
March 2015

ADDENDUM NPPF Sequential Assessment

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

**Demolition of Existing Canopy Structure
And Erection of Retail Food Unit along
With provision of access and car parking**

Application Ref: 2015/0097

On behalf of

Riseholm Investment Limited

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APPENDICES

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Application 2015/0097 was submitted seeking planning permission for a phased development on land at Barnsley Road in Wombwell comprising demolition of existing canopy structure and erection of retail food unit along with provision of access and car parking.
- 1.2 The proposal includes provision of an additional 743 m² gross food retail unit (Class A1) towards the Barnsley Road site frontage, along with associated car parking for the unit which will also serve the existing units, landscaping, access and removal of the former petrol filling station canopy as phase 1 of the development.
- 1.3 Phase 2 will comprise the refurbishment of the existing retail units towards the rear of the site, which provide around 1,115 m² gross retail floorspace and reflects the quantum of retail established by a lawful development certificate granted in February 2011.
- 1.4 The application was accompanied by a number of reports, including a report entitled 'NPPF Sequential Assessment'. Following submission of the application, further information on sequential issues has been requested. This includes demonstration of the likely primary catchment area for the proposed development using a five minute drive time isochrone and assessment of defined centres within this area for the purposes of applying the sequential test.
- 1.5 Discussions have therefore led to a requirement to assess two additional local centres for the purposes of applying the sequential test.
- 1.6 Having regard to the five minute drive time isochrone included in Appendix 1, it is evident that all of the Stairfoot Local Centre falls within the likely primary catchment area of the proposed development.
- 1.7 In light of this and following further discussions with the Council's planning policy officer, this Addendum NPPF Sequential Assessment examines whether there are any suitable or available sites within or on the edge of Stairfoot Local Centre, which could accommodate the proposed development.
- 1.8 In addition and whilst the centre does not wholly fall with the 5 minute drive time, consideration of Lundwood Local Centre has also been requested.
- 1.9 The assessment of Wombwell District Centre is addressed in the main Sequential Assessment report and this demonstrates there are no sequentially preferable sites within or on the edge of that centre which could accommodate the proposal, having regard to the requirement to demonstrate flexibility.

2.0 Sequential Assessment

- 2.1 Paragraph 24 of the NPPF confirms a sequential assessment will be required for applications for main town centre uses which are not in an existing centre or in accordance with an up to date development plan.
- 2.2 The purpose of the sequential approach is to ensure all in centre options have been thoroughly assessed before less central sites are considered and for it to be demonstrated that there are no town centre sites to accommodate a proposed development, followed by edge of centre sites before looking at an out of centre location. When assessing edge of centre and out of centre sites the NPPF gives a preference to sites that are well connected to an existing centre. The application site is in an out of centre location.
- 2.3 As set out in the main Sequential Assessment report, the national planning practice guidance offers limited assistance in applying the sequential approach. Given the current position on the site in respect of permitted retail uses the sequential assessment addresses whether there are any 'suitable' or 'available' sites to accommodate the proposed food retail unit (743 m² gross).
- 2.4 When considering 'suitability' our assessment takes account of the clarification provided by the Dundee Supreme Court decision confirming that in the context of whether an alternative site is 'suitable', it is the question of whether a site is suitable for the proposed development and not some form of alternative development. Whilst regard is to be had to flexibility, as Lord Hope highlighted in the Dundee judgement, the need for flexibility should be designed for use in the real world in which developers wish to operate and not some artificial world in which they have no interest of doing so.
- 2.5 Against this background, the search for potential sequentially preferable sites relates to those suitable and available for the proposed food retail unit.
- 2.6 As set out in Section 1, this Addendum report focusses on whether there is a suitable and available site in or on the edge of Stairfoot Local Centre which could accommodate the proposed food retail unit. Whilst we question the need to assess Lundwood local centre as requested by the local planning authority, for reasons set out in due course, we have nonetheless visited the centre and found no sequentially preferable alternative sites.

Area of Search

- 2.7 The proposed development includes provision of a 743 m² gross food retail unit on the application site. The site lies on Barnsley Road on the edge of Wombwell. To the east is the main built up area of Wombwell whilst to the west is the Stairfoot area of Barnsley.
- 2.8 The proposed development comprises the first phase in the wider regeneration of the site and is intended to help pump prime regeneration across other parts of the site in due course.
- 2.9 Existing convenience provision in the surrounding area includes the Tesco superstore to the west on a retail park alongside typical retail park comparison traders. Further west is an Aldi discount foodstore located in the

Stairfoot Local Centre. Other convenience provision in the local centre is limited to small shops including a bakers, off licence and McColls convenience store.

- 2.10 Permission has been granted to allow subdivision of the B&Q unit at Stairfoot for occupation of part of the unit by Sainsburys.
- 2.11 To the east is Wombwell district centre. Within the district centre is a wider range of convenience retailers including Tesco Express, Herons, Fultons, Greggs, Staniforths and other independent butchers and bakers.
- 2.12 Given the size of the proposed unit, the intended end operator and the nature, scale and location of other convenience provision in the surrounding area, it is considered the extent of the primary catchment area of the proposed development would not extend beyond a five minute drive time.
- 2.13 A plan showing the extent of the five minute drive time is included in Appendix 1. This shows the area extending east to include all of Wombwell and west incorporating the Stairfoot area. This is due to the greater ease of movement east/west along Wombwell Lane compared to north/south movements. Thus the primary catchment area has a greater east/west focus than north/south.
- 2.14 The defined primary catchment area includes two centres as defined in the adopted Barnsley UDP, namely, Wombwell District Centre and Stairfoot Local Centre.
- 2.15 The five minute drive time isochrone also extends to the north west such that it includes the very southern end of Lundwood Local Centre. Whilst it is considered the centre should not be included in the assessment of sequential alternatives, the Council have requested it be reviewed.

Sequential Assessment

- 2.16 The original Sequential Assessment report addresses Wombwell District Centre and concludes there are no sequentially preferable sites.
- 2.17 **Stairfoot Local Centre** is focussed on Doncaster Road extending uphill away from the Stairfoot roundabout. Aldi occupies the largest unit in the defined centre located at the eastern end with a Frankie & Benny's restaurant and Travelodge to the rear on the opposite side of Doncaster Road.
- 2.18 The rest of the local centre is focussed on the northern side of Doncaster Road extending uphill with the frontage broken by an area of open space with children's play area. Bus stops are located on Doncaster Road with frequent bus services in both directions linking the centre with Barnsley and areas to the east.
- 2.19 The local centre is linear and hemmed in by surrounding development including predominantly residential areas to the north but with some employment uses on the south side of Doncaster Road adjoining Aldi. There are no vacant sites within or on the edge of the defined centre which could be brought forward. There are therefore no sequentially preferable sites on the edge of the defined centre which could accommodate the proposed development.

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- 2.20 Within the centre itself are a range of units with the vast majority occupied. At the time visited there did not appear to be any vacant units although the Guns International Unit was not open at the time of our site visit. This unit measures 149 m² gross including first floor storage and a basement area. It would be far too small to accommodate the proposed development. It would therefore not be suitable for the proposed development (743 m² gross unit).
- 2.21 There were no other units at the time of our site visit which were vacant. One previously vacant unit was in the process of being fitted out for E Cloud electronic cigarettes.
- 2.22 In light of the above we conclude there are no suitable or available sequentially preferable sites which could accommodate the proposed development having regard to the requirement to demonstrate flexibility.
- 2.23 With regard to any trading impact on the local centre, there would be very limited trade diversion, if any, such that the level of trading impact would not be quantifiable. When visited Aldi was trading well and in our view able to withstand some trade loss to alternative facilities in the surrounding area.
- 2.24 The centre includes a number of services which would be completely unaffected by the proposed development. This includes restaurants and takeaways (Indian Tandoori Takeaway / Five Double Chinese Takeaway / Town Kebab / Gold Leaf Restaurant / Chicos Pizzas / Yummy Open Kitchen / Frankie & Benny's / Divino Pizza Takeaway and Woody's Fish and Chips).
- 2.25 Convenience retailers include the Aldi discount foodstore, McColls convenience store, The Tap (off licence) and Home Farm Bakery. McColls is limited in size and meets more day to day top up shopping needs of those living near the centre. Equally the Home Farm Bakery is likely to have a very local customer base. The Tap offers a more focussed retail offer.
- 2.26 Comparison traders in the local centre include a furniture store (Snell & Robins), adult shop, Wosbro Motor Spares, Quality Floor Coverings, Charity Shop, Post Office, E Cloud Electronic Cigarettes and Lloyds Pharmacy. None of these operators would experience any trade loss.
- 2.27 With limited vacancies in Stairfoot Local Centre (only possibly one vacant unit at the time visited) and given the nature of uses/operators in the centre, we consider the proposed development would not lead to significant adverse impact on the defined local centre.
- 2.28 **Lundwood local centre** is a linear centre focussed on the A628 Pontefract Road. The centre is largely located on the west side of the road with a small parade at the northern end located on the east side.
- 2.29 At the time of our site visits the northern parade had no vacant units. Occupiers include the InfoZone (Community Partnership), Barnsley House Chinese takeaway, Post Office, Pizza takeaway, Premier convenience store, Fish & Chips, Happy Garden Chinese takeaway and the Appliance Specialists (electrical shop).

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- 2.30 The western run of units includes a variety of operators with a number of takeaway units, the Lundwood Social Club, Methodist Church, the Home Farm Bakery and Café, Dental Centre, a number of hair dressers, existing residential properties, an Iceland foodstore and Betfred.
- 2.31 Iceland is located in the middle part of the centre with car parking to the front which can be used by those visiting the local centre. It measures around 550 m² net. It provides a frozen discount offer with some fresh goods meeting more day to day shopping needs.
- 2.32 The centre has two very small vacant units located close to Iceland. Combined, the total floorspace of the two units, based on information from the Valuation Office website, is 81.6 m² gross. This is clearly far too small to accommodate the proposed development (743 m² gross).
- 2.33 There are no available development sites within the defined local centre. The local centre is hemmed in to the north and south by the existing road network or built development. Iceland provides the largest existing unit in the centre and takes customer access off the Pontefract Road.
- 2.34 There are also no vacant development sites on the edge of the local centre. In this context to the west are playing fields and a rear servicing road for premises fronting Pontefract Road, including access to the delivery yard for Iceland. As indicated above, north and south are existing residential areas and roads.
- 2.35 Opposite the defined centre are exiting residential properties. There are therefore no edge of centre opportunities / sites which are suitable and available for the proposed development.
- 2.36 Lundwood Local Centre is located largely beyond the primary catchment area of the proposed development. The Iceland appears to trade well. The rest of the offer in the local centre is varied with a number of takeaway units, a social club, place of worship, dental centre, hair dressers and bookmakers (Betfred). None of these uses would be in any way affected by the proposal.
- 2.37 Any trade withdrawal from the centre would be of such a limited amount, if any, that it is not quantifiable. It is considered the centre provides a local offer focussed on the immediately surrounding residential area. The proposed development would not lead to significant adverse impact on the centre.

3.0 Conclusion

- 3.1 Having regard to the additional search for sites carried out to include Stairfoot and Lundwood Local Centre, we conclude there are no suitable or available sequentially preferable sites which could accommodate the proposed development.
- 3.2 In light of the findings of this Addendum Sequential Assessment we consider the proposed development would accord with the development plan in relation to the consideration of retail policies.
- 3.3 Our conclusion is therefore not altered from that which is contained in the submitted Sequential Assessment. In our view and having taking the development plan as the starting point in the consideration of planning merit, permission can be granted and there are no material considerations which warrant a decision otherwise.

APPENDIX 1

EXPERIAN 5 MINUTE DRIVE TIME ISOCHRONE

5 Minute drive time from proposed site

