Report

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Employment Land Report

Twibell Street, Barnsley

Peel Holdings Ltd

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gva.co.uk

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For and on behalf of GVA Ltd

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 GVA has been instructed by Peel Holdings Ltd to prepare an employment land assessment to support a planning application for the redevelopment of land to the north of Twibell Street, Barnsley.

1.2 The application site as a whole extends to approximately 6 hectares (15 acres) of which 0.6ha is allocated for employment use within the Barnsley Unitary Development Plan.

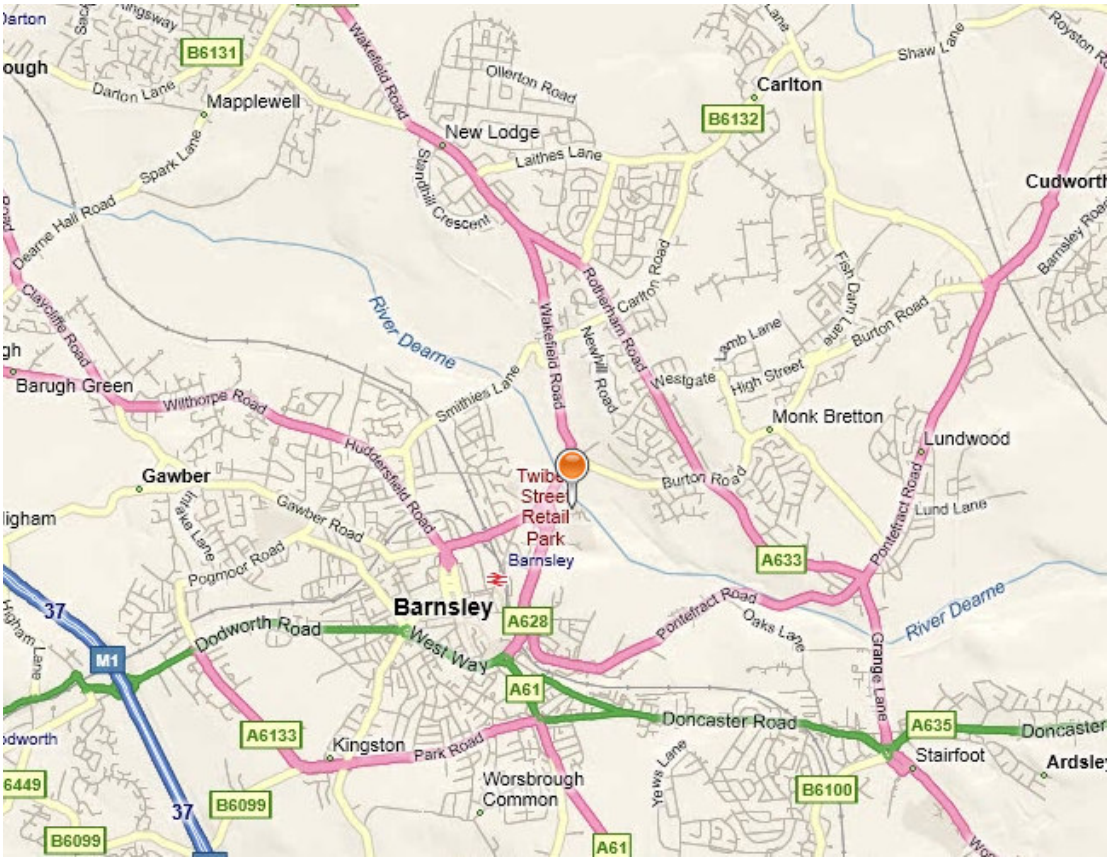
1.3 This report will demonstrate that the loss of this area of employment land to an alternative retail use will not have a demonstrable impact of the supply of employment land within the Borough.

1.4 Furthermore it will demonstrate that the proposed use, although not included within the traditional definition of 'employment uses' will generate a significant number of jobs across the wider site and will contribute to the wider regeneration of the area.

2 Site Context

2.1 The application site is located to the north east of Barnsley city centre as shown in figure 1.1 and is approximately 6 hectares in size.

Fig 1.1 Strategic Location



Source: Bing Maps

2.2 The site is bounded by Old Mill Lane (A61) to the west, Burton Road to the north, Twibell Street to the south and woodland to the east. The existing access to the site is from Twibell Street, with the northern element of the site accessed from the A61.

2.3 Access to the M1 is achieved via Junction 37 which is approximately 4 km from the site with a drive time of approximately 7 minutes.

Existing Uses

2.4 The application site currently comprises a number of uses which include retail units occupied by Howden's, Plumb Centre, Comet and formerly Powerhouse and MFI in the south eastern part of the site. This area is allocated as 'other commercial retail centre' in the Barnsley UDP.

2.5 The northern section of the site is located within the Green Belt and includes brownfield land previously occupied by a retail unit. A high quality bus corridor is currently under construction to the north of the site and once completed will form the northern boundary of the site and will provide the main proposed site access route.

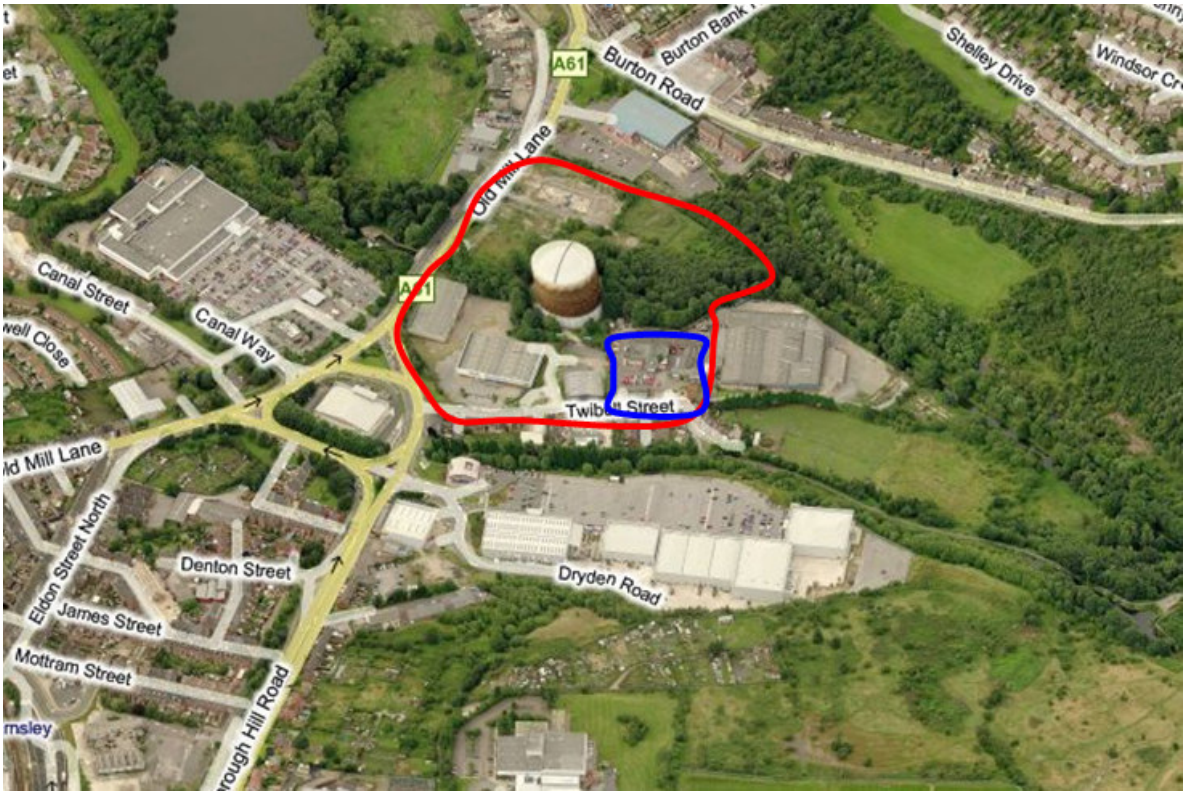
2.6 The central part of the site adjacent to the River Dearne is occupied by a gas holder, which will be removed as part of the proposed development.

2.7 Finally, the eastern part of the site contains a range of depot buildings, which have most recently been occupied by Berneslai Homes for use as storage and offices but are now vacant. To the east of this and outside the application site is a Booker Cash & Carry.

2.8 The former depot and cash and carry occupy a site allocated for employment use (B1/B2/B8), within the Barnsley UDP and the site forms part of Barnsley City Council's employment land supply.

2.9 The red outline in figure 1.2 identifies the extent of the application site with the blue outline indicating the part of the site that is currently allocated for employment use.

Fig 1.2 Aerial View of the Twibell Street Site



Source: Bing Maps

3. EMPLOYMENT LAND POLICY

3.1 The Development Plan for the purposes of determining this application comprises of the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012), the Barnsley Core Strategy (September 2011) and the Unitary Development Plan (December 2000).

3.2 For the purposes of this assessment the Barnsley Employment Land Review (April 2010) also forms part of the evidence base and provides the most up to date analysis of employment land provision in the Borough.

National Planning Policy Framework

3.3 The recently published NPPF replaces the previous range of planning policy statements and guidance and sets out the Government's framework for the planning system, based on a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The full extent of the policy guidance within the NPPF is reviewed in the Planning Statement accompanying the application submission.

3.4 In employment terms, paragraph 22 states that planning policies should avoid the long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose. Land allocations are to be regularly reviewed and where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits, having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support sustainable local communities.

3.5 More widely the NPPF supports the regeneration of brownfield sites in particular and recognises the contribution that development on such sites can have on the growth of communities and the local economy.

3.6 Local Planning Authority's are required to review their Local Plans in light of the NPPF and to ensure the guidance offered is consistent.

Barnsley Core Strategy

3.7 Barnsley's Core Strategy was adopted in September 2011 and sets out a range of strategic policies which underpin a vision for achieving economic growth in Barnsley.

3.8 Policy CSP11 states that 350ha of employment land will be allocated in sustainable locations to meet the development needs of existing and future industry and business up to 2026. A five year supply of market ready sites is to be maintained throughout the period of the plan.

3.9 Barnsley Town Centre is identified as a focus for office development and employment in new technologies such as creative digital media and communications.

3.10 The justification text of Policy CSP11 acknowledges that economic development, as defined in the NPPF, encompasses a wide range of activities including defined town centre uses. It states that some activities are defined as main town centre uses and that these will be expected to be focused in town centres, with many of the remaining uses appropriately located on employment land.

3.11 The Development Sites & Places DPD is to review and allocate employment land. In considering which existing employment land allocations will be carried forward into the DPD, the supporting text to CSP11 states that allocations which are no longer fit for purpose will be de-allocated and replaced by new sites which better meet the needs of modern industry.

3.12 Of the 350ha of employment land to be allocated across the Borough, Policy CSP12 allocates 130-155ha in Urban Barnsley.

3.13 Policy CSP19 looks to retain existing employment land, or land last used for employment use. It states that redevelopment for non-employment uses will only be permitted if:

- Redevelopment would not result in a loss of existing jobs or employment potential; and
- There will still be an adequate supply of employment land in the locality.

Subject to the above, redevelopment will be allowed where it can be demonstrated that:

- The buildings or land cannot satisfactorily support continued employment use.

Barnsley UDP (December 2000)

3.14 The Barnsley UDP was adopted in December 2000, significantly pre-dating the latest town centre retail guidance set out in the NPPF. As such, many of the employment

land policies in the UDP are outdated, with some having been superseded by the Core Strategy. However, relevant 'saved' policies are summarised as follows:

3.15 Policy ED7 states that areas defined on the Proposals Map as employment policy areas will remain in employment use and that development will normally be permitted for business, industry and distribution uses. Other employment generating uses, excluding A1 and A2 may also be permitted by Policy ED7 if they are compatible with adjoining uses.

Barnsley Employment Land Review (April 2010)

3.16 The ELR was published in April 2010, assessing the adequacy and suitability of Barnsley's current portfolio of sites against the predicted need and demand for employment land up to and including 2026.

3.17 To inform the ELR, an assessment was carried in April 2008 to evaluate the remaining 150 ha of employment land allocated in the UDP. A substantial part of this allocated employment land (52.36ha) was identified as being taken up or constrained from future development by end users, with 74.29ha identified as potentially available. Of this 'available' employment land, only 45.1ha is identified as being 'market ready' by the ELR.

3.18 Notwithstanding issues of end user constraints and excluding land recommended for deletion from the supply, the ELR recommends all 128ha of the currently undeveloped allocated employment land to be carried forward into the Development Sites & Places DPD. The ELR states that the roll over of allocated land from the UDP is to form the initial supply of employment land until LDF allocations progressively come forward, leaving an undersupply of 220ha of employment land to be identified in accordance with the Core Strategy.

3.19 Within Urban Barnsley, a total of 34.5ha of currently allocated employment is to be carried over from the UDP, contributing towards a total target of 130-155ha. This ambitious target accords with the Core Strategy and reflects Urban Barnsley as being a priority location for growth.

3.20 Given its reliance on the rollover of remaining UDP employment land and the significant constraints associated with this, the ELR concludes that Barnsley's current employment

supply *"is inadequate in quantity and character"* and will remain so until existing constraints are released and some progress is made on releasing new sites through investment and the planning system. It states that any future supply, namely that to be identified through the emerging LDF, will have to consider *"the range, choice and quality within the stock"* in order to avoid these problems in the future and successfully meet the RSS and Barnsley's Growth Plan ambitions.

3.21 Within this context it is noted that the Core Strategy recognises that there may be leakage, which is anticipated to be in the region of 5ha per annum of employment land that will be lost to other uses over the period of the plan. This will be addressed through the allocation of additional sites within the Site Allocations DPD.

Summary

3.22 The Core Strategy sets an ambitious target for delivering 350ha of employment land over the Plan period. Of this, the ELR recommends 128ha to be included from the UDP but with significant caution given as to the quality and availability of this land.

3.23 The ELR identifies a need for more employment sites in Barnsley but with emphasis given to the need for these to be of an appropriate range, choice and quality. Whilst the UDP has been largely successful in meeting the historic demand for employment land in Barnsley, its supply has become outdated and unreflective of emerging policy. What therefore remains of the allocated UDP employment land is an oversupply of poor quality or heavily constrained sites and an undersupply of high quality employment sites suited for modern employment purposes.

3.24 Helping to respond to this, Policy CSP19 gives the Council the flexibility it needs to reconfigure its existing employment land supply so that it is in greater accordance with national policy and the emerging LDF, allowing, where appropriate, for employment sites to be redeveloped for alternative, job creating uses.

4. COMMERCIAL PROPERTY MARKET OVERVIEW

4.1 Section 3 concludes that there is a current undersupply of high quality, allocated employment land. This section of the report reviews the existing provision of employment land within the Borough including sites that although not necessarily allocated, are currently being marketed and are considered to contribute to the current supply.

Market Available Employment Space in the Barnsley Local Area

4.2 The following schedule shows that, as of March 2012, a mix of differently sized premises is currently being marketed as available in the Barnsley area, capable of accommodating a full range of employment uses.

4.3 The scope to assess the quality of these premises relative to the Twibell Street site, is, however, somewhat limited, given that it is a cleared site (see Section 4). To this end, the following comparative assessment is restricted purely to locational factors but it should be noted that the accessibility/location of employment space remains to be one of the key considerations of the Core Strategy and also one of the most important features for businesses looking for new employment premises.

4.4 The accessibility of each of these premises has therefore been assessed, comparing their proximity to road, rail and public transport networks as being 'worse', 'same' or 'better' than the Twibell Street site.

Fig. 3.1 Schedule of Employment Accommodation Currently Available in Barnsley

Address	UDP Allocated Employment Land?	Total Floorspace sqm	Potential Uses	Accessibility
24a Wellington Street, Barnsley, S70 1SS	✗	146	B1	Better- central town centre location, close to rail and bus links
32-34 Eldon Street, Barnsley, S70 2JB	✗	353	B1	Better- central town centre location, close to rail and bus links
Unit 3-7 Barnsley	✗	1813	B1,B2,B8	Same- relatively

Trade Park, Wombwell Lane, Barnsley, S70 3NS				good location on main road network and adequately served by public transport.
Phase 2 Barnsley Trade Park, Wombwell Lane, Barnsley, S70 3NS	✗	29,173	B1, B2	Same- relatively good location on main road network and adequately served by public transport.
Capitol Park, J37, M1, Barnsley	✔	14400	B1	Better- excellent access to rail and bus services as well as M1
Capitol Park, Junction 37, M1, Barnsley	✔	23690	B8	Better- excellent access to rail and bus services as well as M1
Churchfield Court, Barnsley, S70 2JT	✗	605	B1	Better- central town centre location, close to rail and bus links
Units 3-5, Dearne and Doveworks. West Street, Barnsley, S70 5PG	✗	1,330	B2, B8	Same- relatively good location on strategic road network and adequately served by public transport.
Elmhirst Park, Middle Field Road, Silkstone, Barnsley, S75 4LS	✔	14414	B1, B2, B8	Better- excellent access to rail and bus services as well as M1
Fields End, Barnsley, S75 9TH	✔	3793	B1	Same- relatively good location on strategic road network and adequately served by public transport.
G Space 100, Wentworth Way, Junction 36, BARNSLEY, S75 3DH	✔	9356	B1(c), B2, B8	Better- direct access to M1 and adequately served by regular bus routes
G Space 50, Wentworth Way, Junction 36, BARNSLEY, S75 3DH	✔	4773	B1(c), B2, B8	Better- direct access to M1 and adequately served by regular bus routes
G Space 75, Wentworth Way,	✔	7063	B1(c), B2, B8	Better- direct access to M1 and

Junction 36, BARNSLEY, S75 3DH				adequately served by regular bus routes
G Space 90, Wentworth Way, Junction 36, BARNSLEY, S75 3DH	✔	8337	B1(c), B2, B8	Better- direct access to M1 and adequately served by regular bus routes
Grange Lane Industrial Estate, Stairfoot, Barnsley, S71 5AS	✔	1296	B8	Same- relatively good location on strategic road network and adequately served by public transport.
Units 10C, 19, 24, 55, 73, 75, 77, 83, 85, 95 Carlton Industrial Estate, Industry Road, Barnsley, S71 3PQ	✔	49,861	B1, B2, B8	Worse- relatively good location on strategic road network and adequately served by public transport but far from M1.
McLintocks, Summer Lane, BARNSLEY, S70 2NZ	✘	713	B1	Better- central town centre location, close to rail and bus links
Metro Trading Centre, Barugh Green Road, Barugh Green, Barnsley, S75 1HH	✔	8205	B1(c), B2	Better- good access to the M1 with good bus services
Oaks Lane, Stairfoot, Barnsley, S71 1HT	✔	15790	B8	Same- relatively good location on strategic road location and adequately served by bus routes
Pontefract Road, Barnsley, S71 1JA	✔	296	B1, B2	Same- relatively good location on strategic road location and adequately served by bus routes
Regents House, 11 Regent Street, Barnsley, S70 2EG	✘	2104	B1	Better- central town centre location, close to rail and bus links
Unit 1, Maple Park, Maple Court, Tankersley, Barnsley, S75 3DP	✔	467	B1	Better- good access to M1 and well served by regular bus route

Unit 2 Maple Park, Maple Close, Tankerley, Barnsley, S75 2DP	✔	465	B1	Better- good access to M1 and well served by regular bus route
Units 3 & 4, Oakwell View, Barnsley, S71 1HH	✘	803	B1	Same- relatively good location on strategic road location and adequately served by bus routes
Unit 5 Rockingham Business Park, Rockingham Row, Birdwell, Barnsley, S70 5TW	✔	668	B8	Better- direct access to M1 and well served by regular bus route
Valley Road, Wombwell, Barnsley, S73 0BS	✔	8537	B8	Same- relatively good location on strategic road location and adequately served by bus routes
Waterside Park, Valley Way, Wombwell, Barnsley, S73 0BB	✔	899	B8	Same- relatively good location on strategic road location and adequately served by bus routes
Wembley Works, Hemingfield Road, Wombwell, Barnsley, S73 0LY	✘	2918	B8	Same- well served by rail and bus routes but far from M1 corridor.
Wentworth Industrial Park, Wentworth Way, Barnsley	✔	7990	B1 (c), B2, B8	Better- good access to M1 and well served by regular bus route

Source: EGi

4.5 As demonstrated in Fig 3.1, 220,228 sqm of employment land is available in Barnsley with a good range of small, medium and large scale premises currently on the market capable of accommodating a mix of different employment uses.

4.6 The vast majority of available employment sites have comparable or better locational qualities than the Twibell Street site, particularly in terms of access to the M1 corridor. The majority of the sites available are located within existing Business or Industrial parks. Many of these are already allocated for employment purposes, with a total of 14,538 sqm employment land currently unallocated and surplus to Barnsley's UDP supply.

Summary

4.7 In summary, a vast amount of additional employment space has been identified as currently available on the market in Barnsley, adding a significant amount of potential employment land to its allocated supply.

4.8 The majority of this available space is seen to offer the same or better locational qualities as the Twibell Street site.

5. SITE ASSESSMENT

5.1 Section 4 of this report reviews currently available employment land and properties within the Borough and concludes that there is a good supply of small, medium and large employment sites within sustainable locations to support the aspirations of the Core Strategy in respect of identification of employment sites.

5.2 Within this context, this section of the report assesses the contribution that the allocated employment land within the application site makes to the employment land supply with reference to the criteria set out in CSP19 of the Core Strategy in relation to employment land.

Redevelopment would not result in a loss of existing jobs or employment potential

5.3 The employment element of the wider application site is currently vacant and the buildings that previously occupied the site have been demolished. Therefore will be no loss of existing jobs as a result of the proposed development.

5.4 In terms of future employment opportunities, as the site has been cleared there is no immediate opportunity for significant employment creation and any future use of the site will require significant investment and construction, which has not be forthcoming up to the present time.

5.5 Furthermore, in the interim period since the original allocation of the site, the definition of economic development has been expanded, originally through PPS4 (now superseded) and now within the NPPF. As a result the traditionally held definition of economic development relating to B1, B2 and B8 uses has been broadened to include other town centre uses. Therefore the proposed scheme results in economic development that will be an employment generating use and as such the employment potential of the site is retained.

There will still be an adequate supply of employment land in the locality

5.6 Section 4 of this report confirms that there is a significant range of available employment sites available on the market in Barnsley at the present time and that these sites meet a range of potential size and use requirements.

5.7 The majority of this available space is seen to offer the same or better locational qualities in comparison to the Twibell Street site and the majority are of a significantly higher quality than the application site.

5.8 The extent of the application site covered by the employment allocation equates to approximately 0.6ha. The proposals therefore represent a very limited loss of employment land (under the traditional definition) within the context of the overall supply and as such there is not considered to have a demonstrable impact on the identification of employment land supply, particularly within the context of the Council's ongoing review of such provision.

5.9 The wider employment allocation extends further to the east beyond the site application boundary and this part of the allocation will remain and will not be impacted by the proposed development.

That the buildings or land cannot satisfactorily support continued employment use

5.10 The current access to the employment land is via Twibell Street and is directly opposite residential terrace properties to the south. This access route is inappropriate for modern, large scale employment uses and if the site were to be redeveloped for an employment use, the increased use of the existing access would be unsatisfactory in highway terms due to noise and highway safety concerns.

5.11 In terms of the layout of the site, the constrained location in relation to surrounding land uses render the site unsuitable and commercially unattractive for re-use as B1, B2 or B8 premises, with a more comprehensive redevelopment approach required for viable reuse of the site.

5.12 A larger site that could offer a variety of high skill/high wage jobs would be more advisable. Industrial and office use is more evident and appropriate in industrial and business parks and the businesses around the site are generally retail orientated.

5.13 Employment locations that are more closely located to the M1 would enhance the benefit that could be gained from the close proximity to Leeds, Sheffield and Manchester and are therefore preferable to the Twibell Street site.

5.14 The wider regeneration benefits of the application proposals are outlined in section 9 of the Planning and Retail Statement and these are further considered to outweigh the need to protect the site for future employment use.

6. CONCLUSIONS

6.1 This report demonstrates that the proposed development scheme is fully in accordance with relevant national and local policy guidance regarding employment land.

6.2 Although previous evidence based on the ELR indicated an undersupply of employment sites across the Borough, it has been demonstrated that there are a range of readily available, alternative sites that exist which offer comparable, if not better, locational qualities. These sites are currently being advertised on the market and are available for occupation.

6.3 The Twibell Street site's layout and setting make it unsuitable and commercially unattractive for re-use as B1, B2 or B8 premises and significant investment would be needed to bring the site back into active use. Therefore a more comprehensive redevelopment approach is required.

6.4 The proposals would not result in any loss of existing jobs and would retain an employment generating use within the wider site, which will offer employment opportunities to the local community and will provide retail choice and regeneration benefits in terms of amenity.

6.5 To this end, the proposal to which this report relates provide a redevelopment opportunity for the Twibell Street site, which subject to the demonstration of compliance with town centre planning policies in the NPPF, both accords with planning policy guidance and maintains the site's existing role as an employer. To this end, the use of the site for retail purposes is considered to be justified.