

Planning and Retail Statement

National Grid Properties

Old Mill Lane, Barnsley

September 2006

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning and Retail Statement supports an outline planning application submitted by National Grid Properties (hereafter referred to as National Grid) for the redevelopment of a site at Old Mill Lane, Barnsley.
- 1.2 This proposal involves the development of retail warehouse development comprising 1,960 sq. m gross of retail floorspace on a former gas holder site.
- 1.3 The description of the development for this application is as follows:

“Retail warehouse development comprising 1,960 sq. m gross of retail floorspace, car parking and associated access arrangements”.
- 1.4 The application site is situated directly north of the proposed new link road which is set to run between Old Mill Lane and Burton Road. The new road itself will form a barrier between the application site and the Green Belt to the south of the proposed road, thus creating an appropriate development site which will function as though outside of the Green Belt.
- 1.5 The encroachment on the Green Belt will be insignificant with the small area of land proposed for redevelopment being severed from the rest of the Green Belt by the proposed new link road. The areas of both designated Green Belt and Urban Greenspace will therefore no longer provide any visual or functional linkage to the rest of the Green Belt/Greenspace, or have any impact on the openness upon it. If development was unable to take place this site would be left vacant and provide no benefits to either Barnsley or the Green Belt.
- 1.6 The application site also lies on a primary route into Barnsley Town Centre. A well designed retail development will create visual interest, and a suitable and distinctive feature for this gateway location, as promoted by the Barnsley Masterplan.
- 1.7 National Grid's proposal also provides an opportunity to ensure the regeneration and remediation of a currently contaminated previously-developed site, that otherwise would remain vacant.
- 1.8 As well as dealing with general planning issues, this Statement sets out the findings of the retail assessment carried out to a methodology agreed with Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.
- 1.9 The main purpose of this Statement is to:
 - (a) Appraise the proposed scheme in the context of Development Plan policy and Government guidance;
 - (b) Assess existing retail provision within the Primary Catchment Area (PCA) in qualitative terms and the health of Barnsley and the surrounding principal and district centres;
 - (c) Assess the quantitative and qualitative retail need for the new proposed retail warehouse;
 - (d) Assess the qualitative and quantitative effects of the proposed scheme on Barnsley and other relevant centres in the PCA; and
 - (e) Examine alternative sites in Barnsley in accordance with the sequential approach.

- 1.10 This Statement is divided into 11 sections:
- n *Section 2 provides a description of the site;*
 - n *Section 3 sets out the details of the application proposal;*
 - n *Section 4 assesses national and local planning policy and guidance;*
 - n *Section 5 assess the health of neighbouring retail centres;*
 - n *Section 6 provides a review of existing comparison retail provision;*
 - n *Section 7 sets out an assessment of quantitative retail need;*
 - n *Section 8 sets out an assessment of qualitative retail need;*
 - n *Section 9 provides an assessment of the retail effects of the proposal;*
 - n *Section 10 sets out the sequential appraisal of development sites; and*
 - n *Section 11 sets out the conclusions.*
- 1.11 This Statement is also supported by the following appendices:
- n *Appendix I: Site Plan;*
 - n *Appendix II: Primary Catchment Area Map;*
 - n *Appendix III: Economic Assessment Tables.*
- 1.12 This application is also supported by a Transport Assessment prepared by Savell Bird and Axon, a Contamination Report prepared by White Young Green and plans prepared by Nicol Thomas. The application has also been subject to the EIA screening process. A request for a 'screening opinion' has been submitted to Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.

2. Site and Surroundings

Site Description

- 2.1 The site extends to some 0.6 hectares (1.6 acres). It is located in the Dearne Valley in a predominantly mixed commercial area, with a number of retail warehouses in close proximity, including the Peel Centre and three stores on Twibwell Street. Directly opposite the site there are two single storey retail units, which are currently occupied by the Carphone Warehouse and Choices Video, along with a motor dealership.
- 2.2 The site is currently vacant and cleared, and was formerly used by Transco. A large gas holder and ancillary equipment will remain on parts of the adjoining site which is located south of the River Dearne. This does not form part of the application and is an operational facility. A proportion of the site is located within the Green Belt with the former depot site unallocated in the UDP. This is discussed in more detail in the next section. A Site Plan is included in Appendix I.

Surrounding Uses

- 2.3 To the immediate north of the site there is a Wickes store, to the south there is an MFI store across the River Dearne, to the east is the Dearne Valley Linear Park and across the A61 to the west are playing fields and open space known locally as The Fleets. There is also an area of residential development within walking distance of the site to the north.
- 2.4 To the rear of the site, furthest away from the road, there is an area of mixed deciduous woodland, adjacent to the river. We understand that this is protected by a Tree Preservation Order. This woodland will not be affected by the application proposals.
- 2.5 Old Mill Lane is located on a major bus route, with frequent services in each direction and with regular services to Barnsley town centre. There are bus shelters immediately outside of the site on both sides of the road. This is discussed further in the Transport Assessment.

New Road Scheme

- 2.6 The application site lies adjacent to the existing A61 (Old Mill Lane). A new link road is proposed directly south of the application site and north of the River Dearne, linking Old Mill Lane and Burton Road. This link road is subject to a separate planning application submitted by Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council.
- 2.7 The proposed new road creates a barrier between the application site and the area of Green Belt to the south of the proposed road. This effectively creates a triangle of land between itself, Old Mill Lane and Burton Road, including the application site.
- 2.8 With the area to the north of the application site being occupied by a Wickes store, the application site is the next logical site for redevelopment, especially as it is a previously-developed site within a gateway location.

3. Application Proposal

- 3.1 This application is an outline planning application which is submitted with all matters reserved except means of access and siting.
- 3.2 The description of the development on the application form is:
- "Retail warehouse development comprising 1,960 sq. m gross of retail floorspace, car parking and associated access arrangements".*
- 3.3 The proposal is for of non-food retail development to comprise 1,960 sq. m gross floorspace. The applicant is prepared to accept a planning condition controlling the amount of retail floorspace approved as part of this outline application. Similar to the application approved on the former Yorkshire Electricity Depot site on Harborough Hill Road, Barnsley, National Grid propose the following planning condition to control the type of goods to be sold:
- "The units shall not be used for retailing any of the following goods:*
a) food and drink other than for consumption on the premises;
b) clothes and shoes;
c) fashion accessories;
d) jewellery;
e) cosmetics and toiletries;
f) pharmaceutical products;
g) toys;
f) cameras."
- 3.4 The application proposals create an opportunity to redevelop a currently vacant previously-developed site which is in need of remediation following its use as a gas holder site for Transco. It also lies on one of the main routes into Barnsley Town Centre and a retail unit with an innovative design could promote the vision of the Barnsley Masterplan in creating visual interest on a gateway site.

4. Planning Policy Framework

- 4.1 This section considers the planning policy context for the development proposal. It summarises the relevant national, regional and development plan policy against which the development will be considered. It then goes on to examine the application proposal in the light of key policies and the relevant tests contained in national and local guidance. Most importantly, this Statement reviews PPG2 and PPS6.
- 4.2 The main documents we have considered are:
- i. *PPS1 - Delivering sustainable Development (February 2005);*
 - ii. *PPG2 - Green Belts (1995);*
 - iii. *PPS6 - Planning for Town Centres (March 2005);*
 - iv. *PPG13 - Transport (March 2001);*
 - v. *Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber (December 2004);*
 - vi. *Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (December 2000);*
 - vii. *Barnsley UDP Supplementary Planning Guidance.*

National Planning Policy

(i) Planning Policy Statement 1 - Delivering Sustainable Development (February 2005)

- 4.3 PPS1 builds on the principles set down in PPG1 and emphasises the contribution the planning system can make to achieve sustainable development and a high standard of design, particularly evident from its title.
- 4.4 The proposal will contribute towards this objective, as it is a mixed-use scheme, which responds to its context and the environs and will provide strong linkages with the surrounding area. The proposal will act as a catalyst to the regeneration of the wider Barnsley area and develop a vacant site that is set to be isolated and separated from the Green Belt by a proposed new link road.

(ii) Planning Policy Guidance Note 2: Green Belts (1995)

- 4.5 This PPG aims to prevent urban sprawl and help to ensure that development occurs on locations allocated in development plans. It restricts development in the Green Belt unless it is for the following purposes:
- “- agriculture and forestry;*
 - essential facilities for outdoor sport and recreation, for cemeteries, and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it;*
 - limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings;*

- limited infilling in existing villages and limited affordable housing for local needs under development plan policies according with PPG3; or

- limited infilling or redevelopment of major existing developed sites identified in adopted local plans.”

- 4.6 In summary, the Green Belt guidance sets out a principle of presumption against development unless the above criteria are satisfied.
- 4.7 Two of the main purposes of the Green Belt are to prevent the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas and to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into each other. The redevelopment of the National Grid site would not impact on either of these objectives, with the distance between the north and south boundaries of the Green Belt being only 30 metres apart.
- 4.8 A further objective of PPG2 is to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Only a small proportion of the site is Green Belt land. The encroachment on the Green Belt would therefore be insignificant and the openness of the Green Belt would not be compromised in anyway by the application proposals.
- 4.9 The proposed link road which is set to run directly south of the application site would sever the site from the rest of the Green Belt and thus increase its suitability for development. This severance would prevent the application site from serving any of the purposes of including land within the Green Belt, as set out in PPG2. The site would be unable to provide any visual or functional linkage with the rest of the Green Belt to the south of the proposed road and therefore the redevelopment of the site would have no landscape or visual effect on the Green Belt as a whole and the purposes of including land in the Green Belt.
- 4.10 The redevelopment of the National Grid site would assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of urban land. The development of this land would secure regeneration benefits for the Old Mill Lane corridor, with the social and economic benefits outweighing the environmental benefits of retaining this very small area of Green Belt which will not function as Green Belt land given the barrier created by the Council's proposed link road. If development was unable to take place this site would be left vacant and provide no benefits to either Barnsley or the Green Belt.

**(iii) Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning For Town Centres
(March 2005)**

- 4.11 Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS6) sets out the Government's approach on the provision of town centre uses.
- 4.12 The key objective of PPS6 is to promote the vitality and viability of town centres, both by planning for the growth of existing centres and by promoting and enhancing existing centres, by focusing development in such centres and encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment, which are accessible to all.
- 4.13 The Statement sets out the following other objectives which should be addressed as a means by which to achieve the overall key objective:
- n “enhancing consumer choice by making provision for a range of shopping, leisure and local services, which allow genuine choice to meet the needs of the entire community, and particularly socially excluded groups;*

n supporting efficient, competitive and innovative retail, leisure, tourism and other sectors, with improving productivity; and

n improving accessibility, ensuring that existing or new development is, or will be, accessible and well served by a choice of means of transport.”

- 4.14 Given these key objectives, paragraph 1.7 confirms that the objectives of PPS6 should not conflict with the interests of business. It states that:

“It is not the role of the planning system to restrict competition, preserve existing commercial interests or to prevent innovation.”

Assessing Proposed Developments

- 4.15 Section 3 of PPS6 sets out the considerations which should be taken into account by Local Planning Authorities in determining planning applications for all proposals relating to main town centre uses.

- 4.16 PPS6 states, at Paragraph 3.4, that applicants should be required to demonstrate the following:

- (f) the need for the development;
- (g) that the development is of an appropriate scale;
- (h) that there are no more central sites for the development;
- (i) that there are no unacceptable impacts on existing centres; and
- (j) that locations are accessible.

- 4.17 These requirements are considered in more detail below and in the following sections of this Planning and Retail Statement.

a) the need for the development

- 4.18 PPS6 requires that need must be demonstrated for any application for a main town centre use which would not be in a town centre location and which is not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan document strategy.

- 4.19 In the case of retail development, need assessments should relate directly to the class of goods to be sold from the development. We demonstrate in Section 7 that there is a quantitative need for the type of goods proposed to be retailed from the application site.

- 4.20 In assessing the need and capacity for additional retail and leisure development, greater weight should be placed on quantitative need for additional floorspace for the specific types of retail and leisure developments. PPS6 does however acknowledge that account should also be taken of qualitative considerations. We consider in Section 8 that there is a qualitative need for the proposals.

b) the scale of development

- 4.21 The guidance states that the scale of proposed developments should relate to the role and function of the centre within the wider hierarchical network of centres. Scale should also relate to the catchment population which the development proposes to serve.

- 4.22 PPS6 acknowledges that some larger retail proposals will not be appropriate in smaller local centres. In particular, paragraph 2.42 comments:

“Given their characteristics, local centres will generally be inappropriate locations for large-scale new development, even when a flexible approach is adopted. “

- 4.23 We consider that the retail proposals will be of a scale appropriate to the retail hierarchy in Barnsley and the Primary Catchment Area. The development will enhance the retail provision in Barnsley to the benefit of the local community. This is addressed in more detail in Section 9 of this Statement.

c) the sequential approach to site selection

- 4.24 PPS6 requires that a sequential approach to site selection should be applied to all development proposals for main town centre uses for sites that are not in an existing centre, nor allocated in an up-to-date development plan document.
- 4.25 The sequential approach requires that locations are considered in the following order:
- n *“first, locations in appropriate existing centres, taking account of an appropriate scale of development in relation to the role and function of the centre; and then*
 - n *edge-of-centre locations, with preference given to sites that are well-connected to the centre; and then*
 - n *out-of-centre sites, with preference given to sites which are or will be well served by a choice of means of transport and which are close to the centre and have a high likelihood of forming links with the centre.”*
- 4.26 In considering alternative sites, Local Planning Authorities are required to give weight to those locations that best serve the needs of deprived areas.
- 4.27 Developers and operators need to demonstrate that, in applying the sequential approach, and considering alternative sites, they have been flexible about their proposed business model in terms of the following planning considerations:
- n *The scale of their development;*
 - n *The format of their development;*
 - n *Car parking provision; and*
 - n *The scope for disaggregation.*

- 4.28 The Statement goes on to explain however that Local Planning Authorities should be realistic in considering whether sites are suitable, viable and available. It also states that Local Planning Authorities should take into account any genuine difficulties, which the applicant can demonstrate are likely to occur in operating the applicant's business model from the sequentially preferable site, in terms of scale, format, car parking provision and the scope for disaggregation, such as where a retailer would be required to provide a significantly reduced range of products.
- 4.29 Although the guidance states that it is important to explore whether specific parts of a development could be operated from separate, sequentially preferable sites, it explains that a single retailer or leisure operator should not be expected to split their proposed development into separate sites where flexibility in terms of scale, format, car parking provision and the scope of disaggregation has been demonstrated.
- 4.30 Where it is argued that otherwise sequentially-preferable sites are not appropriate for the particular development proposed, applicants should provide clear evidence to demonstrate why such sites are not practicable alternatives in terms of:
- n *"Availability: the sites are unavailable now and are unlikely to become available for development within a reasonable period of time; and*
 - n *Suitability: with due regard to the requirements to demonstrate flexibility, the sites are not suitable for the type of development proposed; and*
 - n *Viability: the development would not be viable on these sites."*
- 4.31 Section 10 of this Statement considers the scope to accommodate the proposed retail development on other sites within and on the edge of Barnsley town centre. We demonstrate that having regard to the key considerations outlined above, there are no sequentially preferable sites that are suitable, available or viable.

d) the impact of development on existing centres

- 4.32 Paragraph 3.20 of PPS6 requires that impact assessments should be undertaken for any application for a main town centre use which would not be in a town centre location and which is not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan strategy.
- 4.33 An assessment should consider the impact of a proposal on the vitality and viability of an existing centre or centres likely to be affected, taking account of the following:
- n *the extent to which the development would put at risk the spatial planning strategy for the area and the strategy for a particular centre or network of centres, or alter its role in the hierarchy of centres;*
 - n *the likely effect on future public or private sector investment needed to safeguard the vitality and viability of the centre or centres;*
 - n *the likely impact of the proposed development on trade/turnover and on the vitality and viability of existing centres within the catchment area of the proposed development;*
 - n *changes to the range of services provided by centres that could be affected;*
 - n *likely impact on the number of vacant properties in the primary shopping area;*
 - n *potential changes to the quality, attractiveness, physical condition and character of the centre or centres and to its role in the economic and social life of the community; and*

- n *the implications of proposed leisure and entertainment uses for the evening and night-time economy of the centre.*

4.34 We consider in Section 9 of this Statement that the National Grid proposals will not have a detrimental impact upon existing facilities in the PCA. Indeed, we consider that the investment and investor confidence demonstrated by the proposals will have a positive effect in bringing about the regeneration of the application site and surrounding area.

e) The accessibility of locations

4.35 The guidance states that, in considering proposed new developments, Local Planning Authorities should have regard to:

- n *Whether the site is or will be accessible and well served by a choice of means of transport, especially public transport, walking and cycling, as well as by car; and*
- n *The impact on car use, traffic and congestion.*

4.36 We consider that the National Grid proposals will be located in a position which is accessible by a choice of means of transport. The application site is situated aside the A61, which is a major route from Barnsley town centre to Wakefield and is classified as an urban clearway. In particular the application site is located 1.2 km from the town centre retail area and there may be potential for pedestrian access to the site from the public transport interchange in the town centre. This issue is addressed in more detail in the Transport Assessment prepared by Savell Bird and Axon.

Other Material Considerations

4.37 In addition to the considerations discussed above, PPS6 states that the following material considerations may also be taken into account in assessing planning applications for a main town centre use:

- n *Physical regeneration;*
- n *Employment creation;*
- n *Economic growth; and*
- n *Social inclusion.*

4.38 The benefits of the National Grid proposals in terms of these other material considerations is assessed in Section 11. In particular we consider that the proposals will successfully develop the vacant application site and benefit the wider Barnsley area, leading to improvements in the physical, social and economic environment. We consider that the development will be positioned in an accessible location which will provide a range of goods to the local community, therefore improving social inclusion. In addition the proposed development will generate a number of direct and indirect employment positions for the local community.

(iii) Planning Policy Guidance Note 13 - Transport (March 2001)

- 4.39 The advice on locating new retail development is reinforced by Planning Policy Guidance Note on Transport (PPG13), which was published in March 2001. The key aims of the Guidance are set out in the introductory text, namely to integrate planning and transport at the national, regional, strategic and local level to:

- n *Promote more sustainable transport choices for both people and for moving freight;*
- n *Promote accessibility to jobs, shopping, leisure facilities and services by public transport, walking and cycling; and*
- n *Reduce the need to travel, especially by car.*

- 4.40 Paragraph 35 sets out the guidance relating to shopping development:

"Policies for retail and leisure should seek to promote the vitality and viability of existing town centres, which should be the preferred locations for new retail and travel intensive leisure development. At the regional and strategic level, local authorities should establish town centre hierarchies, taking account of accessibility by public transport, which identify locations for major investment. At the local level, local authorities should adopt a sequential approach to identifying preferred locations and selecting sites for new retail and leisure developments. This means preference should be given to town centre sites, followed by edge of centre and, only then, out of centre sites in locations which are (or will be) well served by public transport. Where there is a clearly established need for such development and it cannot be accommodated in or on the edge of existing centres, it may be appropriate to combine them with existing out of centre developments, provided that improvements to public transport can be negotiated."

- 4.41 PPG13 is consistent with PPS6 in that it also emphasises that new retail development should be focused in existing shopping centres where it is likely to be most accessible to the primary catchment area populations by a variety of means of transport. The proposal is consistent with guidance in PPG13 which seeks to promote sustainable transport use. This is addressed in more detail in the Transport Assessment prepared by Savell Bird and Axon.

Regional Guidance

(iv) Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber (December 2004)

- 4.42 The Regional Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber was adopted in December 2004 based on a selective review of RPG 12, and covers the period until 2016. The Assembly are currently preparing the 'new' RSS, which they are expected to deliver to Government Office by the end of December 2005.
- 4.43 The RSS for Yorkshire and the Humber forms part of the statutory development plan under the provisions of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 4.44 The RSS sets out the Spatial Strategy for Yorkshire and the Humber. The aim of the Spatial Strategy is to create:

“A world class region, where the economic, environmental and social well-being of all our people is advancing more rapidly and more sustainably than our competitors.”

- 4.45 In line with RSS 12, the proposal will:

- viii. *Redevelop a vacant site within a key gateway position in Barnsley;*
- ix. *Be well served by public transport;*
- x. *Introduce new locally based jobs, reducing unemployment and the need for commuting;*
- xi. *maintain a good quality, level and range of provision for retail and service needs appropriate to serve the catchment area;*
- xii. *Improve the local environment and enhance community pride;*
- xiii. *Make maximum use of vacant land and offer the opportunity to positively enhance the quality of the environment;*
- xiv. *Promote accessibility to employment, retailing and other services by public transport, cycling and walking; and*
- xv. *It will be on a sustainable site which is well related to existing communities. There are no town centre sites to accommodate the proposal and there would be no harm to the vitality and viability of the existing centres.*

- 4.46 As set out above the redevelopment of the Old Mill Lane site will fulfill the aims of the RSS. Most importantly, it will provide the opportunity to regenerate a currently vacant gateway site. In doing this it will improve the local environment and boost local employment opportunities while not negatively impacting on existing centres.

Local Planning Policy

- 4.47 The Barnsley UDP was adopted in December 2000. It is currently under review which will result in the Barnsley Local Development Framework. This is not due for adoption until 2007.

- 4.48 We set out a summary of the strategic retail policies and more site specific constraints from the UDP below;

(vi) Barnsley Unitary Development Plan (UDP) (December 2000)

- 4.49 In summary, a very small portion of the site is allocated within the Green Belt with the remainder, essentially the former depot site, being unallocated. In addition, most of the site falls within an area designated as Urban Greenspace.

Strategy

- 4.50 The UDP sets out in Part I the key factors which have influenced the UDP Strategy. One of these factors is:

“the need to conserve the countryside which separates the settlements” (Paragraph 2.23 (ii)).

4.51 The Green Belt areas around Barnsley are described at Paragraph 2.24 as being valuable not only from leisure and amenity points of view but also in creating a good image for tourists and potential visitors.

4.52 The Part I Strategy also deals with strategic proposals for the Borough of Barnsley. The objective for Town and Other Centres is:

“to strengthen the vitality and viability of Barnsley Town Centre, and principal shopping and commercial centres as foci for shopping, commerce, leisure and other community services and facilities.” (Paragraph 2.50).

4.53 The strategy objective of conserving and improving the environment is to be fulfilled by the following means:

“New development will normally be focussed into the built-up areas where it generates shorter journeys and can be more effectively served by public transport. Green Belt policy is reaffirmed as the most effective means by which open land can be protected.” (Paragraph 2.56).

Part 1 Green Belt Policies

4.54 Several policies relate to possible development within the Green Belt. These are Policy GS7, GS8 and GS9:

“Without prejudice and subject to the application of Policies GS8, GS8A, GS8B, GS8C, GS8D, GS8E and GS9 in this Plan, development within the Green Belt will not be permitted unless it maintains the openness of, and does not conflict with the purposes of including land in, the Green Belt.” (Policy GS7)

“Within the Green Belt, the construction of new buildings will not be permitted, except in very special circumstances, unless it is for the following purposes:

- a) agriculture or forestry;*
- b) essential facilities for outdoor sport or outdoor recreation, for cemeteries, or for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it;*
- c) the replacement of existing dwellings in compliance with Policy GS8E.”* (Policy GS8)

“Development within the Green Belt, or conspicuous from it, should not by reasons of its siting, materials or design result in significant harm to the visual amenity of the Green Belt.” (Policy GS9)

4.55 As stated in relation to PPG2 the redevelopment of the National Grid site does not impact on the main purposes of Green Belt land. Furthermore the proposed new link road isolates the National Grid site from the rest of the Green Belt. It therefore no longer provides any visual or functional linkage to the remainder of the Green Belt, or has any impact on openness of the surrounding area.

Part 1 Urban Greenspace Policies

4.56 As well as considering policies relating to land within the Green Belt, it is also necessary to look at Urban Greenspace Policies in the UDP. The site falls to be allocated as such.

- 4.57 Policy GS34 is of relevance in addressing the issue of development on land designated as urban greenspace. It states:

"Areas designated as Urban Greenspace on the proposals map will normally remain open and undeveloped. Proposals for the development of such areas will be assessed for their effect on the present and potential formal and informal function of the areas as:

- a) a facility for recreation;*
- b) an area of amenity value;*
- c) an area of nature conservation value; and*
- d) a link between adjacent areas.*

A proposal likely to have a significant adverse effect on the function of the area in any such respect will not normally be approved. Where material considerations nevertheless indicate approval, the adverse effects on urban greenspace must be offset by compensatory improvements or additions within or outside the development site, including where appropriate, through planning conditions or obligations."

- 4.58 National Grid's proposals will not impact significantly on the function of this area of Urban Greenspace as the proposed new link road will cut it off from the rest of the designated Greenspace.
- 4.59 The contamination of the application site will prevent its use as a recreation facility. Furthermore, it will have a limited amenity or nature conservation value.

Part 1 Shopping Policies

- 4.60 Shopping policies are also set out in Part I of the UDP and reflect the guidance set out in both national and regional guidance. Of note is Policy S1:

"Subject to the provisions of other policies in this Plan, all new retail development will be permitted only within the central shopping area of Barnsley town centre and in the principal shopping and commercial centres defined on the proposals map where suitable sites, or buildings suitable for conversion, are available for such purposes."

- 4.61 However, the Plan does recognise that proposals will be put forward for retail development outside defined shopping centres. In such instances Policies S3, S4 and S5 apply.

"All new retail development...which is proposed on a site outside the central shopping area of Barnsley town centre and the principal shopping and commercial centres defined on the proposals map will only be permitted:

- a) on a site allocated for that purpose in the Plan;*
- b) where there is no suitable site available within a centre defined on the proposal map, 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 the development of the site will generate joint trips to it and the adjacent centre, subject to the provisions of Policy S4 of the Plan;*

- 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, subject to the provisions of Policy S4 of the Plan.” (Policy S3)*

4.62 Paragraph 5.32 continues by stating the following:

“Proposals for new retail development which comply with the requirements specified in paragraphs (b) or (c) of Policy S3 will only be permitted if:

- a) *either individually or cumulatively with other retail developments (existing or planned), the development proposed will not unacceptably undermine the vitality or viability of any defined centre, and*
- b) *the development will not unduly harm investment strategies, policies or proposals intended to strengthen the viability of the defined centres, and*
- c) *the development is (or will be) made readily accessible to residential areas for pedestrians and cyclists, to a wider area by established public transport links, and will not generate a significant increase in private car journeys, and*
- d) *the development includes within its proposals satisfactory measures to accommodate the effects and impact of the development on the transport network, including roads, footpaths and cycleways.*

If necessary the applicant will be required to provide evidence that the above criteria will be complied with.” (Policy S4)

“All retail developments which would create a new shopping unit or units in excess of 930 sq. m gross floor area to be used for the sale of comparison goods and which are proposed on sites outside the central shopping area of Barnsley town centre and principal shopping and commercial centres defined on the proposals map, will be subjected to planning conditions which control:

- a) *the range and types of goods to be sold there from and/or*
- b) *the maximum or minimum unit size as measured by gross floor area.” (Policy S5)*

4.63 The proposed development is situated off Old Mill Lane which is an established bus corridor into Barnsley town centre. The site plan shows that there will be clear pedestrian routes from the store area and through the car park onto the proposed new link road.

4.64 The application site is located within an existing retail corridor, adjacent to Wickes and other retail floorspace of a similar nature. It is therefore within an existing location for retail development which is consistent with PPG13 and the promotion of linked trips.

4.65 The impact on Barnsley town centre and other principal and local centres is minimal due to the small scale of the proposed retail development. This is demonstrated more fully in the later sections of this report.

Part 1 Transport Policies

4.66 The Strategic Highway Network (Old Mill Lane/Wakefield Road) which runs along the western edge of the Old Mill Lane site also has policy implications

for any development of the Old Mill site. Policy T3 deals with the existing strategic highway network and states that it:

“has been designated and will be reviewed as appropriate in order to concentrate heavy flows of traffic, particularly HGVs on to the currently most appropriate routes.”

- 4.67 All transport issues are dealt with in the Transport Assessment prepared by Savell Bird and Axon.

Barnsley Urban Community Area

- 4.68 The Borough of Barnsley is sub-divided into 12 community areas, of which the Old Mill Lane site falls into the Barnsley Urban Community Area. Specific policies relating to the Green Belt, Urban Greenspace, Shopping and Transport in this area are contained in Volume 2 of the UDP, which reiterate the policies contained in both Part I and Part II of the UDP.

(vii) Supplementary Planning Guidance

- 4.69 The adopted Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) for the site reinforces the objective of the UDP to promote new retail development, including both comparison and convenience floorspace. However, SPG 27 ‘The sequential Approach and Need for Retail, Leisure and Business Developments’ states that a retail assessment is required to quantify the effects of comparison retail development on the economic health of established centres.
- 4.70 A quantitative and qualitative assessment has been carried out for the proposed retail development at Old Mill Lane. These are within Sections 7 and 8.
- 4.71 As a previously-developed site and its use as a former gas holder, SPG 28 ‘Developing Contaminated Land’ requires that investigations should be undertaken ‘to establish the nature and extent of contamination and its potential on the development proposed’ if contamination may affect any proposed development. A Contamination Assessment has been prepared by White Young Green which covers all these issues.
- 4.72 Located within the Dearne Valley, and therefore potentially at risk of flooding, SPG 29 ‘Flood Risk and Development’ outlines that consultation with the Environment Agency is required. Following this, a Flood Risk Assessment may have to be undertaken. This assessment has been completed to accompany the application for the proposed new link road. The issues of flood risk attached to the proposed new road will also apply to the National Grid site.
- 4.73 The objectives of both national and local policy to provide the necessary levels of parking is reinforced in SPG 32 ‘Parking, Transport Assessments and Travel Plans’, which outlines the maximum and minimum car and cycle parking standards. A Transport Assessment is required for retail developments with a gross floor area exceeding 1,000 square metres. This has been prepared by Savell Bird and Axon in support of National Grid’s proposals.

Summary

- 4.74 The redevelopment of the National Grid site would have no impact on the main purposes of PPG2 to prevent urban sprawl of built-up areas and to prevent neighbouring towns from merging.

- 4.75 Furthermore, the encroachment on the Green Belt will be insignificant, with the small area of land proposed for redevelopment being severed from the rest of the Green Belt by the proposed new link road. The severance of the road will prevent the application site from serving the purposes of the Green Belt, as set out in PPG2. The areas of both designated Green Belt and Urban Greenspace will no longer provide any visual or functional linkage to the rest of the Green Belt/Greenspace, or have any impact on the openness of it.
- 4.76 We have demonstrated that there are very special circumstances in this case why the release of a very small area of land from the Green Belt is appropriate.
- 4.77 The redevelopment of the National Grid site would assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of urban land, and provide social and economic benefits to the wider area. If development was unable to take place this site would be left vacant and these benefits would not be provided.
- 4.78 In relation to the location of National Grid's proposal, the development is situated off Old Mill Lane which is an established bus corridor serving Barnsley town centre. The site plan also shows that there will be clear pedestrian routes from the store area and through the car park onto the proposed new link road.
- 4.79 In line with the Shopping Policies of the Local Plan, the impact on Barnsley town centre and other principle and local centres is minimal due to the small scale of the proposed retail development. This is demonstrated more fully in the later sections of this report.
- 4.80 PPS6 sets out that it will be up to the applicant to demonstrate that there is both qualitative and quantitative retail 'need', that there is no impact on the vitality or viability of the nearby town centres, in particular Barnsley town centre, that there are no sequentially preferable retail sites and that the site is conveniently accessible by a choice of means of transport. We discuss all of these issues in the following sections.

5. Health Checks

- 5.1 This section considers the vitality and viability of the key retail centres within the PCA. These are Barnsley, Cudworth, Wombwell, Hoyland, Penistone, Wath Upon Dearne, Chapeltown, Mapplewell and Stairfoot.
- 5.2 The health check uses indicators of vitality and viability set out in paragraph 4.4 of PPS6 to analyse the health of the centres. These are:
- n *diversity of main town centre uses (by number, type and amount of floorspace);*
 - n *the amount of retail, leisure and office floorspace in edge-of-centre and out-of-centre locations;*
 - n *the potential capacity for growth or change of centres in the network;*
 - n *retailer representation and intentions to change representation;*
 - n *shopping rents;*
 - n *proportion of vacant street level property;*
 - n *commercial yields on non-domestic property (i.e. the capital value in relation to the expected market rental);*
 - n *pedestrian flows (footfall);*
 - n *accessibility;*
 - n *customer and residents' views and behaviour;*
 - n *perception of safety and occurrence of crime; and*
 - n *state of the town centre environmental quality.*
- 5.3 We draw on data sources from Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council and other sources including Experian Goad, Focus and Pedestrian Market Research. We also draw heavily upon the assessment of the health of centres within the PCA which was carried out by Indigo Planning Limited for the Former YEB site, Harborough Hill Road, Barnsley.

Barnsley Health Check

- 5.4 The primary shopping centre within the PCA is identified as Barnsley in the adopted Barnsley UDP (December 2000).
- 5.5 The centre performs a reasonably diverse role in providing a good selection of comparison and convenience retailers as well as a handful of offices, and leisure uses. The principle shopping areas of the town are the pedestrianised streets of Cheapside, Queen Street and May Day Green. The total retail floor space of the town was calculated by GOAD in September 2002 to be 76,041 square metres, this was made up of 458 retail units.

Diversity of Uses

- 5.6 Barnsley is a traditional shopping centre with retail comprising the dominant use within the centre, whilst in the periphery there are alternative uses such as the Gala Bingo Club and other leisure uses. Also located on the periphery are a number of large superstores, such as a Morrison's which includes ancillary car parking and a petrol filling station with a gross retail floorspace of 6,800 square metres.

Composition by Number of Outlets (2005)

Shopping Use	Number of Units	Percentage	% UK Average
Convenience	31	6.8	9.4
Comparison	241	52.6	48.3
Service	129	28.2	30.1
Vacant	52	11.4	10.7
Miscellaneous	5	1.1	1.5
Totals	458	100	

Source/notes:

(1) The categories are based on the classification provided by GOAD, relate to ground floor uses only, and are based on GOAD's land use data (September 2005). Data on UK averages has been provided by GOAD (September 2005).

(2) Service uses include restaurants, coffee bars, fast food and take-aways, hairdressers, beauty parlours and health centres, laundries and dry cleaners, travel agents, banks and financial services, building societies, estate agents and valuers. Taxi ranks are also included in the service category, although this use is not categorised by GOAD.

(3) Pubs, night-clubs and other leisure uses are excluded by GOAD from the national analysis, therefore for the purpose of comparison, these have been excluded from our analysis.

(4) Miscellaneous category includes employment agencies, tourism offices and main and sub-post offices.

Composition by Floorspace (1,000 sq m) (2005)

Shopping Use	Total floorspace	Percentage	% UK Average
Convenience	12.90	14.18	16.55
Comparison	51.38	56.43	52.97
Service	16.07	17.65	20.35
Vacant	8.55	9.39	8.19
Miscellaneous	2.14	2.35	1.94
Totals	76.041	100	

Source/notes:

(1) The categories are based on the classification provided by GOAD, relate to ground floor uses only, and are based on GOAD's land use data (September 2005). Data on UK averages has been provided by GOAD (September 2005).

(2) Service uses include restaurants, coffee bars, fast food and take-aways, hairdressers, beauty parlours and health centres, laundries and dry cleaners, travel agents, banks and financial services, building societies, estate agents and valuers. Taxi ranks are also included in the service category, although this use is not categorised by GOAD.

(3) Pubs, night-clubs and other leisure uses are excluded by GOAD from the national analysis, therefore for the purpose of comparison, these have been excluded from our analysis.

(4) Miscellaneous category includes employment agencies, tourism offices and main and sub-post offices.

- 5.7 The number of comparison units within Barnsley as a percentage of the total number of units is 52.6%, this is above the UK average at 48.3% and comparison floorspace in Barnsley is 56% of the total level of floorspace,

this is also above the UK national average of 53%. Within the comparison sector large amounts of space are occupied by mixed and general clothing, department variety stores and DIY/household goods. Although there may seem to be an over-representation by comparison retailers, there are still many operators missing, as well as retailers who currently occupy smaller units than may be expected in a town the size of Barnsley.

- 5.8 The market, which operates both indoor and semi-open/outdoor, is 100% let. It remains very popular with residents, but there is a need for new investment for redesign and redevelopment to continue its success.

Retailer Representation

- 5.9 Barnsley supports several national comparison retailers, these include Argos, Boots, Woolworths, Primark and Marks and Spencer.
- 5.10 The centre is also well represented by convenience good retailers as a reflection of its size. These include Morrison's and Co-op, in addition to the large indoor market.

Retail Rents and Yields

- 5.11 In terms of yield values, Barnsley town centre stands at a value of 6.5% according to a survey carried out by Donaldson's in 2003 for Barnsley MBC. This demonstrates that there is a reasonably high level of retailer confidence within Barnsley.
- 5.12 Retail values were also assessed in the 2003 Donaldson's report, these are defined as primary (Cheapside and Queen Street) and secondary (Market Street and surrounding streets) shopping areas. Primary rental figures were found to be around £1,184 to £1,292 per square metre and secondary figures were found to be around £506 to £538 per square metre.
- 5.13 Retail rents and yields are a useful indicator of expectations of rental growth and thus of general economic prospects for a town centre, and are recognised as such in PPS6.

Proportion of Vacant Street Level Property

- 5.14 At the time of the survey in 2005 there were 52 vacant units within the defined town centre, this equates to a vacancy rate of approximately 11.4% which is around the national average.

Accessibility

- 5.15 In strategic terms, Barnsley has good links to the principal road network and railway infrastructure. The A628 links Barnsley with the national road network in the form of the M1.
- 5.16 The town has a combined bus and rail station situated to the north east of the town centre. Bus services run at regular intervals throughout the Borough and a regular train service connects the town to Sheffield and Leeds.
- 5.17 Car and bus are the primary modes of transport used to access the town centre, although a reasonable proportion (20%) of town centres visitors are pedestrians. Car use generally increases on a Saturday and bus usage decreases.
- 5.18 Barnsley town centre offers a range of short stay, long stay and limited stay car parks as well as a large proportion of on street and disabled spaces. The car parks primarily used by visitors to the town centre are the Metropolitan Centre and Alhambra Centre multi-storey car parks.

Retailer Demand

- 5.19 Analysis of the Focus Database in October 2005 shows that there were 42 requirements for retail floorspace in Barnsley town centre. The majority of the requirements are on behalf of household goods, furniture and floor covering retailers. Of the remaining requirements 4 are on behalf of clothing and footwear retailers and 6 are for leisure related uses.

Pedestrian Flow

- 5.20 PMRS (Pedestrian Market Research Services) undertook a survey in November 2000 to measure pedestrian flow count within the main retail area of Barnsley (Including Midland Street, Eldon Street, Queen Street, Cheapside, Market Parade and Arcade, Market Street, Peel Square, Market Hill and Open Market).
- 5.21 Saturday was the busiest day, followed by Friday and then Tuesday. The highest pedestrian count was recorded on Queen Street and Cheapside. This reflects the retailing strength of these two areas. Significant pedestrian flows were also recorded Midland Street around Groggers Rest, Market Parade and Arcade, May Day Street, Eldon Street and Peel Square, which are all feeder routes into the prime areas of Cheapside and Queen Street.

Perception of Safety

- 5.22 The centre is well lit, the pedestrian area of the town is well set out with the central streets being wide resulting in a good level of visibility throughout the area. The roads are not overly congested and there are several pedestrian crossing facilities around the town.
- 5.23 The town also has a network of CCTV cameras covering the main areas of the town.

Environmental Quality

- 5.24 Overall, the environmental quality of Barnsley is acceptable, with the majority of vacant retail units within the town well maintained.
- 5.25 In terms of graffiti and litter, the town does not appear to suffer badly. The streets are on the whole clean and attractive and graffiti does not appear prominently in any of the main shopping areas.

Summary

- 5.26 Barnsley town centre is dominated by comparison units, equating to 53% of the total number of units. There is also a high proportion of national multiple retailers offering both comparison and convenience goods, expressing interest in Barnsley.
- 5.27 Rents in Barnsley are generally higher than other centres of similar size within the region, indicating the strength of the centre. Yields are obviously lower than the top tier centres, but Barnsley is considered an attractive location for investment.
- 5.28 Barnsley has good transport links, with good links to the strategic road network and railway infrastructure. There is also a bus station in the town serving a wide catchment area.
- 5.29 Certain areas of the town are pedestrianised. These areas provide for a safe and attractive pedestrian environment providing access to the main shopping centres and units within the town centre.

- 5.30 We consider that Barnsley town centre is a vital and viable town centre for both shoppers and investors.

Wombwell

- 5.31 Wombwell town centre lies approximately 8.5 kilometres south east of Barnsley town centre and is designated as a principle town centre in the Barnsley UDP. The town is the second largest in the Borough.
- 5.32 Wombwell is a linear town centre based around High Street. On High Street itself, the majority of units are retail or retail based uses. Other town centre uses can be found around the defined commercial centre in defined 'fringe commercial areas'. Land uses within this area include pubs, churches, the police station, the library and free areas of car parking.

Composition by Number of Outlets (2005)

Shopping Use	Percentage
A1 - Convenience	13.2
A1 - Comparison	31.6
A1 - Other	17.1
A2	10.5
A3	9.2
Vacant	13.2
Miscellaneous	5.2
Totals	100

- 5.33 The north-eastern side of High Street is comprised of traditional units whilst the south-western side comprises 1960's style units. Collectively, they form the principle shopping area, which is comprised predominately by Class A1 retail units - 61.9% of units are Class A1 in the centre.
- 5.34 National multiple representation is evident through a Co-op store, a large Kwik Save and a Poundstretcher store although there are also a number of nationally recognised high street banks and building societies, including Barclays, Halifax and Natwest.
- 5.35 Wombwell has its own dedicated railway station although this is a considerable distance from the centre. Accordingly, the centre has a greater dependence upon private vehicles and buses.
- 5.36 There are two main car parks serving the centre. There is a large car park to the northeast of the principle shopping area whilst there is also a parking area behind the 1960's units, serving the Co-op and Kwik Save stores.
- 5.37 There are a few areas of public open space in the defined centre although the pavement is wide on the western side of the street and there is plenty of street furniture provided.
- 5.38 There are three bulky goods units in the town providing approximately 240 square metres of net bulky goods floorspace. The largest unit is a carpet specialist with a 92 square metre store. It is apparent that with only three

fairly modest sized bulky goods units, bulky goods retailing has only a limited role in Wombwell.

- 5.39 Overall, the town centre appears to be performing reasonably well. High Street is susceptible to traffic passing along it although the UDP suggests that there may be scope to part pedestrianise the road within the plan period. It is anticipated that this would have a beneficial impact on the environmental quality of the centre and would improve the retailing experience of consumers.

Summary

- 5.40 Wombwell town centre is located to the south of the catchment area. The majority of retailers within the centre are local, independent traders, although there are several multiple convenience retailers such as Kwik Save and the Co-op and also a Poundstretcher and a Blockbuster Video.
- 5.41 The centre is a relatively busy one which benefits from a market, car parking, several bus services and Wombwell Railway Station.

Cudworth

- 5.42 Cudworth is located approximately 6km north east of Barnsley Town Centre and is roughly a ten-minute drive along the A628. The town centre, as defined on the UDP Proposals Map, extends well beyond what could be perceived as the core shopping area northwards along the A628 Barnsley Road.

Composition by Number of Outlets (2005)

Shopping Use	Percentage
A1 - Convenience	8.6
A1 - Comparison	25.5
A1 - Other	10.3
A2	11.9
A3	11.9
Vacant	16.4
Miscellaneous	15.4
Totals	100

- 5.43 This extended centre contains pockets of residential properties, which as a result have created some isolated frontages towards the north-eastern end of the centre. The frontages at the top end of the town (the centre is on a steep gradient sloping from the northeast to the southeast) have the characteristics of secondary shopping frontage. Indeed, the UDP states that the defined centre has been extended beyond the principle shopping area to encourage new urban regeneration schemes and the development of specialist and support services. The Business Innovation Centre in the southern part of the centre is one such development that will hopefully

increase the number of town centre uses and consequently increase the vitality and viability of the town.

- 5.44 The only national retailer operating in Cudworth is the Co-op, which operates from a large convenience store at the very heart of the town centre and comprises most of the convenience floorspace in the town
- 5.45 Despite the relatively high vacancy rate, the defined centre includes more peripheral areas of the town beyond the main shopping area and consequently, secondary and tertiary shopping frontages falsely increase the vacancy rate.
- 5.46 The centre offers little in the way of landscaping and is bisected by Barnsley Road, which carries heavy traffic and reduces the environmental quality. However, there are plans for a Cudworth by-pass in the future. Free parking is also available in the form of a car park located in between the park and the shops. There are six bulky goods stores in Cudworth providing a cumulative total of 506 square metres of net bulky goods floorspace. The stores are located on the eastern side of the road along the busiest stretch of shopping frontage. The stores range in size between 145 square metres and 40 square metres and provide a top-up function only.

Summary

- 5.47 Cudworth is a linear centre along the A628 in the east of the catchment area. The centre is anchored by a Co-op which is supported exclusively by independent local traders. It is a fairly vibrant centre with a good number of vehicle movements. The centre caters for local needs.

Hoyland

- 5.48 Hoyland is situated 12.5 km south of Barnsley Town Centre and within 2 km of the M1 motorway. The B6797, which runs through the town, is not a busy route so the town is unlikely to draw much trade from outside of the town. There is a bypass which runs north of the town which caters for through traffic to the M1.
- 5.49 The town is a linear centre with retail units located on and around High Street and the Market. The market trades twice weekly.

Composition by Number of Outlets (2005)

Shopping Use	Percentage
A1 - Convenience	22.9
A1 - Comparison	29.2
A1 - Other	6.3
A2	6.3
A3	14.5
Vacant	12.5
Miscellaneous	8.3
Totals	100

- 5.50 There is national retailer representation by Kwik-Save and the Co-op, as well as high street banks and building societies including Barclays, Natwest and Halifax.
- 5.51 The vacancy rate of Hoyland of 8.3% is below the national average, which indicates that the town is trading well.
- 5.52 The town has three bulky goods stores, which are all located on the eastern side of the town centre. These are independent stores and provide 350 sq. m of retail floorspace in total. These bulky goods stores provide a top-up function.
- 5.53 There is a large area of free car parking on the southern side of the High Street behind the shops. This serves the town hall, the Kwik-Save and the Co-op, as well as other surrounding shops.
- 5.54 Hoyland is surrounded by a number of small villages which are dependant on it as a shopping centre. This justifies its designation as a Principle Town Centre, even though it does not have a significant role within the catchment area as a whole. As a consequence, the proposed retail development is unlikely to affect the retail strength of the town.

Summary

- 5.55 Hoyland is a linear centre to the south of the PCA. It is a key centre for surrounding villages but has recently struggled due to a bypass to the north of the town diverting traffic away from the town's facilities. The town has a relatively low vacancy rate, a twice weekly market and two nationally recognised convenience store. There are three independent comparison units which serve a top up function.

Penistone

- 5.56 Penistone is a traditional market town with a resident population of approximately 7,000. It is situated 12 km west of Barnsley close to the A628.

Composition by Number of Outlets (2005)

Shopping Use	Percentage
A1 - Convenience	17
A1 - Comparison	27.7
A1 - Other	8.5
A2	21.3
A3	19.1
Vacant	6.4
Miscellaneous	-
Totals	100

- 5.57 There are a number of small villages that are within the catchment area of the town, however, despite its close proximity to the A628 it is unlikely to draw custom from a wide area.
- 5.58 The shops are primarily located on Market Street, although they also extend along Shrewsbury Road, St. Mary's Street and Church Street.
- 5.59 National retailer representation is through a Spar and a Co-op, although the predominant land use is comparison retailing. There are three bulky goods units, a small electrical store, an interiors store and an appliance centre. These provide a total of 240 sq. m of floorspace and serve in a top-up capacity.
- 5.60 There are currently no vacant uses in Penistone which is an indication of the town performance. However, most of the units are traditional shops with limited floorspace and there is no visual evidence of any new retail development in recent years.
- 5.61 The town offers free car parking. The market currently trades two days a week, with an area of public open space provided when it is not trading.
- 5.62 Within the town, the church is currently a significant landmark. The area surrounding it provides an opportunity for future improvement.

Summary

- 5.63 Penistone is a traditional market town to the west of Barnsley, with a number of national convenience retailers. There is a high proportion of comparison retailers in the town and a total of 240 sq. m of bulky goods floorspace.

Wath Upon Dearne

- 5.64 Wath Upon Dearne is within Rotherham Borough. In recent years the visual impact on entering the town has been altered by the construction of a new Tesco Superstore on an edge-of-centre site to the north of the defined centre. There is also an edge-of-centre Netto store.
- 5.65 The B6096 (Biscay Way) is a busy road which severs the Tesco Store from the town centre. This creates a physical barrier for pedestrians to the store, but keeps the store separate from the town centre which helps to retain its traditional character and atmosphere.
- 5.66 The town centre is compact with the majority of units being located on High Street, with other town centre uses such as the library, doctors and college being located just off Montgomery Square. There is national retailer representation by a number of high street banks.
- 5.67 There are three bulky goods retailers in the town, an electrical store, a carpet store and a furniture store, providing a total of 150 sq. m retail floorspace.

Composition by Number of Outlets (2005)

Shopping Use	Percentage
A1 - Convenience	16.4
A1 - Comparison	27.9
A1 - Other	13.1
A2	9.8
A3	13.1
Vacant	6.5
Miscellaneous	13.2
Totals	100

5.67.1 Montgomery Square is a focal point for the town centre and provides public open space within Wath. This adds to the overall environmental quality of the centre, which is high due to the repaving of High Street and Montgomery Square and gives the impression of a pedestrianised centre. There are also pockets of greenery around the edges of the town centre car park.

- 5.68 Overall, the town centre appears to be performing reasonably well although there are a number of vacancies at the eastern end of High Street, which is the peripheral area of the town centre. While the vacancies are above the national average, the pedestrian footfall is fairly heavy.

Summary

- 5.69 Wath Upon Dearne is to the south of Barnsley within Rotherham Borough. The construction of a Tesco Store has had an impact on the town. The town has a number of high street banks and traditional town centre uses, along with three bulky goods stores. Although there are some vacancies the town seems to be performing well.

Chapeltown

- 5.70 Chapeltown is located 17 kilometres southwest of Barnsley and designated as a District Centre in the Sheffield Unitary Development Plan. It lies on the western side of the M1 motorway. It has good transport links to Sheffield, from the train station in the centre of the town.

Composition by Number of Outlets (2005)

Shopping Use	Percentage
A1 - Convenience	11.1
A1 - Comparison	25.9
A1 - Other	13
A2	18.5
A3	24.1
Vacant	5.6
Miscellaneous	1.8
Totals	100

- 5.71 The retail units are clustered around the train station and are dominated by an ASDA superstore. There is also national retailer representation by Tesco Metro, Blockbuster Video, KFC and a series of high street banks and building societies. Aside from a large proportion of A3 units (24.1%) the centre is dominated by comparison units.
- 5.72 There are two bulky goods stores in the centre, a vacuum cleaner unit and a computer store. These provide a total of 80 sq. m of floorspace. There is also an outdoor market in the town situated on a site close to the train station, helping to create a high pedestrian footfall in the centre.

Summary

- 5.73 Chapeltown is located to the southwest of the CA within Sheffield Borough and dominated by an ASDA superstore. There are also a series of national retailers and food outlets, and a large proportion of comparison units. Two of these are bulky goods stores in the centre, with a total of 80 sq. m of floorspace.

Mapplewell

- 5.74 Mapplewell is situated 5km north of Barnsley town centre. The A61 runs directly east of the town and provides a good link to Barnsley, Wakefield and Leeds.
- 5.75 The town is centred on the crossroads of the B6428 and the B6131, with most retail units situated in these two roads. There has been a mixed use urban regeneration project in the last five years in the south of the town centre.

Composition by Number of Outlets (2005)

Shopping Use	Percentage
A1 - Convenience	18.8
A1 - Comparison	20.8
A1 - Other	8.3
A2	6.3
A3	27.1
Vacant	14.6
Miscellaneous	4.2
Totals	100

- 5.76 The Co-op is the only national retailer in the town, although there are also several high street banks.
- 5.77 In the town Class A3 is the dominant use. These are located within the new development as well as along Towngate and the traditional facades in the centre.
- 5.78 Comparison goods account for 20.8% of the uses and there are three bulky goods units. Two of the units sell carpets and the other one sells predominantly furniture. In total they provide 210 sq. m of retail floorspace.
- 5.79 There are a large proportion of both vacant units and Class A3 uses, indicating that Mapplewell has been struggling to complete as a centre. However, the regeneration in the town shows that attempts are being made to regenerate the town, although the new development may have now increased the number of units beyond the level that there is demand for.
- 5.80 There is an area of free car parking to the south of the main crossroads.

Summary

- 5.81 Mapplewell is situated to the north of the Borough, centred on a crossroads. The town has benefited from an urban regeneration project in the last five years. Class A3 is the dominant use and there is only one nationally recognised unit. Comparison goods account for 20.8% of the uses in the town. However, the centre is fulfilling its role as a top-up facility.

Stairfoot

- 5.82 Stairfoot is located approximately 4 km south of Barnsley. It has a linear formation having evolved around Doncaster Road (A635), which is a major trunk road, and therefore has the potential to attract custom from beyond the locality.
- 5.83 To the east of the centre there is a major roundabout where the A635 meets the A633. Situated around this is a series of nationally recognised retailers and hot food outlets, including a Travel Lodge, Little Chef and Burger King within the defined centre of Stairfoot and a B&Q and McDonalds outside it.
- 5.84 There are two bulky goods units within Stairfoot comprising a total of 140 sq. m of floorspace. One unit sells floors coverings and the other is a motor repair shop. These provide a top-up function.
- 5.85 The predominant land use is Class A3 due to the large number of take away units. The vacancy rate is above average, and whilst the take away units stimulate the night time economy of the centre these leave dead frontages during the day.
- 5.86 There is on street parking to serve the smaller units in the town and dedicated car parks for the customers of the larger units.
- 5.87 The overall quality of the centre is poor, with the town being dominated by the trunk road and minimal public open space.

Summary

- 5.88 Stairfoot is approximately 4 km south of Barnsley. It is a linear town along a major trunk road, and attracts custom from beyond the locality.
- 5.89 To the east of the centre there is a series of nationally recognised retailers and hot food outlets, including a Travel Lodge, Little Chef and Burger King, B and Q and McDonalds around a roundabout. There are two bulky goods units with a total of 140 sq. m of floorspace providing a top up function, these are dominated by a large number of A3 units.

Health Check Summary

- 5.90 Barnsley is the primary retailing centre in the PCA and is performing well with a variety of both comparison and convenience retailers. Although the town centre is dominated by comparison retailers there is still a large number of retailer requirements in the town centre.
- 5.91 The town and district centres are all performing reasonably well. They are all represented by national retailers mainly by convenience store and high street banks. They appear to contain a very small proportion of bulky comparison floorspace and perform primarily a top-up function.

6. Existing Comparison Retail Warehouse Provision

Introduction

- 6.1 This section describes the main comparison retail warehouse facilities in the Primary Catchment Area (PCA) and other free-standing units.
- 6.2 The 15 minute drive-time incorporates the provision of the retail warehouses at the Peel Centre, Old Mill Lane, Twibwell Street and Wombwell Lane Retail Park, surrounding the site.
- 6.3 The retail warehouse floorspace in the catchment area is illustrated on the plan in Appendix II. Those retail warehouses that do exist appear to be predominantly selling 'bulky' goods other than a number of units at the Cortonwood Retail Park, such as Boots, Next and Asda Living.
- 6.4 The retail warehouse floorspace is concentrated in six areas as set out below:

Location	Store (year of opening)	Floorspace (m ² net)
Old Mill Lane, Barnsley	Vacant	832
	Wickes (1994)	2,056
	PC World	950
Twibwell Street, Barnsley	MFI (1982)	1,935
	Powerhouse	925
	Comet (1984)	751
The Peel Centre, Barnsley	Currys	1,488
	Halfords	952
	Focus DIY	3,400
	JJB	1,600
	Au Naturale	892
	Storey Carpets	1,336
	Factory Shack	600
Barnsley Retail Park, Wombwell Lane	Maplin	1,120
	Focus	1,975
	Harveys	790
	Allied Carpets	790
	Carpet Right	790

	Vacant	1,975
Lambra Road	Vacant	1,448
Stairfoot Business Park, Bleachcroft Way	B and Q	12,034
Lambra Road, Barnsley	Vacant	1,400
Cortonwood Retail Park	Argos (2003)	790
	B and Q (2001)	12,635
	Boots (2003)	790
	Matalan (2003)	3,958
	Next (2003)	1,580
	Sports Soccer (2003)	1,383
	SCS	1,580
	Halfords	1,185
	Asda Living	2,990

- 6.5 Retail warehousing throughout the primary catchment area (PCA) is of varying quality. Units are generally small and access, landscaping and design are not at the standards that would be demanded of any new retail warehouse unit or park. Furthermore, many of the units are dated, first generation facilities. The Cortonwood grouping of retail warehouses provides the highest quality facilities to both shoppers and occupiers.
- 6.6 There is small amount of committed retail floorspace in the PCA. This is identified in Table 5 in Appendix III. This is relevant when considering quantitative retail 'need' and sequential development sites.

Summary

- 6.7 There is a reasonable selection of retail warehouses in Barnsley selling a mix of both comparison and comparison 'bulky' goods. The warehouses are located within both retail warehouse parks and individually. They are of varying size and within varying distance of Barnsley Town Centre. The application site is in close proximity to existing facilities and is therefore in an existing retail location.

7. Quantitative Retail Need

Introduction

- 7.1 As discussed previously, PPS6 provides current national planning policy guidance on assessing proposed retail developments. The Statement of national planning policy was published on 21 March 2005 and updates previous statements of national planning policy on retailing.
- 7.2 In relation to the assessment of retail developments the Statement indicates that applicants should demonstrate evidence of the quantitative need for retail proposals. The Statement specifically notes at paragraph 2.33 that evidence of quantitative need should be given greater weight than evidence of qualitative need.
- 7.3 With regard to assessing the quantitative need for further retail development, PPS6 records at paragraph 2.34, the following key considerations:

- § *“existing and forecast population levels;*
- § *forecast expenditure for specific classes of goods to be sold, within the broad categories of comparison and convenience goods and for main leisure sectors; and*
- § *forecast improvements in productivity in the use of floorspace.”*

- 7.4 We set out below an assessment of quantitative need for the proposed retail development, in light of the guidance set out in PPS6.
- 7.5 The outline planning application which this Statement supports, seeks permission for retail use. In accordance with the policy background set out above, this economic assessment considers the economic capacity or quantitative retail need for the retail element of the development proposals.
- 7.6 The retail element comprises 1,960 sq. m of gross floorspace (1,568 sq. m net). We have assumed as set out in Section 3 and for the purpose of this statement that the proposed retail development will be for a comparison retail warehouse development.

Methodology

- 7.7 A logical step-by-step methodology to the assessment for the comparison goods has been adopted. Essentially, the steps in each case are as follows:
- (ii) Establish the population of Barnsley's Primary Catchment Area (PCA);
 - (iii) Establish the expenditure per head on comparison goods;
 - (iv) By a combination of steps (i) and (ii) establish the total available comparison expenditure;
 - (v) Detail the existing floorspace and approved schemes within the PCA together with their turnovers and the proportion of turnover that will be drawn from the PCA for comparison goods;

- (vi) By comparing the total available comparison expenditure (step (iii)) against the turnover of the existing facilities (step (iv)) any surplus comparison expenditure can be established;
- (vii) Calculate the comparison turnover of National Grid's proposals; and
- (viii) Establish the capacity of Barnsley, in terms of comparison retailing when compared to National Grid's proposals.

7.8 Experian's definitions of comparison goods have been utilised as follows:

7.9 Comparison goods:

- n *Clothing Material and Garments*
- n *Shoes and Other Footwear*
- n *Materials for Repair and Maintenance of the Dwelling*
- n *Furniture, Furnishings, Carpets and Other Floor Coverings*
- n *Household Textiles*
- n *Major Household Appliances*
- n *Small Electrical Household Appliances*
- n *Small Tools and Miscellaneous Accessories*
- n *Glassware, Tableware and Household Utensils*
- n *Major Tools and Equipment*
- n *Medical goods and Other Pharmaceutical Products*
- n *Therapeutic Appliances and Equipment*
- n *Bicycles*
- n *Recording Media*
- n *Games, Toys and Hobbies, Sport and Camping, Musical Instruments*
- n *Gardens, Plants and Flowers*
- n *Pets and Related Products*
- n *Books and Stationery*
- n *Audio Visual, Photographic, and Information Processing Equipment*
- n *Appliances for Personal Care*
- n *Jewellery, Clocks and Watches*
- n *Other Personal Effects*
- n *Non-Durable Household Goods (10%)*

7.10 Tables 1-9 contain analysis of the quantitative position in relation to the provision of further comparison goods floorspace within the PCA during the period to 2009. These tables can be found in Appendix III.

The Primary Catchment Area (PCA) and its Population

7.11 In order to inform the quantitative analysis, the PCA is based on a report from MapInfo. The boundary of the PCA is based on a 0-15 minutes off-peak drive time area from the proposal site as illustrated on the plan in Appendix II.

7.12 The projected populations for 2006 and 2009 have been calculated utilising MapInfo Population Projections.

7.13 The defined PCA has been utilised as a basis for the overall analysis and adequacy of provision generally. Effectively, the PCA is confined largely within the Borough boundary of Barnsley, although it extends partially into the Rotherham Borough.

Trading Date and Design Year

7.14 For the purpose of this report, we have presumed a design year of 2009. Assuming planning permission is granted in 2006, and the development is completed in 2007/2008, this allows for a 'settling down' period once trading commences of approximately 12 months to allow the trading patterns to mature.

Price Base

7.15 All monetary values expressed in this report are constant at 2003 prices. This is the most recent year for which values are available from MapInfo.

Comparison Goods Expenditure Per Capita

7.16 Table 2 outlines the expenditure per capita including in 2006 and 2009. A growth rate that represents the long term trend as set out by MapInfo has been utilised. Actual rates of growth have been applied for years 2004 and 2006 (i.e. 8.7%, 9.3% pa respectively). Then for the period 2006-2009 growth rate of 4.8% pa has been applied, as per Tables 1 and 3 of MapInfo Info Brief (05/2).

7.17 Expenditure that flows through non-retail outlets ("Special Forms of Trading") has been excluded on a good by good basis in accordance with detailed advice from MapInfo.

Total Available Comparison Goods Expenditure

7.18 The growth in expenditure per capita is mirrored in the total available expenditure that is detailed by Table 3. The total available comparison expenditure for 2006 and 2009 is £548.3 million and £636.9 million respectively.

7.19 Table 3 illustrates that in the period 2006 to 2009 there is growth of £88.6 million for comparison goods in the PCA.

Turnover of Existing Comparison Goods Facilities

7.20 The turnover of existing comparison outlets in the PCA is detailed in Table 4. Both town centre, principal and district centres are included, as well as all out-of-centre comparison floorspace in the PCA.

7.21 Floorspace data has been obtained from the Council, the Indigo Retail Assessment July 2005 and Experian GOAD Out of Centre Directory. Furthermore we have updated the information on tenants and vacancies through our field work.

7.22 The average turnovers of the out-of-centre outlets have been taken from the Corporate Intelligence document Retail Rankings 2005 Edition, with turnover figures for 2003 being used. Where a retailer is not listed in Retail Rankings, we have adopted the turnover estimate of a comparable national retailer. VAT at 17.5% has been added.

Retail Commitments

- 7.23 Table 5 details the existing comparison retailing commitments within the PCA. The floorspace figure for the existing commitments are taken from the Indigo Planning Statement 2005.

Capacity for Further Comparison Goods Provision

- 7.24 Table 6 compares the available expenditure in 2006 and 2009 with the turnover of existing and approved stores identified from Tables 4 and 5.
- 7.25 It is calculated that there is currently (2006) some £311m capacity in comparison goods expenditure. The analysis also indicates that in 2009 there will be an increased capacity to £378m.
- 7.26 Table 7 displays the Floorspace and Turnover of National Grid's Proposals. The total proposed comparison goods turnover is calculated as being £4.7m with the total proposed comparison floorspace turnover from the PCA is estimated at 80%. This is a very small proportion of the total available comparison goods expenditure.
- 7.27 Table 8 analyses the comparison goods floorspace capacity of the PCA for 2006 and 2009.
- 7.28 A test date of 2009 has been used to test National Grid's proposals against the PCA's capacity, as this will allow sufficient time for the proposals to gain planning permission, be built and settle down into regular trading patterns.
- 7.29 The analysis has also been done assuming 50% leakage of existing available expenditure out of the PCA.
- 7.30 It is shown that there is sufficient capacity within the PCA for development of the Old Mill Lane site, with a surplus of comparison expenditure after opening of the proposals of some £185 million.

Conclusion on Quantitative Need

- 7.31 In summary, we have demonstrated that there is the available expenditure in terms of both comparison goods facilities and bulky goods to support the growth of existing facilities in the Barnsley area.
- 7.32 In summary, it has been demonstrated that there is sufficient capacity for the proposed comparison floorspace at the Old Mill Lane site, when tested against the up-to-date retail data. With the projected growth in comparison expenditure increasing to a surplus of about c. £185m in 2009 after opening of the proposals. This is robust evidence of quantitative need.

8. Qualitative Retail Need

Introduction

- 8.1 As outlined in Section 4, PPS6 comments on the importance of considering the qualitative need for retail proposals. The Statement comments at paragraph 2.33 that whilst greater weight should be placed on quantitative need, evidence of qualitative need remains a key test for retail proposals. The Statement further notes that an assessment of qualitative need should consider:

- § *“An appropriate distribution of locations is achieved, subject to the key objective of promoting the vitality and viability of town centres and the application of the sequential approach, to improve accessibility for the whole community; and*
- § *Provision is made for a range of sites for shopping, leisure and local services, which allow genuine choice to meet the needs to the whole community, particularly the needs of those living in deprived areas.”*

- 8.2 Guidance is also provided in PPS6, indicating that other considerations may be relevant such as the degree to which existing retail units may be overtrading.
- 8.3 Further it notes at paragraph 2.37 that matters such as regeneration and employment creation are not necessarily indicators of retail need, however, they are important material considerations.
- 8.4 We consider below the key indicators of a qualitative need for the proposed retail development at Old Mill Lane, and also consider the material considerations of employment and regeneration.

Capacity in Physical Terms

- 8.5 The site is capable of accommodating the proposed retail unit including space for car parking, servicing and site access arrangements. It is severed from the rest of the Green Belt by the proposed link road to the south of the application site, and therefore does not encroach on the Green Belt as a whole.

Regeneration of a partly derelict site

- 8.6 Although there is a Green Belt allocation on a very small proportion of the site, there is also a need to regenerate a vacant site. The proposed development would clean up a currently contaminated former gas holder site, and visually enhance an area in need of regeneration that otherwise would be left vacant.

Extent and quality of existing retail warehouse facilities in the Catchment Area (CA)

- 8.7 In terms of qualitative need, it was widely acknowledged within the Barnsley Town Centre Study (Peter Shearman, 1996) and the Remaking Barnsley Masterplan, that Barnsley Town Centre lacks a range of large scale high quality retail provision, preventing it from more effectively competing with nearby shopping centres such as Wakefield and Doncaster,

and indeed the Meadowhall Regional Shopping Centre. The Masterplan states that:

“... the majority of this shopping is currently aimed at the local demographic in the 20-35 age range, with or without young families. These shops currently reflect the median local income rather than contributing to any aspirational shopping trend.”

- 8.8 It is evident from the information contained within Section 6 of this report that a large proportion of the retail warehouse provision within the PCA is dated and does not reflect the requirements of a modern retail warehouse operator. Providing scope for additional retail floorspace in this out of centre location will redress trade draw from competing centres and benefit the wider catchment area as a whole.
- 8.9 Retail warehousing throughout the PCA is of varying quality. Many units are small and access, landscaping and design are not at the standards that would be demanded of any new retail warehouse unit or retail park. The Cortonwood Retail Park does provide the highest quality facilities to both shoppers and occupiers having only opened in 2001.
- 8.10 In short, Barnsley is not as well provided with retail warehouses as other neighbouring boroughs leading to leakage of expenditure outside the PCA, as demonstrated in Section 7 of this report.
- 8.11 The proposed retail development, which would be of high quality, would help improve the current retail provision of both Old Mill Lane and Barnsley as a whole.

The proposal will be conveniently accessible by a choice of means of transport

- 8.12 The proposal site is likely to be accessible by a choice of transport modes other than the private car, particularly by buses and will assist in promoting sustainable transport use. It may also be possible to demonstrate that there is some linkage with the nearby retail units thus reducing vehicle mileage.
- 8.13 This is discussed in more detail in the transport assessment by Savell Bird and Axon that accompanies this report.

Retailer requirements/demand

- 8.14 We have undertaken a survey of retailer requirements for Barnsley using the FOCUS database. The table below illustrates the results for 'bulky' goods retailers:

Retailer	Floorspace requirement (sq. m net)
Tiles R Us	464-697
Pets at Home	464-1,115
Glyn Web Ltd	1,394-1,858
Dunelm Soft furnishings ltd	1,858-3,716

- 8.15 The survey has illustrated that there is demand from a range of retailers to locate in the Barnsley area with a requirement for a varying amounts of retail space.

Summary

- 8.16 We have demonstrated that there is a qualitative 'need' in Barnsley for the redevelopment of this site for retail use, alongside the demonstrated economic capacity and quantitative 'need'. The proposal site is partly derelict and contaminated and would greatly benefit from regeneration. The site is also easily accessed by a choice of transport, would improve the retail offer of Barnsley and help to meet the current retailer requirements in the town.

9. Retail Effects of the Proposal and Assessment of Scale

Introduction

- 9.1 The purpose of this section is to set out the likely effect of the proposal on the vitality and viability of the key centres within the Barnsley area and to assess the scale of the proposal.
- 9.2 The tables that are referred to in this section follow on from the assessment of capacity and quantitative need in Section 7 of this Statement. They are set out in full in Appendix III.

Methodology

- 9.3 For the purposes of this assessment we have used the design year of 2009. Assuming planning consent is granted in 2006, and the development is completed at the very end of 2007. This allows for a 'settling down' period once trading commences of approximately 12 months to allow the trading patterns to mature.
- 9.4 Table 4 in Appendix III sets out the existing turnover of comparison goods in Barnsley town centre, Principal and District centres and in out-of-centre retail parks.
- 9.5 In simple terms, modern, quality comparison goods stores compete on a like-for-like basis with other modern, quality stores. They do not generally compete with local comparison stores. These stores sit happily alongside existing facilities and perform a local convenient facility. These will continue to do so in the PCA if the application proposal is granted permission, just as they do within the existing retail hierarchy.
- 9.6 In practical terms the assessment of trade diversion has been interpreted accordingly with the most significant trade draw from the main stores that already attract comparison expenditure from within the PCA, that being out-of-centre-stores in Barnsley as detailed in Table 4.
- 9.7 Account has been taken to the location of stores in relation to the PCA, existing retail provision and the propensity for people to change their shopping patterns in the future.

Quantitative Analysis

- 9.8 On this basis, we have calculated the likely impacts on existing facilities in 2009 when the National Grid proposals are trading.
- 9.9 Given the estimated level of trade diversion, as shown in Table 9, the impact upon the turnover of Barnsley town centre will be just 0.7%.
- 9.10 The impact of the proposal upon the principal centres will 1 % and 1.8% for the smaller district centres. These centres perform a 'top-up' local comparison retailing role and will therefore be complimentary to the other comparison retailing facilities in the PCA.
- 9.11 This is not surprising given the small amount of turnover attributed to the proposed development (£4.7 million in 2009).

Consideration of the Scale of the Proposals

- 9.12 PPS6 states that the scale of proposed developments should relate to the role and function of the centre within the wider hierarchical network of

centres. Scale should also relate to the catchment population which the development proposes to serve.

- 9.13 We consider that the proposed retail development will be of a scale appropriate to the retail hierarchy in both Barnsley and the Primary Catchment Area. The development will enhance the retail provision in Barnsley to the benefit of the local community, particularly the Old Mill Lane corridor.

Barnsley Town Centre

- 9.14 As the findings of our economic assessment show, the National Grid proposals are unlikely to have a significant impact upon existing comparison goods facilities in the PCA.
- 9.15 We note that Barnsley town centre contains a range of convenience and comparison goods retailed by national and independent retailers. Our assessment of the health of the centre in Section 5 indicates that Barnsley is currently a vital and viable town centre which provides a good retail offer. The centre is supported by an extensive catchment population. Given the scale and strength of the centre, we do not consider that this level of impact will have a negative impact on the centre, or that the retail proposals will be out of scale with the existing provision in Barnsley.
- 9.16 Indeed we note that the National Grid proposals will comprise 1,960 m² of retail development which represents 4.39% of the comparison goods floorspace in Barnsley town centre and 1.54% of the total comparison floorspace in the PCA. This simple assessment indicates that the National Grid proposals will not be of sufficient size to have a significant impact upon the role or function of Barnsley Town Centre.
- 9.17 The Barnsley Unitary Development Plan sets out a hierarchy of centres within Barnsley and the wider area. The UDP place Barnsley as a sub-regional retail facility in the retail hierarchy. We consider that the National Grid proposals will assist in reducing the out-flow of expenditure to facilities outside the PCA. This will assist in enhancing the role and function of this locality as a retail destination.

Principal and District Centres in PCA

- 9.18 With regard to the role and function of the existing district centres in the PCA, we consider that the proposals will not have an impact upon these facilities. The principal centres of Cudworth, Wombwell, Hoyland, Penistone and Wath Upon Dearne, and the District Centres of Chapeltown, Mapplewell and Stairfoot are all recognised as important centres in the Barnsley Unitary Development Plan retail hierarchy. These facilities provide a predominantly convenience and service function, therefore the introduction of comparison retail facilities at Old Mill Lane will not have an impact upon the existing facilities.
- 9.19 The economic assessment concludes that the National Grid proposals will not have an impact upon the turnover of the existing district centres in the PCA. These facilities will continue to trade as existing and will remain vital and viable district centres.

Leakage and Clawback

- 9.20 It is clear that there is a substantial surplus of comparison goods and more specifically relevant goods expenditure within the PCA, in 2006 and 2009. We consider that this surplus expenditure is currently being spent outside the PCA at the likes of Meadowhall Shopping Centre which offers a range of comparison and relevant goods provided by a range of national retailers.
- 9.21 In terms of the latest national retail planning policy guidance in PPS6, this advocates reduced journey lengths and encourages linked trips to achieve social inclusion. Given this policy basis and the demonstrated leakage of expenditure from the PCA, it must surely be right to seek to clawback this expenditure to the PCA. The National Grid proposals will provide a modern quality shopping environment which will enhance the existing retail service in the PCA. The proposals will be located in an accessible location which will encourage a reduction in journey lengths and increase the propensity to undertake linked trips. The proposals will therefore encourage the retention of expenditure within the PCA.

Summary

- 9.22 PPS6 at paragraph 3.22, outlines the retail impact considerations that should be taken into account when assessing individual applications:
- n *“-the extent to which the development would put at risk the spatial planning strategy for the area and the strategy for a particular centre or network of centres, or alter its role in the hierarchy of centres;*
 - n *the likely effect on future public or private sector investment needed to safeguard the vitality and viability of the centre or centres;*
 - n *the likely impact of the proposed development on trade/turnover and on the vitality and viability of existing centres within the catchment area of the proposed development;*
 - n *changes to the range of services provided by centres that could be affected;*
 - n *likely impact on the number of vacant properties in the primary shopping area;*
 - n *potential changes to the quality, attractiveness, physical condition and character of the centre or centres and to its role in the economic and social life of the community; and*
 - n *the implications of proposed leisure and entertainment uses for the evening and night-time economy of the centre.”*
- 9.23 We can confirm that the application proposal:
- n *will not put at risk the strategy for any of the centres in the PCA. It is likely that the proposal will bring positive spin off benefits to the centres within PCA;*
 - n *is more than likely to have a positive effect on private sector investment needed to safeguard the vitality and viability the centres in the PCA. A positive spin-off effect is likely to be new investment in the area given the confidence that a new comparison development in the area will instil;*
 - n *is likely to promote and provide potential for improvement in the quality, attractiveness and character of the centres in the Barnsley area through competition and complementarily thus improving their role in the economic and social life of the community, particularly in relation to employment and social inclusion;*
 - n *is unlikely to lead to detrimental changes in any of the established retail centres in the Barnsley area, we consider that the proposal will be beneficial to the existing retail centres in the Barnsley area;*

- n will not alter significantly the range of services that the centres will continue to provide. We do not consider any shops will close as a result of this proposal. Conversely, the positive spin off effects of increased investment may in the medium term provide an impetus for the provision of services not currently provided in these centres;*
 - n will not increase the number of vacant properties. Conversely the positive image of a new comparison retail development in close proximity to other centres in the Barnsley area may result in increased investor confidence and retailer activity. Certainly there is more than enough capacity for the proposal and additional retail floorspace in the existing town centres in the catchment area;*
 - n will not have a detrimental impact upon the quality, attractiveness, physical condition or character of the centres in the Barnsley area and will enhance the role of existing centres in the economic and social life of the community through the clawback of expenditure; and*
 - n the implications of proposed leisure and entertainment uses for the evening and night-time economy of the centre."*
- 9.24 The scale of the proposed retail development would not have a significant impact upon existing comparison goods retailing of the existing centres within the PCA, with a minimal impact on Barnsley Town Centre.
- 9.25 In short, the impact on the vitality and viability of existing centres is not significant. Moreover, the proposal will enhance investor confidence in the PCA, to the benefit of the strength of the existing centres.

10. Sequential Appraisal

- 10.1 PPS6 requires that a sequential approach to site selection should be applied to all development proposals for main town centre uses for sites that are not in an existing centre, or allocated in an up-to-date development plan document. This approach is also reflected in the retail policies set out in the adopted Barnsley UDP.
- 10.2 The purpose of this section is to consider potential town and edge-of-centre sites using the 'sequential approach' to site selection.
- 10.3 The sequential approach requires that locations are considered in the following order:
- n *"first, locations in appropriate existing centres, taking account of an appropriate scale of development in relation to the role and function of the centre; and then*
 - n *edge-of-centre locations, with preference given to sites that are well-connected to the centre; and then*
 - n *out-of-centre sites, with preference given to sites which are or will be well served by a choice of means of transport and which are close to the centre and have a high likelihood of forming links with the centre."*
- 10.4 In considering alternative sites, Planning Authorities are required to give weight to those locations that best serve the needs of deprived areas.
- 10.5 Where it is argued that otherwise sequentially-preferable sites are not appropriate for the particular development proposed, applicants should provide clear evidence to demonstrate why such sites are not practicable alternatives in terms of:
- n *"Availability: the sites are unavailable now and are unlikely to become available for development within a reasonable period of time; and*
 - n *Suitability: with due regard to the requirements to demonstrate flexibility, the sites are not suitable for the type of development proposed; and*
 - n *Viability: the development would not be viable on these sites."*
- 10.6 We consider below the National Grid retail proposals in light of the sequential approach set out in PPS6.

Methodology

- 10.7 We have already identified the 'need' in quantitative and qualitative terms for the proposed non-food retail development.
- 10.8 To disaggregate the non-food retail facilities into separate facilities would only serve to replicate provision which already exists within Barnsley and the PCA (i.e. sporadic siting of non-food retail warehouse uses rather than a purpose built facility in an accessible location). Furthermore, disaggregating the proposal into smaller units would not bring about the qualitative improvements to comparison shopping in Barnsley.
- 10.9 Notwithstanding this, an assessment of all potential retail development sites and of the vacant units within existing centres has been undertaken to examine the potential for accommodating the proposals within or on the edge of the town centre and the relevant district centres.
- 10.10 The purpose of this section is to consider potential alternative retail sites in the PCA of the proposed store. Barnsley is the primary centre to be considered.

10.11 Assessment of the individual sites has been based upon their suitability, viability for the proposed use and availability. The approach to identifying possible development opportunities has been flexible and a number of factors have been incorporated into the search criteria:

- *“Size of site and capacity to accommodate the type of development proposed, although PPS6 advises that this criteria should not be applied too rigidly as developers and retailers are required to be flexible on their requirements;*
- *current use of a site and its likely availability for development within a reasonable time period (a key test in PPS6);*
- *current ownership - single or multiple - and the ease with which the site could be assembled;*
- *current traffic and highways conditions, accessibility by foot, bus and cycle as well as by car and the effect on this caused by the proposal;*
- *UDP allocation of the site and the UDP strategy.”*

10.12 We set out below an assessment of sequential sites.

Development Plan Allocations

Site East of Tesco, Wombwell Lane, Barnsley

10.13 A site exists adjacent to the Wombwell Lane Retail Park which is small in size (1.2 hectares) and is in an out-of-centre location. It has an approximate potential capacity of 3,252 sq. m for retail floorspace and is allocated for bulky goods retail floorspace.

10.14 This site is similar to the Old Mill Lane site in its proximity to Barnsley Town Centre and potential to generate linked trips. However this site does not provide the same opportunity to redevelop a previously-developed site in the same way that National Grid's proposals do. Although the site is available it is not as suitable as the site at Old Mill Lane. Furthermore it is no more sequentially preferable.

Polar Motors Site, Wombwell Lane, Barnsley

10.15 The site lies on Wombwell Lane and is 2.5 hectares in size. It is currently allocated for the retailing of bulky goods within the existing Development Plan and has the potential to accommodate 3,252 sq. m of retail floor space. The site is in an out-of-centre location and is no more sequentially preferable to the National Grid's site.

10.16 This site also lies adjacent to an existing retail park, and is therefore likely to be subject to the same issues as the application site.

10.17 In simple terms the site is no more suitable or viable a sequential preference than Old Mill Lane.

Vacant Units and Town Centre Sites

Land Adjacent to Library, Cudworth

10.18 This small site (0.4 hectares) is located within the town centre of Cudworth. It is situated adjacent to the library and has the potential to accommodate approximately 1,000 sq. m of retailing floor space. The site is unlikely to be

able to accommodate the amount of retail floorspace proposed on the Old Mill Lane site, and being situated in Cudworth it is not going to generate linked trips to Barnsley Town Centre.

- 10.19 This site is not suitable or viable for bulky-goods retail floorspace.

Former Pioneer Store, Barnsley

- 10.20 This site is approximately 1 hectare in size and situated within Barnsley Town Centre. The former pioneer store has an approximate potential retail capacity of 5,365 sq. m. The store closed in early 2005 and has been placed on the market for redevelopment. Possible uses of the site have been cited as for a hotel, new retail, offices, residential and car parking. This site is not available or suitable for bulky-goods retail floorspace given the current proposals. Furthermore, the re-development of this site would not provide the same regeneration benefits.

Former Clothing Direct Store, Barnsley

- 10.21 The former Clothing Direct Store on Shambles Street is 0.3 hectares in size and has the potential capacity of approximately 4,326 sq. m of retail floor space.
- 10.22 The site is currently subject to an outline application (submitted 10 November 2005) for mixed use redevelopment to include a multi-storey hotel, conference centre, residential and associated car parking.
- 10.23 The three town centre sites that have been identified all have the capacity to accommodate the proposed retail floorspace at Old Mill Lane. However, they are not as suitable and sequentially preferable as the Old Mill Lane site in that they do not provide the same opportunity to bring a site in need of remediation back into use.
- 10.24 This site is not available, suitable or viable for bulky-goods retail floorspace.

Summary

- 10.25 While there are a number of sites available within the PCA of an appropriate size to accommodate the retail floorspace proposed at Old Mill Lane, they do not offer the same redevelopment potential as the National Grid proposal.
- 10.26 Unlike all of the above sites the Old Mill Lane site is in a key gateway location on a major route into Barnsley town centre. The proposed redevelopment will therefore not only ensure the much needed remediation of a vacant former gas holder site, but improve the image of Barnsley for those entering the town via this key gateway route.
- 10.27 In summary, we have not identified any suitable, available or viable sites within or on the edge of the centre of the primary centre in the PCA which meet the need where it arises or the request to regenerate a contaminated, previously-developed site in a gateway to Barnsley town centre. In conclusion the proposals do not conflict with objectives of the Barnsley UDP or PPS6 in relation to the application of the sequential approach.

11. Other Relevant Planning Issues

Regeneration Benefits

- 11.1 Previous sections have highlighted the policy goals of regeneration across the Borough as a whole, and the particular initiatives focussed on the town centre. This section explains how the proposed development will facilitate regeneration of the subject site and the benefits this will have for the wider community.
- 11.2 As an indicator of the need for regeneration within the Borough, Barnsley was ranked the 16th most deprived District out of 354 English Districts within the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000 (i.e. within the top 5% nationwide). Such indicators of deprivation led to the District obtaining Objective 1 funding status in 1999. By implication, Barnsley is one of Europe's poorest areas.
- 11.3 Turning to the benefits of the enclosed application, the subject site is widely acknowledged within the UDP, SPG and Masterplan as comprising a prime gateway site into the town centre. The site also comprises a vacant previously-developed site; one of the underlying objectives of Central Government Guidance is to positively promote and facilitate the redevelopment of such sites, thereby contributing to regeneration and urban renaissance.
- 11.4 The enclosed application would fully comply with these objectives, through the development of a modern building in a sustainable location that would serve to draw customers in to the town centre. The redevelopment of this rundown site would serve to enhance the image and perception of Barnsley by visitors entering the town via this key gateway location.
- 11.5 All of the regeneration policies and documents produced by, and in conjunction with the Council, ranging from the UDP through to the Remaking Barnsley Masterplan, aim to increase the prosperity of the Borough through job creation. The site has remained vacant and unused for a significant period of time. The longstanding period of inactivity has not contributed to the economic aspirations of the Council. The proposals provide the opportunity to bring the site back into active use with the resulting creation of new jobs within Barnsley. Whilst the precise number of jobs to be created at present is unknown, as this will be dependant on the occupier, there will be a net benefit from the current baseline position. Furthermore, retail jobs are generally drawn from the local area and would provide the opportunity for people from the local community to receive specialist training which will assist their prospect of job retention, and enhance their job seeking prospects. In addition, the anticipated knock on benefits for the health of the town has merits in terms of job retention and creation.
- 11.6 Furthermore, there is the potential that operators could be attracted to the proposed development who are not presently represented in Barnsley. The draw of the development will represent new investment to the town, and would not result in the displacement of existing jobs. The site also benefits from being situated adjacent to a Quality Bus Corridor and the new proposed link road, which make the site more accessible and viable.
- 11.7 In summary therefore the proposals would result in a net benefit to the existing employment situation within the local community.

Design

- 11.8 The layout of the scheme was one of the main concerns of Planning Officers with respect to the previously submitted retail proposals in Barnsley. Primarily, Officers are concerned that schemes do not maximise the potential of prominent gateway locations. Whilst the indicative site layout enclosed with the application is merely submitted for illustrative purposes, it seeks to demonstrate a design solution to the problems of the previous proposals.
- 11.9 The visuals that accompany this report show through the design of the proposed retail unit there will be imaginative treatment of the roofline of the building. This will create visual interest, and a suitable and distinctive feature for this gateway location. This would be reflective of the high quality and modern approach advocated within the Barnsley Masterplan.

12. Conclusion

- 12.1 This Planning and Retail Statement supports a proposal by National Grid for the development of retail warehouse comprising 1,960 sq. m gross of retail floorspace at Old Mill Lane, Barnsley.
- 12.2 This Statement provides data in terms of the health checks, qualitative and quantitative assessments, sequential approach and addresses PPS6 in full.
- 12.3 The aim of the National Grid proposals is to provide improved customer choice through the provision of additional comparison retail facilities with a diverse range and depth of stock. This retail offer will complement and enhance the existing range of comparison retail facilities in the PCA and reduce the need to travel outside the PCA for such facilities.
- 12.4 The National Grid proposals will be located in a position which is accessible by a choice of means of transport.
- 12.5 The application site is currently an area of derelict land adjacent to Old Mill Lane. The proposed development will regenerate the application site and will enhance the regeneration of Old Mill Lane and the wider Barnsley area.
- 12.6 The proposals will deliver a range of employment uses on the vacant application site. The development will deliver a range of direct and indirect employment positions in an accessible location which will assist in achieving social inclusion within the community.
- 12.7 We demonstrate in Section 7 of this Statement that there is quantitative need for the development proposals. We demonstrate that even allowing for existing commitments, following the completion of the non-food retail proposals at Old Mill Lane there will be a surplus of expenditure to support the growth of existing facilities in the Barnsley area. Primarily, we would expect this to be taken up by facilities in Barnsley town centre.
- 12.8 On the basis of this economic capacity we do not consider that the trade diverted to the proposed comparison retail development will have a significant impact upon the vitality and viability of existing centres within the PCA. Moreover, the proposal will enhance investor confidence in the PCA, to enhance the strength of the existing centres. We therefore consider that the retail warehouse proposals will be in scale with the existing retail provision in the PCA.
- 12.9 With regard to sequential approach, we have demonstrated in Section 10 that there are no suitable, viable or available sites or vacant units within or on the edge of the existing centres in the PCA, that are capable of accommodating the application proposal.
- 12.10 The location of the proposed development will provide the best balance of modern comparison shopping to serve the future needs of the south west of the town, and promotes a sustainable pattern of development, well located in relation to the areas that they serve, and accessible by public transport, foot and cycle.
- 12.11 The redevelopment of the National Grid site would have no adverse impact on the main purposes of Green Belt policy to prevent urban sprawl of built-up areas and to prevent neighbouring towns from merging.
- 12.12 Furthermore, the encroachment on the Green Belt will be insignificant, with the small area of land proposed for redevelopment being severed from the rest of the Green Belt by the proposed new link road. The areas of both designated Green Belt and Urban Greenspace will therefore no longer

- provide any visual or functional linkage to the rest of the Green Belt/Greenspace, nor has any impact on the openness upon it.
- 12.13 We have demonstrated that there are very special circumstances in this case why the release of a very small area of land from the Green Belt is appropriate.
- 12.14 The redevelopment of the National Grid site would assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of urban land, and provide social and economic benefits. If development was unable to take place this site would be left vacant and provide no benefits to either Barnsley or the Green Belt.
- 12.15 The application site also lies on a primary route into Barnsley Town Centre. A well designed retail development will create visual interest, and a suitable and distinctive feature for this gateway location, as promoted by the Barnsley Masterplan.
- 12.16 In short, National Grid's proposal provides an opportunity to ensure the regeneration and remediation of a currently contaminated previously-developed site, that otherwise would remain vacant.

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SEPTEMBER 2006