November 2012

NPPF Retail Assessment

Hybrid Application for
Proposed Supermarket (Class A1),
Petrol Filling Station, Health Centre (Class D1),
Car Parking, Residential Development, Additional Parking for Community Campus, POS, landscaping, access and Ancillary Works

On Land at
Midland Road, Royston

On behalf of

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- The Council commissioned Smaller Centres Study (November 2010) found that the vast majority of convenience expenditure in the North Zone (including Royston) is spent outside the area;
- A significant proportion of Royston residents travel to the Asda at Old Mill Lane in Barnsley for their main food shop whilst others shop at Morrisons in Barnsley and Asda on the southern edge of Wakefield;
- The proposed supermarket in Royston would encourage residents in the area to do their main food shop locally thereby encouraging linked trips with other shops and services in the adjoining Midland Road and Wells Road centre;
- The proposal would strengthen the retail offer of Royston in a central location where residents could benefit from an improved main food shopping offer along with other associated uses.
- The supermarket would allow one trip to serve more than one purpose leading to more sustainable shopping patterns;
- Matters raised by the NPPF with respect to the sequential approach and impact tests have been fully assessed and we conclude:
    - Compliance with the requirements of the sequential approach. There are no more suitable, viable and available sites which could accommodate a new supermarket and associated development in Royston;
    - Significant adverse impact would not occur in relation to the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planning private or public sector investment in existing centres or on the vitality and viability of Royston district centre;
    - We consider that given the close relationship of the site to the rest of the defined centre, the proposal would lead to linked trips with other shops and services in the centre and spin off benefits for the centre; and
    - Against this background no significant adverse impacts are identified but we consider there to be a number of positive impacts arising.
- In our view the proposed development accords with retail policies in the development plan and the NPPF. It would provide a significant improvement to shopping facilities in Royston.

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Report addresses NPPF retail policy considerations insofar as they apply to a proposed mixed use development on Midland Road in Royston. The application has been submitted to bring forward redevelopment of a former Royston High School site in Royston following the opening of a new Advanced Learning Centre (ALC) in Carlton. The application comprises a mix of uses including a new supermarket for Royston, petrol filling station, health centre and new housing development.

1.2 A separate report has been prepared dealing with the housing policy aspects of the overall development whilst an overarching Planning Statement provides a summary of the planning merits of the proposal when assessed against the development plan and relevant material considerations.

1.3 This report solely addresses NPPF retail policy considerations and therefore should be read in conjunction with other reports and information submitted in support of the application.

1.4 The report proceeds as follows:

- **Section 2** describes the site;
- **Section 3** describes the proposed development including other uses in the mixed use application;
- **Section 4** sets out a brief overview of retail planning policy;
- **Section 5** describes existing and proposed convenience provision in the area;
- **Section 6** addresses sequential considerations;
- **Section 7** deals with impact considerations; and
- **Section 8** sets out our conclusions.

2.0 Site Description

2.1 The overall site measures (7.12 hectares) and is located centrally in Royston adjoining the defined 'centre' on Midland Road. The site was formerly occupied by Royston High School and associated grounds but has since been demolished and cleared in readiness for future development.

2.2 The site is largely bounded by residential areas to the north, west, south and east (save for the Asda store). West of the former school site is the Royston Community Campus which includes a variety of public uses including a Leisure Centre, Civic Hall, Lifelong Learning Centre and the Grove, the latter being the base for the Royston and Carlton Community Partnership. Within part of the site is car parking for the various uses, which are accessed via a shared access from Station Road. North east of the site are existing allotments.

2.3 The site is linked to Midland Road to the south east by the former school entrance road. Immediately south and south west of the site are residential properties taking access from Station Road and fronting Midland Road providing a mix of terraced, semi-detached and detached properties. A place of worship and more commercial uses also front Midland Road towards the eastern site boundary.

2.4 Asda (formerly Netto) bounds the site to the east forming part of the defined Midland Road 'centre' in Royston. There are effectively two 'centres' in Royston although we refer to both as the 'centre'. To the south of the site is the Wells, which is focussed around the junction of Station Road/Midland Road/Church Street and High Street, and Midland Road. The Wells includes a Co-op foodstore and a range of other small shops and town centre uses. The Midland Road part of the centre includes Asda and extends east resulting in a linear centre broken up by residential properties on Midland Road. Towards the eastern end of the centre is a Sainsburys Local.

2.5 The site sits to rear of properties fronting Midland Road and in a location between the Wells end of the centre and the Midland Road part of the centre.

2.6 Access to the site is currently from Midland Road but with the potential to gain access from The Lane, which runs to the side of Asda serving existing residential properties at the end of the road. There is an existing public right of way (Warren Walk) crossing the site from east to west which is fenced on either side to prevent unauthorised access to the former school grounds. Rushton Drive, serving surrounding residential areas, bounds the site to the north east.

2.7 The site itself is largely overgrown with the former school buildings having been demolished and the former play areas/playing fields no longer under any active management.

3.0 Proposed Development

3.1 The mixed use development includes commercial and residential elements. The commercial element includes provision of a Class A1 supermarket along with a petrol filling station and health centre together with associated car parking and access roads. The commercial element is intended to serve the residents of Royston linking with the existing defined centre on Midland Road.

3.2 Given the limited walking distance between the proposed commercial elements and the defined centre, we consider that visitors to the site would have convenient access to other shops and services in the centre thus encouraging linked trips and increased activity/footfall in the centre. This would benefit existing traders and act as a catalyst to attract new retailers/services to the centre.

3.3 The overall layout of the site is shown on Plan AD(00)02. This shows the commercial element located in southern part of the site, towards Midland Road. This enables the commercial uses to link better with the existing centre and help provide a less disjointed town centre offer in Royston. The location of the supermarket in southern part of the site is in the area identified as a potential development opportunity for expansion of the district centre by England & Lyle in the November 2010 Barnsley Smaller Centres Study.

3.4 The southern part of the site also includes a petrol filling station, something commonly required by operators to provide for their customers. North of the supermarket access road is the proposed public open space with equipped children's play area.

3.5 The Design & Access Statement sets out the rationale behind the layout approach across the site and how the residential and commercial components are arranged to provide an attractive comprehensive development within the overall site.

3.6 The commercial layout shows the proposed supermarket situated in the southern part of the overall site. This was chosen as the preferred location for the supermarket for a number of reasons;

- The supermarket building and service area would be located towards the existing Asda store rather than backing onto residential properties to the south and south west of the site;
- Locating the supermarket in the southern part of the site allows provision of an attractive pedestrian/cycle route along the western site boundary retaining the majority of existing trees and linking to the Community Campus to the west;
- The service yard would be well screened and not visible as it would be screened from view by existing buildings on The Lane and Midland Road and the proposed supermarket building; and

- Given the location and proximity of residential uses around the site, locating the residential component in the northern part of the site provides the most compatible site layout given its context.

3.7 The supermarket itself measures 3,066 m^2 gross (1,858 m^2 net) and would be of sufficient size to attract shoppers back to Royston for their main food shop. Whilst residents may still travel to the large superstores further afield once a month or on a less frequent basis for shopping, their more regular weekly main food shop could be undertaken in Royston.

3.8 The supermarket would provide predominantly convenience goods with a complementary non food offer increasingly expected by shoppers. However, the primary function and attraction of the supermarket would be for food shopping and the non food element would be secondary with such purchases being an adjunct to the main purpose of the visit i.e. main food shopping. The supermarket's convenience range would be of sufficient size to provide for the main food shop in the context of provision elsewhere. The modern store would do much to improve food shopping provision in Royston and encourage residents and those living in the nearby settlements to visit the centre for their main food shop and visit other shops/services as part of the same trip.

3.9 The proposal would therefore provide a modern and attractive supermarket facility in a location which would encourage shoppers to link their main food shop with other activities in Royston. The breakdown of the proposed supermarket would be as set out below:

	Floorspace (m^2)
SUPERMARKET	
Convenience goods	1,672
Comparison goods	186
Net Floorspace	**1,858**
lobby/toilets/Back up etc	1,208
Supermarket Total	**3,066**

Notes:
1. Supermarket split convenience/comparison goods 90%/10%

4.0 Planning Policy

Development Plan Policy

4.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 stipulates that if regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purposes of a determination to be made under the Planning Act, determination is to be made in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Barnsley comprises the following:-

- The Yorkshire and Humber Plan - RSS to 2026 (May 2008)
- The Barnsley Core Strategy (September 2011)
- Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (December 2000)

RSS for Yorkshire & Humber (2008)

4.2 The RSS was revoked by the Coalition Government in July 2010. Following a High Court challenge (November 2010), the RSS was reinstated and for the time being remains part of the development plan.

4.3 A central theme running through the RSS is the need to manage growth and change across places and communities in Yorkshire and Humber in order to achieve sustainable development and the spatial vision. In relation to South Yorkshire, **Policy SY1** seeks to transform town centres as vibrant, healthy, accessible, attractive and safe places where more people live, visit and work. In dealing with new retail development, **Policy E2** requires that plans, strategies, investment decisions and programmes should strengthen the role and performance of existing city and town centres.

Barnsley Core Strategy (2011)

4.4 The Core Strategy (CS) was adopted in September 2011. The key diagram and paragraph 7.4 sets out the Borough's settlement hierarchy and identifies Royston as one of six Principal Towns in the Borough. In this context we note that other principal towns include Penistone and Hoyland, both of which have been subject to recent successful supermarket proposals to enhance food shopping provision in those towns. Along with urban Barnsley, the Principal Towns are to be the focus of future development including housing, employment, shopping, leisure, education, health and cultural activities and facilities enhancing their roles as accessible and vibrant places to live.

4.5 **Policy CSP31** (Town Centres) supports maintenance and enhancement of the vitality and viability of town centres.

Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (UDP)(2000)

4.6 **Policy S1** directs new retail development to locations within the central shopping area of Barnsley town centre and other centres. **Policy S3** deals with retail proposals outside the central shopping area of existing centres and permits such developments:

a) On sites allocated for that purpose in the plan;
b) Where there is no suitable site available within a defined centre, or where there is no available allocated site, then on a site at the edge of a defined shopping centre so long as it can provide a satisfactory functional connection thereto in terms of distance and physical relationship and where it is likely that development of the site will generate joint trips to it and the adjacent centre, subject to the provisions of Policy S4 (no longer saved), or
c) Where there is no suitable site available either within any of the centres defined above or in accordance with the requirements of (a) or (b), then an out of centre site in a location accessible by a choice of means of transport.

4.7 The UDP shopping policies are 'saved'; however they are only material considerations in that they preserve the defined centres as shown on the UDP Proposals Map, including Royston. Core Strategy Policy CSP31 and the NPPF are therefore key considerations.

Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

4.8 The National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF") was published in March 2012 and replaces all previous national guidance. The introduction to the document confirms it should be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

4.9 A full review of the NPPF is contained within the accompanying Planning Statement, but with regard to retail matters, the NPPF includes reference to both the 'impact' and 'sequential tests'.

4.10 Paragraph 24 of the NPPF indicates that local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan.

4.11 Impact assessments are required for retail development outside town centres which are not in accordance with an up to date Local Plan and for developments over a threshold of 2,500 m² unless there is a locally set threshold. In this instance there is no local threshold set out in local planning policy.

4.12 Paragraph 26 of the NPPF sets out the requirements for impact assessments and states they should include an assessment of:

- The impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planning public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and

- The impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and wider area, up to five years from the time the application is made.

Relevant LPA Studies

England & Lyle (E&L) Smaller Centres Study – November 2010

4.13 The Council commissioned E&L to undertake an assessment of centres in the Borough outside of Barnsley in 2010. The Smaller Centres Study (SCS) was published in November 2010. Along with the other principal towns, the SCS assessed the current health and function of Royston district centre and was informed by the results of a 2007 household shopping survey.

4.14 In Royston the SCS found that between 2003 and 2007 the number of retail units had reduced from 34 to 26, a reduction of 8 units. Vacancies over the same period increased from 7 to 15 and service units reduced by 1. Although it is not possible to compare these figures with the SCS update in 2010 because of the way the centre was defined, it is suggested in the report that over the period 2003-2010 there is likely to have been a reduction in the number of retail and service units but an increase in vacancies.

4.15 The SCS included an 'in-centre' survey with 80% of respondents giving food shopping as their main reason for visiting the centre. Other reasons included window shopping (17%) and for work (7%). The vast majority (73%) were in the centre for no particular reason. Virtually all those in the centre started their journey from home (95%) and the majority (68%) travelled by car although a significant proportion (28%) walked.

4.16 Of those using the centre, 38% did their main food shop at Netto (now Asda) with a further 15% using Co-op whilst 19% interviewed in the centre shopped at Asda on Old Mill Lane. Not surprisingly, when asked about fashion shopping, the majority travelled to Barnsley town centre (55%) or further afield to Meadowhall (11%) and Wakefield (16%).

4.17 In terms of 'likes', 27% liked Royston because it was easily accessible from home with 15% liking it because it offered 'good shops'. 17% suggested other aspects including that 'it is quiet'. Dislikes included the poor range of restaurants/cafes (11%) with 31% disliking other aspects such as atmosphere and that there is nothing to do.

4.18 Respondents were asked what improvements they would like to see in Royston. Cleaner streets (19%) and improvements to play areas for children (15%) were most mentioned.

4.19 The SCS also looked at wider shopping patterns through assessing the results of the 2007 household telephone shopping survey. In the Royston zone (Zone 4), 45% of residents did their main food shop at Asda on Old Mill Lane whilst 15% shopped at Morrisons in Barnsley. 10% travelled north to Asda on the edge of Wakefield. Only 1.7% shopped at Netto (now Asda) in Royston and 0.6% used Co-op. This shows a very low retention of spend in

Royston for main food shopping. Whilst the 'in centre' survey suggested a higher proportion of respondents doing their main food shop in Royston, this is based on those already using the centre and ignores the vast majority of people who do not use the centre but chose to travel elsewhere.

4.20 In relation to top up shopping, the survey evidence suggests more people shop in Royston (14% of Zone 4 respondents excluding those that don't do a top up shop or don't know). The survey shows that shops in Royston largely perform a top up shopping function providing for day to day food shopping rather than a main food function. Those trips are lost to destinations elsewhere.

4.21 The evidence shows that for a Principal town, Royston lacks convenience shopping that would draw residents into the centre for their main food shop. The vast majority travel elsewhere leaving the centre currently performing a limited top up shopping function. Attracting shoppers back to Royston will help provide increased activity in the centre and encourage those people to use other shops and services in the centre on the same trip. Neither the Wells nor Midland Road provide an attractive retail offer appropriate for a 'Principal' town. The proposed development would address the shortfall in provision at an appropriate scale for the size of settlement.

4.22 The SCS health check of Royston concluded that the centre did not have a level of vitality and viability which could be regarded as of concern in terms of its role and performance as a centre. However, the SCS scored the vitality and viability of Royston as average and lacking in non food multiple retailers as well as other uses.

4.23 In looking forward at potential future need in Royston, the SCS concluded that the current retention level of spending in the centre was just 14%. However this relates to an assumption that around half of the expenditure in Zone 4 is located in the catchment area for Royston. We consider the level of expenditure in the catchment area would be greater. Notwithstanding this, even at 14% this means that 86% is going elsewhere.

4.24 The SCS predicted future requirements for Royston based on maintaining a low market share of 14% (assuming the catchment only forms part of Zone 4). With limited spending growth no real capacity for additional provision was established in SCS. However, the study recognised that in reaching this conclusion:

"No allowance is made in the capacity analysis for the possibility of a new retail development at Midland Road, Royston on the school site. If a new retail development takes place it would increase the retention level in the Royston catchment area." (page 182)

4.25 Section 13 of the SCS provided the Council with advice for each centre. In the case of Royston the E&L report concluded that Royston's centre should be 'expanded'. The report concluded that Royston is a centre which has the potential to physically expand outside of its existing boundary. The SCS includes Figure 4, which provides maps for each of the defined 'centres'

including Royston. The Royston centre plan puts forward a development opportunity area comprising land which is the proposed location for the new supermarket development forming part of this application.

5.0 Existing and Proposed Convenience Provision

5.1 This section assesses current and proposed convenience shopping provision in Royston and the wider area. It draws on the 2007 Council commissioned household telephone shopping survey (see **Plan IDP1** in **Appendix 1**).

Convenience Goods – Main Food Shopping

5.2 As highlighted in the preceding section very limited main food shopping expenditure is attracted to Royston. Existing provision largely attracts top up shopping and includes the Co-op (615 m^2 net) and the former Netto, now Asda (951 m^2 net).

5.3 The vast majority of convenience spend flows out of the area (Zone 4) to larger stores in Barnsley and Wakefield. This includes around 45% of main food spend to the out of centre Asda (3,901 m^2 net) on Old Mill Lane and 15% to the edge of town centre Morrisons (3,382 m^2 net) with a further 10% to the out of centre Asda on the south side of Wakefield and 6% to the modern out of centre Tesco Extra (7,421 sqm net) located to the east of Barnsley on Wombwell Lane. Royston does not retain main food shopping and as evidenced by the household survey is largely a top up shopping destination.

5.4 Using the household survey information, the SCS demonstrates that both the Asda and Morrisons in Barnsley are trading at very high levels of around £84m and £72m respectively. These turnover levels are significantly above their respective company averages. Appendix 3 of the SCS shows that in Zone 4 (Royston/North) some £26m is attracted to Asda on Old Mill Lane with a further £9.6m going to Morrisons on the edge of Barnsley town centre, £6m to the Asda at Wakefield and nearly £4m to Tesco on Wombwell Lane. Shops in Royston only retain around £4m of spend in Zone 4. When looked at across Zone 4 as a whole, this represents just **5.8%** retention.

Top Up Convenience Shopping

5.5 As set out in Section 4 Royston predominantly attracts top up shopping meeting more day to day food shopping needs. This reflects the scale and nature of existing convenience shopping in both centres as well as the proximity of larger superstores in the surrounding area.

Comparison Shopping

5.6 The household survey shows a similar pattern for comparison shopping. For those in Zone 4, the vast majority shop in locations such as Barnsley town centre (49%), Meadowhall (16%) and Wakefield (14%) for fashion goods. So limited is the comparison goods spend attracted to Royston that the household survey picks up very few respondents visiting the centre for that purpose. Around 1.2% of zone 4 respondents purchased DIY goods in Royston with 2.3% buying chemist goods. The evidence shows the very limited comparison shopping function of the centre.

5.7 Main comparison provision in the surrounding area is focused in Barnsley town centre and in three major retail parks outside the town centre including the Peel Centre Retail Park, Stairfoot Retail and Business Park and Cortonwood Retail Park.

Committed Shopping Provision

5.8 There are no known convenience or comparison commitments in Zone 4 of the SCS. Recent commitments in the wider area include the Tesco at Penistone, the Tesco at Hoyland and a recently granted superstore on an edge of Barnsley town centre site on New Street. The former two proposals represent supermarket investments in Principal towns that previously lacked such provision. Both stores are targeted at improving main food shopping in those towns and reducing outflow to other destinations. A full list of convenience commitments in the wider Barnsley MBC area includes the following:

- Tesco, Penistone
- Netto, Lunwood (net increase)
- Netto extension, Goldthorpe
- Supermarket, Thurnscoe
- Aldi extension, Doncaster Road
- Harborough Hill Road
- New Supermarket, Goldthorpe
- Markets Project (convenience goods)
- Peel Street, Barnsley
- Tesco, Hoyland
- Superstore, New Street, Barnsley
- Aldi, Brough Green

6.0 NPPF Considerations – Sequential Approach

6.1 Paragraph 24 of the NPPF confirms a sequential assessment will be required for applications for main town centre uses which are not in an existing centre or in accordance with an up to date development plan. The purpose of the guidance is to ensure all in centre options have been thoroughly assessed before less central sites are considered and for it to be demonstrated there are no town centre sites to accommodate a proposed development where an edge of centre proposal is coming forward. In considering sequentially preferable sites applicants and local planning authorities should demonstrate flexibility in terms of scale and format.

6.2 There is no policy requirement to demonstrate 'need' for the proposed development. Notwithstanding this, Section 5 highlights the quality, location and nature of convenience shopping in Royston and the surrounding area and concludes that existing shops in the town perform a top up shopping function. Main food shopping is carried out elsewhere, principally at the out of centre Asda on Old Mill Lane in Barnsley and also at the Morrisons in Barnsley, Asda in Wakefield and Tesco at Wombwell. There is clearly a need for a type and scale of convenience retailing in Royston which would provide for the main food shop and attract shoppers to the town on a regular basis.

6.3 In applying the sequential approach the Secretary of State and Inspectors have recognised that the nature of the need to be met can be relevant when applying the sequential approach. In this case the need is to provide a modern main food shopping facility in Royston providing competition and consumer choice to local residents.

6.4 The application site is located between the Wells and Midland Road in Royston. These shopping areas are separated by properties on Midland Road and the proposal would be located between the two parts of the centre thus helping to provide a more composite overall shopping offer in Royston. The site physically adjoins the defined Midland Road part of the centre as shown on the UDP Proposals Map. The supermarket element is located in that part of the overall site suggested as a possible development opportunity site in the E&L November 2010 Smaller Centres Study. The layout of the proposed development shows good pedestrian/cycle links between the supermarket site and Midland Road.

6.5 Annex 2 of the NPPF defines the 'Primary Shopping Area' or PSA as the area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and secondary frontages which are contiguous and closely related to the primary shopping frontage). 'Edge of centre' is defined for retail purposes as a location that is well connected to and within easy walking distance (i.e. up to 300 metres) of the primary shopping area.

6.6 The Barnsley UDP Proposals Map does not identify primary and secondary shopping frontages for Royston but a Principal Shopping/Commercial Centre. In terms of distance to the defined centre, the application site physically adjoins the centre. The walking distance from the supermarket customer

entrance to the defined centre is less than **200m**. The route is level and with an appropriate width pavement is an easy walking route with no impediments to movement. In policy terms the site is edge of centre.

6.7 When applying the sequential approach the NPPF follows the town centre first, followed by edge of centre locations and only if 'suitable' sites are not 'available' should out of centre sites be considered. When considering edge of centre or out of centre sites, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre. Paragraph 24 of the NPPF indicates that applicants and local planning authorities are to demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale. We take the latter to mean that as much as applicants should demonstrate flexibility, local authorities are also to do the same. This indicates that consideration should be given to the proposed business model when applying the sequential approach.

6.8 When considering potential sites, they are to be 'suitable' and 'available'. The NPPF gives little guidance on the application of the sequential approach other than the search sequence and the need for applicants and local planning authorities to demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale. The Practice Guidance (PG), issued with the former PPS4 has not been withdrawn and therefore insofar as it is of relevance in the context of the NPPF, it still offers some guidance on how to approach sequential issues in relation to suitability and availability. It also refers to viability.

6.9 Against this background it is appropriate to consider whether there are any more sequentially preferable sites within Royston district centre that are suitable or available for the proposed use. As the need for additional main food shopping provision is in Royston, only potential sites 'within' the district centre have been assessed.

6.10 In this case the proposal would be in an 'edge of centre' location adjoining the defined centre. Midland Road is a linear centre hemmed in by existing residential development, Royston Welfare Park and other greenspace. There are no suitable, viable and available development sites in the centre which are of sufficient size to accommodate the supermarket.

6.11 The Wells centre is focused around the Church Street/High Street/Midland Road/Station Road junction. As with the Midland Road end of the centre it is largely surrounded by existing development including predominantly housing uses, place of worship and nearby a primary school south off Midland Road. There are no development sites in this part of the centre capable of accommodating the proposed development.

6.12 Against this background, we consider the application site to provide an appropriate location for the proposed supermarket. There are no suitable, viable or available sites in the defined centre (The Wells or Midland Road) that are better located to accommodate the proposed development taking account of the need for flexibility.

6.13 In light of the above we consider the proposed development would not conflict with the sequential approach.

7.0 NPPF Considerations - Impact

7.1 Paragraph 26 of the NPPF sets out the requirements for impact assessments and states they should include an assessment of:

- The impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planning public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and
- The impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and wider area, up to five years from the time the application is made.

7.2 Accordingly the remainder of this section provides an assessment against the above criteria.

Impact on Existing, Committed and Planned Public/Private Investment

7.3 There is no known existing, committed or planned public/private investment schemes in Royston or surrounding centres which would be adversely affected by the proposed development. Far from resulting in an adverse impact, given the location of the site, we consider the proposal represents a major investment in Royston on a site well related to the existing defined centre on Midland Road. It is also well located to help reduce the separation between Midland Road and The Wells parts of the defined centre in Royston. We consider the proposal offers positive benefits rather than an adverse impact. It would draw people to Royston and reduce the outflow of shoppers to more distant destinations leading to more sustainable shopping patterns.

Impact on Town Centre Vitality and Viability

7.4 In terms of the vitality and viability of the defined centre in Royston, E&L provided a PPS4 health check assessment in the November 2010 Smaller Centres Study. This built on earlier health checks carried out by previous consultants acting for the Council. Taking account of this background work we updated the land use survey for Midland Road and The Wells and investigated other health check indicators (see **Appendix 3**). In the assessment The Wells and Midland Road are treated as one centre.

7.5 Paragraph 12 of **Appendix 3** sets out the analysis of diversity of uses in the centre with slightly more than the UK average in terms of number of convenience units and less than the average comparison units. This reflects the existing more localised role of Royston dominated in the convenience sector by more top up type shopping facilities. Vacancies in the centre stands at around 27%, above the UK average for all centres of 11.7% which may be in part a reflection of the economic recession but also in our view a reflection of the limited attraction of Royston as a place to shop. Evidence from the household shopping survey shows that those living in the area are much more likely to do their main food shop in other locations rather than staying local.

7.6 Retailer representation is deficient for a Principal Town with food shopping limited to smaller foodstores/local shops whilst the comparison goods choice is very limited with a number of specialist shops rather than typical high street retailers. Access to the centre by choice of transport mode is good with buses running mainly along Midland Road. Those living in the surrounding residential areas can also walk to the centre. Car parking in the centre is good with parking at Co-op and Asda (formerly Netto), some on street parking and further provision to the front of the pharmacy/health centre fronting Midland Road.

7.7 In centre survey evidence also supports the conclusion that the role of the centre is currently focused very much on a day to day top up shopping destination with 80% of those surveyed saying that they were in the centre on the day interviewed for food shopping. Coupled with the results of the telephone household shopping survey, the evidence demonstrates the predominant role of existing convenience facilities as meeting more day to day requirements.

7.8 In terms of the local environment, the general environmental quality of the centre is reasonable. Some parts of the centre (around Asda for example) are relatively modern and of reasonable quality. Dedicated pedestrian areas are limited with a small pedestrian area in the north west quadrant of the signalised junction in the Wells centre. Safety and security of the centre is also reasonable with main car parks being well lit and the shopping areas in the busiest parts of the town where there is passing traffic and more activity.

7.9 Overall, we consider Royston provides a reasonable range and choice of retailers for the size of town and given the nature of the centre that has evolved over time. The quality of the centre is reasonable although like many centres, has not see any recent investment apart from Asda (formerly Netto). Given the nature of the centre and despite having a high vacancy rate, we consider the centre is in reasonable health although it would benefit from future investment in facilities to increase footfall and attract more people to the town. We consider the proposed supermarket and associated uses would achieve this.

7.10 The Council commissioned consultants (E&L) to assess potential levels of future capacity in Smaller Centres in the Borough. This culminated in publication of the November 2010 Smaller Centres Study. The approach adopted by E&L used a constant market share approach as its starting point.

7.11 Although this showed no real capacity in Royston this was on the basis of maintaining the current limited market share retention into future years. The November 2010 Study acknowledged that the conclusions took no account of the potential for existing towns to increase market share retention. In relation to Royston, the consultant's report recommends the centre be expanded and identified a potential development opportunity site (part of the application site).

7.12 Our assessment of expenditure capacity below considers the ability of Royston to increase market share in terms of retained expenditure in the

town and surrounds. For the sake of ease in assessing capacity and impact issues and as agreed with officers as part of the pre-application process, we have adopted the E&L approach and methodology as set out in paragraph 3.4 of the May 2011 E&L Study. Consequently, we have adopted the following base assumptions:

- Catchment area for the proposed supermarket is focussed on the North/Royston zone (Zone 4) – the wider E&L study area includes 5 zones broadly reflecting Barnsley's administrative area. This includes:
    - Zone 1 – Barnsley Central
    - Zone 2 – Penistone/West
    - Zone 3 – Wombwell/Hoyland
    - Zone 4 – Royston/North
    - Zone 5 – Goldthorpe/Cudworth
- Shopping patterns and Expenditure Flows have been based on E&L's assessment of the original 2007 household survey;
- E&L adopted a base (2011) and design year (2016) to represent a five year study period over which to assess expenditure capacity and impact. Given the passage of time our assessment rolls their work forward by one year to provide a 2012 base year and 2017 design year. To allow comparison to their 2010 Smaller Centres Study our assessment adopts the same assumptions regarding growth of per capita spend, floorspace efficiency etc.
- Commitments – there are no known retail commitments in the North/Royston Zone. However, there are a number of commitments which would affect wider shopping patterns and consequently, where possible, these have taken into account such as Tesco at Hoyland and the recently permitted superstore on land at New Street on the edge of Barnsley town centre.

Economic Tables

7.13 **Appendix 4** includes a series of Economic Tables with a description below of what each table contains. The tables are largely derived using Appendices to the November 2010 Smaller Centres Study.

Table 1 **Population** – Adopts the approach taken by E&L when taking account of population growth and the distribution of housing allocations in the Borough;

Table 2 **Per capita spend convenience goods** – Figures are taken and where necessary extrapolated from the November 2010 Smaller Centres Study (E&L) excluding Special Forms of Trading (SFT);

Table 3 **Convenience goods expenditure** - Table 1 multiplied by Table 2;

Table 4 **Per capita spend comparison goods** – As with convenience goods above Table 4 draws on E&L's work setting out per capita spend on comparison goods (excluding SFT);

Table 5 **Comparison goods expenditure** - Table 1 multiplied by Table 4;

Table 6 **Proposed Supermarket turnover** (we address this below)

Proposed Supermarket Turnover

7.14 The proposed supermarket seeks to provide a modern supermarket offer capable of attracting main food shoppers. The anticipated internal breakdown in floorspace of the proposed store is shown on **Table 6**. Assumptions made about the net floorspace and internal split between convenience and comparison goods is based on experience elsewhere and company averages of the main national food retailers. Table 6 identifies a store of 3,066 m^2 gross (1,858 m^2 net) with 1,672 m^2 convenience goods and 186 m^2 net and comparison goods. We consider the scale of the proposed development is of sufficient size to attract main food shoppers to Royston rather than travelling further afield to stores in surrounding towns.

7.15 The anticipated turnover of the supermarket adopts an average for the main food retailers (excluding Asda present in Royston) by applying the average sales density to the convenience and comparison floorspace in the proposed supermarket.

7.16 National sales densities used take account of floorspace efficiency between the base (2012) and design years (2017) adopting assumptions used by E&L although in our view floorspace efficiency in the convenience sector falls slightly below the level used. Not all the new store's trade would be derived from the catchment area with an element of trade drawn into the catchment (i.e. inflow).

7.17 In defining the catchment area for Royston, E&L make an assumption that the catchment area would constitute around 50% of available spend in Zone 4. Whilst we do not agree that Royston's catchment would be this limited, we have adopted it for the purposes of this assessment when assessing whether there is any future expenditure capacity to support the proposed supermarket's turnover anticipated to be drawn from the catchment area. In this case we consider that around 80% of the supermarket's turnover would be derived from the E&L Royston assumed catchment.

7.18 As a result of the above assumptions the turnover of proposed store is estimated to be as follows (see Table 6, **Appendix 4**):

Convenience goods - **£20.90m** (£16.72m from catchment)
Comparison goods - **£1.55m** (£1.24m from catchment)

Expenditure Capacity

7.19 Demonstration of 'need' is not a development management test.

7.20 **Table 7** in **Appendix 4** sets out an assessment of convenience expenditure capacity in Zone 4. Given the nature and scale of commitments in the surrounding area (in Barnsley etc) it is likely that with the proposed supermarket trading in Royston, some trade will still be lost to more distant facilities. Whilst we do not necessarily agree with the catchment identified for Royston by E&L it represents an area containing 50% of expenditure in Zone 4.

7.21 Table 7 utilises data and spending flows based on shopping patterns derived by E&L from the household shopping survey. Row 1 sets out total convenience expenditure in Zone 4 at 2008, 2012 and 2017. The second row sets out the catchment assuming 50% of available spend in the zone of £34.69m in 2008 and £33.78m by 2017. The third row sets out existing turnover of stores in Royston, drawn from Zone 4. This is limited amounting to around £3.89m by 2017 representing a very low level of market share retention of 6%.

7.22 This leaves remaining capacity by 2017 to support new floorspace of around £30m (fourth row). Taking account of the anticipated turnover of the proposed supermarket, drawn from the assumed Royston catchment (i.e. 80% of its turnover), this would still leave around £13m flowing out of the area to stores in surrounding areas. This represents an uplift in retention of spend in part of Zone 4 to 61%. This demonstrates more than sufficient expenditure capacity over a five year period to accommodate the proposed development.

7.23 Given the limited anticipated turnover attributable to comparison goods in the proposed supermarket (i.e. £1.55m) our assessment of comparison capacity is set out below. Appendix 3 of the E&L Smaller Centres Study includes a table showing comparison goods expenditure flows from the wider study area zones to destinations. Given the limited comparison offer in Royston the survey has not picked up any spend going to Royston but shows that in 2008 Zone 4 provided just over £100m of comparison goods expenditure. Table 5 (**Appendix 4**) shows this increases to around £116m by 2017.

7.24 Taking account of the assumed E&L Royston catchment (50% of spend in Zone 4) this would provide for around £58m (i.e. 50% of £116m) comparison goods expenditure in Royston's catchment. Whilst clearly some expenditure is being attracted by shops in Royston, this is likely to be very limited. The Royston health check in **Appendix 3** shows 14 comparison units in the centre which are all limited in size. Our assessment of their net floorspace provides a total estimated net floorspace of all comparison units of 2,623 m^2 net. Assuming these units trade at around £3,000 per square metre, this would amount to a total comparison turnover of £7.87m at 2012. By 2017 the turnover of local shops is assumed to increase in line with assumptions on per capita spend increase during the 2012-2017 period (see Table 4 in

Appendix 4) which amount to 12.2% over the five year period. The comparison turnover of shops in Royston by the impact test year of 2017 would therefore be **£8.83m**.

7.25 Taking account of the turnover of existing floorspace at 2007 (£8.83m) and available spend in the immediate area (£58m) it is considered that the comparison turnover of the proposed supermarket of around £1.24m (assuming 80% from the Royston catchment area) could comfortably be absorbed by available spend in the area. This assumes that all existing comparison turnover in Royston would be drawn from the assumed catchment, which it would not be.

7.26 Having regard to the above, we consider there is sufficient expenditure capacity to accommodate the proposed supermarket in the E&L Royston catchment area in relation both convenience and comparison goods at 2017.

Retail Impact Analysis

7.27 **Table 8** sets out our **convenience goods** impact assessment of the proposed edge of centre supermarket in Royston. Given the relationship between the proposed supermarket and the defined centre, we have assumed for the purposes of our analysis that the proposed supermarket would form part of the centre's offer. Notwithstanding this approach, we have also considered impact if the new supermarket is not taken as part of the centre's offer.

7.28 Column 1 shows the turnover of stores/centres at 2012 whilst column 2 shows their turnover by 2017 based on the E&L assessment of turnovers derived from the 2007 household survey results. Columns 3 & 4 take account of diversions to known commitments in the wider shopping system based on the E&L assumptions whilst column 4 includes the turnover levels at 2017 after main commitments and Lidl on Peel Street. Column 6 takes account of the committed Tesco at Hoyland and the Barnsley Markets Commitment.

7.29 Column 8 takes account of trade diversion to the proposed new superstore on New Street on the edge of Barnsley town centre. The impact levels take account of the assessment being rolled forward to a 2017 design year.

7.30 Column 10 identifies the proportion of trade generated by the proposed supermarket that is diverted from stores and centres. The pattern of trade diversion which results from this exercise is shown in Column 11 and follows the principle that if you are providing a store that will act predominantly as a main food shopping destination then trade is most likely to be diverted from similar type facilities. In this case the largest single level of trade diversion is from the out of centre Asda in Barnsley, which currently attracts the greatest proportion of convenience expenditure from the Royston/North Zone.

7.31 Trade would also be diverted from other main food shopping destinations including Morrisons in Barnsley and Asda in Wakefield. Some trade would be diverted from the New Street site in Barnsley. This pattern of trade diversion

is evident from Column 11 with the majority of trade (£11.49m) diverted from Asda, with further trade from other main food destinations (i.e Morrisons, Barnsley -£2.19m).

7.32 Diversion from Asda at Old Mill Lane, Morrisons at Barnsley and the proposed new store on New Street would amount to £14.72m (70% of the new supermarket's turnover). Much less trade proportionately is diverted from shops in Royston. Whilst they will experience some diversion of trade, this will be limited to some top up spend diverting and in our view amounting to around -£0.21m trade diversion.

7.33 Column 12 sets out the turnovers of stores/centres post diversion to the proposed supermarket. Resulting turnover of shops in Royston town centre stand at £4.32m. This represents an impact of -4.6% against the design year turnover after all commitments. We consider this to represent a limited level of trade diversion from existing shops and would not give rise to concerns regarding their future viability.

7.34 In relation to other stores in the surrounding area, trade diversion from the Asda on Old Mill Lane and Morrisons in Barnsley would leave both stores still trading above their respective company averages. Both stores would continue to trade at a healthy level. However, diversion of some of their trade to the proposed supermarket in Royston would enable those living in Zone 4 to do a regular main food shop more locally. We do not consider trading impact on stores outside of Royston would lead to material planning harm.

7.35 In terms of **comparison goods** trade diversion the proposed development includes the non food turnover in the proposed supermarket (see Table 6, £1.55m). Given the nature of the development proposed and scale of floorspace/turnover of the comparison element (£1.55m), the only centre against which any impact should be tested will be Royston (The Wells and Midland Road). The E&L land use survey of the centre (updated in August 2011) identified 14 comparison units in the centre. These included the sale of the following types of goods:

- Post office/Newsagent
- Florists
- Computer shop
- Furniture stores
- Charity shop
- Pharmacy
- Pools, Spas & Hot Tubs
- Motorbikes and Quad Shop
- Karts Shop
- Royston Pet Supplies
- Tony's second hand shop
- Royston Window Company
- B-Stiched – Sewing Alterations and Repairs

7.36 What is clear from the above is that very few of the goods sold in existing shops in Royston would overlap with the proposed supermarket and commercial units. Although the supermarket would sell some newspapers/magazines (as does the post office) the Co-op already sells those goods. We consider the introduction of a small element of those goods in the supermarket would not adversely impact either of those shops or the centre as a whole.

7.37 In addition whilst the supermarket will sell some pharmacy goods (i.e. shampoo, toilet soap etc) as do all foodstores (i.e Co-op and Asda) the limited range of goods sold would not result in adverse impact on those units. The pharmacy would in any event derive the majority of its turnover from its location next to the health centre and prescriptions. The pet shop trades near the Asda (formerly Netto) which sold pet food and continues to trade in that location. Again, the supermarket may include a small amount of goods for sale including pet food but we consider that this would have a minimal impact, if any, on the pet food shop. Co-op currently sells pet food and the pet shop also trades in the centre. We consider the local offer by the existing independent pet shop, including personal service that can be provided, would mean it would continue to attract regular custom. Furthermore, attracting more people into Royston for their main food will provide an opportunity for the pet supplies shop to benefit from increased footfall and activity in the centre. A similar point applies to the two florists in the centre. As with the shops identified above, we do not consider the limited range and choice of comparison type goods that would be sold in the supermarket would have an adverse affect on individual retailers in Royston or the centre as a whole.

7.38 Other shops in the centre sell goods which would not be sold in the supermarket and consequently would only benefit from increased numbers of people shopping locally. This would be a benefit to the centre and traders within it.

7.39 Quantifying comparison goods impact is not straightforward given the limited turnover levels being assessed leaving minor changes in assumptions having a relatively larger effect on potential impact. Comparison goods trade diversion to the supermarket would come partly from the transfer of comparison trade from foodstores/superstores when the shopper diverts their main food trip, partly from impulse purchases based on limited time period in-store offers (WIGIG) and from other destinations where the household survey suggests that the types of goods sold in the new store are currently purchased. The second type of purchase identified above is very difficult to model as it is often a purchase that would not have otherwise been made.

7.40 In considering levels of trade diversion, of assistance are the results of the 2007 household survey which highlights main destinations for different types of goods. In relation to Royston, the survey picked up few respondents visiting Royston for comparison shopping. No respondents in the survey indicated that they shopped in Royston for: fashion goods (clothing etc); furniture; household textiles; large and small household electrical items; TV's, computers, Hi Fi's etc; and books/jewellery type goods. The only respondents shopping in Royston included chemist goods (0.5% in the

survey overall and 2.3% of Zone 4 respondents) and the purchase of hardware/DIY/decorating goods (0.2% overall, 1.2% of Zone 4 respondents).

7.41 In terms of other goods the principal destinations include Barnsley town centre, Meadowhall, Wakefield and Cortonwood Retail Park. Given the limited scale of development proposed we consider there would clearly be no adverse impact on Barnsley town centre, even if all the proposed turnover were diverted from that centre. A similar case would apply to Wakefield. Other destinations identified are out of centre.

7.42 In terms of impact on shops in Royston, we consider the proposed supermarket would have an overall benefit by increasing activity and therefore footfall in the centre. Any trade diverted would be minimal and assuming this would amount to just 2% of the likely comparison turnover of the proposed development (i.e. the comparison goods in the supermarket of £1.55m), this would equate to a diversion of just £0.031m (i.e. 2% of £1.55m).

7.43 The estimated 2017 comparison turnover of shops in Royston would be £8.83m resulting in an impact of just -0.4%. This is a very limited level of trading impact and would not lead to material planning harm. Indeed, we consider the attraction of more shoppers to Royston would provide substantial opportunity for existing traders to benefit from increased footfall and activity in the centre.

7.44 Taken together the overall impact on the design year 'centre' turnover (2017) in Royston (after all commitments have been taken into account) would amount to -1.8% (Centre turnover - convenience £4.53m + comparison £8.83m = £13.36m) (diversion to proposed development - £0.21m convenience, £0.031m comparison = £0.24m total diversion)(£0.24m/£13.36m x 100 = 1.8%).

7.45 We consider the above anticipated levels of trade diversion and impact would not give rise to concerns regarding the future trading viability of shops in Royston and would not lead to material planning harm. In our view the proposed supermarket provides an opportunity to enhance the vitality and viability of the centre by attracting more people to Royston and enabling them to link that trip to visits to other shops and services in the centres around The Wells and Midland Road.

7.46 Having regard to our analysis above, in our view, the proposed development would not be likely to result in significant adverse impact on Royston centre(s). In reaching this conclusion, **cumulative impact** considerations have been taken into account in the convenience goods retail impact tables. However, commitments that have come forward over the past few years have not been located such that a supermarket in Royston would give rise to cumulative impact concerns.

7.47 Overall, we consider the proposed development has a number of positive benefits which would be provided. Having regard to our health check of The Wells and Midland Road centres in Royston, we do not consider the proposed development would give rise to significant adverse impact.

8.0 Conclusions

8.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 stipulates that if regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purposes of a determination to be made under the Act, determination is to be made in accordance with the Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Development Plan for Barnsley comprises the following:-

- The Yorkshire and Humber Plan – RSS (May 2008)
- The Barnsley Core Strategy (September 2011)
- Barnsley UDP (December 2000) (Saved Policies)

Development Plan Strategy – Town Centres and Retail Developments

8.2 The Core Strategy identifies Royston as a 'Principal Town'. RSS Policy E2 requires that plans, strategies and investment decisions should strengthen the role and performance of existing city and town centres. Given the nature and scale of the proposed development, we consider it would support objectives in the RSS and be fully in accordance with the identification of Royston as a 'Principal Town' in the recently adopted Core Strategy. Having regard to our assessment and findings we consider the proposal would not materially conflict with Core Strategy CSP31 or UDP Policy S3 or Policy S1.

8.3 Located on the edge of the centre, we consider the proposal would support rather than detract from the centre's overall offer and would be in line with the development plan's retail strategy.

Material Considerations

8.4 NPPF incorporates national policy guidance dealing with a variety of matters including retail issues. Sections 6 and 7 address sequential and retail impact considerations. Our assessment concludes no significant adverse impact on Royston centre and also identifies no sequentially preferable sites that are suitable, viable or available for the proposed supermarket. The proposal is also located on a potential development site identified in the emerging LDF evidence base for the site allocations DPD.

8.5 Given conclusions reached in Sections 6 and 7 we consider there to be no material conflict with the provisions of the NPPF. In our view the proposal will provide benefits to the local economy and will substantially improve main food shopping provision in Royston.

Conclusion

8.6 In relation to retail policy issues we find no material conflict with the Section 38(6) development plan for the area or other relevant material considerations.