

APPENDIX 1

Initial Assessment prepared by Alyn Nicholls & Associates, October 2008

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AT
HANGMANSTONE DEPOT,
SHEFFIELD ROAD, BIRDWELL, BARNSELY**

BY HARTWOOD ESTATES

**INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF THE SCOPE
FOR RETAIL DEVELOPMENT**

OCTOBER 2008

ALYN NICHOLLS
 **& ASSOCIATES** 
 **CHARTERED TOWN PLANNERS** 

140 Denby Lane Upper Denby
Huddersfield HD8 8UN

Tel 01484 860000
Fax 01484 860011

akn@alynnicholls.com
www.alynnicholls.com

Introduction

1. This note sets out our initial views on the scale of retail provision that could be justified within a development at Hangmanstone Depot, Sheffield Road, Birdwell.
2. In undertaking this initial assessment we have defined a study area which is based upon a potential walk-in catchment. This area is shown on the plan attached at Appendix 1. It is based upon a 2 kilometre radius from the site. The study area has been defined so as to exclude residential areas which are more conveniently located for the local centre at Hoyland Common and Hoyland Town Centre. Consequently, within the 2 kilometre radius of the site the study area comprises the residential areas of Birdwell located along Sheffield Road to the north of the site and the rural settlements of Pilley and Tankersley located to the west of the M1 motorway (which can be accessed by a footbridge).
3. Expenditure and demographic data has been purchased from Experian Business Strategies for the defined study area. This provides estimates of local expenditure based upon the socio-economic characteristics of people living within the area.
4. In undertaking the initial assessment of capacity we have had regard to the Council's Retail Study published in April 2008 (the DTZ Retail Analysis and Healthcheck of Barnsley Town Centre 2008). This Retail Study incorporates a household survey of shopping habits and a retail capacity assessment relating specifically to the town centre. In addition, Donaldsons produced a study of smaller centres within Barnsley for Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council in 2003.

General Context for the Assessment

5. Birdwell is a distinct settlement located to the south of the main built up area of the Barnsley. In general terms, the settlement is linear in form along the A61 Sheffield Road with an area of 1950's estate semi-detached housing to the north located along Worsborough Road. To the south of Birdwell is Junction 36 of the M1 motorway.
6. To the east of Birdwell is Hoyland Town Centre. This town centre is about a mile due east of Hangmanstone Depot. There is a local centre at Hoyland Common at the junction of Sheffield Road (the A6135) and Hawshaw Lane (the B6096). Whilst this local centre is a relatively short distance from Hangmanstone Depot it is separated by the relatively new Dearne Valley Link Road (the A6195). The route does not encourage pedestrian access. This is a factor which has been taken into account when defining the study area adopted for the purposes of the initial retail analysis.
7. There is no shopping centre to serve the residents of Birdwell. Existing shopping provision is sporadic and distributed throughout the settlement. The largest and most significant shop selling convenience goods is the Co-op Late Shop located on Spring Green Avenue which is located in the northern part of the settlement. More centrally

within the settlement, Birdwell News is a newsagent which sells a very limited range of convenience items. Moving further south, there is an off licence/sandwich shop located on Sheffield Road although it appears that this has limited opening hours and the trade appears to focus on take away food.

8. To the west of the motorway Tankersley Post Office located at Pilley Green provides a limited range of convenience items. All of the existing convenience shops are limited in size, the Co-op at Spring Green Avenue being the largest with a net area of around 200 square metres (2,150 square feet). Consequently, the range of goods available within the area is very limited and for all practical purposes is confined to immediate day to day requirements.
9. In terms of other shops and services, there is a post office located on the eastern side of Sheffield Road within Birdwell. The pharmacy is also located on Sheffield Road. There are three hairdressers, a dry cleaners and hot food take away, window showroom and a showroom selling fireplaces scattered throughout the settlement.

Overview of Policy for Retail Development

10. In very broad terms national planning policy for retail development aims to support the role and function of existing centres and only to allow development in out of centre locations in circumstances where a need for the development can be demonstrated; where the development is of an appropriate scale; where there are no sites available for development within or adjoining existing centres; where the likely economic effects of development are acceptable in terms of their impact on existing centres; and where development is accessible by a choice of means of transport. Whilst national policy does not presume against ad hoc planning applications for the establishment of new shopping centres, national policy clearly expects proposals for new centres to be defined by Local Planning Authorities when preparing Development Plan Documents.
11. There are presently proposals to revise national policy for retail development. Proposed Changes to national policy have recently been the subject of public consultation. In broad terms, the proposals are to remove the requirement to demonstrate a need for retail development, to place greater emphasis on promoting choice and competition and to reaffirm and reinforce the "town centres-first" approach of national policy.
12. The Barnsley Unitary Development Plan contains policies for controlling shopping development. Policy S3 relates to development outside defined centres. It indicates that development will only be permitted on sites allocated for that purpose or where there is no suitable site available within or adjacent to an existing centre. Policy S4 requires out of centre development to be acceptable in terms of the likely economic impact on existing centres, that it is readily accessible to residential areas for pedestrians and cyclists, and that the development is acceptable in terms of highways impact.

13. However, Policy S6 is also relevant as this relates to local shops. It states that local shopping facilities serving day to day needs of an immediate locality will be permitted subject to scale, traffic and environmental considerations.

The Quantitative Assessment of the Capacity for Retail Development at Birdwell

14. The tables attached at Appendix 2 set out our quantitative assessment of the capacity for retail development at the Hangmanstone Depot site.
15. The scope for additional convenience goods (food and groceries) shopping is more critical than non-food retailing. Per capita expenditure on convenience goods is lower than for comparison (non-food) goods. Furthermore, the rate of growth in expenditure on convenience goods is significantly lower than for comparison goods. In addition, the issues arising from proposals for Hangmanstone Depot in terms of retail provision are focussed on the prospects of securing a development to meet the needs of the local area. Local needs will be principally for convenience shopping. Consequently our analysis focuses on the scope for convenience shopping on the site.
16. Table 1 sets out estimates of population and available expenditure. Population is derived from the Experian Retail Planner Report for the defined study area. At 2008, population within the area is about 4,500. In estimating population levels at 2013 and 2015, the Experian projections show a marginal fall in population within the area. However, the DTZ Retail Study published in April 2008 indicates there will be an increase in population within the Barnsley area in the immediate future. Consequently, we have adopted the rates of population growth employed within the Council's Retail Study. These indicate a growth of about 100 to 4,600 at 2013 with growth continuing to 2015.
17. With regard to per capita expenditure for convenience goods and comparison goods, base data has been derived from the Experian Retail Planner Report for the study area. With regard to convenience goods, at 2008, per capita expenditure is about £1,512 (at 2004 prices).
18. It should be noted there is a significant difference between the figure for per capita expenditure derived from Experian that we have used within our initial assessment and the estimate of per capita expenditure within the DTZ Retail Study. The equivalent figure for per capita expenditure on convenience goods within the DTZ Retail Study is about £1,300. Consequently, the DTZ Retail Study will invariably produce lower estimates of retail capacity. An explanation for the difference is that the DTZ, MapInfo derived figure is for the whole of the area covered by the Retail Study (the whole of Barnsley and the wider area) whereas the figures we have adopted are specific to the Birdwell area.
19. In terms of growth rates in per capita expenditure, we have utilised the same figures at the DTZ Retail Study which are 0.9% per annum growth in per capita expenditure on convenience goods and 3.8% per annum growth in per capita expenditure for comparison goods. Our estimates of per capita expenditure also make allowance for growth in

non-store retail spending (special forms of trading), the main cause of which is the increase in internet shopping.

20. In terms of total available expenditure, Table 1 shows that for convenience goods, total expenditure arising within the study area is about £6.8 million at 2008 increasing to about £7.2 million at 2013. For comparison goods, total available expenditure is a little over £12 million at 2008 increasing to about £14.5 million at 2013.
21. Table 2 sets out estimate of convenience expenditure in existing shops in the study area. It must be emphasised that this table employs broad assumptions regarding the estimate of the net floor area within each of the shops and the appropriate sales density to apply to the floor area. However, we estimate that total turnover in shops within the study area on convenience goods is about £0.65 million. Assuming that 10% of turnover is derived from households living outside of the study area, convenience expenditure in local shops arising from within the study area is likely to be about £0.58 million.
22. Table 3 sets out the scope for additional convenience shopping at 2013. The table first shows that available convenience expenditure arising within the study area at 2013 is about £7.2 million. This is derived from Table 1. The convenience expenditure in local shops arising from within the study area is about £0.58 million. This is derived from Table 2. Consequently, the percentage of convenience expenditure currently spent within the study area is about 8.1%.
23. If the proposed development is to be confined to meeting local needs, the extent to which expenditure is available for top-up shopping trips is a key consideration. Within Table 3 we have assumed that 20% of available expenditure on convenience goods is an appropriate percentage to establish the amount of money available on top-up trips to spend within the study area (the Barnsley Retail Study assumes that 25% of expenditure would be on top-up trips, but not all top-up expenditure arising in the area would be spent in shops in the area). Applying this to the total convenience expenditure arising within the study area produces £1.45 million being spent on top-up trips.
24. In addition to top-up trips, if appropriate shopping provision was provided within the area there is a prospect that it would also attract some main food shopping trips. Assuming that 75% of expenditure is spent on main food trips, the total arising on main trips within the study area is about £5.78 million. On the basis that 10% of this might be attracted to a store located within the study area, the total amount of expenditure available arising from main trips is about £0.58 million. Consequently, the total potential spend in the study area taking account of top-up trips and main food trips is about £2 million.
25. In calculating the capacity for additional retail development, account needs to be taken of existing shops within the study area. On the basis that convenience expenditure at existing local shops arising from within the study area is about £0.58 million (see Table 2), the capacity arising from within the study area is about £1.44 million.

26. Any new development within the study area is likely to attract a small percentage of turnover from outside the study area. We have assumed that this might be 20% which amounts to about £0.29 million.
27. Taking account of the total potential capacity arising from households within the study area and expenditure that might be attracted from outside the study area, the total potential convenience spend in shops is about £1.73 million.
28. Applying a turnover to floorspace ratio of £4,500 per square metre, which is typical of a convenience store, the potential capacity in terms of net floorspace is 384 square metres (4,130 square feet). Assuming a net to gross ratio of 70% this relates to a gross floor area of 549 square metres (5,900 square feet).
29. Turning to comparison goods, the assessment of capacity is less critical because total expenditure arising within the area is significantly higher compared to convenience goods and levels of growth are also significantly higher. The issue in respect of comparison goods is whether the proposal would meet a specific local need as opposed to providing an attraction to the wider area.
30. In terms of other non-retail uses, there should not be a specific reason why other service uses could not be accommodated on the Hangmanstone Depot site so long as the uses can be legitimately justified as meeting a local need arising within the Birdwell area.

Advice from Barnsley MBC Policy Team, 10 July 2008

31. We have seen the email from Robert Ellis of the Policy Team within Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council regarding the development of the site for retail use. This email makes three points:
 - That any retail unit on the site will need to be small in scale and be designed to meet the local needs of Birdwell that are not already met by existing local shops. It states that this need must be demonstrated as part of any subsequent application.
 - The size of the unit must be in keeping with other local shops in Birdwell.
 - The retail element of any proposal on the site must be designed in such a way as not to encourage additional car trips.
32. In response to these points, first there is a requirement arising from policy to ensure that retail development is appropriate in scale. However, there is no justification for a requirement that the size of units within a proposed development must be of a similar size to other local shops in Birdwell. Furthermore, there is no requirement arising from policy to state that the uses must be designed to meet local needs that not already met by existing local shops. Because there is no established centre at Birdwell, development at

Hangmanstone Depot could provide replacement accommodation for existing businesses in the area. Indeed the proposed development could assist in meeting one of the objectives of PPS6 of securing an efficient, competitive and innovative retail sector if it was to provide new accommodation for existing businesses.

33. Overall, the policy advice from the Council does not reflect either national or local planning policies for retail development.

The Significance of Confining the Proposals to a Local Need

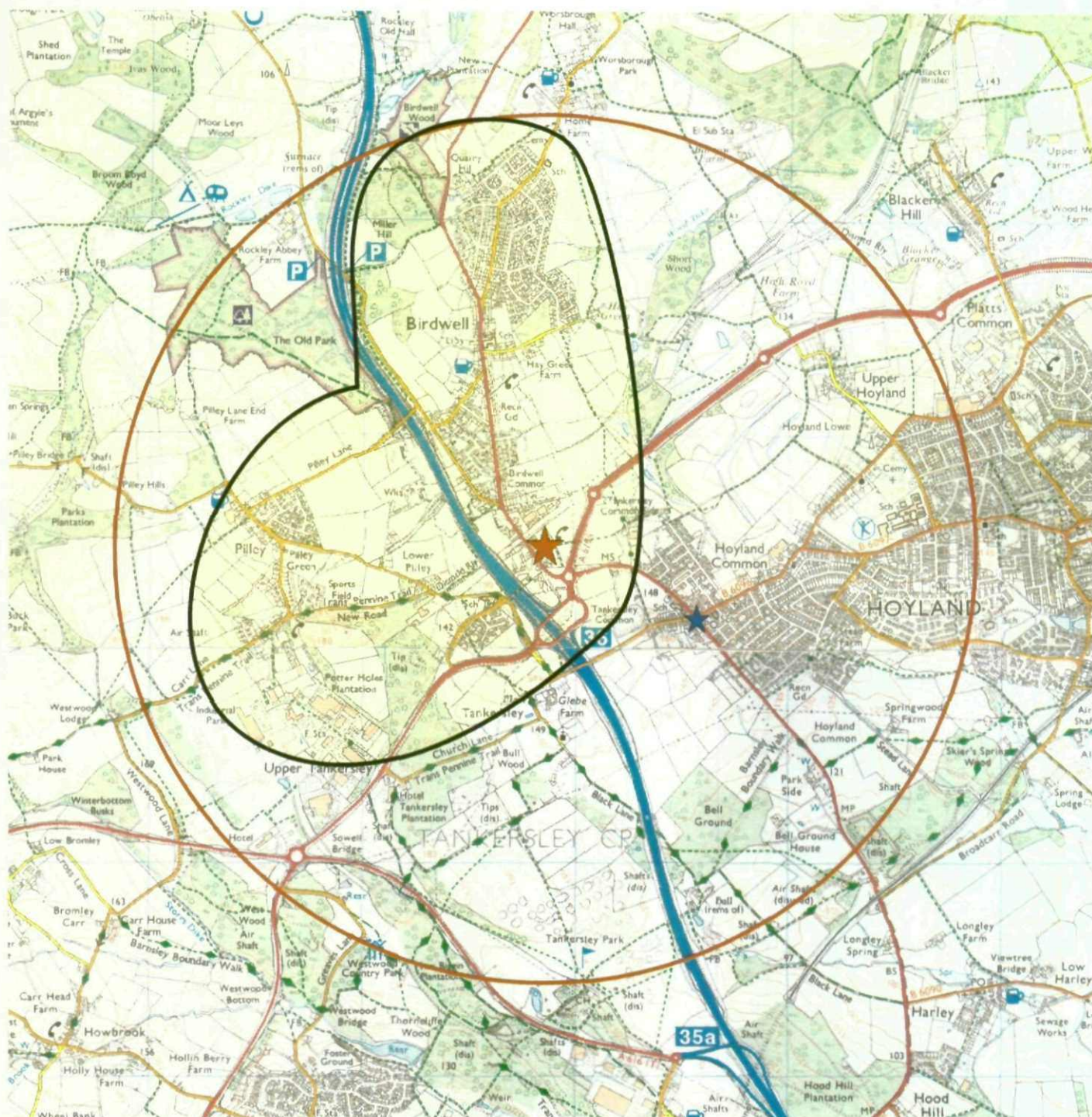
34. Having regard to national and local planning policies, if a proposal for retail development on this site is to be successful it will need to be demonstrated that the proposal caters for a local need only and that any attraction of the development to the wider area is limited. Policy S6 of the Adopted Unitary Development Plan allows the development of shops to meet a local need and allows schemes to avoid the potentially more onerous test contained within national policy and Policy S3 and Policy S4 of the Adopted Unitary Development Plan. If proposals were to serve a wider area it immediately raises the issue of the sequential approach to site selection and in particular where there are sequentially preferable sites available to accommodate the proposals within or adjoining existing centres. Bearing in mind the scale of development which is being proposed is relatively small, the strong likelihood is that the Council would be able to point to potential development sites to meet part or all of the components of a development on the site within or adjacent to centres nearby. Hence it is particularly important in this instance that it is demonstrated the proposals in terms of scale and the nature of end users is geared towards meeting a local need in Birdwell.

Conclusions

35. Having regard to the assessment of capacity we have undertaken, in our view a scheme involving a convenience store of up to 550 square metres (5,900 square feet) gross may have a reasonable prospect of success providing controls (by way of planning condition) are offered to indicate there will be no sale of convenience goods within any unit shops within the scheme.
36. In terms of any unit shops within the scheme, the key test is whether the proposed uses can be justified in terms of providing a local service. The number and size of units should be influenced by potential end users. However, without specific details we would suggest that a scheme might provide 4 units, with the amount of floorspace geared to end user requirements. However, as a general guide we suggest these units should be no more than 93 square metres gross (1,000 square feet) but if there are specific operators who require more space and the use can be justified as meeting a local need, larger units might be incorporated.

APPENDIX 1

Plan showing the Study Area



HARTWOOD ESTATES

HANGMANSTONE DEPOT, SHEFFIELD ROAD, BIRDWELL, BARNSELY INITIAL RETAIL CAPACITY ASSESSMENT

STUDY AREA

The Study Area is highlighted in yellow. The red circle shows a 2Km radius from the site (2Km is the maximum distance people are likely to walk to visit shops and services).

Not to scale

APPENDIX 2

Tables

TABLE 1: Population and available expenditure

	2008	2013	2015
Population	4,515	4,606	4,643
Convenience Goods			
Per capita expenditure	£1,512	£1,570	£1,596
Total expenditure (£m)	£6.83	£7.23	£7.41
Comparison Goods			
Per capita expenditure	£2,683	£3,159	£3,392
Total expenditure (£m)	£12.11	£14.55	£15.75

Notes

Population and expenditure estimates are derived from Experian Business Strategies Retail Planner Report for the Study Area (August 2008). Population growth is assumed to be 0.4% per annum (this is the rate of growth employed in the 2008 DTZ Retail Study).

Average growth in available expenditure over the Study Period is assumed to be 0.9% per annum for convenience goods and 3.8% per annum for comparison goods. These assumptions about average annual growth over the study period have regard to forecasts within Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 5.1 (November 2007) and MapInfo Information Brief 02/07 (September 2007). The Barnsley Retail Study adopts the same assumptions regarding growth in per capita expenditure.

Expenditure estimates take account of non-store retail activity ('special forms of trading'). For convenience goods it is assumed to be 2.8% of per capita expenditure at 2008 increasing to 3.5% at 2013 and 3.65% 2015. For comparison goods it is assumed to be 12.1% at 2008 increasing to 14.1% at 2013 and 14.4% at 2015. These assumptions have regard to the assessment of non-store retail activity set out in Experian Retail Planner Report 5.1 (November 2007).

TABLE 2: Existing convenience shopping provision in the study area

	Net floorarea	Sales density	Turnover (£m)
Convenience shops:			
Co-operative, Spring Green Avenue	107	£4,000	£0.43
Birdwell News, Sheffield Road	50	£2,500	£0.13
Off-licence/sandwich shop, Sheffield Road	30	£1,500	£0.05
Tankersley Post Office	25	£2,000	£0.05
Total			£0.65
Percentage of convenience expenditure from outside study area			10.0%
Value of convenience expenditure from outside the area			£0.06
Convenience expenditure in local shops arising from within the study area			£0.58
Notes			
Net floorears are estimates based on site visits. The sales density estimates reflect typical turnover to floorspace ratios having regard to the scale and character of the existing shops.			

TABLE 3: Scope for additional convenience shopping 2013

Existing spending on convenience goods:

Available convenience expenditure arising within the study area 2013 (£m) (see table 1)	£7.23
Convenience expenditure in local shops arising from within the study area (£m)(see Table 2)	£0.58
Percentage currently spent within the study area	8.1%

Potential spend on top-up trips:

Potential top-up shopping spend in the study area as a percentage of total convenience expenditure	20.0%
Potential spend in the study area top-up shopping (£m)	£1.45

Potential spend on main trips:

Expenditure on main shopping trips arising in the study area (£m)	£5.78
Potential main trip expenditure within Study Area	10.0%
Potential spend in the study area main shopping trips (£m)	£0.58

Total potential spend in the study area (£m) £2.02

Total potential capacity arising within the study area (£m) (potential spend less expenditure in existing shops)	£1.44
Percentage of expenditure from outside the Study Area	20.0%
Expenditure from outside the Study Area (£m)	£0.29
Total potential convenience spend in shops in the Study Area (£m)	£1.73
Turnover to floorspace ratio (£ per sqm)	£4,500
Potential capacity convenience goods - net floorspace (sqm)	384
net to gross ratio	70.0%
Potential capacity convenience goods - gross floorspace (sqm)	549

Notes:

The Barnsley Retail Study assumes an average of 25% of expenditure on convenience goods is on top-up shopping trips.

APPENDIX 2

Response to the Development Control consultation from the Council's Planning Policy

Group in respect of the previous application submitted in March 2008

**BMBC Planning & Transportation Service
Planning Policy Group
RESPONSE TO DEVELOPMENT CONTROL CONSULTATION**

To: Development Control
Name: Alex Cotton

From: Policy
Name: Dennis Patton

Proposal: Mixed use development

Planning application no: 2008/0561

Site: Hangmanstone Depot Sheffield Road Birdwell

Regional Spatial Strategy

Key Policies:

Unitary Development Plan

Designations:

Employment Policy Area

Key policies:

S1, S2 and S3

ED2 Uses on Employment Sites

HN4

ED7 and ED12

Relevant Supplementary Planning guidance or Planning Brief?

SPG7 - only relevant if "hot food take away" is acceptable in principle

SPG23 - Uses on Employment land

SPG24 -

SPG27 - now out of date, superseded by PPS6

Comments

This site fronts onto Sheffield Road, and is adjacent to the proposed Rockingham Employment Site. It is based on the former NCB workshops site.

Birdwell was categorised as a "large village" in the 2005 Core Strategy Preferred Options document and PAN 30 document. Birdwell is also regarded as not having a significant role as a retail or leisure centre. This categorisation is likely to remain for the foreseeable future. This approach is in line with current RSS policy.

UDP Policy

S1, S2 and S3 relate to location of retail uses

Policy ED2 applies to this proposed development. The preferred uses for this site are: business, industry, and storage and distribution. Class A1 (shops) and class A2 (financial and professional services) uses will not be permitted.

Policy HN4 applies. The proposed site includes part of HN4/3 Rockingham Row, Birdwell site.

Policy ED7 also applies

Policy ED12 also applies. A2 uses are preferred are encouraged to locate in Barnsley town centre and other principal shopping and commercial centres.

Employment Land Issues

UDP Policy ED7 states that normally, the site should be protected for B1, B2, B8 uses, unless other significant material considerations apply.

SPG 24 provides a basis for considering proposals for alternative uses on employment policy areas. "Only exceptionally will it be appropriate for an Employment Policy Area to be redeveloped for a use other than those set out in Policy ED7, in order to achieve overall environmental benefits which outweigh the loss of jobs from the site." And, "In general, therefore, the council will seek to retain well located sites and premises for employment use."

For employment uses other than retail, the general location of the site could hardly be better, in terms of access by both public and private transportation, via the Strategic Highway Network. Indeed the site has potential to yield

significantly more jobs than appear to have been sustained on this part of the employment designation in recent years and could also have potential to attract higher quality jobs than previously.

It has access to labour markets throughout a large part of the district including the Barnsley Urban Area, Worsbrough, Birdwell, Hoyland and beyond. Within Birdwell, there has been very significant new housing development in recent years. We would suggest that this continues a trend for car borne commuting to Sheffield and Leeds. We would also suggest that sites such as this have in their own small way a potential to offer jobs to those Barnsley residents who are not able to commute so far afield. Such potential to help stem the trend to car borne commuting should not be ignored.

We note that various claims are made regarding the economic benefits of the proposals and also that overwhelming environmental reasons are claimed to outweigh the site's employment policy area designation and potential for B1, B2, B8 employment. The principal claim appears to be that there is a need for high land value to offset remediation costs arising from previous uses.

We have not seen any development appraisal/feasibility study to back this and we note the remainder of the development plan designation appears reasonably well developed and let with apparently good standard employment units, which presumably were also developed on the former colliery depot, without recourse to retail development. We are aware that the premises were used for refurbishment of diesel engines and prior to that as a colliery depot but we also note that you have received advice which questions the extent and seriousness of any contamination.

It appears to us that adequate land for retail use and land with most potential for growth in retail employment is provided elsewhere in the district and is identified in the current UDP. While, generally speaking, the contribution of retail jobs to Barnsley's challenging requirements for a net growth in jobs is welcome, we are concerned that significant retail development, outside established centres, may only provide jobs which are offset by job losses elsewhere in the District. Economic arguments to forgo potential jobs in B1 B2 B8 and substitute potential jobs in retail are therefore questionable, in our opinion. We would also be concerned if the proposed provision was harmful to sustaining and regenerating better located established retail centres.

Proposals for alternative uses on land designated as employment policy area should also be assessed against SPG 24.

Based on annual monitoring in 2007 and on independent assessment of genuine availability to the market within 5 years, we do not consider the proposals meet the third criteria of SPG 24, which requires that an adequate supply of employment land in terms of the scale, range and availability of employment land should remain.

Where this is not the case, it is particularly important to protect land designated as employment policy areas which are so well located to meet Barnsley's economic needs.

The site has potential for various types of employment use. In terms of any proposals for offices on the site, these need to be of sufficiently high quality to attract good quality end users. In our opinion, success in this respect would come from being able to demonstrate sufficient critical mass and presence as a new office location and the flexibility and quality to meet a diverse range of market demands. In this respect, freestanding offices, divisible into a range of smaller office suites, should be made available freehold, or on flexible leasehold terms and it is important that sufficient car parking to meet operational needs of each user is made available.

Retail Issues

The retail element of this proposal comprises 8 units including shops, a hot food takeaway and a restaurant.

Policy S1 of the Barnsley UDP states that retail development 'will be permitted only within the central shopping area of Barnsley and in the principal shopping and commercial centres'. The proposed scheme is located in an 'out-of-centre' location as defined by table 2 of PPS6.

Class A1 (retail) and A2 (service) uses will not be allowed on existing employment sites because to do so would be likely to limit the types of economic development that could take place elsewhere on the site; be contrary to the objective of protecting and enhancing existing shopping and commercial centres; and run counter to the advice in PPG13 about seeking to reduce growth in the length and number of motorised journeys and reliance on the private car.

The applicant has based their statement on SPG27: The Sequential Approach and Need for Retail, Leisure and Business Developments which is based on national guidance in PPG6 which has been cancelled and replaced by PPS6.

PPS6 takes precedence over SPG27. PPS6 is clear that 'the sequential approach to site selection should be applied to all development proposals for sites that are not in an existing centre nor allocated in an up-to-date development plan document.

The proposed development lies in an out-of-centre location and is not allocated for retail use. The applicant will need to undertake a sequential test to show that no alternative sites are available in Hoyland and Hoyland Common.

The existing stock of employment land and premises (excluding sites allocated for new development) has been reducing at a substantial rate due to the pressures to allow housing and other forms of development. The Council can continue to try and stem the loss of existing employment premises and sites to higher value competing users or accept that some poor-quality sites, particularly isolated uses in residential areas, should be released for other purposes.

The applicant has not undertaken a retail sequential test to show that there is no impact on Hoyland or Hoyland Common retail centres. Retail development can not be allowed on this site unless other sites are not available in Hoyland and Hoyland Common. A sequential test will be required to determine this impact.

Recommendation

Refuse

The proposals are unacceptable, given that insufficient land remains for future employment use within the district and that the retail element may be harmful to sustaining and regenerating existing centres. It is therefore contrary to policies S1, S2, S3, ED2, ED7, ED12 and HN4, based on the out of centre nature of the location of the proposed development.

Date of response 14th May 2008

Cotton , Alexandra

From: Nutter , Richard
Sent: 02 May 2008 17:33
To: Cotton , Alexandra
Cc: Ellis , Robert; Hart , Alan; Swift , Kevin
Subject: 2008 0561 proposed Mixed Use A1 A3 A5 B1 Hangmanstone Depot

Alex,

Thankyou for consulting BDA officers on the above application which is for a parade of shops/restaurant uses with offices above some of the units. The offices constitute some 37% overall floorspace.

BDA officers support the provision of offices but object to the current planning application, where the primary use proposed is retail.

The proposals are unacceptable, given that insufficient land remains for future employment use within the district and that harm to sustaining and regenerating existing centres may be an issue.

We note that under the Council's UDP policy, ED7- Employment Policy Areas, we would normally expect the site to be protected for B1, B2, B8 uses, unless other significant material considerations apply. SPG 24 provides a basis for considering proposals for alternative uses on employment policy areas.

"Only exceptionally will it be appropriate for an Employment Policy Area to be redeveloped for a use other than those set out in Policy ED7, in order to achieve overall environmental benefits which outweigh the loss of jobs from the site."

"In general, therefore, the council will seek to retain well located sites and premises for employment use."

For employment uses other than retail, the general location of the site could hardly be better, in terms of access by both public and private transportation, via the Strategic Highway Network. Indeed the site has potential to yield significantly more jobs than appear to have been sustained on this part of the employment designation in recent years and could also have potential to attract higher quality jobs than previously.

It has access to labour markets throughout a large part of the district including the Barnsley Urban Area, Worsbrough, Birdwell, Hoyland and beyond. Within Birdwell, there has been very significant new housing experienced in recent years. We would suggest that this continues a trend for car borne commuting to Sheffield and Leeds. We would also suggest that sites such as this have in their own small way a potential to offer jobs to those Barnsley residents who are not able to commute so far afield. Such potential to help stem the trend to car borne commuting should not be ignored.

We note that various claims are made regarding the economic benefits of the proposals and also that overwhelming environmental reasons are claimed to outweigh the site's employment policy area designation and potential for B1, B2, B8 employment. The principal claim appears to be that there is a need for high land value to offset remediation costs arising from previous uses.

We have not seen any development appraisal/feasibility study to back this and we note the remainder of the development plan designation appears reasonably well developed and let with apparently good standard employment units, which presumably were also developed on the former colliery depot, without recourse to retail development. We are aware that the premises were used for refurbishment of diesel engines and prior to that as a colliery depot but we also note that you have received advice which questions the extent and seriousness of any contamination.

It appears to us that adequate land for retail use and land with most potential for growth in retail employment is provided elsewhere in the district and is identified in the current UDP. While, generally speaking, the contribution of retail jobs to Barnsley's challenging requirements for a net growth in jobs is welcome, we are concerned that significant retail development, outside established centres, may only provide jobs which are offset by job losses elsewhere in the District. Economic arguments to forgo potential jobs in B1 B2 B8 and substitute potential jobs in retail are therefore questionable, in our opinion. We would also be concerned if the proposed provision was harmful to sustaining and regenerating better located established retail centres.

16/05/2008

NO.117 P.11

HARTWOOD ESTATES

27.AUG.2009 17:13

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