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TOWN CENTRE USES AND RETAIL STATEMENT

REFURBISHMENT AND EXTENSION OF FORMER CAR SALES & PETROL FILLING STATION PREMISES FORMER ROCKWOOD GARAGE - WAKEFIELD ROAD, GRANGE MOOR, HUDDERSFIELD, WF4 4DS.

Job 2797

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TOWN CENTRE USES & RETAIL STATEMENT

Grange Moor Settlement

1. Grange Moor is a settlement which lies within the Kirklees Rural area. At the time of preparation of the Local Plan the Settlement Appraisal shows that Grange Moor had a population of 855 and achieved an accessibility rating of 14.

2. In terms of facilities the settlement had a Post office, 1 local convenience store, I local comparison store and 2 pubs/restaurants.

Significant Employment Opportunity

3. Grange Moor is unique in terms of a settlement within Kirklees. Whilst it has a relatively modest population it also contains once of the largest employment sites in this part of the district – a total of 14 hectares at the Grange Moor Industrial Estate off Jubilee Way.

4. This concentration of employment uses is now planned to increase as a site off Barnsley Road – a total of more than 7 hectares - has been granted approval as part of planning permission 2023/90668. This is currently under construction. The officer report indicates that this will provide circa 480 jobs over the next 10 years.

Decline in Local Facilities since Local Plan Adoption

5. Since the Plan was assessment, it is notable that a number of listed local facilities are no longer available. Within the settlement the former New Inn/Grameen Spice outlet has closed and has had consent for 20 residential units on the site – 2021/90086. It is currently being marketed on a nationwide basis.

6. At the edge of the village the former Blacksmiths Arms on Wakefield Road has closed in recent years.

Local Centres

7. Whilst Grange Moor is a settlement it does not have a defined local centre within the local plan similar to other similar rural locations nearby such as Flockton and Emley. The nearest defined local centre is within Lepton and this is situated 3.3km away.

NPPF

8. Chapter 7 of NPPF - Ensuring the vitality of town centres sets out the national policy position on town centres and town centre uses. The paragraphs relevant to this application are Paragraph 91 to 94. These deal with sequential tests, rural locations and impact assessments. These are amplified with the Kirklees Local Plan which gives thresholds and further guidance through policy LP13 and paragraph 9.9. Both are set out below**.**

Kirklees Local Plan – Policy LP13 and Paragraph 9.9

9. Of note to this application are the following parts of the Kirklees Local Plan.

10. **Policy LP13** states the following:

'Within Kirklees, main town centre uses shall be located within defined centres (principal town centres, town centres, district centres, and local centres), as shown on the Policies and Town Centre Maps, and as detailed in the shopping centre hierarchy and then in accordance with the sequential test.

Main town centre uses which are appropriate in scale, help to retain an existing centre's market share, and enhance the experience of those visiting the centre and the businesses which operate in that centre will be supported. The scale and types of services expected within each centre are set out in Delivery of Services Table as shown below. Proposals that have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of a centre, or compromise the role and function of a centre will not be supported.

Centres shall provide a mix of uses to serve the local community, businesses and visitors to the district.

The uses shall complement each another whilst retaining a strong retail core. Centres in Kirklees shall aim to provide a range of uses to support the daytime and evening economy. The creation of new Local Centres in areas of significant residential growth or where there are deficiencies in the existing network of centres will be supported, where it can be demonstrated that existing centres cannot be expanded to deliver local services, and subject to the sequential test and impact assessment as set out in B and C below.

All proposals shall be inclusive for all users, and be attractive to pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport users. They shall also conserve and enhance the local character, heritage, green spaces and the public realm where appropriate.

Level	**Defined Centres**
Principal Town Centre	Huddersfield and Dewsbury
Town Centre	Batley, Cleckheaton, Holmfirth and Heckmondwike
District Centre	Almondbury, Birstall, Denby Dale, Honley, Kirkburton, Lindley, Marsden, Marsh, Meltham, Milnsbridge, Mirfield, Moldgreen, Ravensthorpe, Skelmanthorpe and Slaithwaite
Local Centre	There are 61 local centres as set out in the Local Plan

Level	**Role and Function**
Principal Town Centre	Provide for the shopping needs (particularly for non-food goods) of residents across Kirklees. The main focus in Kirklees for the provision of financial and professional services; offices, entertainment; sport, leisure, arts, culture and tourism facilities; further and higher education; and health services.
Town Centre	Provide for the shopping needs of residents across Kirklees mainly in the convenience (food) goods sector. Be the focus for the local provision of financial services; offices; entertainment and leisure facilities; arts, culture and tourism facilities, further education; and health services.

District Centre	Provide a range of shopping for everyday needs and serving specialist markets. Be the local focus for basic financial services, food and drink, entertainment, leisure and tourist facilities, and health services.
Local Centre	Provide for top-up shopping and local services particularly food and drink.

*B. **Sequential Test**- Proposals which come forward for main town centre uses, which are located outside of the defined centre boundaries, will require the submission of a Sequential Test. For retail proposals the boundary shall form the Primary Shopping Area; for all other main town centre uses this shall be the extent of the centre boundary. Main town centre uses shall be first located in the defined centres, then edge of centre locations, and only if there are no suitable sites shall out of centre locations be considered. For offices and small-scale proposals in non-urban areas*, **the sequential approach will not be required for proposals of 150 square metres and under**.*

The scope and content of any Sequential Test shall be agreed with the council and shall be reflective of the scale, role and function of the proposal.

Proposals which fail to pass the sequential test will not be supported.

*C. **Impact Assessment** - An Impact Assessment will be necessary for proposals (including the formation of mezzanine floors) for/or which include retail, leisure and office developments which are not located within a defined centre where:*

- *the proposal provides a floorspace greater than 500m^2 gross; or*
- *the proposal is located within 800 metres of the boundary of a Town Centre or District Centre and is greater than 300m^2 gross; or*
- *the proposal is located within 800 metres of the boundary of a Local Centre and is greater than 200m^2 gross.*

The scope and content of any Impact Assessment shall be agreed with the Council and shall be reflective of the scale, role and function of the proposal.

Proposals which would have a significant adverse impact on surrounding centres shall not be supported'.

11. In addition to the above the following paragraph is useful to the determination of this application.

12. **Paragraph 9.9** states:

'Proposals for small scale local convenience shops (under 280m^2) within residential areas which serve day to day needs and that do not have a defined local centre nearby are serving a local catchment and therefore are meeting local needs. As such these proposals will be supported'.

Sequential Test – Key Points

13. As set out above Policy LP13 gives the thresholds for when a sequential test is required. This will be assessed below in relation the proposals. However, in carrying out this the following aspects need to be emphasised.

- Adopted development plan Policy LP13 provides the starting point in the consideration of the sequential test. However, material considerations should also be taken into account, including the NPPF and associated guidance. Other relevant material considerations include the local context and the nature of the proposed development.
- The PPG checklist (paragraph 010) indicates that when carrying out a sequential test that;

  '*The application of the test should be proportionate and appropriate for the given proposal.'*

Sequential Test – Requirements

14. The table below sets out where a test maybe required in relation to this application.

Use	Size (m^2)	Comment	Sequential Test
PFS/Retail unit	240	PFS is not a main town centre use – combined with local top up shopping facilities	See below
Office	148	Both Main Town Centre Uses	Below threshold of 150m^2 – Policy LP13 Part B makes this exempt
Hot Food Outlet	96		Below threshold of 150m^2 – Policy LP13 Part B makes this exempt
Car Repairs and Sales	360	Not a main town centre use	Not required

Table 1: Test Need - Uses and Floorspaces

Sequential Test - Factors to be Considered including Consideration of Other Sites

15. We have set out above a number of key factors which relate to this application from a town centre uses perspective. To summarise these are:

- Expanding nature of the Grange Moor area in terms of employment opportunity
- Declining number of local facilities within and close to the settlement
- Thresholds within LP13 for sequential test
- The need for proportionality in searching for alternative sites

16. In addition, it needs to be emphasised that the retail element is being combined with the Petrol Filling Station aspect which is taking advantage of previous on-site infrastructure as well as its location on a key link between Huddersfield and Wakefield. This is supplemented by the potential demand from growing employment opportunities. This is a fairly typical scenario displayed across many PFS sites nationally and locally.

17. In addition, the retail aspect combined with the other uses on this site will ensure that the redevelopment of the site is economically sustainable in the long term.

18. We are also mindful of advice in paragraph 9.9 of the Kirklees Local Plan that proposals for local top up facilities are generally supported in rural areas below specified thresholds. The present proposal falls below the 280m^2 quoted

19. Whilst we consider these factors to be key in the determination of this application a search of alternative sites has been undertaken. This aspect is set out below:

Sequential Test - Search Area and Sites

20. As this is a local top up shopping facility our search has been confined to the nearest Local Centre at Lepton and a circa 800m - 1500m radius of that area. In addition, we have looked inside the settlement boundary of Grange Moor Itself. The following properties/sites are currently available:

- Office Unit at 291 Wakefield Road – 88m^2 – Lease Only
- Former – Grameen Spice site – 0.24 hectares – with PP for 20 residential – Sale price – Circa £650,000

Sequential Test - Assessment of Options

21. The table below sets out our overview of the two sites

Option	Comments
Office Unit at 291 Wakefield Road	• Unit is too small. • No opportunity for PFS • Lease only
Former – Grameen Spice site	• Site has PP for residential which will undermine other policy ambitions at national and local level to achieve housing targets. • Property prohibitively expensive (given potential for housing) • Will require demolition and rebuild – further costs • No opportunity for PFS

Table 2 – Options Assessment

Sequential Test – Conclusion

22. The above assessment has considered the suitability and availability of sites in and at the edge and is well connected to Lepton Local Centre and Grange Moor settlement. The assessment has concluded that there are no suitable or available sequentially preferable sites either within or at the edge of either to accommodate the proposed retail element. In any event removing the retail element could undermine the attractiveness of PFS itself.

Need for an Impact Assessment – Local Plan Policy LP13 – Part C

23. The proposal falls outside of the criteria for an impact assessment as set out in this Policy. As such no impact assessment is required.

Conclusion on Town Centre and Retail Matters

24. Overall, it has been demonstrated that the main town centre uses proposed for this site fall below the thresholds requiring either a sequential test or an impact assessment.

25. Where a sequential test may be required, we have applied what is felt to be a proportionate and appropriate approach to assessing other sites and locations based on a number of key factors but mostly the local top up nature of the outlet, plus the need to support the PFS and the rural nature of the Grange Moor area.

26. At the time of submission there are no other suitable or available sites to suit the proposals.

27. Overall, this assessment shows there are no town centre or retail matters that should render this application unacceptable. In any event it is felt that paragraph 9.9 of the adopted local plan should be given significant weight as the proposal will support local residential and business communities and enhance the accessibility and sustainability of the settlement.