retail, commercial and / or community uses which enhance the vitality and viability of town centres and which are compatible with regeneration strategies will generally be supported;**~~
- ~~**In all Town Centre locations, development proposals will be expected to retain any surviving historic shopfronts;**~~
- ~~**In Primary and Secondary Frontage areas all Town Centre locations, development proposals will not be supported where they will create or contribute to an unacceptable concentration of fast-food takeaways.**~~

~~**B. Within Local Retail Centres, proposals for commercial or community uses, which are well related to existing facilities, accessible by a range of travel modes, including walking, cycling and / or public transport and that are of a scale that is compatible with the role and function of the Local Retail Centre will be supported.**~~

GN 31 Town Centre and Local Retail Centre Development

A. Within defined Town Centres, development will be permitted for the following land uses:

i. **In a Primary Frontage A1, A2, A3, D1 or D2 uses. In addition, residential and B1 uses are permitted above ground floor level only.**

ii. **In a Secondary Frontage A1, A2, A3, D1, D2 and B1 uses. In addition, residential uses are permitted above ground floor level and will be considered on a case-by-case basis at ground floor level.**

iii. **Outside Primary and Secondary Frontages development proposals for retail, commercial and community uses that enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre and which are compatible with regeneration strategies will generally be supported.**

B. Within Local Retail Centres, proposals for retail, commercial and community uses, that are well-related to existing facilities and are of a scale that is compatible with the role and function of the Centre, will be supported.

C. In all cases:

i. **Development proposals will be expected to retain any surviving historic shopfronts;**

ii. **Development proposals that would create or contribute to an unacceptable concentration of fast-food take-aways will not be supported.**

iii. **Wherever possible, changes to residential uses should be designed so as not to prejudice conversion back to a retail or commercial use.**

5.161 ~~Non A1, A2 and A3 uses outside Primary Retail Frontages and residential development on the upper floors of buildings in Town Centres and Local Retail Centres will be encouraged subject to compatibility with other policies in the plan. Changes of use to non-A1, A2 or A3 on the ground floor outside Primary Retail Frontages but within a Town Centre will only be permitted:~~

> ~~1) If for residential purposes: a) where the premises / floorspace has been vacant for at least one year and has been actively marketed over that time; and b) where the premises / floorspace does not form part of a purpose-built retail environment or a continuous frontage of three or more existing commercial units.~~
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> ~~2) If for other purposes: a) the proposal does not involve the loss of existing A1 floorspace and b) wherever possible, proposals for a change of use of existing floorspace are designed so as not to prejudice a future conversion back to a retail or commercial use.~~

~~5.162 As expressed above, the Council's aim is to increase the vitality and viability of the retailing and commercial centres in the Pembrokeshire. This policy therefore actively encourages residential developments on the first and upper floors in Primary, Secondary Frontage Retail and elsewhere in Town Centres, as part of mixed-use developments. Incorporation of residential uses can promote a greater sense of community with more people living in commercial centres, reduce private vehicle reliance, enhance civic pride, promote safer centres, increase local~~

~~commuter spending and attract more businesses into centres via the locally resident, skilled workforce.~~

5.162 The Council's aim is to increase the vitality and viability of the Town Centres and Local Retail Centres in Pembrokeshire. Primary Frontages establish the core retail and commercial areas. This policy helps to develop a flexible and pragmatic approach to help support the Town and Local Retail Centres recognising that changes in shopping habits and technological advances have created greater competition and that continued sustainability of these centres depends on allowing new roles and a wider range of uses.

~~5.163The policy also recognises that, in some older centres, the prospects of attracting new commercial development (A1, A2 and A3 uses) are limited. Under these circumstances, there is a need to adopt a more flexible and pragmatic approach whilst also promoting the benefit of bringing empty units and upper floors back into active use. In most of the Local Centres, the commercial centres are interspersed with residential development, and indeed, many of the shops were once private dwelling houses that have been converted. The Council would be concerned if, under these circumstances, shops remained vacant for a considerable length of time, leading to a deterioration of their condition and to the detriment of the local environment. It is therefore considered appropriate to develop criteria by which retail units outside of the Primary Frontage shopping areas can be converted to more viable uses such as residential. In these circumstances, it would need to be demonstrated that the property has been actively marketed for at least one year prior to the submission of an application. The Council will need to be satisfied that marketing has been undertaken on reasonable terms and, as a minimum, would require sales particulars and information from sales / letting agents to be submitted as part of an application.~~

5.163 Primary Frontages establish the core retail areas of Town Centres and the policy aims to continue to protect this function by limiting acceptable uses, at ground-floor level, to those that would generally be found in a town centre location and support both retail uses and the vitality of the centre core. Consideration will also include whether a proposal would enhance the vitality and viability of the Town Centre by providing an active shopfront during normal shopping hours, reduce long-term vacancy and contribute to the overall sense of place.

~~5.164 The balance and distribution of non-A1 uses can have a significant effect on the retail role of Retail Frontages and complementary uses, including cafes and restaurants will be supported where they do not cumulatively undermine the retail character and role of a Retail Frontage. Considerations will include whether the use would enhance the vitality and viability of the centre and the well-being of residents and visitors, provide an active shopfront during normal shopping hours, reduce long term vacancy and contribute to a sense of place.~~

5.164 Secondary Frontages typically have a greater mix of retail and commercial uses. The Policy reflects this by allowing a wider range of uses, including B1 and

residential uses at ground-floor level within Secondary Frontages. Many of the Town Centres have higher than national average vacancy rates for commercial properties and Town Centre decline may be managed by allowing commercial properties in Secondary Frontages to be released into residential use. Consideration of proposals for residential uses in the Secondary Frontages will need to carefully balance potential long-term vacancies and voids against a fragmentation of the commercial area. Consideration of residential uses on a case-by-case basis in these frontages will take into account:

i. Properties that have been vacant for a minimum period of 12 months and actively marketed for retail/commercial use during that time;

ii. Properties that are not part of purpose-built retail properties; and

iii. Properties that are not in a continuous frontage of three or more commercial units.

~~5.165 Concentrations of units operating solely as fast food take-aways are unlikely to support the well-being of residents or visitors. The well-being of residents and visitors includes their mental and physical health and is intended to support the well-being goal of 'a healthier Wales' by ensuring that such uses do not become over-concentrated within Primary Retail Frontages Town Centres. No more than 33% of shop units within the Town Centre; no more than 33% of frontage length of Primary Retail Frontages; and no more than 3 consecutive units within the Town Centre should be in sole fast-food takeaway use. (Focussed Change)~~

5.165 Concentrations of units operating solely as fast-food take-aways are unlikely to support well-being. The well-being of residents and visitors, including mental and physical health supports the well-being goal of 'a healthier Wales' by ensuring that such uses do not become over-concentrated within Town Centres. To achieve this aim there should be:

a. No more than 33% of units and no more than 3 consecutive units within the Town or Local Retail Centre;

b. No more than 33% of Primary Frontages in sole fast-food take-away use.

~~5.166 Primary Retail Frontages establish the core commercial areas of town centres, and whilst ensuring that opportunities remain for shops to establish in core areas, recognise that changes to shopping habits and technology mean that town centres must seek new roles and encourage a wider range of uses in order to maintain vital and viable places for communities, visitors and workers. Co-working hubs can make an important contribution to the vitality of centres and will be supported. There are town and local centres which have higher than national average vacancy rates for commercial properties. In some cases, the authority will seek to manage the decline of such centres by allowing commercial property at the periphery of town centres and which is not within a Primary Retail Frontage to be~~

~~released into residential use. This approach would help to manage the decline of some centres and introduce residential use in sustainable locations. The conversion of retail units often leads to the fragmentation of commercial frontages but this is considered preferable to long term vacancies and voids. The use of Primary Retail Frontages will help to combat this. Nonetheless, these have to be kept in balance so that the very purpose of retailing and commercial centres is not diluted unduly. Although activities falling within Class B1 are by definition acceptable in residential areas in terms of their environmental standards, the Council will not permit such uses which would result in the loss of existing retail A1. Such uses may be successfully accommodated above ground floor level in primary shopping frontages and in non-retail premises elsewhere in established commercial centres~~

5.167 The South-West Wales Regional Retail Study Feb 2017 identified that there is no need to allocate for additional convenience retail floorspace within Pembrokeshire. No allocations are therefore made for food stores.

5.168 The study identifies that there is capacity for comparison goods floorspace and the following table identifies the need anticipated for each main town up to the end of the Plan period, taking into account existing commitments. There is less certainty about the level of need over such a long period of time, and since need up to 2031 is less than 1,000 sq m (0.1Ha) net, this is not allocated within the Plan. It is anticipated that need will be taken up through redevelopment opportunities within centres, and in accordance with national planning policy.

Figure 6 Comparison Floorspace Need

Retail Centre	**Net floorspace capacity – comparison goods sqm ~~(Ha)~~**	
	By year 2031	**By year 2036**
Haverfordwest	735 ~~**sqm**~~	2,916 ~~**sqm**~~
Milford Haven	-	-
Pembroke	137	217
Pembroke Dock	330	713
Fishguard	172	273
Narberth	-	-

<u>The need identified is square metres net</u> ~~<u>and assumes a net / gross ratio of 70%.</u>~~

5.169 Some of the Town Centre areas are also in flood risk zones and in these locations <u>the provisions of criterion 8</u> of Policy GN 1 (General Development Policy)

~~the provisions of criterion 8~~ and TAN15: Development, Flooding and Coastal Erosion will need to be taken into consideration when assessing development proposals.