Former Market Place, Station Road, Thurnscoe

Supporting and Retail Report

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Planning and Retail Report

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1. Introduction

1.1. This Planning Statement is prepared in support of a planning application submitted on behalf of Netto Ltd, for demolition of existing buildings and erection of a retail store (A1 use class), car parking, servicing, landscaping and associated highways works. The store will be located on the former Market Place site within Thurnscoe Shepherd Lane Local Centre.

1.2. This Planning Statement is accompanied by the following supporting documents which comprise the planning application:

- The Planning Application Forms and Certificates;
- Planning drawings;
- A Design & Access Statement;
- A Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Appraisal;
- A Contaminated Land Preliminary Investigation Report;
- A Transport Assessment;
- A Noise Assessment; and
- A Statement of Community Involvement.

1.3. The proposal will have a number of benefits including providing a much needed retail facility within a local centre and within walking distance of local residents, as well as providing new investment and employment for the local community.

1.4. This planning application has been subject to pre-application discussions with both Officers at Barnsley Council and the local Ward Councillor. A written response from the planning officer (Keiron Dunn) was provided on 9 July 2015. The key issues raised during the pre-application discussions included the following:

- The need to demonstrate why the existing employment use should not be retained;
- Design concerns including the relationship with Station Road and adjacent residential properties, the design of store, the need for additional landscaping, and a suggestion to relocate the store entrance;
- The need to ensure the proposal will not impact on the amenity of surrounding residents;
- The need for a sustainable drainage scheme to be incorporated within the proposal; and
- Confirmation that a propriety junction is not acceptable and that the scheme should include a roundabout.

1.5. The scheme has since been amended to address the main design concerns.

1.6. Netto also met the local ward councillor (Councillor Worton) on 25 August 2015 to present the proposal.

1.7. The outcome of this consultation is set out in further detail in the Statement of Community Involvement.

Structure of Planning Statement

1.8. This Statement is set out as follows:

- Section two sets out the factual site background, including the context of the site and its planning history;
- Section three explains the proposed development;
- Section four summarises relevant national and local planning policies;
- Section five assesses the planning considerations in respect of the proposal; and
- Section six sets out our conclusions.

2. Factual Background

Site and surroundings

2.1. The site is located on Station Road within Thurnscoe Shepherd Lane Local Centre.

2.2. The site is approximately 0.4ha, with the majority of the site currently vacant having previously been used for leisure and as a market. The western part of the site is currently occupied by Fabrino Fencing who manufactures fencing. Fabrino will be re-locating to the existing premises in Goldthorpe, if this application is granted.

2.3. The site lies within a town centre, in a mixed commercial and residential area, bound to the east by an existing railway line. Commercial and residential properties bound the site to the west and north. The surrounding properties are one and two storey.

2.4. Vehicular and pedestrian access to and from the site is currently taken from Station Road.

2.5. The site is not subject to any ecological designations, nor are there any heritage designations or conservation areas close by that would be impacted upon by the proposed development.

2.6. The site is located within Flood Zone 1, at the lowest risk of flooding. An assessment of the site does not show any surface water on the site.

Relevant planning history

2.7. The eastern part of the site has a long history relating to its use. It was originally a Cinema, followed by a Bingo Hall. In 1986 permission was approved for the change of use of the site to a private snooker club and leisure centre (ref: B/86/1265/DE).

2.8. The western part of the site was formerly a church. In 1987 an application was approved for the change of use to vehicle repair workshop and car sales (ref: B/87/0727/DE). This was subsequently followed by a change of use application in 1991 to DIY, gardening and general workshop (ref: B/90/1154/DE).

2.9. In 2001, outline planning permission was granted for the demolition of the eastern part of the site for its redevelopment including shops, offices and flats (ref: B/01/1348/DE).

2.10. In June 2008 an outline planning application for the erection of a retail foodstore encompassing the entire site (LPA ref: 2007/2130) was granted. The officer's committee report for the application concluded that:

> *"The scheme offers the potential for a new quality development that makes a significant improvement to the appearance of this prominent and underused site. The scheme will also provide for significantly expanded retail facilities that are well located and convenient to the needs of Thurnscoe East."*

2.11. The officer adds that the principle of development is considered acceptable given the site:

> *"...is located within the defined Shopping and Commercial Area. Policy S1 seeks to extend and enhance the range of goods, consumer choice and facilities within designated shopping and commercial area and the proposal is therefore in accord with this policy.*

The proposal will also help to compensate for Lidgett Lane shops lost due to the general economic decline in the area."

Conclusion

2.12. The site is contained within a Local Centre and has previously been approved for convenience retailing. The previous proposal was larger than current proposals and was found to accord with local policy intentions and was supported. This remains the case for the current proposals.

3. Proposed Development

3.1. The scheme will provide a foodstore with a total gross internal floorspace of 1,045sqm and a net sales area of 796sqm, as well as landscaping and 69 car parking spaces.

3.2. The proposal will help to meet the shopping needs of local residents and enhance the vitality and viability of the local centre. It will bring forward the redevelopment of the site and act as a catalyst for further development within Thurnscoe, as well as creating new employment opportunities for the local community.

3.3. The layout of the store has been informed by a number of factors including constraints such as the size and shape of the site; pedestrian and vehicular access requirements; the relationship with surrounding development and housing; and following pre-application discussions with Barnsley Council.

3.4. The proposed store is located within the western part of the site, to provide an active frontage along Station Road. During the pre-application discussions with officers, it was suggested that the store entrance be located on the corner of the building to maximise the potential for pedestrian trips between the store and the rest of the local centre.

3.5. Car parking is proposed to the side of the store, with access taken from Station Road via a new roundabout. The scheme also provides improvements to both vehicular and pedestrian access within, to and from the site.

3.6. The proposed foodstore is of a high quality design that seeks to enhance the residential amenity of neighbouring residents, through creating a positive, responsive relationship to the public realm.

Summary

3.7. The site comprises a partly vacant site located within Thurnscoe Shepherd Lane Local Centre, which was previously subject to outline planning permission for a foodstore. Although this consent has now lapsed it remains a material consideration in respect of this application.

3.8. The foodstore is smaller than that previously approved, and the design, layout and appearance of the store have been carefully considered, to remain in keeping with the character of the local area.

3.9. Access to the site is to be taken from a new roundabout located to the west of the site. The roundabout will be similar to that previously approved in 2008.

4. Planning Policy Context

4.1. The development plan for Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council consists of the Saved UDP Policies (2000) and the Core Strategy (2011). The development plan is the starting point in decision-making, but the development plan for Barnsley pre-dates the National Planning Policy Framework.

4.2. The Framework notes that Local Plans may need to be revised to take into consideration the policies of the Framework, noting at paragraph 215 that following the first 12 months grace period of the Framework *"…due weight should be given to relevant policies in existing plans according to their degree of consistency with this Framework (the closer the policies in the Plan in policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given)."*

4.3. Consequently, where the policies of the Local Plan are inconsistent with The Framework, they are deemed 'out of date' and in such circumstances paragraph 14 of The Framework should be applied, i.e. the presumption in favour of sustainable development, unless the adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, or the policies in The Framework indicate development should be restricted.

National Planning Policy Framework

4.4. The Framework sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

4.5. There are three dimensions of sustainable development which are mutually dependent and therefore should not be undertaken in isolation. These are an economic role; a social role and an environmental role (paragraph 7). In pursuing sustainable development these should not be carried out in isolation (paragraph 8).

4.6. Central to the planning system and at the heart of The Framework is the *"presumption in favour of sustainable development"* and granting development without delay. Local Planning Authorities in decision making should:

> *"Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
>
> *Any adverse impact of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole; or*
>
> *Specific policies in this framework indicate development should be restricted"* (Paragraph 14).

4.7. Paragraph 17 sets out the core land-use principles which underpin decision-taking, which guide that planning should:

> *"Proactively drive and support sustainable economic development to deliver the businesses and thriving local places that the country needs;*
>
> *Always seek to secure high quality design and a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants; and*
>
> *Encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land)."*

4.8. The government is committed to building a strong, competitive economy which promotes competitive town centres. Paragraph 24 highlights that:

> *"Planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period."*

4.9. It adds that in drawing up Local Plans, local planning authorities should:

> *"Recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality" and promotes a town centre first principle which "provides customer choice and a diverse retail offer* (Paragraph 23)*".*

4.10. A key objective of The Framework is to promote sustainable economic development recognising that this can be delivered through the provision of a range of economic uses, including retail. Paragraph 19 of the Framework is instructive in this case, noting that the planning system should do *"…everything it can to support sustainable economic growth."*

4.11. It highlights that planning should operate to engage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth. It goes on to state that *"…significant weight should [therefore] be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system".*

4.12. Whilst part of the site is in employment use, The Framework is relevant which advises the policy test is whether the benefits of the development significantly and demonstrably outweigh any impacts resulting from the loss of traditional B class employment land.

4.13. Moreover, The Framework seeks to promote sustainable economic development recognising that this can be delivered through the provision of a range of economic uses, including retail.

4.14. The Framework also notes that *"good design is a key aspect of sustainable development"* (paragraph 56). Good design should contribute to positively making places better for people. Intrinsic to this is that design should take account of connections between people and places, and between the built, natural and historic environment.

4.15. The Framework however requires that local planning authorities in plan-making take into account ensuring both viability and deliverability of development. Paragraph 173 states that:

> *"Pursuing sustainable development requires careful attention to viability and costs in plan-making and decision-taking ... development identified should not be subject to a scale of obligations and policy burdens that their ability to be developed viably is threatened."*

Local policy

Saved UDP Policies (2000)

4.16. The UDP is clearly of some age, and therefore little weight can be afforded to its policies. However, the proposal clearly complies with the main retail policy of the UDP which permits development within the defined centres, including Thurnscoe, where it will "*encourage, co-ordinate and implement"* improvements in the general surrounding environment.

Core Strategy (September 2011)

4.17. The Core Strategy also pre-dates The Framework, albeit we set out below the most relevant policies in respect of this proposal.

4.18. Policy CSP 19 sets out the Council's aims to protect existing employment land. It permits the redevelopment of employment land for non-employment uses where:

"Redevelopment would not result in a loss of existing jobs or employment potential; and

There will still be an adequate supply of employment land in the locality.

If the above can be satisfied then redevelopment will be allowed where it can be demonstrated that:

The buildings or land cannot satisfactorily support continued employment use."

4.19. However, this policy does not fully comply with The Framework which seeks to promote economic prosperity, recognising that this can be delivered through providing favourable planning conditions for a range of economic uses, including retail.

4.20. CSP 25 sets out the Council's requirements for new development to promote more sustainable forms of travel through permitting development that is:

"Accessible by public transport; and

Provides parking for other modes of transport other than private car."

4.21. CSP 26 requires that all new development should provide for *"safe, secure and convenient access for all road users."*

4.22. The Council expect development to promote a high quality design that takes advantage of and enhances the distinctive features of Barnsley, including:

"Views and vistas to key buildings, landmarks, skylines and gateways

Heritage, townscape and landscape character including the scale, layout, building styles and materials of the built form...."

4.23. CSP 31 supports development that maintains and enhances the vitality and viability of all town district and local centres. Thurnscoe (Shepherd Lane) is allocated as a local centre. Policy CSP 31 states that:

"The Local Centres serve smaller catchments and development here will be expected to meet the needs of the local area and not adversely impact on the vitality or viability of other nearby centres.

All retail and town centre developments will be expected to be appropriate to the scale, role, function and character of the centres in which they are proposed."

Emerging Local Plan

4.24. The emerging Local Plan will replace the adopted UDP and Core Strategy. The Local Plan is however, at the very early stages of development, being proposed for options consultation in October and November 2015. The policies in this document, therefore, should be afforded very little weight. Nevertheless the proposal complies with the following key policies.

4.25. Policy SD1 which supports a positive approach to development that reflects the national presumption in favour of sustainable development.

4.26. Policy GD1 which states that development will be approved if: there are no significant adverse effects on amenity; development is compatible with the surrounding area; development will not adversely affect the potential for development; nor will it adversely impact on the environment.

4.27. Policy E5 and E6 which state that non employment uses on employment sites will be:

> *"Considered on their merits, particularly their contribution to the borough's economic offer and job density."*

4.28. Policy T3 which states that, new development should be located in easily accessible areas, and should promote the use of sustainable modes of transport.

4.29. Policy D1 which requires that all new development is of a high quality design, which complements and enhances the existing character and townscape of the area and which will not adversely impact on vistas and views to key buildings. Development should contribute to place making.

4.30. Policy TC1 which promotes the town centre first principle.

Other planning documents

Parking SPD (March 2012)

4.31. In accordance with Policy CSP 25 of the Core Strategy maximum guidelines for car parking are provided to restrict parking in areas which are readily accessible by other modes of transport. This will promote more sustainable choices, and releases land for other uses.

4.32. As set out in Table 1 of the SPD the maximum guidelines for car parking recommends that development for food retail over 1,000sqm should provide 1 space per 14-25sqm. The proposal is in accordance with this.

5. Planning Considerations

5.1. This section of the Statement addresses the main planning issues that arise as a result of the development, which include:

- The principle of development;
- Regeneration and employment;
- Design and appearance;
- Residential amenity;
- Environmental issues;
- Transport; and
- Sustainability.

Principle of development

5.2. The application site is located within an existing local centre, and is fully supported by both national and local planning policy, with all strands of policy promoting a 'town centre' first approach to development, where retail is encouraged to focus on existing centres.

5.3. Moreover, the Council have previously granted outline permission for a foodstore (1,254sqm) on this site in 2008. At the time of the determination of this application, officers were of the view that the proposals fully accord with local planning policy. Since 2008, the promoting of retail development in centres continues to be a key aim of retail policy.

5.4. It was considered that the location of the proposed store would serve to consolidate and enhance the existing small group of shops and that its size would mean that it would serve local needs. Its accessibility for local residents and proximity to public transport were also identified as benefits of the proposal.

5.5. This remains the case for the current proposal with the Council's pre-application response highlighting that:

> *"The site is in an area designation as a shopping centre … policy CSP31 Town Centres would support the proposal."*

5.6. The principle of retail development on the site is, therefore, clearly supported by all tiers of planning policy.

5.7. The proposal will enhance consumer choice and the vitality and viability of the local centre through increased footfall and opportunities for linked trips by attracting new shoppers to Thurnscoe.

Regeneration and employment

5.8. The proposal will not result in the loss of any existing jobs given that Fabrino Fencing are relocating to their existing workshop in Goldthorpe, with the capital received from selling their site enabling them to invest further in their existing business and safeguard it for the future.

5.9. Moreover, the proposal will provide significantly more jobs than currently on site (i.e. circa 25

jobs compared to 4 at the existing fencing company) in an area of high unemployment, to the benefit of local residents, creating employment for those sectors with the particular need. The roles available will have flexible hours making them attractive to a range of potential employees including those looking for reduced hours whilst studying or raising a family, for example.

5.10. The proposed foodstore will also represent significant new investment in a local centre and help to retain local retail expenditure. The retention of a greater proportion of local retail expenditure through improving range and choice and reducing the need to travel elsewhere will have spin off benefits for the local community.

5.11. Moreover, the proposals will help to bring the entire site back into use to the benefit of the local economy, and improve the site's overall appearance.

Design and appearance

5.12. The siting and layout of the proposed foodstore has been designed to take account of the current surrounding uses and to ensure the proposal will function well for its required use. The foodstore is proposed to be located to the east of the site, with the car park to the west acting as a buffer between the proposal and the existing local residents.

5.13. The development will face onto Station Road, with the service yard located to the rear, this ensures an active frontage. The development has been treated in a holistic manner, in order to deliver an appropriate design solution.

5.14. The height and scale of the proposed foodstore has been carefully considered to be in keeping with the character of the surrounding area and to minimise its visual impact on the street-scene and neighbouring residents.

5.15. Moreover, the scale of the proposal is significantly smaller than the previously consented scheme which was considered to be acceptable by the Council. As such, the store will have a lesser impact on the surrounding area.

5.16. The building will comprise a steel portal frame structure with a combination of metal cladding for the roof and high level wall panels and masonry brick piers, approximately 31m in height with sand/cement rendered panels between which will help to visually 'break up' the mass of the building. A powder coated aluminium shopfront and customer entrance door will be located to the corner of the unit facing the local centre, with powder coated metal escape and goods in doors to the rear.

5.17. The design and materials proposed are considered entirely appropriate for such a commercial location.

5.18. Landscaping is also proposed to complement the proposed building, and provide screening and enhance the appearance of the site when viewed from the surrounding area. The scheme provides landscaping areas along the boundaries of the site to create a pleasant and attractive environment for users.

5.19. Vehicular access to the site will be taken from the west of the site, via a proposed new roundabout. The proposed roundabout will be in a similar location and design to that previously approved for the foodstore in 2008 (ref: 2007/2130). The roundabout was proposed following pre-application discussions in which Highways officers confirmed that they have no objections in principle to the proposed development, although:

> *"A priority junction would not be acceptable and access should be derived via the previously approved roundabout."*

5.20. Pedestrian access to the site will also be taken from the west of the site. A new footpath and pedestrian crossing will be provided for pedestrian safety within the site. The proposed

access will be via a purpose built ramped footpath to ensure a level surface within the site.

5.21. Customer and staff access to the store itself is via the entrance door located to the northwest corner of the unit, facing onto Station Road and Thurnscoe Local Centre, thereby encouraging linked shopping trips to existing shops and services. Officers suggested that this was the most appropriate location during pre-application discussions.

5.22. The scheme provides improvements to both vehicular and pedestrian access within, to and from the site.

Residential amenity

5.23. Following pre-application advice, the location of the proposed store was amended to reduce the potential impact on residents along Barley View and Shepherd Lane, with the proposed foodstore now located in a similar position to that previously approved in 2008.

5.24. A Noise Assessment has also been submitted in support of the application based on a series of background noise readings taken over a period of time compared with a series of assumptions on noise levels to be generated by activities at the store, particularly focussed on the servicing of the store, traffic generation, and the relationship with adjoining residential properties.

5.25. The assessment demonstrates that deliveries between 06.00 to 22.00 and customer car parking will not result in an adverse impact on neighbouring residents from undue noise disturbance during both day time and night time hours.

Environmental issues

5.26. The accompanying Phase I Site Environmental Investigation Study identifies that there are no significant ground hazards identified on the site.

5.27. It is possible, however, that contamination hot-spots may be present. The report suggests that an intrusive ground investigation should therefore, be undertaken to verify these assumptions which can be conditioned.

5.28. The accompanying Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) assesses the risk of flooding of the development. It confirms the site lies within Flood Zone 1, outside any known fluvial floodplains and is at little risk or no significant risk of flooding.

5.29. An assessment of the site does not show any surface water on the site. The surface water drainage network will be designed to reduce surface water run-off. The network will be designed to permit a 1 in 30 year rainfall event and will be connected to the existing combined sewer. The foul water will also be connected into the existing adopted combined sewer in Station Road.

Transport

5.30. The accompanying Transport Assessment (TA) has been prepared by Vectos in accordance with a methodology scoped at pre-application stage with the Council. The TA considers the trip generation of the site, including the potential to generate trips by sustainable modes of travel, and the ability of the existing and proposed highway network to accommodate the vehicle traffic generated by the development.

5.31. This TA recognises that a significant proportion of the vehicle trips associated with the foodstore will not be new to the local highway network, but rather will occur as a minor diversion of an existing trip, or will be an existing retail trip that transfers to the development from an alternative retail destination.

5.32. The TA concludes that the residual cumulative impacts of the proposed development would

not be severe, and therefore in accordance with The Framework guidance there are no reasons why the planning application should be refused on highway or transportation grounds.

Sustainability

5.33. The proposal is located within a highly sustainable and accessible location within an existing local centre which is well served by public transport. It will be a sustainable form of development in accordance with the principles of national planning policy.

5.34. The proposal will assist in the delivery of strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by creating a good quality built environment, with access to local retail facilities that reflect the community's needs and supports consumer choice, health and well-being.

5.35. The development has been sensitively designed in order to protect and enhance the character of the surrounding area, and to be legible and safe for users.

5.36. The development is sustainable development and there is a national and local presumption in favour of sustainable development.

Summary

5.37. In summary, the principle of retail development on the site has been established through the granting of the previous planning application for a foodstore on the site. The site is also located within Thurnscoe Local Centre, with the proposal complying with both national and local planning policy.

5.38. The design of the proposal has been carefully considered to be in keeping with the character of the surrounding area, and to minimise its visual impact and reduce the impact on neighbouring residential amenity.

5.39. The proposal will not result in demonstrable harm to the surrounding highways network and there is no reason that the proposal should be resisted on traffic or transportation grounds.

5.40. There are, therefore, very strong planning grounds for supporting this proposal, which will create jobs and enhance the retail offer of the existing local centre in a sustainable and accessible location. The proposal will assist in delivering local growth; promoting a strong and competitive local environment and it represents sustainable development which should be considered favourably.

6. Conclusion

6.1. This application seeks permission for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of a retail store (A1 use class), car parking, servicing, landscaping and associated highways works. The application is supported by a suite of technical reports assisting the Local Planning Authority in their consideration of the proposal.

6.2. A summary of the key planning considerations in relation to the proposal is provided below.

- The application site is located in an existing local centre, where the principle of retail development is supported by both national and local planning policy;
- The proposal will enhance consumer choice and the vitality and viability of the local centre through increased footfall and opportunities for linked trips by attracting new shoppers to Thurnscoe;
- The proposal will meet the shopping needs of the local area in a sustainable manner on a site in close proximity to local residents and well served by public transport;
- The proposal will create significantly more jobs than currently exist on the site and will not result in the loss of any existing jobs at the Fabrino Fencing;
- The proposal will represent new investment which will improve investor confidence in Thurnscoe;
- The proposal will result in redevelopment of a brownfield site and bring it back into beneficial use;
- The proposal is appropriately designed and will enhance the visual amenity of the surrounding area; and
- The scheme will have no detrimental impact on neighbouring residents or highway safety.

6.3. There are strong planning grounds for supporting this proposal, which will create jobs and enhance the retail offer of the existing local centre in a sustainable and accessible location. The Framework makes it clear that such proposals for sustainable development should be supported by local planning authorities.