

Kildare Village in €50m expansion



US television star and fashion icon Olivia Palermo at Kildare Village for a Vanity Fair fashion shoot; Inset right: promotional picture from the shopping destination



ONE of Ireland's biggest retail outlets is set to get bigger after the owners of Kildare Village were granted planning permission to almost double its size in a massive €50m expansion project that will create up to 500 jobs, writes Allison Bray.

An Bord Pleanála granted multinational Value Retail Dublin 10 years' planning permission to extend its existing designer discount retail facility outside Kildare town to the new Kildare Tourist Outlet. This will add 7,053sqm to the current site for a total area of 18,219sqm.

The expansion will see a one- and two-storey building added on to the existing complex and will include 36 new retail outlets, a tourist information centre, two restaurants, public toilets, office space, more than 400 new parking spaces and a pedestrian link to the adjacent Tesco.

Permission was granted after the company's director Chris Harris flew to Dublin to attend the oral hearings earlier this year in which he claimed the expansion project would create 120 construction jobs and 380 retail jobs while generating €5.5m in wages to the local economy each year.

The village, which opened in July 2007 and houses 60 leading brand fashion, lifestyle and homewear shops, currently employs 550 people.

Brian Flanagan, chairman of the Kildare Town Chamber of Commerce, welcomed the decision, saying: "The outlet centre employs a lot of local people and the new jobs will come as good news to both younger and older people seeking work."

Officials from Value Retail were unavailable for comment last night. However, during the hearings, the retailer's global chairman Scott Malkin said the retailer was eyeing Chinese tourists as a major source of future income at the facility.

Kildare Village director Maria McGovern said: "The new development will generate significant employment opportunities and the international investment in the region will give the necessary critical mass to enhance the overall experience of Kildare Village, making it an even more attractive shopping destination."

No date has been set for construction, but it is understood that it will get under way within the coming year.

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VALUE RETAIL.