PLANNING

PLANNING STATEMENT

HERON FOODS

NEW WELLINGTON STREET, MILL HILL, BLACKBURN, BB2 4DV

PLANNING STATEMENT

On behalf of: Heron Foods

In respect of: New Wellington Street, Mill Hill, Blackburn, BB2 4DV

Date: November 2017

Reference:

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Retail Statement has been prepared in support of the full planning application by Heron Foods Limited for the erection of a retail foodstore at the former Pioneer Mills site, New Wellington Street, Blackburn.

Scope of the Statement

1.2 This statement provides an overview of the site, its planning history and the development proposed. The statement then outlines the relevant national and local planning and retail policy framework before assessing the development proposals against this policy basis.

1.3 This statement demonstrates that:

- The site is located on the edge of the centre boundary of Mill Hill. There are no suitable alternative sites within the centre. The application proposes an A1 use which both national and local policy deem to be acceptable. The principle of development in this location is therefore acceptable.
- The proposed development will enable 369sqm[1] of A1 floorspace to come forward within an edge of centre location in a deprived area. This will allow a currently vacant site to be brought back into use along with the introduction of one new national operator into the area, strengthening its offer and adding to its overall vitality and viability.
- The proposed development will enable this site to be brought into viable use rather than remaining vacant, delivering significant visual benefits and physically regenerating this vacant site. The proposal will assist with meeting the day to day needs of local residents by providing a store in a highly accessible location in an area where many people do not have access to their own means of transport.
- Overall, the development proposals will further improve consumer choice and trade within the Mill Hill area along with providing new job opportunities which will have a positive impact upon its overall vitality and viability.

1.4 The proposed development brings significant social, economic and environmental benefits and very much falls within the definition of sustainable development, on which the NPPF encourages planning authorities to take a positive approach. There are no adverse impacts that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits of the proposals and there are no specific policies which indicate that development should be restricted. The proposals comply fully with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework, the relevant policies of the Leeds UDP and all other material planning considerations. Therefore, in line with paragraph 14 of the NPPF, planning permission should be granted without delay.

[1] GIA

2.0 Site Description and Context

2.1 The application site, shown in red below is part of the former Pioneer Mills site which has been cleared and now lies vacant. The site lies approximately 2km from the centre of Blackburn and immediately on the edge of the Mill Hill District Centre to the north west.

2.2 The site is bound to the north by New Wellington Street, beyond which lies the aforementioned Mill Hill shopping centre; designated as the district centre (Local Plan 2 Proposal Map). Directly to the North-East corner of the site is a roundabout, which connects New Wellington Street to Queens Terrace to the west. To the East of the site is Kelly Street, a small road providing access to the adjacent commercial building. Immediately to the south of the site lies the remainder of the Pioneer Mill site beyond which lies the Leeds Liverpool Canal. The surrounding area comprises a mixture of uses including residential properties commercial warehouse buildings and retail units associated with the Mill Hill District Centre.

2.3 With regard to flood risk, the Environment Agency's online Flood Risk Map indicates that the site lies within flood zone 1 and is therefore at low risk of flooding.

2.4 As indicated by Historic England there are no listed buildings on the site and it does not fall within a conservation area.

Planning History

2.5 A search of Blackburn with Darwen Council's online planning records provided the following historical planning applications.

Application Reference	Development Description	Decision
10.91/0846	Full Planning Application for Rear of 123 New Wellington Street, Mill Hill, Blackburn	Approved July 1991

3.0 Proposed Development

3.1 This application is for full planning permission for:

'The erection of a new (A1) retail foodstore with associated access, parking and landscaping.'

3.2 Full details of the proposed scheme are contained within the submitted plans and design and access statement.

3.3 The site will be occupied by a 369 sqm A1 retail unit to be occupied by Heron Foods Ltd. The store will be served by a car park containing 17 spaces which includes 2 disabled spaces.

3.4 The floorspace within the store will be split between 280 sqm sales area and 89 sqm back of house. The site will retain and widen the existing northern vehicular access point off New Wellington Street which will provide access to the new store's car park, for both customers and delivery vehicles. Pedestrian access will also be provided off New Wellington Street.

3.5 Heron Foods is a food retailer which sells a range of chilled and grocery goods. The Company was established in 1979 and has circa 250 stores. The Company has recently announced further expansion plans on the back of strong trading results. Heron started out as a primarily frozen goods retailer but now sells everyday goods which will meet the day to day needs of the local residents. The store is distinguished from other convenience retailers in that it carries a much more restricted range of goods; commonly 1250 lines as opposed to 3,500-5,000 lines. The store would not sell cigarettes, magazines, alcohol or newspapers and serves primarily a foot borne, very local trade.

3.6 Heron is a discount retailer; it buys in bulk which allows it to pass savings onto customers. Many of its products have a shorter than normal shelf life and specific products often only appear for a short time. In this respect it acts as a complementary facility to the larger main food stores and larger discounters.

3.7 The store will be modern in appearance, simplistic in nature, and is designed in such a way, with low mono-pitch roof and modern wall claddings/render systems so that it has its own identity and to also complement the existing buildings around the area. The store will be constructed of a mixed contemporary palette of materials include brick facing columns, timber effect boarding, Aluminium framed double glazing windows and Kingspan roofing panels.

3.8 Advertisement consent will be sought under a separate application to include store front signage and a newly proposed totem sign.

4.0 Planning and Retail Policy Review

4.1 The following section provides a summary of the key planning policies that are considered relevant to the determination of the application.

National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF')

4.2 The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies nationally. It strongly supports economic growth and gives the planning system significant weight in working to achieve this sustainably. The NPPF requires Local Planning Authorities to approve development proposals which are in accordance with the local development plan without delay.

The Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

4.3 The central aim of the NPPF is to promote sustainable development which brings about economic, social and environmental progress and benefits and in doing so 'meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.

4.4 From this principle Paragraph 14 sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development which it states 'should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision taking'.

4.5 For decision taking this means:

- Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
- Where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out of date, granting planning permission unless:
  - Any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework taken as a whole; or
  - Specific policies in the Framework indicate development should be restricted.'

4.6 NPPF sets out the overarching principles for retail development within section 2. Most notable for the purpose of this report are paragraphs 24 and 26.

4.7 Paragraph 24 sets out 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.

4.8 Paragraph 26 sets out that when assessing applications for retail, leisure and office development outside of town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan, local planning authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold.

National Planning Policy Guidance ('PPG')

4.9 The PPG was originally published in March 2014 and has been used as an iterative online resource with the primary focus of complimenting the NPPF and offering additional guidance where necessary.

4.10 Relevant to this application PPG sets out further guidance on the application of the sequential and impact tests. In relation to this, guidance is also provided in determining the health of town centres using appropriate indicators. The PPG states that *"The impact test should be undertaken in a proportionate and locally appropriate way, drawing on existing information where possible."* [2]

The Development Plan

4.11 The statutory Local Development Plan for Blackburn with Darwen Council currently comprises:

- The Core Strategy (2011)
- The Local Plan Part 2 (2015)

Core Strategy (2011)

4.12 The Core Strategy (2011) is part of the statutory development plan of Blackburn with Darwen. It sets out the priorities for the future planning for the next 20 years. The following retail policies are relevant to this application:

4.13 Policy CS12: Retail Development – This policy defines the Borough's retail hierarchy including town centres, district centres and local centres. The policy states that Blackburn and Darwen Town Centres will be the focus for all major and a significant proportion of minor retail development, including "destination" retailing, over the life of the Core Strategy. If towards the end of the Strategy period, sites to meet identified needs are not available within the Town Centres, development will be located according to the following sequential test:

i. First, edge-of-centre sites

ii. Second, within or on the edge of neighbourhood centres

iii. Third, in locations elsewhere within the urban area that are easily accessible by non-car means

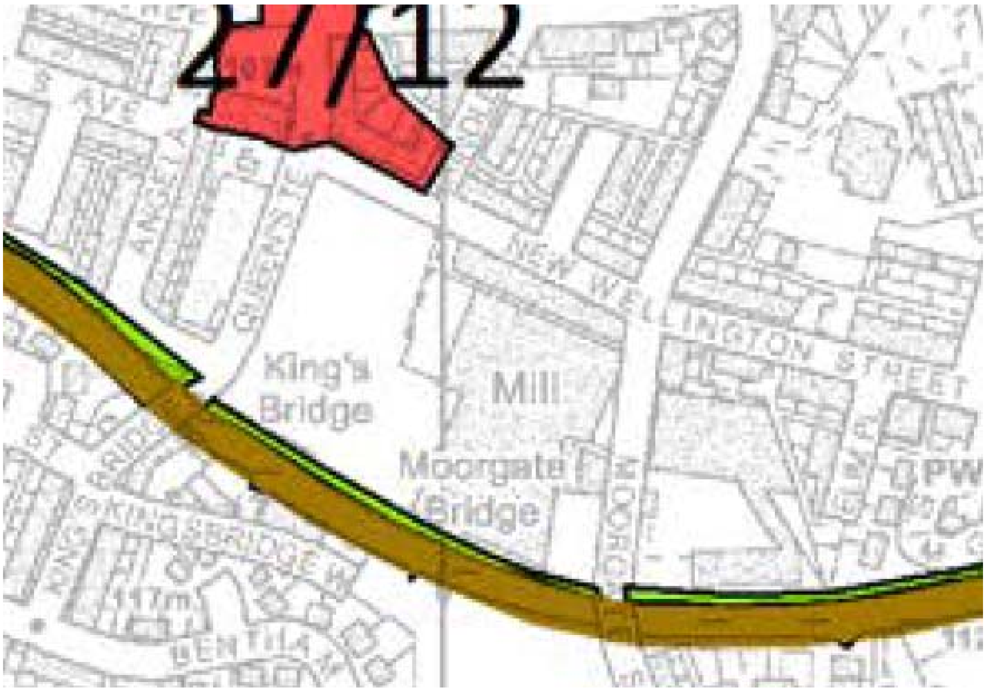
Local Plan Part 2 - Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (2015)

4.14 The Local Plan Part 2 Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (2015) was adopted in December 2015 and contains the site allocations and development management policies for the

[2] Paragraph: 015 Reference ID: 2b-015-20140306

district. It works alongside the Core Strategy to provide Blackburn's overall framework for development.

The Proposals Map



4.15 The site itself is not allocated within the Local Plan Part 2, however, it does show the location of the Mill Hill District centre immediately to the north of the site.

Relevant Retail Polices

4.16 Policy 27: District Centres – a Framework for their Development – This policy states that

"Within and adjacent to the District Centres as shown on the Adopted Policies Map, and listed in the table below, development will be supported where it encourages mixed uses, and where it responds to the scale and function of the centre in question. Proposals which fulfil these requirements will be permitted in the following circumstances:

i) New build proposals should be proportionate to the scale and function of the centre. New retail, leisure, office and service use developments should demonstrate that they cater for local needs, and should be accompanied by an impact assessment if they involve the creation of new floorspace above the thresholds set out in Policy 29. The assessment should consider the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in the centre and other nearby centres.

ii) Proposals involving conversion and adaptation of premises or involving changes of use should take place within existing buildings and frontages in order to consolidate and strengthen the vitality of the centre. They should retain or provide shop fronts in order to maintain active frontages and retain the character and vitality of the centre.

4.17 Policy 29: Assessing Applications for Main Town Centre Uses – sets out the Borough's sequential and retail impact assessment criteria.

4.18 In terms of sequential assessment the policy states that proposals outside of defined retail centres will be acceptable providing there are no sequentially preferable site's available or likely to be available within a reasonable timescale to accommodate the development; and that in discounting any sequentially preferable site, the developer/operator has applied a sufficiently flexible approach to their requirement in respect of scale, format and car parking provision. This part of the policy goes onto state that where an edge- or out-of-centre development is justified under the policy, preference will be given to locations which are well connected to an existing town centre; and appropriate measures will be required to maximise connectivity between the development and the centre.

4.19 In terms of assessing impact the policy states that retail developments which are not specifically supported by other policies, and are not in a town or district centre and which will create additional floorspace at or above the levels set out in Table 2 will be required to be accompanied by an impact assessment. Table 2 indicates that developments of over 250sqm within 500 metres of a district centre will be required to assess the potential impact on all district centre or local shopping centres/parade of shops within 500 metres of the site.

4.20 The policy finally states that:-

Where an impact assessment is required, proposals will only be granted planning permission where it is demonstrated that there will be no unacceptable impact on the vitality and viability of existing centres. In making its assessment on this issue the Council will take account of the following main issues along with any that are specific to the development in question:

i) The impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment, in a centre or centres in the catchment of the proposal;

ii) The impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and the wider area, up to five years from the time the application is made. For major schemes where the impact will not be realised in five years, the impact should also be assessed up to 10 years from the time the application is made; and

iii) The ability of the impact to be mitigated through measures secured through planning conditions or a planning agreement.

Retail Capacity Study (2011)

4.21 The Retail Capacity study in Blackburn with Darwen was conducted by Roger Tym and Partners in February 2011. The study was completed in order to identify potential future retail development of the borough, as well as to form an evidence base which the Council could use to create the policies for the Development Plan and the Local Development Framework.

4.22 The 2011 Study provides data on existing convenience goods trading patters within the borough. These existing trends were informed by a household survey with defined catchment areas based on geographic features and postcode sector boundaries. The application site lies within zone 6 convenience shopping catchment area although it also lies very close to Zone 5 to the north.

5.0 Retail Assessment

5.1 The requirements of this retail assessment are based on the pre-application advice provided to Heron Foods by the LPA alongside the relevant local and national planning policy and guidance. It was agreed through pre-application discussions that the development site lies on the edge of the defined Mill Hill District Centre. Whilst the LPA did not specifically request that a sequential assessment be carried out, given that the development proposed is located in an edge of centre location a proportionate sequential assessment has been undertaken in accordance with Policy 29 of the Local Plan Part 2 and paragraph 24 of the NPPF.

5.2 In addition to the requirement for a sequential assessment, the LPA indicated through pre-application discussions that the proposals would meet the policy threshold of being a retail development of over 250sqm within 500 metres of a district centre. As such, in order to comply with Policy 29 of the Local Plan Part 2 the LPA have requested that a retail impact assessment be carried out. Policy 29 requires the assessment to assess the potential impact on all district centre or local shopping centres/parade of shops within 500 metres of the development.

5.3 On this basis, and in accordance with advice in the PPG a locally proportionate impact assessment has been undertaken.

Area of Consideration – Primary Catchment Area

5.4 The proposed store would have a very localised catchment area, predominantly made up of walk-in trade serving the local population of Mill Hill. This is recognised by the requirements of Policy 29 which only requires an assessment of impact on centres within 500m. It is also the common experience of Heron Foods Ltd, in terms of its customer base. For robustness, however the potential for short car journey from neighbouring areas such as Feniscowles to the south west, Ewood to the south and small areas of Hollins Bank to the north east and north of the site has been assumed. It is not considered that the catchment area for the proposed store would extend too far beyond Hollin Bridge Street and Stancliffe Street given the presence of Blackburn Town Centre around 1.8 km north west of the site. Trade from areas north of Hollin Bridge Street and Stancliffe Street will mostly be drawn to Blackburn Town Centre and the surrounding major stores including Asda at Grimshaw Retail Park; Lidl, Whalley Banks; and Aldi, Montague Street. A map of the assumed primary catchment area is provided below.

5.5 This localised catchment area of the store is supported by the 2011 Retail Study which found that most convenience shopping in the borough is undertaken on a highly localised basis and that only three stores within the Study Area have market shares of over 10 per cent in three or more zones; these were the major Asda, Morrisons and Hill Street Tesco stores in Blackburn. Although the growth of discounters since 2011 may have reduced these market shares to an extent, we consider that these shopping patterns will remain fundamentally unchanged.

5.6 Mill Hill is the only defined shopping centre within the catchment area.

5.7 For the purposes of the impact assessment, given that policy 29 of the Local Plan part 2 only requires impact assessments to consider the potential impact on centres and shopping parades within 500 metres of the proposed development only the district centre of Mill Hill and the surrounding shopping parades need to be assessed in this instance.

5.8 In order to inform this assessment this report has considered the trade draw from existing stores in centre and out of centre locations. The Roger Tym and Partners Blackburn with Darwen Retail Capacity Study 2011 has been used to inform this assessment.

Sequential Assessment

5.9 As already highlighted within this report the application site is an edge-of-centre site for the purposes of the sequential test assessment as it is located less than 10m from the Mill Hill District Centre.

5.10 As set out in Paragraph 24 of the NPPF and within the adopted Development Plan the application of the sequential test is required for planning applications for main town centres, such as retail, that are not in an existing centres. As the site is located outside the defined district centre boundary, albeit in an edge-of-centre location, there is a requirement to undertake a sequential test assessment.

Relevant Appeal Decisions and Case Law

5.11 There have been a number of legal and appeal decisions which have considered the application of the sequential test and provided greater certainty regarding the requirements of the test. As such it is important to consider these before moving on to undertake the sequential test assessment. For ease of reference the cases referred to are as follows:

- Dundee Case – Supreme Court – Tesco Stores Ltd v Dundee City Council [2012 UKSC 13] (21/03/12)
- Scunthorpe decision – High Court – Zurich Assurance Ltd v North Lincolnshire [2012 EWHC 3708 (Admin)] (20/12/12)
- Barnsley Decision – planning appeal – Appeal Ref. APP/P4415/A/13/2197947 (5/11/13)
- Rusden Decision – recovered appeal decision – Appeal Ref: APP/G2815/V/12/2190175 (11/06/14)
- Moreton-in-Marsh Decision – High Court –Warners Retail (Moreton) Ltd v Cotswold DC [2014] EWHC 2504 (Admin) (22/07/14)

5.12 The clear message from the Dundee case is that the term 'suitable'; which forms part of the requirements of the sequential test assessment as set out in NPPF para. 24 and PPG para 010 (reference ID: 2b-010-20140306), should be interpreted as being suitable for the development proposed taking into account the format, scale and suitability of the location to serve the market that the development intends to serve.

5.13 This matter was further considered through the Scunthorpe decision with the judgement highlighting that in considering suitability and appropriate degree of flexibility; developers and planning authorities work in the real world (paragraph 61) citing paragraphs 29 and 38 of the

5.14 The identified case law and appeal decisions provide certainty as to what is required in the consideration of the sequential test assessment for main town centre uses. In summary, they confirm that whilst there is a requirement to demonstrate flexibility on issues of format and scale; any such flexibility must be well related and close to the development proposed and in a location that will ensure that the development is able to serve its intended market rather than being something which is significantly different to what is being sought by the developer.

Area of Search

5.15 As set out previously the sequential assessment has considered a very localised catchment area, predominantly made up of walk-in trade. In light of this the sequential assessment has only considered suitable sites located capable of accommodating the proposed development within Mill Hill District Centre.

5.16 Mill Hill District follows a mainly linear formation along New Chapel Street and New Wellington Street and is bound predominantly by residential terraced properties. The centre contains mainly local small format retailers however a few larger national chains are present within the centre including Spar, William Hill and Betfred.

5.17 Given the nature of the district centre which mainly comprises of smaller format retail units there is little opportunity for the proposed development to be accommodated within the centre. In centres of this nature there is sometimes the opportunity to amalgamate vacant units to provide a larger single unit. However, given the size and the lack of floorspace depth of the units within the centre a significant stretch of the centre's shop front would need to be vacant and amalgamated in order to provide the 369 sqm footprint required by the proposed development. Even if this were possible the store would not provide a suitable and workable footprint for Heron to trade from and would clearly be beyond the realm of reasonable flexibility.

5.18 For the reasons set out above, there are no sequentially preferable sites within the Mill Hill District centre that capable of accommodating the proposed development.

Summary

5.19 The defined centre of Mill Hill and Ewood have been assessed for suitably available sites capable of accommodating the proposed development. The sequential assessment has found there to be no sites available or suitable for the proposed development within these centre largely due to the size, form and pattern of the existing units within the centres. The site is therefore clearly the most sequentially preferable location capable of accommodating the proposed development. As such, the Proposed Development accords with Policy CS12 of the Core Strategy, Polices 27 and 29 of the Local Plan Part 2 and paragraph 24 of the NPPF.

Impact Assessment

5.20 In accordance with paragraph 26 of the NPPF and the Policy 29 of the Local Plan Part 2; as the development is in an edge-of-centre location there is a requirement to assess the proposal's impact on defined town centres. Policy 29 requires retail impact assessments to be submitted for retail developments providing over 250m2 of retail floorspace in locations within 500 metres of defined district centres. The policy requires the assessment consider the impact on district centres and shopping parades within 500 metres of the application site.

5.21 The application proposals will provide around 370 sqm (280sqm net) of retail floorspace on a site immediately adjacent to the defined Mill Hill District Centre. Policy 29 does not specify whether the threshold figures are gross or net retail floorspace, however, in both instances the proposed development falls above this policy threshold.

5.22 It is important to note that PPG confirms that; *'the impact test should be undertaken in a proportionate and locally appropriate way, drawing on existing information where possible.'* Given that the application proposals are for a small foodstore that provides a predominantly localised function, the impact assessment has been prepared in a proportionate manner.

5.23 The Blackburn with Darwen Retail Study 2011 forms part of the evidence base for the Local Plan provides the latest data on turnover of existing stores and trading patterns within Borough and there is no more up to date data available. Whilst the turnover figures within the retail study are based on 2006 prices these represent the latest data the Council have available at present and therefore this assessment relies upon the data provided within the 2011 Retail Study in respect of existing turnover and convenience goods trading patterns at the base year of 2011 at 2006 prices.

5.24 In order to provide a comparative assessment, the turnover of the proposed foodstore has been calculated by multiplying the net floorspace figure (280m2) by an average sales density for Heron Food stores as derived from Mintel's UK Retail Rankings at 2006 prices (£4,547 per m2). This gives an anticipated turnover of the proposed store of around £1.27million per annum in 2006.

Trade Diversion

5.25 In order to inform the trade diversion analysis, the existing shopping patterns of residents within Zone 5 and Zone 6 of the Retail Study area (at 2011) have been used and the key statistics are summarised below:

- The localised retention rate is Zone 6 is very low at 20.1%
- Zone 6 residents primarily travel to Asda at Grimshaw Park (34.13%) and Morrisons in Blackburn Town Centre (10.14%) as well as Aldi at Ewood (11.38%)
- Only 2.3% of Zone 6 residents shop at 'Other Stores' in Zone 6
- The localised retention rate in Zone 5 is higher at 42.1%, although again residents primarily travel to the town centre stores in Blackburn

5.26 A summary of shopping patterns within the catchment area of the store is provided at Table 1, with the expected turnover of the proposed development at Table 2 and the impact and expected trade draw of the proposed store presented at Table 3 of Appendix 1.

5.27 Given the localised catchment area of the proposed store and the policy requirements only to assess the impact of the proposals within 500 metres of the application site only those existing retail stores within the catchment area previously discussed have been examined in detail. These existing stores have been in-situ prior to the 2011 Retail Survey and therefore turnover data for these stores is available within the 2011 Retail Study. We have obtained turnover for the various stores from Table 15A which assumes a static retention rate and is therefore a worst case scenario in terms of trading levels. The only nearby store not included within the 2011 Retail Study is the Sainsbury's Local on Preston Old Road, which opened more recently. As such, we have calculated the total annual turnover of this store by multiplying the net floorspace figure (246.5m2) by an average sales density for Sainsbury's Food stores as derived from Mintel's UK Retail Rankings at 2006 prices (£7,716 per m2).

5.28 The Site itself and the expected catchment area of the proposed store lie mainly within the Zone 6 convenience shopping catchment area of the 2011 Retail Study. However the site is also close to the border of Zone 5 of the retail study. Existing shopping patterns of residents within both Zone 6 and Zone 5 have been utilised to inform the anticipated impact and trade draw of the proposed development.

5.29 Whilst the existing shopping patterns within the area have been used in considering the expected trade diversion associated with the proposed foodstore, account has mainly been taken of the guiding principle set out within the PPG[3] which confirms that retail uses tend to compete with their most comparable competitive facilities on a 'like-for-like' basis. In this regard it is important to consider the offer provided by Heron Food stores. These stores predominantly offer a limited range of convenience goods focusing primarily on frozen foods and discounted short life goods rather than more general day-to-day convenience goods. Whilst not providing a true main-food shopping offer, Heron Foods are generally used in order to purchase specific, mainly frozen, food items which otherwise would be purchased from larger supermarkets or express/local equivalents with a significant frozen food offer

5.30 In this regard, the new foodstore will principally compete against other supermarkets which have a frozen food offer and other frozen food specialist retailers. Only a limited amount of trade will be drawn from smaller convenience stores as the overlap in retail offer is limited with Heron Foods not providing a number of typical 'top-up' convenience goods products such as newspapers, magazines, tobacco and alcohol that are typically sold in smaller convenience stores/'corner shops' which also have a very limited frozen food offer.

5.31 On this basis, and in light of the shopping patterns in Zone 5 and 6 summarised above, it is anticipated that the proposed store will draw a large proportion of its trade from the main Asda and Morrisons stores, and to a lesser extent the smaller format stores on the edge of Blackburn town centre such as Tesco Express at Bank Top and Farmfoods on King Street due to its comparable goods offer to the proposed development. As such, we anticipated 30% trade from 'other' destinations not specifically listed at Table 3, which sit outside the store's Primary Catchment Area.

5.32 The other existing store the proposed store will likely draw trade from outside the primary catchment area is the existing Heron Foods Store on Rothesay Road. It is anticipated that the trade draw will only be small (5%) in this instance and will be a result of residents in Zone 5 and Zone 6 who have previously travelled some distance to the existing Heron Store because they like the particular offer, now being able to shop in the more local proposed store.

5.33 In light of the high level of spending leakage, particularly within Zone 6, to the large supermarkets within Blackburn, the proposed Heron will help to retain resident spending within Zone 6 and will address the identified low localised retention rate as noted in the 2011 Retail Study. It will meet a clear localised need.

[3] Paragraph: 016 Reference ID: 2b-016-20140306

5.34 Within the Primary Catchment area, the closest convenience store to the proposed development is the Spar in the Mill Hill District Centre. It is expected that 3% of the proposed store's turnover will be from this store based on the limited overlaps in products offered with the Spar having a very limited frozen offer. Given the proximity of the Spar to the proposed store it is anticipated that the many shoppers will be drawn to the Heron for its specific frozen offer and also result in the potential for link trips where shoppers will visit the Spar as well as other shops and services within the Mill Hill centre.

5.35 To the west of the site towards Feniscowles are larger format convenience stores in the form of a Sainsbury's Local on Preston Old Road and Tesco Express on Liversey Branch Road. It is anticipated that the proposed development will draw a relatively large proportion of its trade from these two stores given that they do have a wider frozen food offer that overlaps with the proposed development's product offer. Furthermore, the Tesco store in particular draws around 25% of its trade from residents in Zone 6 and therefore it is likely that some of these shoppers will be diverted to the proposed development. In light of this it is anticipated that the proposed development will draw 12% of its trade from the Tesco express and slightly less trade (10%) for the Sainsbury's Local. Both of these stores sit in out-of-centre locations and are not afforded any protection by planning policy.

5.36 Within the eastern part of Zone 6 lies the Iceland foodstore and an Aldi located within the Ewood District Centre. It is anticipated that the proposed development will draw 14% of its trade from the Iceland store as it represents the closest convenience store with a similar product and price offering to Heron foods. The draw from the Iceland is not anticipated to be any higher given that it currently draws a relative modest proportion of Zone 5 and 6 expenditure (6.5% and 1.1% respectively), which, as previously mentioned is mainly directed towards larger stores such as Asda at Grimshaw Park Retail Park. As for the Aldi it is anticipated that the proposed development will draw 17% of its trade from the Aldi given that it does have a relatively large frozen food at a similar price point to Heron but also because it draws a notable proportion of convenience expenditure from Zone 6 (11.38%).

5.37 The proposed development is anticipated to draw 6% from 'other stores' in Zone 6 which it is expected to be largely made up of turnover from the Co-op store on Liversey Branch Road to the south of the site. The Co-op provides a limited frozen offer and therefore despite the proposed development the Co-op will continue to serve the residential areas to the south of Liversey Branch Road as their primary 'top up' convenience shop destination.

5.38 The remaining 3% of trade is expected to be drawn from other stores within Zone 5 such as the smaller format convenience stores in allocated centres such as Bolton Road District Centre as well as several small convenience stores located around the Mill Hill and surrounding residential areas.

5.39 Overall, the store is anticipated to draw 65% of its turnover from stores within the identified Primary Catchment Area, with the remaining 35% drawn from outside. In view of the existing shopping patterns which demonstrate high leakage of expenditure to other, larger facilities, this is considered to be a reasonable estimate of the likely pattern of trade diversion for this store.

Impact on Planned Investment

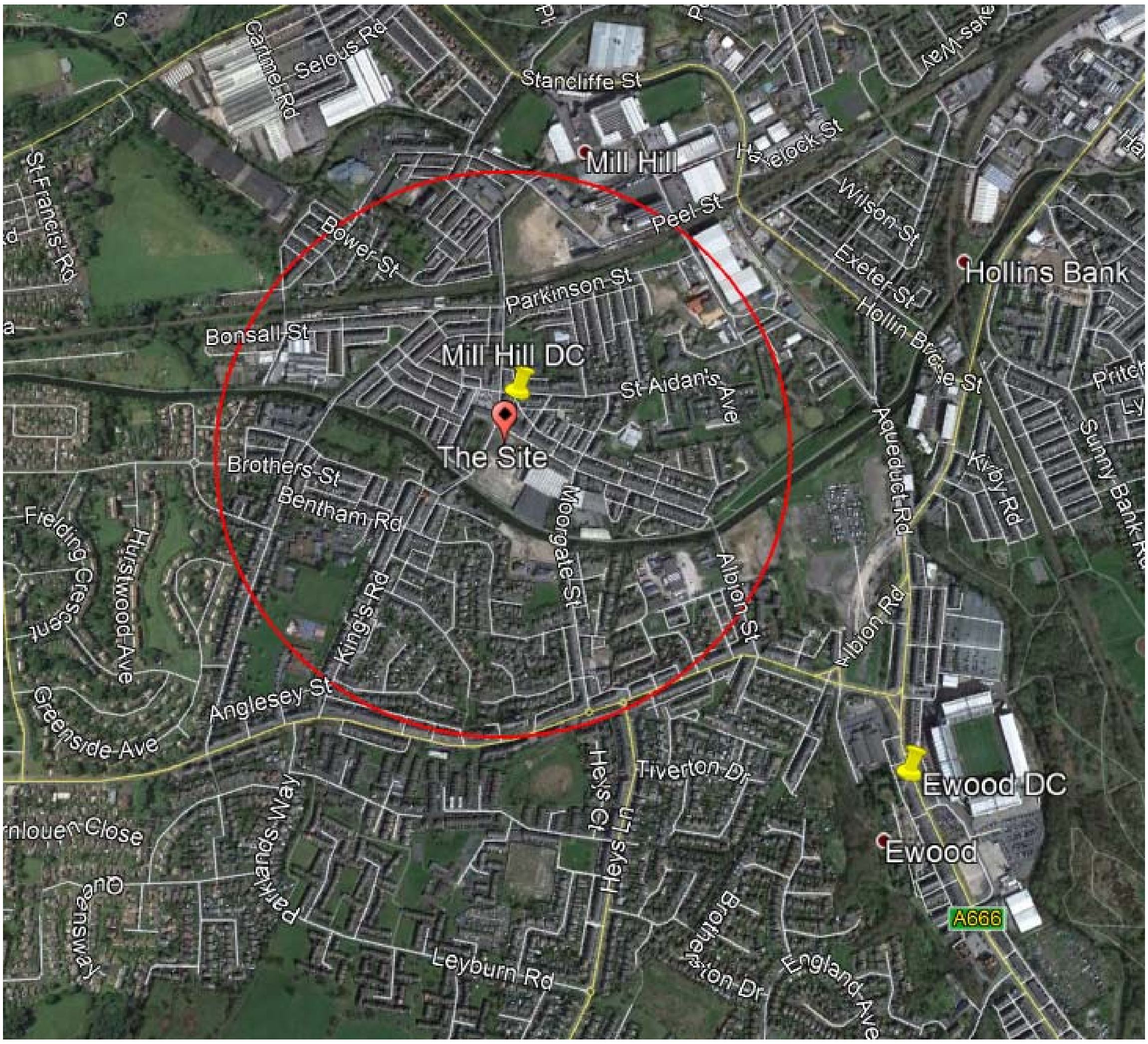
5.40 There are no committed developments of an appropriate scale or proximity to the site to be impacted upon by the proposed development.

Impact on Town Centre Vitality and Viability

5.41 Policy 29 of the Local Plan requires that proposals of 250sqm or more within 500 metres of a district centre should consider the potential impact on all defined centres and parade of shops within 500m of the development site.

5.42 The aerial image below shows a 500 metre radius from the centre of the Site. The only defined centre within this area is the Mill Hill District Centre immediately to the north of the Site. Ewood District Centre is located 750 metres to the south east of the site and therefore outside this area of consideration required by policy. In terms of shopping parades within this area there are several retailers located along Liversey Branch Road. It is not considered that these retailers constitute a traditional ‘parade of shops’ in the context of Policy 29 as they are mostly dotted along Liversey Branch Road rather than clustered together. We have nevertheless considered the potential impact on these retailers for robustness.

5.43 As such, the key locations to consider with regards to impact are Mill Hill District Centre and the retailers situated along Liversey Branch Road.



5.44 With regards to Mill Hill District Centre, the only store to be see any sort of impact beyond negligible is the Spar. The level of trade draw is considered to amount to a maximum of 3% (or £0.038 million) given the considerable differences in product offerings of the two stores. As previously highlighted Heron Foods does not offer many of the standard convenience goods offered by top-up local shops such as newspapers, magazines, tobacco and alcohol which make up a significant draw for the Spar. As such, we anticipate the proposed development and the Spar to complement each other in their convenience goods offer and provide a more diverse choice to the centre.

5.45 The household survey undertaken in support of the 2011 Retail Study did not identify Mill Hill District Centre as a retail destination and as such the turnover and floorspace of the centre is unknown. Nevertheless from inspecting the retailers operating within the Mill Hill centre and adjacent parade there is likely to be little, if any, trade drawn from the existing retailers. Using google maps, which contains up to date data on retailers within this area, and Google Street view (June 2016) it can be seen that Mill Hill comprises of several independent comparison goods retailers such as a mobile phone repair shop and a sportswear retailer; several takeaways and cafes; service based retailers such as a Post Office, a pharmacy and a funeral directors; several beauty/hair/tanning salons; and well as national betting chains such as Betfred and William Hill.

The proposed development will clearly not divert any trade from these retailers. There are a few newsagents/small format convenience stores within the centre however these stores have a very limited, if any, frozen food offer and therefore the trade diversion from these retailers will be negligible. As such, the level of trade diversion from the Spar and the centre as whole is not considered to be significant as to compromise the vitality and viability of the store or centre which would be able to continue to operate with minimal impact.

5.46 Rather than cause harm, the proximity of the proposed foodstore to the centre brings significant potential for linked trips with other stores and services within centre, particularly given it will retain more of the convenience expenditure in the local area and will provide safe and free parking within a convenient location. As such, the store will likely benefit the centre through increased footfall and visitor numbers. This in turn will help to increase the turnover of existing retail units within the centre and will increase investor confidence in the area potentially resulting in an increased interest from potential occupiers in any vacant units. As such, it is clear that the proposed foodstore will not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality or viability of the existing local centre and will in fact have a net benefit.

5.47 In terms of the parade of shops located on Liversey Branch Road again there is minimal crossover between these retailers which include a hair salon, takeaways and cafes and a Bargain Booze and therefore there will be no trade drawn from these destinations. As discussed above it is anticipated that the proposed Heron store will draw up to a maximum of 6% of its trade from the Co-op on Liversey Branch Road which is contained within the 'Other Store, Zone 6' destination within table 3. This is again largely due to the Heron offering minimal convenience goods offered by top-up local shops such as newspapers, magazines, tobacco and alcohol which make up a significant draw for the Co-op. The Co-op will also give its location will still perform as the principal top-up shopping destination for the residential areas to the south of Liversey Branch Road given the limited alternatives these residents have access to.

5.48 In summary the proposed development will not have significant impact on the vitality and viability of the defined district centre of Mill Hill or the retailers situated along Liversey Branch Road. As such, the proposed development is considered compliant with Policy 29 of the Local Plan Part 2 and paragraph 26 of the NPPF.

6.0 Summary and Conclusions

6.1 This report has demonstrated how the proposed development would be an effective use of a currently developed but under-utilised site to provide a new food store within Mill Hill on an edge of centre site. The provision of a food store on this site will provide economic benefits through the creation of jobs in the local area and generation of business rates to be reinvested.

6.2 The tests set out within the NPPF regarding the sequential test (paragraph 24) and the impact test (paragraph 26) have been addressed in an appropriate level of detail in this report above.

6.3 In light of the primary catchment area for the proposed Heron Food Store, our search for sequential sites has focused on the Mill Hill District Centre. The sequential assessment concluded that no sequentially preferable available units/sites within this area have the potential to support a store of this scale. As such the application site is the most sequentially preferable site to accommodate the proposed development.

6.4 The impact assessment found that the proposed development will draw the majority of its trade from larger supermarkets within Blackburn in line with current spending patterns within the borough. The proposed store will however assist in the retention of resident spending within Zone 6 and will address the identified low localised retention rate as noted in the 2011 Retail Study. The assessment ultimately concludes that the proposed development will not have a significant impact upon the vitality and viability of existing centre and shopping parades. With regards to Mill Hill District Centre there will be little overlap in product offering with the Spar and thus limited competition between stores. Furthermore, the addition of the Heron Food Store offers significant potential for linked trips with the other units in the centre and may increase interest in take up of the currently vacant units, thus improving the vitality and viability of this centre.

6.5 Furthermore, the development proposals will create an attractive new part of the local centre that interacts well with its surroundings and the redeveloped centre, provides safe and appropriate levels of access for users of all requirements, and is respectful in its design and operation towards neighbouring properties and residential areas.

6.6 In conclusion, the development proposals will bring notable economic, social and environmental benefits to Mill Hill and as such constitute sustainable development in line with the definition with NPPF. As such in accordance with NPPF Paragraph 14 planning permission should be granted without delay.

Appendix 1:

Retail Table

Table 1: Convenience Goods Shopping Patterns

Zone	Destination	Zone 5 (%)	Zone 5 (£m)	Zone 6 (%)	Zone 6 (£m)	Total from all Zones(£m)
4	Tesco Express, Livesey Branch Road, Blackburn	0.87	0.23	2.25	0.49	*2.30*
4	Other stores, Zone 4	0.00	0.00	0.19	0.04	*2.73*
4	Sainsburys Local*					*1.90*
5	Spar, New Chapel Street, Mill Hill, Blackburn	1.20	0.32	3.50	0.76	*1.12*
5	Other stores, Zone 5	4.21	1.10	1.18	0.25	*2.37*
6	Aldi, Bolton Road, Blackburn	2.72	0.71	11.38	2.46	*5.97*
6	Iceland, Bolton Road, Ewood, Blackburn	1.10	0.29	6.44	1.39	*1.91*
6	Other stores, Zone 6	0.87	0.23	2.31	0.50	*0.92*

Notes

Data taken from Blackburn with Darwen Rodger Tym & Partners 2011 Retail Study - Table 14A convenience Goods Spending as a Percentage and Table 15A Convenience Goods Spending Patterns (both Static Retention Rate)

* Data on Sainsburys Local not avaialable in 2011 Retail Study.
Store total annual turnover calculated by multiplying the net floorspace figure (246.5m2) by an average sales density for Sainsbury's Food stores as derived from Mintel's UK Retail Rankings at 2006 prices (£7,716 per m2).

Table 2: Proposed Heron Food Store Turnover

Gross Floorspace (sqm)	Net Floorspace (sqm)	Sales Density (£/sqm)	Convenience Goods Turnover (£m)
369	280	4547	1.27

Notes:

Sales Density taken from Mintel Retail Rankings at 2006 Prices

Convenience Goods Turnover based on Net Floorspace x Sales Density

Table 3: Anticipated Trade Diversion and Impa

Zone	Destination	Total (£m)	Trade Diversion (%)	Trade Diversion (£m)	Total Convenience Goods Turnover Post Trade Diversion (£m)	Level of Impact on Existing Convenience Turnover (%)
Inside Primary Catchment Area						
4	Tesco Express, Livesey Branch Road, Blackburn	*2.30*	12%	0.1524	2.15	7%
4	Other stores, Zone 4	*2.73*	0%	0	2.73	0%
4	Sainsburys Local	*1.90*	10%	0.127	1.77	7%
5	Spar, New Chapel Street, Mill Hill, Blackburn	*1.12*	3%	0.0381	1.08	3%
5	Other stores, Zone 5	*2.37*	3%	0.0381	2.33	2%
6	Aldi, Bolton Road, Blackburn	*5.97*	17%	0.2159	5.75	4%
6	Iceland, Bolton Road, Ewood, Blackburn	*1.91*	14%	0.1778	1.73	9%
6	Other stores, Zone 6	*0.92*	6%	0.0762	0.84	8%
Outside Primary Catchment Area						
	Heron, Rothesay Rd, Blackburn		5%	0.0635		
	Other		30%	0.381		
			100%	*1.27*		