



Sequential Test

Proposed Retail Unit and Extension to Pharmacy at
Woodland Drive Medical Centre, Barnsley, S70 6QW

October 2016

Client //

Lo's Pharmacy Ltd

Project //

Proposed Retail Unit and Extension to Pharmacy at Woodland Drive, Barnsley

Report Title //

Sequential Test

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Section 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Sequential Test has been prepared to accompany the planning application as being made by Lo's Pharmacy Ltd for a proposed retail unit and extension to pharmacy at Woodland Drive Medical Centre, Woodland Drive, Barnsley.
- 1.2 The assessment has regard to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the adopted Barnsley Core Strategy.
- 1.3 The application provides for the creation of a new retail unit with a gross floor space of 278.7sqm (3,000sqft) together with an extension to the existing pharmacy with a floor space of 127.6sqm (1,500 sqft). The application site is currently undeveloped and located immediately adjacent to the existing pharmacy and medical centre. It is identified within the Unitary Development Plan's proposals map as being within an Existing Community Facility allocation.
- 1.4 The application proposal has been considered against the key test laid down in the NPPF and the Barnsley Council Core Strategy. These tests relate to impact on Town Centre health and vibrancy, regeneration and employment, levels of accessibility and whether there are sequentially preferable sites available within or adjoining nearby Town Centres to accommodate the development proposed.
- 1.5 Section 2 of this statement sets out the context in which these proposals have been considered, and Section 3 sets out the sequential assessment that has been undertaken.

Section 2 Context

2.1 The application site is located on Woodland Drive and is approximately 1.6km to the west of Barnsley Town Centre. Adjacent to the site is an existing pharmacy and medical centre which were granted planning permission in April 2012 (reference 2012/0236)

2.2 Prior to the submission of this planning application, the Applicant's architect has submitted a pre-application enquiry to the Local Planning Authority and their response has indicated that the Site is 'out of centre' and therefore given the nature of the proposals *"a sequential test should be required for proposed main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and not in accordance with an up to date local plan."*

2.3 The pre-application advice identifies Policy CSP32 of the adopted Core Strategy as being of particular relevance as this relates to proposals for new small shops. This policy states;

"Outside existing centres we will allow small convenience shops that meet the daily shopping needs of a local community if:

- the shops are of a type and in a place that would meet local needs and this need is not already met by existing shops; and***
- the shops are located and designed to encourage trips by pedestrians and cyclists and would not encourage car trips."***

2.4 Paragraph 9.229 of the Core Strategy goes on to clarify that 'small shops' are those which have a floor space of less than 500sqm.

2.5 Whilst Policy CSP32 does not explicitly state that the sequential test must be applied to retail development of this scale, the pre-application advice states that this is necessary and this is also supported by the National Planning Policy Framework. As the proposals propose less than 2,500sqm of floor space, they do not exceed the threshold where the Impact Test must be applied. This has been confirmed in the local authority's pre-application advice.

2.6 The Applicant successfully operates the existing pharmacy from the Site and due to demand for this service, wishes to expand the premises to accommodate this. Additionally, there are no convenience retail facilities within the vicinity of the Site and it is considered that a small store will be of benefit to the local community who presently have to travel further afield for 'top-up' purchases. Notwithstanding the fact that the Site is 'out of centre', it is sustainably located and in an area of high residential population. Given the Site's out of centre location and in accordance with

planning policy, it is considered in sequential terms in the forthcoming sections of this statement

Section 3 Sequential Test

- 3.1 The need to carry out the sequential test on these retail proposals is set out in Paragraph 24 of the NPPF which states that Local Authorities:

“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 Authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale.”

- 3.2 The requirement to undertake the Sequential Test is repeated in the pre-application advice that has been received from the Local Planning Authority.

- 3.3 In carrying out the sequential approach it is first necessary to establish the status in sequential terms of the application site. The Local Planning Authority have confirmed the Site to be ‘out of centre’ and have stated that due to the size of the development proposals, a 5 minute drive-time isochrone would be appropriate. This presumably is considered by the Local Planning Authority to represent the journey time that customers would be prepared to travel for ‘top-up’ purchases from a convenience store of the scale that is proposed.

- 3.4 A 5 minute drive-time isochrone has been identified on the plan at Appendix 1. This has been derived from Google Maps which allows for journey times to be accurately calculated.

- 3.5 Having identified a 5 minute drive-time isochrone, defined centres as shown within Barnsley Council’s Unitary Development Plan have been identified. These centres are identified on the map at Appendix 1 and extracts from the UDP proposals maps are included at Appendix 2, which show the extent of the relevant centres.

- 3.6 The defined centres which have been identified and their status are as follows;

- Dodworth (Principal Shopping Area)
- Oak Road (Local Shopping)
- Agnes Road (Local Shopping)

- 3.7 A site visit to each of the centres identified above was undertaken on 18th September 2016 to identify if any sequentially preferable sites were available within the defined catchment. The results of this visit are provided below

Dodworth

- 3.8 This centre is located just within the 5 minute isochrone from the Site although it is located across the M1 motorway junction which is likely to be perceived as a physical barrier to those living in the Woodland Drive area requiring top-up purchases.
- 3.9 The extent of the centre is shown on the plan at Appendix 2 and includes properties on both sides of High Street. The properties which are included within the centre comprise retail units, public house, food store and residential. At the time of visiting there were no vacant units or land available which could accommodate the development proposals.

Agnes Road

- 3.10 Agnes Road is located to the east of the application site, on the outer limit of the 5 minute drive-time isochrone. The extent of this centre is shown on the map included at Appendix 2.
- 3.11 The centre includes a number of small commercial units which include butchers, off-licence, cafe and pharmacy. The centre also includes a number of residential terraces. No vacant premises or land were identified within the defined centre.

Racecommon Road

- 3.12 This centre is also located to the east on the application site (and to the north west of Agnes Road) and is located just within the 5 minute isochrone.
- 3.13 Within the centre a range of uses and services can be found including grocery shops, chemists, takeaways, Working Men's Club, car repair garage and bookies. A number of residential properties are also included within the Centre, as defined on the plan at Appendix 2.
- 3.14 During the site visit, a vacant retail property was identified on the eastern side of Racecommon Road. This property is being marketed by i-Estates, sales particular for which are included at Appendix 3. This property is two storeys, with the ground floor trading area estimated to have a floor space of circa 50sqm.
- 3.15 No other properties or land appear to be available within the Racecommon Road Centre.

- 3.16 Having sought to identify available land or premises within the defined centres as set out above, edge of centre locations (within 300 metres of centre) were also considered to ascertain whether any suitable opportunities existed. It has been concluded that no available or suitable sites exist within edge of centre locations.
- 3.17 The Sequential Test has only identified one available property within centres and edge of centre locations, this being a vacant retail unit on Racecommon Road. This unit has a ground floor trading area of approximately 50sqm which is substantially smaller than the proposed retail unit and extension to the existing pharmacy. Whilst the NPPF requires applicants to be flexible on issues including format and scale, it is considered that the identified vacant premises would be completely unsuitable for the development proposals.
- 3.18 The extension to the pharmacy, in locational terms needs to adjoin the existing pharmacy which is already trading and therefore the Racecommon Road premises would not only be unsuitable in terms of floor space, but also location. This goes beyond the level of flexibility advocated by the NPPF.
- 3.19 The proposed convenience retail unit has a GEA of 278sqm and is intended to provide 'top-up' shopping opportunities to local residents. Not only is the vacant premises on Racecommon Road substantially smaller than the proposed unit and therefore unsuitable, its location on the periphery of the 5 minute drive-time isochrone is unlikely to provide a convenient facility for those living in the Woodland Drive area who are currently without any convenience stores.
- 3.20 Notwithstanding the fact that it has been demonstrated that the sequential test has been satisfied, Policy CSP32 of the Core Strategy is considered of particular importance as it is permissive of small convenience shops of under 500sqm outside of existing centres. It is considered that the proposals satisfy the requirements of this policy given that there are no alternative shopping facilities in close proximity and therefore a local need will be fulfilled (need is no longer a relevant test) and the close proximity of the Site to residential areas and the provision of cycle parking facilities, will encourage trips by cyclists and pedestrians.

Appendix 1

Identified Catchment



Appendix 2

UDP Proposal Map Extracts



Above: Dodworth Centre



Above: Agnes Road Centre

UDP Proposal Map Extracts



Above: Racecommon Road Centre

Appendix 3

Retail premises to let in Racecommon Road, Barnsley S70

£8,100 pa (£156 pw)



Property info

- Unfurnished

Property features

- Close to Barnsley town centre
- Prime Location
- Road Side Location
- Excellent Working Environment
- Central Heating

Property description

Reception/Waiting Room.

This room has front door access from Racecommon Road.

It offers a street view with wall mounted radiator, power.

Internal secure rear door leading to kitchen & toilets

Measurements (13' 6" x 12' 7")

Office/Interview room

This room has front door access from Racecommon Road.

It offers a street view with wall mounted radiator, power & a sink in the corner.

Internal secure rear door leading to kitchen & toilets

Measurements (13' 6" x 12' 6")

Third Room

This room is rear facing with window, access from the rear of property.

Secure access door wall mounted radiator, power, access to kitchen & toilets

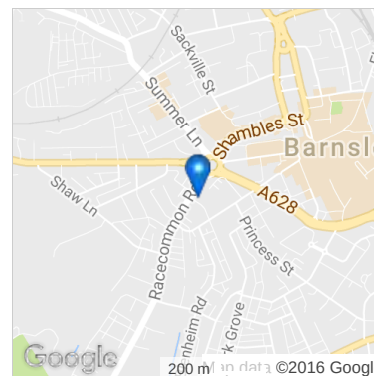
Measurements (13' 1" x 7' 11")

Forth Room/Storage

This room is situated to the rear of the property, no natural light. Access from the rear of the property.

Secure access door, wall mounted radiator, power, access to kitchen & toilets.

Measurements approx (11' x 7' 6")



Nearby transport

Barnsley (0.5 miles)

Dodworth (1.8 miles)

Darton (3.1 miles)

Robin Hood Airport (20.6 miles)

Leeds Bradford International Airport (22.9 miles)

Manchester International Airport (35.2 miles)

Hull Ferry Terminal (51.5 miles)

Liverpool Pier Head Ferry Terminal (62.9 miles)

Liverpool Belfast Ferry Terminal Bootle (62.9 miles)

Nearby schools

Kitchen/Toilets

Note: Tenant fees may apply. Details available on request from agent.

 Holy Rood Catholic Primary School (0.2 miles)	 Horizon Community College (0.1 miles)	 Greenacre School (0.7 miles)
 Joseph Locke Primary School (0.2 miles)	 Barnsley College (0.2 miles)	 Springwell Community Special School (1.9 miles)
 Shawlands Primary School (0.2 miles)	 Northern College (2.2 miles)	 Grasmere School (1.9 miles)

Note: Distance is shown as a straight line measurement

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