
January 2015

Planning Statement

**Aldham Bridge Services Site,
Wombwell Lane
Wombwell**

**Proposed Development
Construction of New Retail Unit
And
Refurbishment of Existing
Retail Units
(Use Class A1)**

On behalf of

Riseholm Investment Limited

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Planning Permission B/03/0803/WW – Erection of two industrial units, extension of existing retail unit into adjacent industrial unit and extension to retail unit.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Riseholm Investment Ltd in support of an application seeking planning permission for a phased development on land at Barnsley Road in Wombwell comprising construction of a new retail unit, removal of existing former petrol filling station canopy, access and associated car parking as part of phase 1 and refurbishment of existing buildings which benefit from established retail use (Use Class A1) forming phase 2.
- 1.2 The proposal includes provision of an additional 743 m² gross retail unit towards the Barnsley Road site frontage, along with associated car parking for the unit and to serve the existing units, landscaping, access and removal of the former petrol filling station canopy as phase 1 of the development. The retail unit is to be operated by Farmfoods.
- 1.3 Phase 2 will comprise the refurbishment of the existing retail units towards the rear of the site, which provide around 1,115 m² gross retail floorspace, which reflects the quantum of retail established by a lawful development certificate in February 2011.
- 1.4 This report addresses planning policy considerations whilst a separate report entitled NPPF Sequential Assessment specifically addresses retail policy considerations. The application is supported by a number of other reports and plans as set out in the cover letter with the application.
- 1.5 Against this background the report proceeds as follows:
 - Section 2.0 briefly describes the application site and relevant planning history;
 - Section 3.0 provides an overview of the redevelopment proposals;
 - Section 4.0 summarises relevant planning policy;
 - Section 5.0 deals with general planning policy considerations including in particular Green Belt policies; and
 - Section 6.0 sets out our conclusions.

2.0 Site Description & Planning History

Site Description

- 2.1 The site lies on Barnsley Road in the northern part of Wombwell. Existing development on Barnsley Road to the north west includes residential uses whilst to the south east are more employment related uses with further residential areas as you enter the main urban area of Wombwell.
- 2.2 The site is bound to the north west by Old Farm Lane. To the north east the site boundary is marked by a line of existing trees beyond which is an embankment, on top of which is the line of the former railway line. The latter now forms part of a multi-user recreational route. The old railway line crosses over Old Farm Lane. To the south east of the site is a further treed area comprising a number of trees, some of which are subject to a TPO. Opposite the site is an ATS Euromaster tyre change depot.
- 2.3 Although the site is located in Green Belt it is close to existing development including both residential and employment uses. However, as described below, the general visual quality of the local environment is poor.
- 2.4 Bus stops are located proximate to the site serving both east and west directions. The site is therefore accessible by a choice of transport mode.
- 2.5 The site itself is unattractive in appearance and currently comprises a line of dated units towards the rear of the site with a former petrol filling station canopy extending forward to Barnsley Road from the western unit. The unit in the north western part of the site was occupied by Wombwell Pet and Aquatics and is now vacant.
- 2.6 The middle unit is occupied by a bedroom furniture retailer (Bedworld). At the eastern end is a further vacant unit with front shutter doors closed when visited.
- 2.7 On the south eastern part of the site is a hand car wash. The south east corner of the site also has a number of trees with an existing hard surfaced road passing through the trees in a loop. Some of these trees are the subject of a Tree Preservation Order (TPO).
- 2.8 The site is run down in appearance and includes a relatively large area of vacant floorspace, along with one occupied retail unit. The existing development does not offer modern good quality retail accommodation. In particular the western vacant unit is not attractive and is run down in appearance.
- 2.9 The former PFS canopy is old, tired and in need of removal. The site does not provide an attractive and welcoming development site in Green Belt on the main Barnsley Road linking Wombwell in the east to the Barnsley area to the west.
- 2.10 The site would benefit from regeneration. Overall, the quality of the physical environment is low and visually of poor quality.

Planning History

- 2.11 The planning history of the site on the Council's public access system includes a number of planning applications.
- 2.12 On 30th May 1985 planning permission (B/85/0914/WW) was granted for change of use of vehicle repair garage to petrol filling station. This was followed on 28th July 1988 with the grant of permission (B/88/0499/WW) for the erection of a car wash on the site. A further application (B/87/1261/WW) for the erection of a petrol filling station and car wash was granted on 16th June 1988.
- 2.13 On 16th March 1989 planning permission (89/0023/WW) was refused for the erection of a restaurant, car park and service access on the application site. The reasons for refusal related to the location of the site with designated Green Belt in the context of relevant planning policy at that time, potential prejudice to the construction of a proposed highway improvement scheme and the loss of a considerable number of mature trees which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order.
- 2.14 Planning permission (B/02/0301/WW) was also refused on 7th May 2002 for the erection of a retail unit with associated car parking (outline) on the site. The reasons for refusal related again to Green Belt issues with reference to what was then relevant guidance in PPG2 and Council Policy CS8. The proposal was also considered contrary to retail policies S1 and S3 of the adopted Barnsley UDP on the grounds of potential detriment to the vitality and viability on nearby established commercial centres such as Wombwell town centre.
- 2.15 More recently planning permission (B/03/0803/WW) was granted on 6th April 2004 for the erection of two industrial units, extension to an existing retail unit into an adjacent industrial unit and extension to retail unit. A copy of the planning permission and layout plan is included in **Appendix 1**.
- 2.16 The layout plan shows the existing retail units to the rear of the site, with a 79 m² extension to an existing unit to provide a 279 m² gross retail unit. The additional two industrial units adjoin the eastern end of the terrace extending south towards the area of the site with a number of TPO'd trees.
- 2.17 A key relevant aspect of the planning history in the context of this application was the grant of a Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing Use (CLEUD) (2010/1457) in February 2011 for the two units at the rear of the site with Class A1 retail use being the established lawful use of the premises.
- 2.18 The LDC states that sufficient evidence had been provided to demonstrate that the A1 Retail Use of the two units and associated parking had occurred continuously for a period of more than 10 years.
- 2.19 On this basis and having regard to those units identified in the LDC as benefitting from a lawful retail use (Class A1), the site is currently occupied by 1,115 m² gross of retail floorspace. This element is proposed to be refurbished as part of phase 2 for the site.

2.20 However, as set out in this report, there are clear advantages to redeveloping the site and improving the visual and environmental quality of this trading location.

3.0 Proposed Development

- 3.1 The proposed development would entail two phases. Phase 1 comprises construction of the proposed Farmfoods 743 m² gross unit (Class A1) towards the Barnsley Road site frontage, removal of the petrol filling station canopy, construction of car park with appropriate site levels to comply with flood mitigation and landscaping.
- 3.2 Phase 2 comprises refurbishment of the existing parade of retail units measuring around 1,115 m² gross floorspace. The proposed site layout (Plan: 3R11-0-100/Rev E) plan shows the location of the Farmfoods unit and existing retail units towards the rear of the site with servicing.
- 3.3 Farmfoods, a frozen food specialist. The nearest Farmfoods representation is currently around 4.5 miles to the east in Mexborough or just over 5 miles to the south at Parkgate in Rotherham. There are no local stores in Barnsley/Wombwell.
- 3.4 Farmfoods is a frozen food retailer with an even more value focused positioning than its main competitor, Iceland. Following a period of decline around 2007/2008, when sales fell by around 8% (in 2007), like many quality value retailers the recession has provided a boost to sales enabling the company to invest in new stores.
- 3.5 The proposed investment in new economic development on the application site seeks to provide a suitable unit for Farmfoods and one of sufficient size to enable it to retail its range of frozen goods for those requiring a more value orientated offer.
- 3.6 The site layout plan (Plan: 3R11-0-100/Rev E) shows the main customer car park in the southern part of the site fronting Barnsley Road. Servicing would be to the rear of the existing units forming phase 2 and on the northern side of the proposed Farmfoods building, away from the site frontage to Barnsley Road.
- 3.7 Access to the site would utilise the existing eastern vehicular access with the other existing access closed off.
- 3.8 Overall, the proposed development would remove the existing unsightly petrol filling station canopy and construct a new modern well designed retail unit for Farmfoods. The Farmfoods building would face Barnsley Road and appropriate elevational treatment provided. The existing buildings towards the rear of the site would be refurbished as part of a second phase of development.
- 3.9 The proposal provides an opportunity to improve a run down and unattractive site in need of regeneration. The current quality of the built environment with the hand car wash is poor and the proposed provision of the modern Farmfoods retail unit, with refurbishment of the existing dated retail units in due course. Overall, the proposals will provide an important visual benefit on the main connecting road between the Barnsley area to the west and Wombwell to the east.

4.0 Planning Policy

The Development Plan

- 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 Barnsley Core Strategy (September 2011)
 - Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (December 2000)
- 4.2 Emerging development plan policy will be provided by a new Local Plan which will incorporate changes to the Core Strategy and proposed policies and allocations. The Barnsley Local Plan Consultation Draft was recently published for comment. However, given its early stage in preparation no weight can be attached to emerging policy at this stage.
- 4.3 *Notwithstanding the above ID Planning have made representations on behalf of Riseholme Investment Ltd seeking removal of the previously developed site from Green Belt and removal of an apparent greenspace designation along the eastern site boundary to the River Dove.*
- 4.4 In dealing with retail policy considerations a key material consideration is the **National Planning Policy Framework ("NPPF")**, which was published in March 2012 and replaces virtually all previous national guidance.

Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (2000)

- 4.5 Barnsley UDP was adopted in 2000 with some policies subsequently saved in 2007. Whilst the adopted Core Strategy replaced a number of UDP policies the local plan allocations remain in place until the new Local Plan has been adopted.
- 4.6 The application site is shown to fall within Green Belt on the adopted Local Plan Proposals Map to which **Policy WW7** applies.
- 4.7 Policy WW7 states that in accordance with **Policy GS6** the Green Belt boundaries are detailed on the proposals map. **Policy GS6** highlights the extent of the Green Belt but reverts to policies GS8 and GS9 for development control purposes. The latter two policies are now superseded by the Core Strategy. The detailed boundaries of the Green Belt are shown on the Proposals Map. The application site is located within the Green Belt.
- 4.8 Along the rear of the site the former railway line is shown on the proposals map as Multi-User Recreational Routeway and identified as such by **Policy WW14**. UDP **Policy GS26** deals with recreations routeways and networks but is superseded by Core Strategy **Policy CSP33**.