

Rockingham Phase 1

Employment-led Mixed Use Development

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LPA reference: **2014/1055**

Subject/title: **Town Centre Uses: Catchment Area and Sequential Assessment**

INTRODUCTION

This note is supplementary to the planning application for employment-led mixed use development (Rockingham 1) located north of the Dearne Valley Parkway (LPA ref. 2014/1055). As the development proposal includes an element of food/drink and hotel accommodation, officers have requested an indication of the catchment area of these uses to allow assessment against national and local planning policy for town centre uses.

This note provides further explanation of the proposed town centre use and assesses these in the context of relevant policy and in relation to nearby designated centres, thereby demonstrating that the sequential test is satisfied.

NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK AND PLANNING PRACTICE GUIDANCE

The application site is out-of-centre in National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) terms. Paragraph 24 of the NPPF states that:

“Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan. They should require applications for main town centre uses to be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations and only if suitable sites are not available should out of centre sites be considered. When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre. Applicants and local planning authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale.”

To meet the terms of the sequential test, alternative sites within a realistically defined catchment should be considered for their availability, suitability and viability. Only if no such alternative, sequentially-preferable sites exist is the sequential test passed.

It is important to note that the NPPF is silent on the need for applications for town centre uses in out-of-centre locations to demonstrate whether the proposed development can be disaggregated into specific parts at one or more sequentially-preferable site. This, and more generally the importance of having regard for the commercial requirements of developers in the application of the sequential test, is reinforced by recent legal judgements (including Tesco v Dundee in the Scottish Supreme Court).

The national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) further states that the sequential test 'should recognise that certain main town centre uses have particular market and locational requirements which mean that they may only be accommodated in specific locations' (paragraph 011). Officers have confirmed already that disaggregation does not need to be considered given the nature and function of the uses proposed.

As demonstrated in the submitted Planning Statement (Section 8), the complementary town centre uses proposed at the application site are key to the success and delivery of the site as a whole and will provide (inter alia) essential support for the employment-led scheme. No alternative site could support this identified need and function. That said, for completeness and in order to satisfy the sequential test, alternative sites within a realistic catchment are considered below in terms of their availability, suitability and viability to accommodate the town centre uses proposed.

LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

Emerging planning policy in the Local Plan Consultation Draft 2014 reflects the National Planning Policy Framework. Draft Policy TC1 on Town Centres (and the corresponding Core Strategy Policy CSP1) states that:

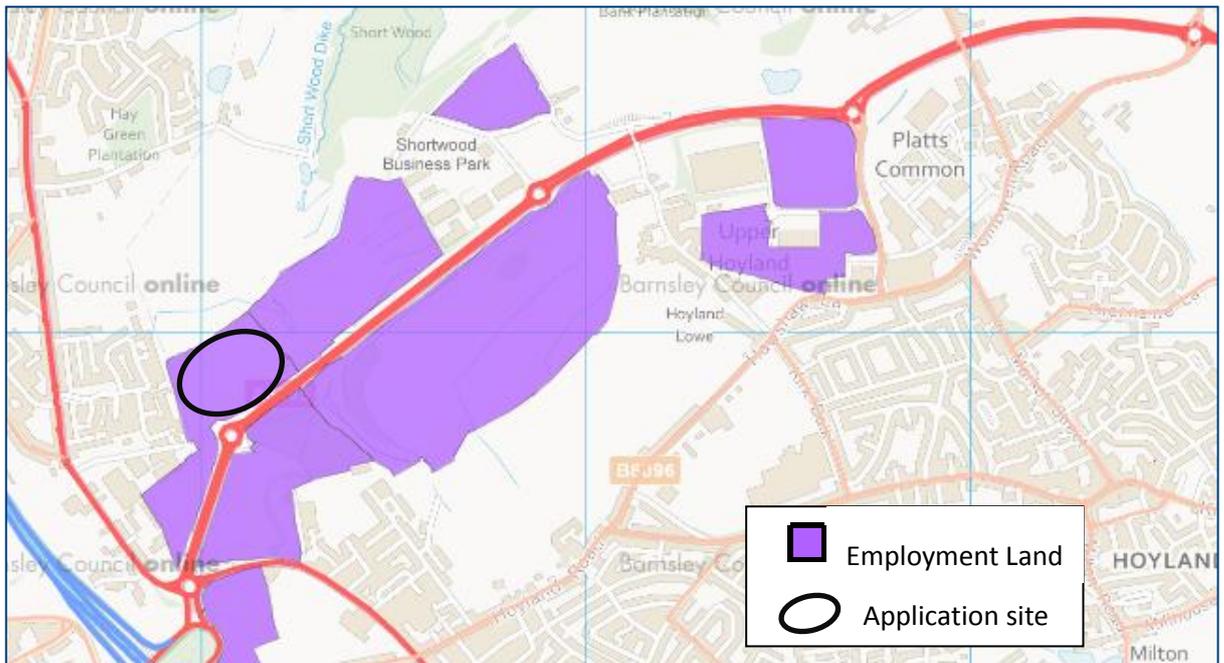
"Edge of centre and out of centre development will only be allowed where it meets the requirements of NPPF."

Officers have confirmed already that an Impact Assessment is only required for retail and leisure development (as per draft Policy TC3) and is therefore not applicable to this proposal.

ASSESSMENT

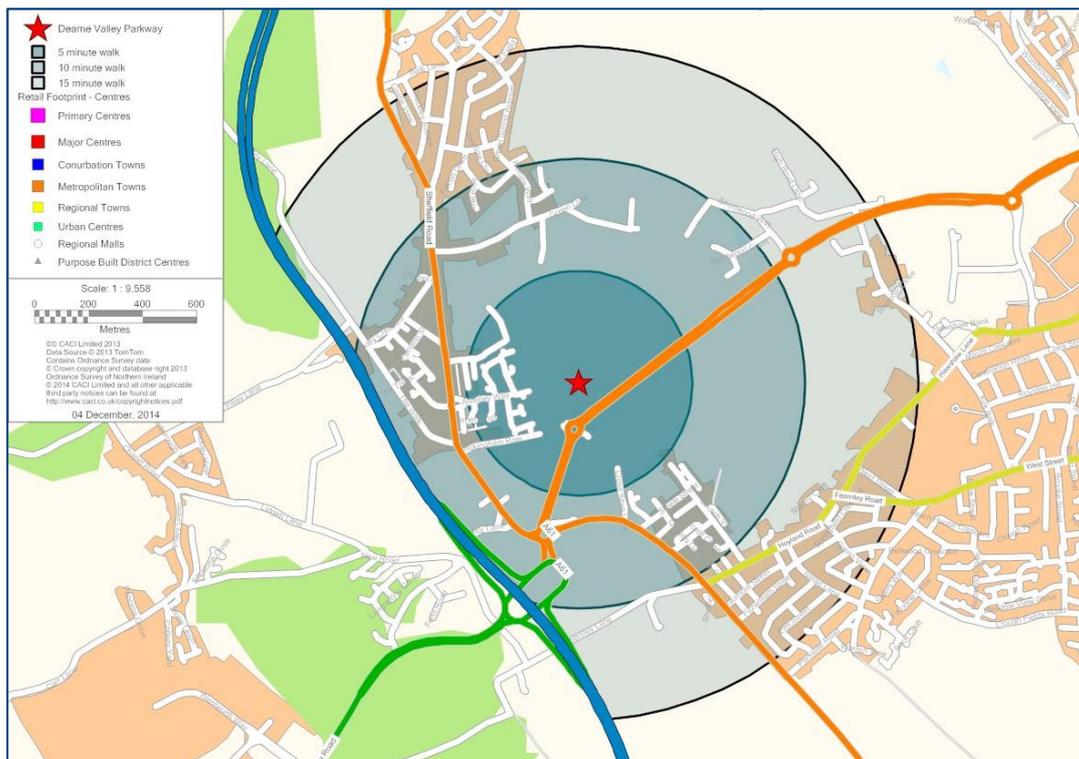
The notes and diagrams below seek to identify the realistic catchment area of the town centre uses forming part of the Rockingham Phase 1 employment led mixed use development and to demonstrate that whilst this is an 'out of centre' location there are no sequentially preferable sites which are available and suitable for the delivery of this scheme.

1. The town centre uses comprise food & drink (A3/A4/A5) of up to 1900sqm and a hotel (C1) of up to 2700sqm. As outlined in the Planning Statement, the catchment of these will be generated by the following users:
 - users of the proposed development (and future phases);
 - passers-by; and
 - local people (food/drink only).
2. The catchment area of users of the proposed development is that of the Dearne Valley Parkway sites only, as broadly indicated in the map extract below. All food/drink and accommodation elements of the scheme will serve users of the Dearne Valley Parkway developments.



Extract of draft Development Sites and Places DPD Proposals Map (October 2014) showing Employment Land Allocations only

3. The catchment of passers-by is indeterminable, but importantly, the use does not generate the trip as they are passing already. The drive-thru provision within the scheme will primarily serve customers who are passers-by.
4. The catchment of local people is those, realistically, within walking distance, for which we may allow up to 15 minute walk-time radius. The 'town centre uses' should benefit the local population but would not be a destination from further afield. It is expected that local people will primarily use the pub/restaurant element of the scheme and may access this on foot.



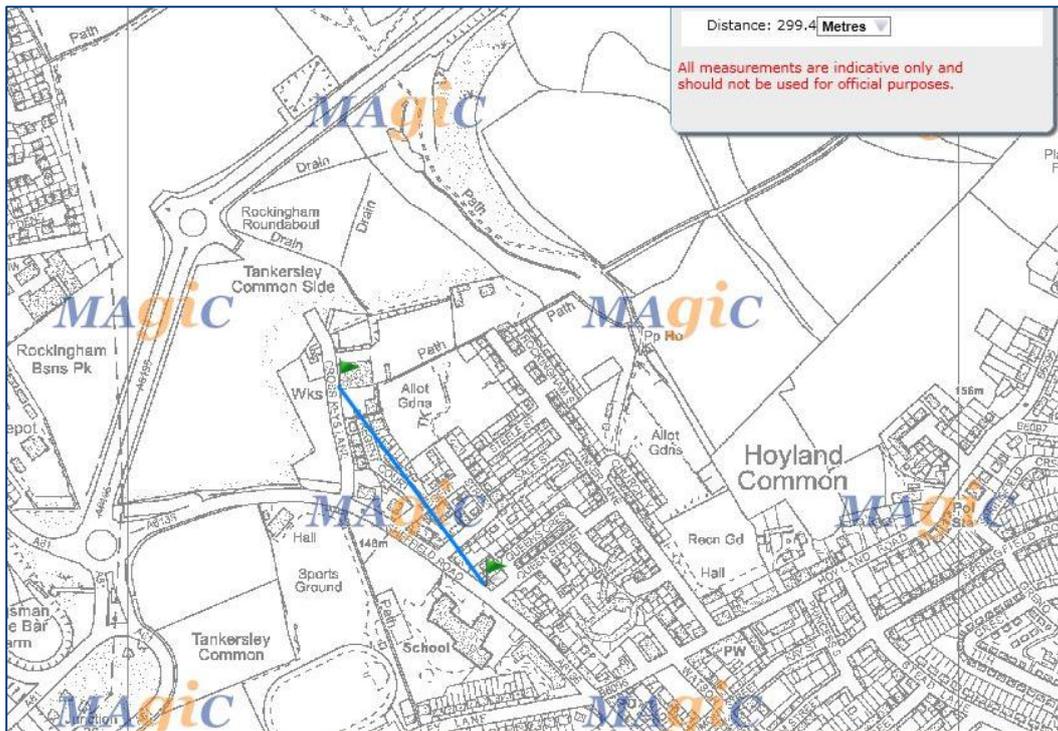
5, 10 and 15 minute walk time radii (not to stated scale) at speed 5km/h (5 minutes: 417m, 10 minutes: 833m, 15 minutes: 1,250m)

5. The walk-time radius is shown in the diagram above, excluding land west of the M1 which forms a barrier to pedestrian movement. This shows a small residential population lies within a five or ten minute walk of the site. A larger population including areas of Hoyland and Worsbrough lies within a 15 minute walk.
6. A node based drive time isochrone will not be representative of the actual operation of the site and uses, especially given its location close to the motorway junction and main distributor roads, which will generate a very large area within a short drive time. For instance, the main urban areas of Sheffield, Rotherham and Barnsley are accessible within a 10 minute drive from the site.
7. The nearest local centre is at Sheffield Road/Hoyland Road, Hoyland Common (as shown on the map extract below), the nearest point of which falls within the 10 minute walk radius, with the majority falling with 15 minutes. Google maps data indicates the nearest point to be a 2 minute drive from the site.



Extract of UDP Proposals Map, which is essentially consistent with the draft Development Sites and Places DPD Proposals Map (October 2014), showing location of local and district centres

8. Given the scale and function of the development proposed, there is no site within the Hoyland Common local centre capable of accommodating the development.
9. There is also not considered to be any suitable site available at the edge of this centre. The NPPF defines 'edge of centre' as a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. A linear distance of 300m from the nearest point of the Hoyland Common local centre in the direction of the application site is shown on the diagram below.



Indication of 300m linear distance from edge of Hoyland Common Local Centre

10. Whilst a small part of the land west of Cross Keys Lane which is subject of an employment allocation does lie within 300m of the local centre boundary, this site is considered feasible to accommodate the proposed development given its emerging proposed use for highways infrastructure as part of the Birdwell Junction improvement scheme as shown on the diagram below from the current planning application.



Extract of Birdwell Junction improvement scheme proposed layout drawing

11. The next nearest centre is Hoyland High Street, which is a 30+ minute walk or 5 minute drive (Google) at the nearest point. Then the next nearest centre is Park Street, Worsbrough which is a 50+ minute walk or 6 minute drive (Google) at the nearest point. These centres lie outside of a reasonable walking catchment area. Nevertheless, given the scale and function of the development proposed there is not considered to be any site within or on the edge of these designated centres capable of accommodating the development.

CONCLUSION

Given the nature and location of the proposed development and the quite specific catchment area/population of its use, a drive time generated catchment is not considered to be applicable and no isochrones diagram is provided.

A more accurate catchment has been considered as that being comprised of the Dearne Valley Parkway development sites and a 15 minute walk radius from the site. Hoyland Common local centre lies within this 15 minute walk catchment.

There are no suitable or available sites for the development proposed within this centre. There are no suitable or available sites for a development of the nature/function of that proposed on the edge (i.e. within 300m) of the Hoyland Common local centre.

Accordingly, the subject site satisfies the sequential test for a development of the scale and function proposed.