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Helen Willows
Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Development Management,
PO Box 634,
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Ref: 4124LE.L003.A

Date: 13 June 2022

Dear Helen,

2022/0194 - Proposed Lidl at Hoyland Barnsley - Response to Co-op Representation dated 16th May 2022

We are writing to provide a response to the representation by Barton Wilmore on behalf of the Co-op dated 16th May 2022 in relation to our planning application for a proposed Lidl store at Hoyland with reference 2022/0194. The Co-op representation sought clarification and raised questions relating to the Retail Impact Assessment (RIA) submitted in support of the planning application alongside some general comments. The structure of this letter will take the key points that relate to the RIA from the Co-op's representation and address them in turn.

Co-op's Role within Hoyland Common

The Co-op representation states that the Co-op Hoyland Common store plays a "vital role" in supporting the wider vitality and viability of the local centre and that any significant trade diversion would reduce footfall and opportunities for linked trips, thereby impacting on the other stores in the local centre. However, we disagree with this assessment given the make up Hoyland Common Local Centre which currently only contains two convenience retail stores in the form of the Co-op and a butcher. The remaining commercial floorspace in the centre consists of a wide variety of retail stores and services, as well as offices and restaurants. DPP found evidence of this through the retail health checks that were undertaken as part of the RIA and planning assessment in November 2021; a summary of the list of uses found when carrying out this health check can be seen in **Table 1** below.

Use	Number
Accountants	2
Barbers	2
Pubs	3
Co-op	1
Funeral Directors	1
Café	1
Community Centre	1
Auto part shop	2
Charity Shop	1
Takeaway	5
Solicitors	1

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Butchers	1
Bar	1
Dental Care	1
Interior Shop	1
Clothes Shop	2
Pharmacy	1
Beautician	5
Physio Therapy	1
Dog Groomers	1
Fishing Shop	1
Vacant	3

Table 1: Summary of uses within Hoyland Common Local Centre as of November 2021

The variety found within the centre means that, whilst footfall to the Co-op was found to be high, the possibility of linked trips from the Co-op to such uses is low. For example, it is unlikely that visitors to the centre travel there to visit the Co-op and then follow up with a trip to the beautician, dentist, accountant, or pub. In fact, we argue that it is likely that the roles will be reversed and that visitors to the centre are attracted by the non-convenience retail uses and then subsequently visit the Co-op because it is close and would save a trip to secondary centre. In this regard, the Co-op is fulfilling its role as a true 'convenience' retailer.

This conclusion is further supported by the fact that the Co-op's car park, the only off-road car park within the centre with approximately 10 parking spaces, has a maximum time limit of 30 minutes for customers; this is clearly insufficient time for a Co-op visit and linked trips as the representation suggests.

Linked trips from the non-convenience stores to the Co-op would also explain the high footfall to the latter seen when carrying out the health check. It would only take a small number of customers to make a linked trip to the Co-op to generate a high amount of footfall by virtue of the fact that there are 33 non-convenience uses and one Co-op store.

Notwithstanding the above, national planning guidance is clear that the impact on individual stores is not a planning consideration, and that the assessment should consider the impact on the centre as a whole. The representation from the Co-op agrees with this approach.

Population and Expenditure Figures

The representation states that the population and expenditure figures have been inflated as they extend beyond the Primary Catchment Area (PCA), and that this then impacts on the accuracy of the RIA. However, the PCA, by definition, is the main area that a store gets its trade from but not the entire area. Therefore, any proposed trade draw from the PCA would normally constitute only 70-80% of overall trade draw. However, as the household survey covers a larger area than the PCA, it can be assumed that this will include the entire trade draw for the proposed store.

Notwithstanding the above, the population and expenditure figures will have no bearing on the end impact figures as these are expressed as a percentage rather than absolute amounts.

Co-op Hoyland Common Turnover

The Co-op representation states that the existing turnover of the Co-op Hoyland Common store should be based on the PCA expenditure and not the household survey area as stated within the RIA. However, DPP consider this statement to be incorrect. As set out in the explanatory text within the RIA, using the PCA would not give an accurate representation as there would be insufficient responses to the household survey, meaning an inaccurate sample size. Therefore, in order to gain a true reflection of expenditure, a wider survey area was required. This represents a standard methodology used by NEMS (the survey company) to carry out household surveys.

In addition to this, we are happy to share the results of the household survey and have included this under separate cover with reference '131121A Hoyland Household Survey'.

The representation from the Co-op also states that the retail floorspace of the Hoyland Common store has been overstated as it does not account for back of house facilities. We acknowledge this and welcome the correct figures as stated within the representation of 232sqm of convenience floorspace and 17sqm of comparison floorspace. This change in floorspace does not impact on the turnover of the store in the RIA as this was based on the household survey data rather than the benchmark figures. However, a lower retail floorspace consequently means a lower benchmark turnover figure and therefore we have amended the 2022 benchmark turnover figure from £3.3m to £2.6m. What this updated benchmark figure shows is that the Co-op store is no longer considered to be under trading when considering the household survey results and instead is performing as expected.

This change in performance therefore addresses the comments within the representation about comparative impacts on under trading stores however it must be further iterated that the impact on individual stores is not a planning consideration.

Impact on Co-op and Hoyland Common Local Centre

The Co-op representation states that the 2% trade draw shown in the RIA is unrealistic and instead their estimate is that it should be closer to 15%. However, DPP assert that a 2% trade draw can be expected once the proposed Lidl is operational. This trade draw has been determined based on the role of Co-op Hoyland Common within the centre and as a true convenience retailer for the local population and visitors to the centre. Evidence for this can be found within the household survey data which shows that only one respondent out of 451 stated that they did their main food shop at Co-op Hoyland Common.

In contrast, it is expected that a higher proportion of Lidl shoppers will use the proposed store as their main shop and, as such, the trade draw from the Co-op will be low. Instead, direct competitors such as Aldi, Tesco, and Asda will see a higher trade draw due to their comparative range, offer, and facilities.

In addition, as set out within the RIA and through the centre health checks carried out, Hoyland Common is considered a healthy centre with a wide range of non-convenience retail uses that will see no loss of trade to the proposed Lidl by virtue of the differing products and services. For example, Lidl will have no impact on cafés, charity shops, clothing stores, beauticians, or other specialist use due to the fact that Lidl will not stock these items or offer these services. Any suggestion to the contrary is incorrect.

Regarding the trade draw and trade diversion figures within the representation, no evidence has been supplied to support these claims and therefore they cannot be considered and hold no weight.

Summary

Overall, the comments and claims made within the Co-op representation have been assessed and are not considered to make a material difference to the findings of the RIA. Suggestions that the Co-op serves an important role as an 'anchor' store within Hoyland Common and provides linked trips to other stores are considered to be flawed and instead it is argued that the variety of other uses in the centre are an attraction in their own right. The suggested trade draw and trade diversion figures have been stated with zero evidence and therefore there is no basis to attribute them with any weight.

The one matter that the representation has changed relates to the retail floorspace of Co-op Hoyland Common which, as acknowledged, has been overstated resulting in a high benchmark turnover and perception that the store is under trading when compared to the household survey results. Whilst the lower floorspace figures do not change the overall findings of the RIA, they have demonstrated that Co-op Hoyland Common is not under trading but is in fact performing as expected.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MD Davies', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke underneath.

Michelle Davies
Director
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