

Prepared for:
Lidl Great Britain Limited

Planning and Retail Statement

Land adjacent to Yarmouth Stadium
Caister-on-Sea

by CarneySweeney

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1.0 Introduction

1.1.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared in support of a planning application for Lidl Great Britain Limited (Lidl) for a new discount foodstore and two drive-thru restaurants on the land adjacent to Yarmouth Stadium, Caister By-Pass. The description of development states:

“Construction of a Class E limited assortment discount foodstore (Class E) and two drive thru restaurants (Class E / Sui Generis), with associated access, car parking, landscaping and engineering works.”

1.1.2 The Statement focuses on the general planning and retail policy issues associated with the proposed development. It is intended to assist Great Yarmouth Borough Council in its determination of the application and has been prepared in accordance with the requirements set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It seeks to evaluate the proposal against national and local planning policies and considers the justification and implications of the proposed development, particularly in relation to the retail policy considerations including the impact on trading patterns and the vitality and viability of Caister-on-Sea centre.

1.1.3 The planning application comprises the following supporting documents, in addition to this statement:

- Application drawings
- Design and Access Statement
- Transport Assessment
- Travel Plan
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Plan
- Preliminary Ecological Appraisal
- Energy and Sustainability Statement
- Ground Investigations Report
- Mineral Resource Safeguarding Statement
- Topographical Survey
- Utilities Statement

1.1.4 The remainder of this Statement is set out as follows:

- **Chapter 2: The Site, Surroundings and Planning History** – this section describes the site and surroundings and sets out the planning history.



- **Chapter 3: The Proposed Development** – a detailed description of the development proposals.
- **Chapter 4: Pre-Application Discussions and Public Consultation** – A summary of the pre-application discussions is provided in this chapter.
- **Chapter 5: Policy Context** – The planning policy context on which the application will be determined is provided in this section.
- **Chapter 6: Assessment of Existing Retail Provision** – provides a health-check assessment of Caister-on-Sea Centre and the surrounding centres.
- **Chapter 7: Considerations of Retail Policy** – provides a sequential assessment to site selection.
- **Chapter 8: Assessment of Impact** – provides an assessment of retail impact as a result of the scheme.
- **Chapter 9: Other Principal Planning Considerations** – this section assesses the remaining key planning issues relating to the Proposed Development.
- **Chapter 10: Summary and Conclusions** – provides a summary and conclusions.



2.0 The Application Site

2.1 Site Description

- 2.1.1 The site is located approximately 700 metres to the south of Caister-on-Sea District Centre and 3 km north of Great Yarmouth. The site itself is approximately 2.6ha and partially used as overflow car parking for Yarmouth Stadium (1.3 ha), with the remainder of the site being grassland.
- 2.1.2 The site is bound by the A149 (Caister Bypass) to the north and Yarmouth Road to the east. Yarmouth Road the site northwards into Caister-on-Sea centre, and southwards into Great Yarmouth centre. Yarmouth Stadium is located directly to the south of the site, Caister Recycling Centre and Sewage Treatment Works is located to the west of the site. East of the site is Caister Golf Club.
- 2.1.3 Public Transport access to the site is to a good standard with bus stops on Yarmouth Road. The closest stops are located within very close proximity and walking distance of the site. Regular services between Caister-on-Sea and Great Yarmouth are available.
- 2.1.4 Caister-on-Sea is also served by Tesco Superstore, located to the north of the proposed site, and immediately south of the Town Centre. Other supermarkets are located in Great Yarmouth including Lidl's own store on Pasteur Road as well as Asda, Aldi, Sainsburys, Tesco Extra, M&S Foodhall, The Food Warehouse and Londis. Ormesby centre also has a Spar.

2.2 Planning History

- 2.2.1 The Council website does not have any relevant planning history for the site; however, the site is shown within the red and blue line boundaries of a number of planning applications at Yarmouth Stadium and is listed as Stadium Car Parking. Based on the information above, it is considered that the use of the section of the site included in the Yarmouth Stadium site has been established for car parking for Yarmouth Stadium which is a 'sui-generis' use (1.3 ha). The remainder of the site is undeveloped land, with no planning history.
- 2.2.2 We understand that there have been previous discussions with the Council regarding the site, but the Council holds no record of the details of the advice.



3.0 The Application Proposal

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 There are three identified development plots forming the proposed development site, all accessed from the adjacent roundabout, with a total area of 2.88 hectares. The largest plot will be occupied by a new Lidl foodstore, with the remaining plots are proposed to be drive-thru restaurants. It is not possible to name the operators at this stage for confidentiality reasons, but they are nationally recognised brands. A details description of each plot is set out below:

3.2 Lidl Foodstore

3.2.1 The replacement limited assortment discount foodstore will comprise:

- A single storey building with a floorspace of 2,187 sqm (GIA) and a net sales area of 1,512 sqm;
- 141 car parking spaces, including 6 disabled spaces and 9 parent & child spaces and 2 Electric Vehicle (EV) charging bays are also provided;
- 12 covered cycle spaces (6 Sheffield Stands);
- Vehicular access from the adjacent roundabout; and
- Associated drainage and landscaping.

3.2.2 The Proposed Site Layout Plan shows how the development will be arranged. The foodstore will be located along the western boundary of the site, orientated so that the glazed elevation faces towards the roundabout. Car parking will be located on the northern and easter sides of the building, with accessible parking and parent and child parking provided close to the store entrance for ease. Vehicular access for staff, customers and deliveries will be via a new access to the roundabout.

3.2.3 The foodstore will be single storey, with the warehouse located along the south-west elevation of the building, wrapping around to the north-west elevation. The south-west elevation of the proposed Lidl is approximately 5.1m tall, with the building risking to a height of just over 7 metres on its north-east elevation at the top of the mono-pitch roof.



- 3.2.4 The customer entrance will be located on the eastern corner of the building, providing easy access to the store for pedestrians. The entrance forms part of an attractive glazed elevation which runs the length of the south-east elevation. The canopy provides definition and articulation to this façade, wrapping around the north-east elevation. It also provides over to both the trolley storage area and cycle stands. The canopy also serves to provide shelter to those entering the store and contributes to managing thermal gain within the building. The palette of materials provides interest and a modes design that is in keeping with the adjacent Yarmouth Stadium. Further details can be found in the accompanying Design and Access Statemen.
- 3.2.5 Cycle access to the site is good and 6 cycle Sheffield Stands, providing 12 spaces, are proposed on site by the entrance. The site is also accessible for pedestrians. The Transport Assessment submitted in support of this application includes further details on accessibility.
- 3.2.6 The store will be serviced via an enclosed loading bay on its north-west boundary so that all deliveries of goods to the foodstore, and the collection of waste from it, will be carried out within the building. There will be no movement of storage of waste in any outside area. Lidl's foodstores are typically served by 1 to 2 HGV deliveries per day. These deliveries take waste back to the regional distribution centre, helping to reduce the number of traffic movements at Lidl's sites and reducing emissions as a consequence. The number of deliveries may be higher at peak seasonal times but will remain, typically, no more than 2 to 3 per day.
- 3.2.7 The new store will be a relocation of Lidl's existing Caister-on-Sea outlet, and it is intended that all existing staff will transfer over to the new store. As well as safeguarding existing jobs, the larger foodstore will require additional staff and Lidl always seek to source labour locally and provide management opportunities for staff. It is estimated that the new store will potentially generate up to 15 additional jobs.
- 3.2.8 The opening hours are likely to reflect the existing Caister-on-Sea foodstore which are set out below but the application seeks unrestricted operating and servicing hours:
- 08:00 to 22:00 Monday to Saturdays including bank holidays.
 - 10:00 to 16:00 Sundays

3.3 Existing Lidl Store

- 3.3.1 Lidl have traded from their existing outlet on Norwich Road in the village centre since 2001. The Council's website does not provide any details of the original planning permission. The existing store comprises:



- A single store building with a floorspace of 1,445 sqm (GIA) and a net sales area of 1,114 sqm.
- 83 car parking spaces

3.3.2 The internal layout and servicing do not meet Lidl's current specifications and compromises store operations. Overall, the outlet is significantly smaller than current formats and is sub-standard in terms of its internal layout, parking and servicing – the staff welfare area is poor compared to the newer formats and the warehouse space is insufficient which causes significant operational difficulties in keeping the store stocked. It therefore does not allow the efficient store operations that the deep discount business model is built around, nor does it provide the quality of offer that the public now expect in Limited Assortment Discount (LAD) stores.

3.3.3 Lidl has explored replacing the existing store previously obtaining planning permission for "Demolition of existing store and replacement with new" on 27 August 2014 (ref: 06/14/0588/F). This increased the floorspace by 564 sqm but reduce the car parking provision down to 70 spaces which does not meet operational requirements. Other applications have been submitted more recently for general improvements to the store (06/21/0473/F) and extension of trading hours (06/15/0688/F).

3.3.4 Lidl have identified a need to provide an improved offer in Caister-on-Sea, both because local residents should be able to access the same quality of offer as Lidl provide elsewhere, but also to safeguard their market share in the face of increasing competition. The current store has been identified for closure due to the operational inadequacies. This will occur, whether or not planning permission is granted for the new store.

3.4 Plot 1 - Drive Thru

3.4.1 A drive-thru restaurant is proposed (Class E / Sui Generis takeaway) which will comprise:

- A single storey building with a total floorspace of 351 sqm (GIA).
- 50 car parking spaces including 2 disabled spaces.
- Outdoor seating area.
- Access via the roundabout and access road.
- Associated landscaping and drainage infrastructure.



- 3.4.2 The footprint of the building will be located on the southern area the site with car parking to the west. The customer entrance will be located on the north elevation with glazing wrapping around the north and west elevation, fronting the car park. The building itself is single storey with a maximum height reaching 5.2 metres to the west, stepping down to 3 metres towards the eastern area of the site. The design is modern in appearance with a varied palette of materials providing visual interest.
- 3.4.3 The customers using the drive-thru will enter the car park and pass to the north of the building. Orders will be placed via units to the east of the site, payment and collection will be on the south elevation.
- 3.4.4 Cycle access to the site is good and Sheffield Stands are proposed on site by the entrance. The site is also accessible for pedestrians. The store will be serviced via the car park area in which is a standard approach for drive-thru restaurants throughout the country. The Transport Assessment submitted in support of this application includes further details on accessibility and deliveries.
- 3.4.5 It is proposed that the operating hours will be unrestricted.

3.5 Plot 2 - Drive Thru

- 3.5.1 The second drive thru restaurant (Class E / Sui Generis takeaway) will comprise:
- A single storey building with a total floorspace of 167 sqm (GIA)
 - 46 car parking spaces including 2 disabled spaces.
 - Outdoor seating area.
 - Access via the roundabout and access road.
 - Associated landscaping and drainage infrastructure.
- 3.5.2 The footprint of the single storey building will be located in the south-west of the plot with parking to the north. The customer entrance will be located on the north elevation, with glazing wrapping around the north and east elevations, fronting the car park. The building is also single story, but with a mono-pitch rising from the south to north, with a maximum height of 5.3 metres. The building also has a modern design approach, utilising brick and render with an aluminium roof.



- 3.5.3 The customers using the drive-thru will enter the car park and proceed around the building from the east to the west. Cycle parking spaces will be located near the customer entrance. Deliveries and servicing will be carried out in the car park, during off-peak hours. The Transport Assessment submitted in support of this application includes further details.
- 3.5.4 It is proposed that the operating hours will be unrestricted.



4.0 Pre-Application Discussions and Public Consultation

Pre-Application Discussions

4.0.1 A pre-application meeting was held with Planning Officers to discuss the principle of the development. The key matters raised in the meeting were as follows:

- It was requested that the application demonstrate that the existing site could not accommodate the new foodstore requirements and therefore relocation was necessary.
- Consideration of the Jack Chase Way development as an alternative location for the foodstore, together with other sites put forward in the 'Call for Sites' consultation.
- Officers questioned the impact of the development on the surrounding area.
- The flood risk designation was questioned, on whether the site was in Flood Zone 3a or Flood Zone 3b.

4.0.2 No formal written response was received following the meeting. All of the above matters have been addressed in this report.

1.1 Public Consultation

4.0.3 National and Local Government encourages developers to consult with local communities and stakeholders before submitting a planning application. Consultation and communication with local communities is an important element of the planning process. It is important that local communities are made fully aware of proposals affecting their area and are provided with opportunities to view any plans and discuss issues with the development or their professional team. This process should also enable the community to provide feedback.

4.0.4 A programme of community engagement has taken place over the plans for a new Lidl foodstore and drive thru restaurants in Caister-on-Sea. Residents have been informed of the public consultation via a leaflet with a website feedback link, which was distributed across Caister-on-Sea and the northern area of Great Yarmouth. A presentation was also given to the Parish Council where residents were also invited to attend. Local Council's were also contact directly about the proposals.



4.0.5 Around 6,135 households were sent a two-sided information leaflet about the proposal new development. A website was also launched which included details about the plans and an online survey. To date we have received 75 responses to the consultation. 47 responses were in support (64%), 8 were neutral (10%) and 20 objected (26%) to the proposals.

4.0.6 The positive comments included:

- Welcoming the improved offer Lidl can provide with a new, larger store.
- New jobs and investment for the community.
- The drive thru restaurants would provide a new offer to Caister-on-Sea.

4.0.7 Whilst the public consultation showed a high level of support, below key areas of concern which were raised by those who responded to the

- Highway impact and safety of the new junction. This is explored in details in the Transport Assessment submitted in support of this application.
- Loss of the existing village centre Lidl foodstore. Lidl has explored at length the potential to improve the offer on the existing site but the site is not large enough to accommodate the needs of a fit-for-purpose Lidl foodstore. It is likely that the current store will close, whether planning permission is granted for the new foodstore or not.
- Car Park Management for the Stadium. Lidl are working closely with the Stadium owner to delivery a more appropriate solution to the car parking provision than current exists.

4.0.8 On 4 September, the proposals were presented to the Caister-on-Sea Parish Council. There was a half hour question and answer session, predominantly focused on the issues above.

4.0.9 It is considered that engagement has been open and transparent, and the intention is to continue to accept feedback following the planning submission.



5.0 Planning Policy Context

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 This section of the report briefly considers the national and local planning policies of relevance to the proposed retail development.

5.1.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 states that planning applications must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. In this instance the development plan consists of the Great Yarmouth Core Strategy (adopted 2015) and the Great Yarmouth Local Plan Part 2 (adopted 2021). Other material considerations include national policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

5.2 Development Plan

Great Yarmouth Core Strategy (adopted 2015)

5.2.1 The adopted Policies Map shows the site as unallocated and located outside of the settlement boundary.

5.2.2 The Great Yarmouth Core Strategy was adopted in 2015. Policies considered to be of relevance to the application comprise:

- **Policy CS1:** ‘Focusing on a sustainable future’ supports development proposals that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the borough. It states that the Council will take a positive approach and work positively with applicants to find solutions so that proposals that improve the economic, social and environmental conditions of the borough can be approved wherever possible.
- **Policy CS2:** ‘Achieving sustainable growth’ seeks to ensure that new commercial development for employment and retail uses is distributed in accordance with Policies CS6, CS7, CS8 and CS16.
- **Policy CS6:** ‘Supporting the local economy’ promotes the provision for new and existing businesses to thrive and grow, by supporting the local visitor and retail economies in accordance with Policies CS7 and CS8.
- **Policy CS7:** ‘Strengthening our centres’ identifies Caister-on-Sea as a District Centre and seeks to allocate in accordance with the retail hierarchy and the sequential approach between 2,152sqm (net) and 4,305sqm (net) of new ‘food’ shopping floorspace. It seeks



to ensure that all proposals for town centre uses outside defined centres demonstrate that there are no sequentially preferable sites available, and that the proposal can be accessed by sustainable transport. Proposals over 200sqm (net) will also be required to submit a Retail Impact Assessment demonstrating that there will be no significant adverse impact on existing designated centres, including those beyond the borough boundary.

- **Policy CS9:** ‘Encouraging well-designed, distinctive places’ states that high quality, distinctive places are an essential part in attracting and retaining residents, businesses, visitors and developers. As such, the Council will ensure that all new developments within the borough:
 - Draw inspiration from the surrounding area’s natural, built and historic characteristics, such as scale, form, massing and material, to ensure that the full potential of the development site is realised, making efficient use of land.
 - Provide vehicular access and parking suitable for the use and location of the development, reflecting the Council’s adopted parking standards.
 - Seek to protect the amenity of people working in or nearby from factors such a noise, light, air pollution and ensure that new development does not unduly impact upon public safety.
- **Policy CS11:** ‘Enhancing the natural environment’ where *the Council will work with other partner authorities and agencies to improve the borough’s natural environment and avoid any harmful impacts of development on its biodiversity, geodiversity, landscape assets, priority habitats and species. The policy sets out a number of criteria on how this can be achieved.*
- **Policy CS13:** ‘Protecting areas at risk of flooding and coastal change’ seeks to ensure a sustainable and practicable approach to flood risk and coastal change and ensure development does not increase the risk of flooding elsewhere. This will be achieved by:
 - Directing new development proposals away from areas of highest risk of flooding (Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b) unless it can be demonstrated that:
 - The requirements of the Sequential Test are met
 - Where applicable, the requirements of the Exception Test are met. A safe access/egress route throughout the duration of the flood event should be provided. However, if this is demonstrated as not being possible then evacuation will be considered as a means of making the development safe



- A satisfactory Flood Response Plan has been prepared
- Seeking the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) in all new developments.
- **Policy CS16:** Improving accessibility and transport *The Council and its partners will work together to make the best use of, and improve, existing transport infrastructure within and connecting to the Borough, having first considered solutions to transport problems that are based on better management and the provision and promotion of sustainable forms of travel.*

Great Yarmouth Local Plan Part 2 (adopted 2021)

5.2.3 The relevant policies in the Great Yarmouth Local Plan Part 2 are set out below:

- **Policy GSP1** ‘Development Limits’ which are defined in the Policies Map. Development will not be permitted on land outside of Development Limits except where specific policies in the Local Plan indicate otherwise.
- **Policy GSP8:** Planning obligations ‘Planning Obligations’ states that the Council will consider the need to require planning obligations where they:
 - Are necessary to make the development acceptable, directly related to the development and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to developments; and
 - Cannot be secured by a planning condition.
- **Policy UCS7:** Amendments to CS7 – Strengthening our centres
- **Policy R1:** Location of retail development states that new main town centre use development (as defined by the National Planning Policy Framework) will be permitted within the designated centre boundaries. Where there are no suitable or available sites within the designated centre, proposals for main town centre use development which are otherwise in accordance with Policy CS7 (as amended by Policy UCS7) will be permitted on edge of centre sites. For all main town centre uses proposed in Caister-on-Sea, edge of centre site should be within 300m of the designated centre.

Where there are no suitable or available sites within designated centres or edge of centre sites, new town centre use development will be permitted on out of centre sites within the Development Limits providing it is otherwise in accordance with Policy CS7 (as amended by Policy UCS7), and:

the location is accessible by public transport and is accessible to pedestrians and cyclists;



- the site has good links to the designated centre, or links can be improved;
- the proposed use either individually or cumulatively does not undermine the attractiveness or viability of the designated centres; and
- the site will not impact upon other neighbouring uses, in terms of traffic, parking and amenity issues.

Additionally, development on out of centre sites which are also outside of Development Limits will only be permitted where:

- an additional need for retail development has been demonstrated to justify the development; and
 - there is no suitable and available land within the Development Limits.
- **Policy E1:** Flood risk planning applications within areas of flood risk (as defined above) will need to be supported by a Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan which covers flood warnings, escape routes and procedures, and awareness of the risks involved. The Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan will be secured by a planning condition.
 - **Policy E4:** Trees and landscape states that development will be supported where it:
 - retains trees, hedgerows and landscape features which contribute significant value to the character, amenity or ecology to the locality; and
 - takes opportunities to enhance those features and qualities, commensurate with the scale and nature of the development.

Where development may impact upon trees, planning applications should be supported by an Arboricultural Assessment. Developments should include landscaping schemes as appropriate to the size and nature of the development in order to mitigate impacts on and where possible enhance the local landscape character.

- **Policy E6:** 'Pollution and hazards in development' highlights that development proposals will be supported where the potential for the creation of, or susceptibility to, hazards and pollution (including air and light pollution) has been suitably avoided or suitably mitigated. Applicants will need to demonstrate their proposals are safe from, and do not give rise to, unacceptable hazards and/or pollution as a result of the following matters:
 - the proposed development and the activities and substances involved;
 - the site itself, and any potential existing contamination or land instability; and/or
 - the proximity of the proposal to any existing hazards;



- the cumulative effect of development with respect to pollution and hazards on health, living conditions and the natural environment in combination with nearby development or developed uses.
- **Policy I1:** Vehicle parking for developments sets out the requirements for vehicle parking (including cycle parking) which are determined with regard to the most up to date standards published by Norfolk County Council. The policy also highlights that development should be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low-emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations.
- **Policy I3:** Foul drainage states that all new development proposals will be expected to demonstrate the following:
 - that adequate foul water treatment and disposal infrastructure already exists; or that the necessary infrastructure can be provided in time to serve the proposed development;
 - that no surface water connections should be made to the foul system and connections to the combined or surface water system should only be made in limited circumstances where there are no feasible alternatives; and
 - that suitable access is safeguarded for the maintenance of water resources and drainage infrastructure.

5.3 Other Material Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework

- 5.3.1 A revised edition of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2021. The Framework must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans and is also a material consideration in planning decisions.
- 5.3.2 Two of the objectives of the NPPF were to simplify national planning policy and support and encourage sustainable economic development. Paragraph 11 makes clear that “*Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development*”. It is also made explicit that in making decisions on planning applications this means:
- “Approving development proposals that accord with the development plan without delay; and
 - where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of date, granting permission unless:



- i. the application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
- ii. 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”.

5.3.3 Paragraph 81 says that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt, and that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity. Paragraph 82 goes on to say that planning policies should, inter alia, be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances. Paragraph 83 says that planning policies and decisions should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.

5.3.4 In relation to town centres and retailing, Section 7 of the Framework reiterates previous guidance that LPAs should support the role that town centres play at the heart of communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation, and promote their long-term vitality and viability. Paragraph 87 requires a sequential approach to selecting sites for main town centre uses (which include retail development, hotels, restaurants and bars) where they are not in an existing centre or in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan. The first preference is for sites within town centres, followed by edge-of-centre locations and only then out-of-centre sites. Sites must be suitable and available, and both developers and local planning authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale.

5.3.5 Paragraph 90 states that for retail development outside a town centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan, an impact assessment will be required if the development is over a proportionate locally set floorspace threshold: in the absence of a locally set threshold the default is 2500sq m. Any such assessment should consider:

- The impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private sector investment in a centre or centres within the catchment area of the proposal; and
- The impact on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the centre and wider area.

5.3.6 The NPPF is clear in saying that an assessment of impact may be made up to five years ahead of when the application is submitted. For major schemes where the full impact will not be realised in five years the impact should also be assessed up to ten years from the date of the application.



- 5.3.7 Paragraph 91 of the Framework says that where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of defined centres, or planned investment in any centre, it should be refused.
- 5.3.8 Section 9 seeks to promote sustainable transport and says, inter alia, that developments that generate significant movement should be located where the need to travel will be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised.
- 5.3.9 Paragraph 157 in Section 14 says that new development should be expected to comply with local requirements for decentralised energy supply, unless that can be demonstrated to be not feasible or viable, and take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.



6.0 Retail Matters – Assessment of Existing Provision

- 6.1.1 Although the ‘need’ test for new town centre development no longer forms part of Government policy, criterion (e) of Policy R1 of the Local Plan Part 2 states that on out-of-centre sites that are also outside the defined settlement limits, development will only be permitted where “an additional need for retail development has been demonstrated to justify the development”. In having regard to that it should be noted from the outset that the proposed development constitutes the relocation of an existing Lidl store to a larger premises, that is better equipped to meet local retail customers’ needs. As such the existing Lidl Caister store is already playing an important role in helping to meet an existing local retail need; this need will continue to be met by the proposed new store.
- 6.1.2 Need can be expressed in quantitative and qualitative terms, with the latter being an important consideration. It reflects the increasing recognition of the wider economic, social and environmental considerations in determining planning applications for retail proposals. It is of particular relevance in securing accessible, efficient, competitive and innovative retail provision which, in turn will allow increased investment and stimulate job creation.
- 6.1.3 Qualitative need considerations can include (but are not limited to) addressing issues associated with existing store operational inefficiencies/ deficiencies, improving accessibility and counteracting unsustainable shopping patterns.
- 6.1.4 When considering ‘need’ it is crucial to note in this instance that the proposal is for the development of a relocated existing local operator in Caister; one which is long-standing and already well-established within the locality. The existing store has been trading for many years; it is popular and heavily relied upon by the local community. The fact that Lidl is taking the significant commercial investment decision to relocate and redevelop a new premises as close to its existing store location is a very strong indication itself of a) the strength of the existing customer base; b) the importance of the store in meeting local needs; and c) the pressing need for enhanced premises.

6.2 Meeting Local Consumer Need

- 6.2.1 Lidl’s Caister store is one of Lidl’s “first generation” stores, having started trading in 2001. The operational and customer requirements were very different then than they are today. Lidl (and the store’s) growing popularity since first opening means the store as currently sized and arranged is no longer fit for purpose; it is no longer able to accommodate Lidl’s operational format which has evolved over the years as the company’s popularity has grown.



- 6.2.2 Lidl's growing popularity means the existing store is no longer capable of meeting local consumer demand. The level of customers shopping at the store is leading to store operational issues e.g. store replenishment and car parking demand. The rationale for the proposed store is clear; an improved store is required to ably meet local need. Obtaining planning consent will ensure that Lidl continues to be able to suitably serve local needs from what is a well-established existing retail destination. The enhanced store will help relieve pressures and improve store operations. Overall, an improved customer experience will be achieved.
- 6.2.3 It is important to note the smaller format Limited Assortment Discounters (LAD) such as Lidl operate from far smaller stores than is typical of the large format 'big four' operators. It is now widely accepted that smaller format LADs have become increasingly popular in the last decade. This popularity and the smaller scaled store portfolio can lead to operational and logistical challenges in seeking to adequately service each store's established (and growing) customer base. Whilst the adequacy of existing provision is often assessed by local authorities in quantitative capacity terms, the effect of the increasing popularity of existing LADs and the qualitative issues that arise are typically overlooked. In scenarios such as this, where customer demand means the smaller, "first generation" Lidl stores are no longer capable of providing the quality of offer that the shopping public now expect, Lidl typically seeks to deliver enhanced stores, ideally at the existing site but where this is not feasible (such as at Caister), as close to its existing store as practicable, so they can continue to serve the same catchment area. This is to alleviate operational pressures and 'decongest' existing stores. This will ensure a high level of customer experience can be maintained at Caister.
- 6.2.4 At 1,512sqm net in total the proposed store remains modestly scaled by supermarket standards. Notwithstanding this, it comprises the latest generation of Lidl store, providing ancillary staff/welfare facilities, bakery area, manager's office and customer toilets etc. Its delivery will be of direct benefit to both staff and customers alike. The store layout is more spacious than the existing store it is intended to replace and is better equipped to cater for its shoppers.

6.3 Counteract Unsustainable Shopping Patterns

- 6.3.1 As outlined above the proposed store seeks to ensure local shopping requirements continue to be adequately met at Caister. In doing so, shoppers will be disinclined from generating unsustainable travel patterns by changing to shop at other stores further afield. While the existing Lidl is a popular store, it is dated and falling behind in the quality of the offer it provides. Therefore, there is a need for Lidl to upgrade their offer or risk shoppers changing to bigger and more modern stores elsewhere. A proportion of 'leakage' is generally to be expected to higher order centres in the region; however, by enhancing existing provision in the PCA, Caister will be better equipped to cater for local needs locally and, in turn, counteract any



propensity for shoppers to shop further afield.

6.3.2 In this manner the proposal will help to address unnecessary car journeys. It is thus logical and eminently sensible in planning terms to enhance the Caister retail environment. The application site is accessible as the existing store site by walking, cycling and public transport. Accordingly, it is considered an appropriate location for additional retail investment, subject to satisfying the sequential and impact tests.

6.4 Caister-on-Sea District Centre

6.4.1 Caister-on-Sea is a district centre. The Centre is predominantly located along High Street. The Centre contains a variety of multiple retailers, as well as a selection of independent shops, cafes and restaurants which serve the surrounding residential areas. A map showing the location of the Centre and other centres assessed below are presented in Appendix A.

Diversity of Uses

6.4.2 The composition of units within Caister-on-Sea is set out in the table below. The figure provides a comparative view of different services within the Centre (convenience, comparison, retail services, leisure services and financial and business services) against the UK average.

Table 1: Caister-on-Sea District Centre Composition of Uses

Sector	Outlets	%	UK Average
Convenience	6	14.29	9.3
Comparison	7	16.67	27.0
Retail Services	11	26.19	15.7
Leisure Services	12	28.57	25.0
Financial & Business	5	11.90	8.9
Vacant	1	2.38	13.8
Total	42	100	100

Notes: CS Survey December 2022. UK Average April 2022

6.4.3 Caister-on-Sea centre benefits from a wide range of outlets and services. The highest sector take-up is leisure services which is 28.57%, above the UK average (25%), followed by the retail services sector (26.19%), above the UK average (15.7%). The next highest take-up is the comparison sector (16.67%) which is below the UK average (27%). The convenience sector takes up 14.29% of the outlets in the Centre, which is above the UK average (9.3%). The financial and business sector takes up 11.90%, which is above the UK average of 8.9%.



Vacancies

- 6.4.4 The observed vacancy rate is 2.38% against the national UK average of 13.8%.

Pedestrian Flows

- 6.4.5 In terms of pedestrian activity levels, almost all areas demonstrated good levels of activity throughout the visit to the Centre on a Wednesday morning. There were some quieter areas with less footfall. These included the shops on Yarmouth Road to the south of the Centre.

Accessibility

- 6.4.6 The Centre is easily accessible by both public and private transport. The Centre is well located via public transport where there are numerous bus stops which serve the Centre of Caister-on-Sea and provide regular serves to the surrounding residential and wider areas. These include Lowestoft, Great Yarmouth, Martham and North Walsham.
- 6.4.7 The majority of public footways were observed to be well-maintained and of sufficient width to allow unimpeded access throughout the Centre for less-abled visitors. There are cycle parking racks located outside of Caister Community Hub.
- 6.4.8 There are various sections of on-street parking. For example, outside of the Co-op of High Street where visitors can park for 1 hour, outside of Coral on High Street, where visitors can park for 30 minutes, outside of the Co-operative Funeral Care, where visitors can park for 30 minutes. Lidl, Co-op and the King Arms PH also provide off-street parking provision.

Perception of Safety

- 6.4.9 A site visit to Caister-on-Sea was carried out in daylight hours and the Centre felt safe to visit, aided by good footfall levels and high natural surveillance. There was observed to be CCTV monitoring throughout the Centre. In terms of lighting, there also appears to be adequate lighting throughout the Centre and no obvious unwelcoming areas were observed.

Environmental Quality

- 6.4.10 The Centre is well kept and served by street furniture in some areas, which helps create a welcoming environment. Caister-on-Sea centre offers areas of modern hard landscaping at the northern end of the Centre and throughout the majority of the Centre which lifts the overall quality and amenity of the public realm and helps increase dwell time. There were no obvious litter issues observed. The Centre's shopfronts are, overall, well maintained, and the wider Centre is also generally tidy, free from graffiti and well maintained.

Summary



6.4.11 Caister-on-Sea centre is considered to be performing well, within a good representation of a wide range of outlets and services, including well known retailers Lidl and Co-op. The Centre has a visibly healthy mix of outlets and services. Additionally, the vacancy rate of the Centre is significantly below the UK average. The Centre also benefits from good public transport links as well as high-quality public realm which is kept clean and tidy, adding to the overall shopping experience. Overall, the Centre is considered to be vital and viable.

6.5 Hemsby

6.5.1 Hemsby is a defined local centre. The Centre comprises multiple units located along The Street and Kings Way.

Diversity of Uses

6.5.2 The Centre comprises a mix of uses (convenience, comparison, retail services and leisure services). The composition of units within Hemsby is set out in the table below. The table provides a comparative view of different services within the Centre.

Table 2: Hemsby Local Centre Composition of Uses

Sector	Outlets	%	UK Average
Convenience	1	14.29	9.3
Comparison	1	14.29	27.0
Retail Services	2	28.57	15.7
Leisure Services	3	42.86	25.0
Financial & Business	0	0	8.9
Vacant	0	0	13.8
Total	7	100	100

Notes: CS Survey December 2022. UK Average April 2022

6.5.3 The largest outlet category in Hemsby is leisure services (42.86%), which is higher than the UK average (25%). The next highest outlet representation was retail services (28.57%) which was higher than the UK average (15.7%), followed by convenience and comparison (both 14.29%). The convenience representation in Hemsby is higher than the UK average (9.3%). The Centre has no financial and business services.

Vacancies

6.5.4 There were no vacant outlets in Hemsby, which is below the UK average of 13.8%.



Pedestrian Flows

- 6.5.5 In respect of pedestrian activity levels, observations indicate that the busiest areas were towards the Co-op on Kingsway. The quieter parts of the Centre included The Street.
- 6.5.6 However, all parts of the Centre demonstrated reasonable levels of activity on a Wednesday afternoon.

Accessibility

- 6.5.7 The local centre is easily accessible by both public and private transport. In terms of private transport, there are multiple roads running through the Centre. There is one bus stop in Hemsby Centre, located on Kingsway, which is served by routes 1 Coastal Clipper, 1A Coastal Clipper, 8 Coastal Reds, 72A, 271 and 983 which provides connections to Martham, Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth.
- 6.5.8 There was some cycle parking provision located on Kingsway. However, the Centre has shared footpaths that are well kept with a sufficient width to provide accessibility for people with different impairments or health conditions, as well as older people with mobility requirements.
- 6.5.9 On-street parking spaces are available in Hemsby Centre with a 40 minute return time Monday to Saturday 8am – 7pm.

Perception of Safety

- 6.5.10 The local centre felt safe during the site visit and in terms of street lighting. There is adequate lighting in the Centre to accommodate safety at night. The Centre also benefits from natural surveillance from passing road traffic and pedestrians.
- 6.5.11 Overall, in the daylight during the site visit, Hemsby felt safe and there was no graffiti.

Environmental Quality

- 6.5.12 The buildings within the Centre are pleasant and well maintained with tree lined streets and some areas of green space. There were no issues with regards to litter.

6.6 Ormesby St Margaret

- 6.6.1 Ormesby St Margaret is a local centre. The Centre comprises a row of shops and the petrol station on Station Road.



Diversity of Uses

6.6.2 The Centre comprises a mix of shops and services (convenience, retail services, leisure services, and financial & business). The composition of units within Ormesby St Margaret is set out in the table below. The table provides a comparative view of different services within the Centre.

Table 3: Ormesby St Margaret Local Centre Composition of Uses

Sector	Outlets	%	UK Average
Convenience	1	12.5	9.3
Comparison	1	12.5	27.0
Retail Services	4	50	15.7
Leisure Services	1	12.5	25.0
Financial & Business	1	12.5	8.9
Vacant	0	0	13.8
Total	8	100	100

Notes: CS Survey December 2022. UK Average April 2022

6.6.3 The highest outlet categories in Ormesby St Margaret are retail services (50%) which is much higher than the UK average (15.7%). These outlets include a hairdresser, MOT repair shop, a petrol station and a jet wash facility. There is one comparison outlet which comprises a kitchen and bathroom showroom, making up 12.50% of the outlets, below the UK average (27%).

6.6.4 In terms of convenience retail, Ormesby St Margaret includes a Londis, making up 12.50% of the total number of outlets, which is above the UK average (9.3%). The financial and business sector also occupied up 12.50% of the Centre, again, above the UK average (8.9%).

Vacancies

6.6.5 There were no vacancies identified in Ormesby St Margaret, meaning the vacancy rate is well below the UK average (13.8%).

Pedestrian Flows

6.6.6 In respect of pedestrian activity levels, observations indicate that the busiest area was along Wapping and Station Road. The quietest area was on Station Road towards The Village Centre.

6.6.7 All parts of the Centre demonstrated reasonable levels of activity on a Wednesday afternoon.



Accessibility

6.6.8 The local centre is easily accessible by both public and private transport. In terms of private transport, Station Road runs through the Centre. There are two bus stops located on Cromer Road served by routes 1 Coastal Clipper, 8 Coastal Reds, 983, X6, and 72A which provide connections into Martham, Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth.

6.6.9 No cycle parking provision was visible during the site visit. There is car parking provision located at the petrol station and on Wapping and Station Road outside of the shops.

Perception of Safety

6.6.10 The local centre felt safe during the site visit and in terms of street lighting, there is adequate lighting in the Centre to provide safety at night and natural surveillance from passing road traffic and pedestrians travelling along Station Road.

6.6.11 Overall, in the daylight during the site visit, Ormesby St Margaret felt safe and there was no graffiti.

Environmental Quality

6.6.12 The buildings within the Centre were of adequate quality and appeared moderately maintained. The streets were lined with trees with a well-kept green space between Station Road, Cromer Road and North Road. There were also no issues with regards to litter.

6.7 Martham

6.7.1 Martham is a local centre. The Centre is located along Repps Road, Black Street and The Green.

Diversity of Uses

6.7.2 The Centre comprises a mix of uses, totalling 21 outlets. The comparison of units in Martham is set out in the table below. The table provides a comparative view of different services within the Centre (convenience, comparison, retail services, leisure services, financial and business and vacant outlets).



Table 4: Martham Local Centre Composition of Uses

Sector	Outlets	%	UK Average
Convenience	3	20	9.3
Comparison	1	6.67	27.0
Retail Services	3	20	15.7
Leisure Services	4	26.67	25.0
Financial & Business	2	13.33	8.9
Vacant	2	13.33	13.8
Total	15	100	100

Notes: CS Survey December 2022. UK Average April 2022

6.7.3 The highest outlet categories in Martham are leisure services (26.67%). The next highest categories are convenience and retail services (both 20%). The convenience sector is above the UK average (9.3%), and the retail service sector above the UK average (15.7%). Financial & business takes up 13.33% of the outlets in Martham, which was above the UK average (8.9%). The comparison category had the lowest proportion of outlets (6.67%), which was below the UK average (27%).

Vacancies

6.7.4 Two small vacant units were identified within the Centre at no. 9A The Green and The Victoria Inn, however, the local centre’s vacancy rate (13.33%) is lower than the UK average (13.8%).

Pedestrian Flows

6.7.5 In respect of pedestrian activity levels, observations indicate that the busiest areas were along Repps Road, particularly towards the Co-op. Around The Green had lower footfall.

6.7.6 All parts of the Centre demonstrated reasonable levels of activity on a Wednesday afternoon.

Accessibility

6.7.7 The local centre is easily accessible by both public and private transport. In terms of private transport, roads run through the Centre. There are three bus stops located in the Centre, served by routes 1 Coastal Clipper, 1A Coastal Clipper, 8 Coastal Reds, 72A, 834, 983 and X6 which provide connections to North Walsham, Lowestoft and Great Yarmouth.

6.7.8 There was no cycle parking provision visible in the Centre. The shared cycle/footpaths are well kept with a sufficient width to provide accessibility for people with different impairments or health conditions, as well as older people with mobility requirements.



6.7.9 There is a small amount of on-street parking available in the Centre. There is no main car park in Martham, but there is a small car park for customers for the Co-op.

Perception of Safety

6.7.10 The local centre felt safe during the site visit and in terms of street lighting, there is adequate lighting in the Centre to provide safety at night and natural surveillance from passing road traffic and pedestrians.

6.7.11 Overall, in the daylight during the site visit, Martham felt safe and there was no graffiti.

Environmental Quality

6.7.12 The buildings within the Centre were all pleasant and appeared to be well maintained. The streets were lined with trees with some areas of grassland with a pond. There were also no issues with regards to litter.

6.7.13 Overall, the Centre is in good shape with a mix of uses, with only two vacant units and shopfronts and building frontages generally of reasonable quality throughout the local centre.

6.8 Winterton-on-Sea

6.8.1 Winterton-on-Sea is a local centre. The Centre is located along Beach Road and Market Place and lies approximately 200m from Winterton Beach.

Diversity of Uses

6.8.2 The Centre comprises a Fish and Chip Shop, a Post Office, a team room and a small convenience store.

6.8.3 The Centre has no comparison outlets, financial & business or vacant units, but overall, it offers useful outlets for a small centre and the surrounding residents.

Vacancies

6.8.4 There are no vacant existing units within the Centre.

Pedestrian Flows

6.8.5 In respect of pedestrian flows, observations indicate that the busiest areas were along Beach Road. Market Place had a lower footfall. This may be due to people walking to and from the

6.8.6 beach. However, overall, the Centre had sufficient levels of activity during the site visit.



Accessibility

- 6.8.7 The local centre is easily accessible by both public and private transport. In terms of private transport, three roads run around the perimeter of the Centre. There is a bus stop located on Winmer Avenue which is served by service 1 Coastal Clipper, 8 Coastal reds, 903 and 983.
- 6.8.8 These all provide regular services to Martham, Great Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Gorleston and Ormesby.
- 6.8.9 Cycle rack provision is located outside of the convenience store on Market Place. There is limited car parking within the Centre, however, Winterton Beach Car Park is located approximately a 5-minute walk away which costs £1.50 per hour.

Perception of Safety

- 6.8.10 The local centre felt safe during the site visit and in terms of street lighting, there is adequate lighting in the Centre to provide safety at night and natural surveillance from passing traffic and pedestrians.
- 6.8.11 Overall, in the daylight during the site visit, Winterton-on-Sea felt safe and there was no graffiti.

Environmental Quality

- 6.8.12 The buildings within the Centre were all pleasant and appeared to be well maintained. The streets were clean with no issues with regards to litter.



7.0 Sequential Assessment

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Section 7 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) relates to retail development and the vitality of town centres, and requires the following assessments for developments proposed outside defined retail centres and not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan:

- Sequential test.
- Retail impact, comprising:
 - Impact on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in centres within the catchment area.
 - Impact on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and wider area.

7.1.2 Paragraph 91 of the NPPF is clear that where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have a significant adverse impact [our emphasis], it should be refused.

7.2 The Sequential Approach to Site Selection

7.2.1 Both national and local planning policies on retail development mandate a sequential approach to site selection, whereby the first preference should be locations within town centres, followed by sites on the edge of a centre and only then out-of-centre sites at accessible locations. In assessing potential sites there is a requirement for them to be both suitable and available, and for both developers and planning authorities to demonstrate flexibility on issues such as scale and format. The purpose of searching for alternative sites is to ensure that the identified need (which can be both quantitative or qualitative) is met in the most appropriate location, and a number of High Court judgements over the years have established that suitability of potential sites needs to be judged having regard to the nature of the need (see *R v Cambridge City Council ex parte Warner Village Cinemas Ltd* (2000) and *JJ Gallagher Ltd v SSL, DTR and Gateshead MBC* (2002)).

7.2.2 Similarly, in considering whether a site is 'suitable' under the sequential approach, it has been established in case law that the requirement is for sites capable of accommodating the broad type of development that is being proposed by the applicant. This was made clear in the High Court judgment of *Aldergate Properties Ltd v Mansfield District Council* (2016) and the judgement of the Supreme Court in *Tesco Stores Limited (Appellants) v Dundee City Council*



(Respondents) (Scotland) [2012] UKSC where at paragraph 37 of the judgment Lord Hope stated:

“It is the proposal for which the developer seeks permission that has to be considered when the question is asked whether no suitable site is available within or on the edge of the town centre.”

7.2.3 In this instance the need is for a new foodstore to serve Caister-on-Sea, as a replacement for Lidl’s existing store in the town centre which is now dated and unable to offer the range and quality of offer that is now expected and provided in their newer format stores.

7.2.4 While policy requires developers/retailers to be flexible when assessing alternative sites under the sequential approach, there is no longer a requirement to consider the disaggregation of floorspace where the development would be split onto separate sites: this has been confirmed in a number of appeal/call-in decisions, including Rushden Lakes in Northamptonshire (PINS ref. APP/G2815/V/12/2190175 and Cribbs Causeway in South Gloucestershire (APP/P0119/V/17/3170627), as well as the judgement of the Court of Appeal in Warners Retail (Moreton) Ltd v Cotswold District Council (2016). Neither the National Planning Policy Framework or National Planning Practice Guidance give any detailed guidance as to what degree of flexibility is required, or what forms it might take, although it is generally held to include multi-level stores, shared or multi-level parking and innovative servicing arrangements.

7.2.5 In terms of the site parameters that are essential to enable the Lidl business model to trade viably, these include:

- A minimum size of store for trading operations to be viable, with the sales floor open and unencumbered by support columns. Each store requires sufficient space to sell a standard range of goods and number of lines, but there is some limited scope for flexibility in the net sales area (principally the width of the aisles), in the rear warehouse and the amount of customer parking. However, any significant deviation from the standard store requirement will undermine the viability of the business model. The increasing popularity of Lidl stores over the last 10 years has led to the company increasing its optimum store size, in order to cope with a larger throughput of customers. The minimum site area is now 0.8ha for a standalone store, with unit sizes of between 1,672sq m and 2,461sq m. The larger stores allow a slightly larger range of goods to be sold compared to the earlier/smaller formats, and the additional floorspace allows wider aisles and lower-level display shelves, to improve the shopping experience and enable more efficient restocking. At 2,187sq m the proposed store in Caister-on-Sea will be 742sq m larger than the existing sub-standard and dated unit it will replace and will be able to provide a much improved offer but will still be smaller than Lidl’s typical store format.



- A single storey, open and unrestricted sales floor with a flat/level topography.
- Provision of dedicated surface level parking so customers can easily transfer their shopping to their vehicles.
- Adequate service access that can allow the safe manoeuvring of delivery vehicles and a dedicated rear service area to the rear of the store. • The store must be directly visible from the main road network, so it can attract passing trade.

7.2.6 Having regard to the above requirements the minimum site needed to accommodate a Lidl store is circa 0.8ha and we have therefore used that as the target for the purposes of the sequential assessment.

7.2.7 Like all successful retailers Lidl's trading format has evolved over time, with stores now providing more spacious circulation space and the provision of an improved offer, including an area for the sale of a limited range of fresh bakery goods. An example of this is Lidl's new Deposit Return Scheme which they are proposing to roll out across their entire store portfolio. The Government consulted on introducing such a scheme in England, Wales and Northern Ireland in March-June 2021, and while they have yet to report on the results of that consultation Lidl are taking the initiative and looking to incorporate such facilities in their stores. The scheme will add a small extra deposit on the price of drinks sold in plastic and glass bottles and cans, which the consumer gets back once the container is returned for recycling; this deposit can be redeemed for a voucher to spend in the store. Return vending machines will be incorporated as close to the store entrance/exit as possible, ideally within the building, accessed in the entrance lobby. The new store for Caister-on-Sea includes space for this DRS facility.

Sequential Search

7.2.8 As previously noted, the proposed store is intended to replace Lidl's existing outlet on Norwich Road. That store is an important element in Caister-on-Sea's retail offer but it is dated and not capable of providing the quality of offer customers now expect from LAD stores and despite being the only LAD store in the area (the closest alternative being located in Great Yarmouth) it is trading around, or just under, its benchmark company average level – for a store with such limited competition Lidl would expect to trade at a much higher level, but the low quality offer provided in the existing unit is not allowing that. There is no chance of providing the necessary uplift in floorspace and quality of parking and servicing through an extension to the existing building because of the physical constraints at the existing site, so the only option Lidl have is to relocate to a new store on another site.



7.3 Sites Within the Defined Catchment Area

7.3.1 The following potential alternative sites in an on the edge of centres within the catchment of the application proposal have been identified for assessment.

1. Land adjacent to Tesco Superstore, Caister-on-Sea
2. Taylors Fish and Chip Shop, Martham
3. Land off Jack Chase Way, Caister-on-Sea
4. 9A The Green, Martham
5. The Walnuts, The Green, Martham

7.3.2 A plan showing the location of these sites is enclosed at Appendix A.

7.3.3 These properties were identified during a search for available properties in or on the edge of district and local centres defined in the adopted Great Yarmouth Core Strategy Part 1 and Local Plan Part 2. The assessment has been supplemented by site visits carried out in December 2022.

Site 1 – Land adjacent to Tesco Superstore, Caister-on-Sea

7.3.4 The site comprises a tennis court and an area of hardstanding along with vegetation and open grassland. It is difficult to determine the potential size of the site, but the estimation is 0.73ha.

7.3.5 The site is not located within the centre of Caister-on-Sea, but is located within the Development Limits GSP1 to the south of Caister-on-Sea. The site appeared reasonably flat on the site visit and is bounded by Yarmouth Road to the east, residential dwellings to the south and north and open grassland to the west. Slightly further south is Tesco Superstore. No planning applications for the site can be found on the Great Yarmouth Borough Council Planning Register. Additionally, no active marketing of the site is visible. It can therefore be considered that the site is not available.

7.3.6 At 0.73 ha the site is also considered to be too small to accommodate a discount foodstore, allowing for flexibility. As such the site has been discounted.

Site 2 – Taylor’s Fish and Chip Shop, Martham

7.3.7 The site extends to approximately 317 sqm and comprises a former fish and chip shop with 3 bedrooms 3 bathrooms, a 1 bedroom annex, commercial and a garage.

7.3.8 The site is located just outside of Martham local centre and is bounded by Hemsby Road to



the south, The Green to the west, residential units to the east and an area of grassland to the north.

- 7.3.9 The site is understood to be currently vacant and is being marketed by property agents Paul Hubbard.
- 7.3.10 The site is considered to be too small to accommodate the proposed development, allowing for flexibility. Therefore, the site is unsuitable and has been discounted.

Site 3 – Land off Jack Chase Way

- 7.3.11 This site is undeveloped and laid to grass.
- 7.3.12 The site forms part of the wider site allocation of Policy CA1 ‘Land west of Jack Chase’ within the Great Yarmouth Local Plan Part 2 2021. The policy allocates the land for development.
- 7.3.13 We have not seen any evidence of marketing. We understand that the site is the subject of a current outline planning application with all matters reserved, except access, for up to 665 dwellings, local centre (to include A1-A5, B1, D1 and other community uses), land for a primary school, health centre, plus associated infrastructure and open space (LPA ref: 06/19/0676/O). The application was approved in July 2022 subject to a Section 106 Agreement and conditions. The Committee Report states that the local centre is expected to amount to approximately 1.75 hectares including a small top-up/convenience foodstore (A1 retail use). The Committee Report also contains a draft condition which restricts A1 retail use to 600 sqm gross internal floorspace area. The Local Centre is expected to come forward as part of Phase 3 of the planning permission, as highlighted in the approved Phasing Plan submitted with the application. There are no clear timescales within the Phasing Plan.
- 7.3.14 The site is not considered available for the proposed development due to the timescales in which the Lidl wish to bring forward the new foodstore. The site is therefore considered unavailable and unviable for the proposed development and has been discounted.

Site 4 – 9A The Green, Martham

- 7.3.15 The site is located within Martham local centre and comprises a small retail shop with a floor area of 47.8 sqm. The site is bounded by Martham Kebab, a takeaway shop and Pizza to the west and Royal China, a Chinese takeaway to the east.
- 7.3.16 The unit is currently being marketed by property agents East Commercial.
- 7.3.17 The floorspace of the unit is significantly smaller than the minimum floorspace requirement for the proposed development. Furthermore, the site cannot accommodate any car parking which



is a requirement for Lidl. Therefore, the site is considered unsuitable and has been discounted.

Site 5 – The Walnuts, The Green, Martham

7.3.18 The Walnuts lies within Martham local centre. It is bounded by the village green and Martham Duck Pond to the north and east as well as residential properties to the south and west. The site comprises a four-bedroom detached house with a retail unit. The property extends to 317.44 sqm and within 0.11ha of land. It is currently used as a local butchers and delicatessen.

7.3.19 The unit is currently being marketed by property agents East Commercial. Given the size of the site, it is considered unsuitable for the proposed development, allowing for flexibility.

7.3.20 In conclusion the site is considered unavailable and unsuitable for the development proposed. As such, the site has been discounted.

7.4 Conclusion on the Sequential Test

7.4.1 In the absence of an alternative site within or adjoining the town centre and having regard to the fact that the proposed store is intended to be a replacement for the existing one serving the Caister-on-Sea catchment area, the application site is acceptable under the sequential approach to site selection.



8.0 Assessment of Impact

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 Paragraph 90 of the NPPF sets out that an impact assessment needs to accompany planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in a centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan “if the development is over a proportionate, locally set threshold (if there is no locally set threshold, the default threshold is 2,500sqm)”. Paragraph 90 states this should include an assessment of:

- The impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and
- The impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and the wider retail catchment (as applicable to the scale and nature of the scheme).

8.1.2 Paragraph 90 of NPPF is clear in stating that only proposals which are likely to have a “significant adverse impact” on one or more of the above factors should be refused. Notwithstanding this, prevailing judicial authority set out in the Zurich¹ High Court decision, confirms that the any perceived failure of the sequential approach or retail impact tests and consequent presumption of refusal, is just one consideration which should be balanced against other considerations, to see whether or not it is outweighed by other such considerations.

8.1.3 It is important to note from the outset of this chapter that the development proposes just c.2,187sqm GIA floorspace, which is under the prescribed NPPF threshold. Notwithstanding this, under Policy CS7(f) of the adopted Great Yarmouth Local Plan Core Strategy requires an impact assessment for proposals for new out of centre retail development over 200sqm (net) floorspace. Accordingly, a proportionate impact assessment has been undertaken as outlined in this chapter.

8.2 National Planning Practice Guidance

8.2.1 Guidance on the how the impact test should be used in decision taking is set out in the Town Centres and retail section of the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG). The guidance states that the impact test should be undertaken in a proportionate and locally appropriate way, drawing on existing information where possible.

¹ CO/4764/2012 [2012] EWHC 3708 (Admin) Zurich Assurance



8.2.2 Paragraph 015 of the NPPG notes that as a guiding principle, impact should be assessed on a like-for-like basis in respect of that particular sector. Retail uses tend to compete with their most comparable competitive facilities. It also notes that where wider town centre developments or investments are in progress, it will be appropriate to assess the impact of relevant applications on that investment.

8.2.3 Key considerations are identified as including:

- The policy status of the investment (i.e. whether it is outlined in the Development Plan).
- The progress made towards securing the investment (for example if contracts are established).
- The extent to which an application is likely to undermine planned development or investments based on the effect on current/forecast turnovers, operator demand and investor confidence.

8.2.4 Paragraph 018 sets out a checklist for applying the impact test and some of the key steps which should be taken when carrying out an impact test in decision-taking. The checklist/steps are discussed in the following paragraphs.

8.3 Methodology and evidence base

8.3.1 The approach adopted in this impact assessment reflects national guidance and follows a widely adopted methodological approach to quantitative assessment in terms of assessing future capacity for retail development and quantifying impact. In practice the approach comprises five elements, as summarised below:

Step 1 - Establish catchment area, base/design years, and determine what is being assessed.

8.3.2 The primary catchment area (PCA) is outlined at Appendix B. In geographical terms, the PCA is largely focused on zone 1 of the Council's Great Yarmouth Retail Study Area, but with overlap of zones 2 and 3 (**see Appendix C**). The PCA has been dictated by a variety of factors not least the location of other LADs in Great Yarmouth to the south but also the absence of main food shopping provision to the north and west. The catchment is considered to generally comprise an area of up to a c.5 minute (off-peak) drive from the application site to the south and c.12 minute (off-peak) drive to the north and west, which is typical for a proposed LAD store of this relatively modest scale in a rural location.

8.3.3 Impact is assessed up to five years from the time of the application being made (base year). The design year of 2028 has therefore been adopted for testing impact i.e. the second calendar year after opening of the proposed store. The impact assessment utilises the



turnover of the existing Lidl, drawn from zones 1, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8 and assumes most of this turnover will switch to the new store.

Step 2 - Examine 'no development' scenario, i.e. what will happen if no development takes place.

- 8.3.4 A 'no development' scenario should be analysed. Moreover, impact assessments should not limit themselves to examining the effects of a proposal on the current position. It is relevant to consider the effect of any known commitments, and to consider the cumulative impact of the proposals.
- 8.3.5 In this instance there are no known, notable retail commitments in the PCA to be assessed from a cumulative impact perspective. CarneySweeney is aware of two applications for Lidl foodstores in the wider Great Yarmouth area, outside the PCA - at land south of Links Road at Gorleston/Hopton-on-Sea and the former Trafalgar College site, Thamesfield Way, Great Yarmouth. However, the retail impact assessments for both foodstores do not identify any trade diversion from specific foodstores and centres in the PCA. Therefore, these proposed foodstores are not considered as part of a cumulative impact assessment exercise.

Step 3 - Assess turnover and trade draw.

- 8.3.6 The use of available household telephone survey information to identify existing shopping patterns and catchment area derived turnover levels of existing facilities is a widely adopted and industry accepted approach to understanding the turnover of existing facilities.
- 8.3.7 In October 2019 a survey of 1,003 households was undertaken within a defined Study Area based on Electoral Ward boundaries to underpin the assessment. The survey was carried out by NEMS Market Research for the Council's Great Yarmouth Retail Capacity Study 2020.
- 8.3.8 Our analysis has updated the Retail Study's expenditure estimates by adopting the latest population projections and per capita spending figures for each zone using Experian Location Analyst and projected the growth in spending and sales densities forward using the latest Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 20 (February 2023).
- 8.3.9 In addition, the assessment uses the most up-to-date published evidence of company average sales densities for the main grocery retailers, derived from company accounts and published by Global Data, which provides an industry accepted approach upon which to gauge the benchmark turnover of a proposed development.



8.3.10 The characteristics of the development may give the best indication of where the new development is likely to draw its trade from. Trade is more likely to be drawn from similar competing facilities.

Step 4 - Assess impact on existing centres.

8.3.11 Set out the likely impact of the proposal clearly, along with associated assumptions and reasoning, in respect of quantitative and qualitative issues.

8.3.12 It is likely, if a particular facility accounts for the vast majority of expenditure currently generated in a given zone, that a similarly higher proportion of the proposal's turnover will be diverted from that facility.

Step 5 – Consider consequences of impact.

8.3.13 Any conclusions should be proportionate. It is important that the impacts are considered on the vitality and viability of the whole of a centre, not simply on individual facilities which may be similar to the proposed development.

8.3.14 The assessment utilises the latest available population and expenditure information and projected growth rates derived from Experian, accounting for Special forms of Trading (SFT) i.e. non-store sales, which are excluded from the assessment.

8.3.15 A price base of 2017 is used throughout the assessment for comparison with the Great Yarmouth Retail Capacity Update 2020.

8.3.16 The level of trade diversion is based on the generally acknowledged principles that:

- the trading effect on existing floorspace would generally be proportionate to their distance from the proposed new store. Numerous surveys of food shopping patterns throughout the UK suggests that customers generally go to the store that is nearest to their place of residence which can provide for their particular shopping needs; and
- stores tend to compete on a 'like with like' basis, such that main foodstore proposals which have dedicated surface level car parking and provide a similar range of in-store customer facilities, would tend to compete directly for trade.

8.3.17 Accordingly, this assessment is fully in accordance with prevailing recommendations and guidance in quantifying retail impact. It utilises an orthodox and industry accepted approach to assessing impact. The statistical tables referred to in this section are provided at **Appendix D**.



8.4 Impact on Existing, Committed or Planned In-centre Investment

- 8.4.1 In considering impact on investment, only investment that has been made, committed or planned in-centre in the catchment area of the proposal warrants consideration.
- 8.4.2 Retail allocations in the catchment area have been considered as part of the sequential investigations undertaken as outlined in Sequential chapter above. A review of the adopted development plan does not highlight any allocated sites which may require further consideration.
- 8.4.3 We conclude there is no evidence to suggest the proposed development will have a likely significant adverse impact on any other existing, committed or planned in-centre investment in the catchment area of the proposal.

8.5 Impact on Centre Vitality and Viability

- 8.5.1 The following paragraphs assess the potential impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability with a focus on choice and in-centre trade. The current health of Caister District Centre and other smaller centres falling within the PCA are considered (drawing on the findings of Chapter 4.0 above) before conclusions are drawn on whether there is any evidence the proposal, together with relevant retail commitments, would likely give rise to a significant adverse impact on in-centre vitality and viability.
- 8.5.2 In considering impact on in-centre trade this section draws on the assessed turnover of the proposal, existing centre turnover and also considers growth in available expenditure. A detailed trading assessment of the potential impact that the proposal is likely to have on the patterns of retail expenditure in the surrounding area is provided.
- 8.5.3 As outlined in the preceding sections Lidl's Caister store is an early generation one and it is too small to provide the quality of offer that Lidl now seek to provide in their latest formats. The tables enclosed at **Appendix D** reveal the existing store has an actual convenience turnover of £11.0m and is overtrading 76% above its benchmark level. Therefore, the relocation is not being proposed in order to increase turnover, but rather to address qualitative deficiencies and overtrading, which includes difficulties in keeping shelves stocked, reducing congestion in the store etc. The operational and customer requirements were very different when the store was developed than they are today. Lidl (and the store's) growing popularity since first opening means the store as currently sized and arranged is no longer fit for purpose; it is no longer able to accommodate Lidl's operational format which has evolved over the years as the company's popularity has grown. As time has passed the quality of offer customers expect has grown and as a result the LAD format has had to change to provide a wider range of



goods and a better shopping environment. The existing Lidl in Caister is not capable of providing the quality of offer the company expects to give its customers, in part because of its popularity and limited sales area.

Turnover

- 8.5.4 The benchmark turnover of the proposed development is set out in Table 8 at Appendix D and is estimated to total £11.0m in 2028 (convenience and comparison), which approximates to the turnover of the existing Lidl. However, for robustness, we have assumed a small (5%) uplift in the convenience turnover of the proposed foodstore. Overall, this means the existing Lidl has a convenience turnover of £11.0m, while the proposed Lidl will turnover £11.6m. We have assumed that 95% of the existing turnover will be retained by Lidl in their new store, with 5% being taken by the Co-op in Caister town centre as some shoppers may not choose to change to shopping at the proposed Lidl store and will continue to shop in the town centre. Given the proposed Lidl would be in close proximity to the Tesco on Yarmouth Road, we have assumed a small amount of trade will be diverted from this store to the proposed Lidl. Therefore, overall, the relocation will provide a small uplift in turnover compared to the existing store. This will be a minimal amount (£0.6m) because, as stated above, the reason for the relocation is not to increase the number of customers and secure a larger turnover, but rather to address qualitative deficiencies in the existing offer.

Expenditure Growth

- 8.5.5 Tables 1-5 provided in **Appendix D** apply local estimates of expenditure per person to the resident population within the study area in order to forecast the available retail expenditure generated over the period to 2028. The population and expenditure growth in each zone in the study area is taken from Experian Location Analyst.
- 8.5.6 Analysis of expenditure growth can help provide an indication of the potential impact of a proposal. Tables 3 and 5 in **Appendix D** demonstrate the underlying position study area is one in which available convenience and comparison expenditure in the study area is expected to grow to 2028.
- 8.5.7 Table 5 in **Appendix D** alone demonstrates there is sufficient expenditure growth to support any additional comparison turnover arising from the proposed larger foodstore. It is also important to note Lidl's non-food offer i.e. the "middle-aisle" is very modest, sold on a WIGIG basis (When Its Gone Its Gone) and typically purchased on an impulse basis. The choice of non-food goods is constantly changing within the store and no type predominates at any given time. Crucially, Lidl is not, in itself, a comparison goods destination and thus the proposed store's capacity to affect local comparison-shopping patterns is minimal. There is, therefore, very limited potential for Lidl's comparison goods range to impact upon any specific retailer/



centre as there is no consistency in the range of comparison retail goods that Lidl sells. Lidl is a convenience business and therefore competes against other convenience/food stores.

8.5.8 As such, the remainder of this section focuses on the trading effects of the proposed additional convenience floorspace.

Trading Assessment

8.5.9 This section of the statement considers the potential impact that the proposal may have on the pattern of convenience expenditure in the surrounding area.

8.5.10 Set out at Table 9 of **Appendix D** is an assessment of how the introduction of the proposal will affect the projected turnovers of centres/facilities within the surrounding area.

8.5.11 As noted earlier in this section the methodological approach employed is widely adopted and accords with guidance set out in the NPPG. It involves the following steps:

- i. Establishing the existing (2023 (the base year)) expenditure pattern within the catchment/survey area, based on an identification of turnover levels of existing stores or centres derived from monies spent by households in the catchment and wider survey area.
- ii. Projecting the pattern of expenditure forward to 2028 (the design year) for testing impact assuming that each location maintains its current market share of expenditure.
- iii. Taking into account any changes in shopping patterns resulting from relevant retail commitments, if applicable.
- iv. Assessing the pattern of trade draw to the proposal on the basis that foodstores will compete predominantly like for like with other foodstores.
- v. Calculating the quantitative impact of the proposal, in terms of:
 - The percentage reduction in trade at each store/centre at 2028; and
 - The percentage change in retail turnover in each store/centre between 2023 to 2028.

8.5.12 It is important to recall that impacts are considered on the vitality and viability of the **whole of a centre**, not simply on individual convenience facilities which form part of a centre and/or may be similar to the proposed development; the total retail turnover of a centre/destination consists of a combination of both convenience (food) and comparison (non-food) turnover. Impact must be weighed in the context of the whole of the centre.

8.5.13 Moreover, we have not made adjustments to take into account any trade drawn from beyond



the survey area (known as 'inflow'). As such, the turnovers of existing stores/centres noted in this assessment are likely lower than in reality and thus the percentage impacts we predict may be overstated. This, again, is a robust approach.

- 8.5.14 Assessed levels of trade diversion to the new development is based on careful scrutiny of: the function and retail offer of various stores; the relative accessibility of the various facilities by car and public transport; and the known characteristics of existing trading patterns and stores elsewhere.
- 8.5.15 As outlined above a guiding principle is that impact is assessed on a 'like for like' basis in respect of the convenience sector. It is widely accepted that retail uses tend to compete with their most comparable, competitive facilities. For example, in an area already served by modern convenience stores, the effects of new bespoke stores are likely to fall disproportionately on the existing competing modern stores. Their proportionate impact on smaller and local independent retailers, for example, may be less. Likewise, a proposal for a 'main food shop' supermarket is also less likely to compete with smaller 'top-up' convenience stores and corner shops.
- 8.5.16 These accepted patterns suggest that the proposed development will compete predominantly on a 'like for like' basis with large/medium sized 'main shop' foodstores, compared with smaller stores popular for 'top up' shopping'. By their size and nature and parking requirements main shop foodstores are more commonly accommodated in out of centre locations, such is the nature of the activity.

Trading Effects

- 8.5.17 Two measures of retail impact are set out in **Appendix D**:
- The monetary change in convenience retail turnover at each retail destination between 2023 and 2028; and
 - The percentage change in convenience trade at each retail destination between 2023 and 2028.
- 8.5.18 In Table 9 at **Appendix D**, the first two columns show the 2023 and 2028 convenience turnovers of existing stores derived from the household survey and Experian Location Analyst. The third column then details the spending captured by the proposed Lidl the fourth column is the 2026 post-impact turnover of stores after the turnover of the new store has been taken into account. The fifth and sixth columns show the impact (which is the trade diversion expressed in monetary terms and as a percentage of the 2028 pre-impact turnover). The final columns show the overtrading in percentage terms of the existing and proposed Lidl in 2023



and 2028 respectively.

- 8.5.19 In terms of trade diversion and impact, Table 9 shows that £10.5m of the proposed store's convenience turnover will be transferred from Lidl's existing store and £0.6m (or 5%) of the existing Lidl turnover will be retained by the Co-op in Caister town centre. Our view that some of the existing Lidl turnover will be captured by the Co-op is supported by the adopted Great Yarmouth Local Plan: Core Strategy (para. 4.7.5) which identifies the Co-op (not Lidl) as the key anchor for Caister town centre. Therefore, the effect of the proposed relocation will be to strengthen what the local planning authority has identified as the key anchor store. No town centre store (other than the Lidl) is expected to suffer a significant impact. It is reasonable to assume that the majority of the existing Lidl's turnover will simply transfer across to the new store, given it is a popular store that has served the local area for many years, and the new store will provide a better shopping environment than the existing one.
- 8.5.20 The proposed store's remaining turnover (£1.1m) will be derived from the Tesco on Yarmouth Road, just 200 metres away but the impact is less than 6% and it is in any event an out-of-centre store. Out of centre stores are not afforded protection in policy terms and need not be considered further.
- 8.5.21 In terms of comparison goods, the notional comparison goods turnover of the proposed store will be £0.62m more than the existing Lidl store but this is less than the forecast growth in comparison spending in Caister (zone 1) over the period 2023 to 2028. The potential for any significant impact arising from the additional comparison goods turnover is therefore minimal.
- 8.5.22 Whilst technically the relocation of the existing Lidl to a site outside the town centre does result in a substantial impact, as the centre's turnover will decrease by some £11m, in practice the actual impact will be solely from the loss of linked spending by Lidl customers visiting other shops in the centre.. Furthermore, it is important to note that the existing Lidl unit will become available for reuse, and would be suitable for a non-food multiple retailer requiring a larger format unit, of which there are currently none in the town centre.

8.6 Summary

- 8.6.1 In summary, for the reasons explained above, and in light of the strength of Caister centre outlined in the healthcheck in the preceding chapter, we do not expect Lidl's relocation will give rise to an undue significant adverse effect on the viability and vitality of the centre as whole. As such, the NPPF, Policy CS7 of the Great Yarmouth Local Plan: Core Strategy and Policy R1 of the Great Yarmouth Local Plan Part 2 are complied with.



9.0 Other Planning Considerations

9.1 Development in the Strategic Gap

- 9.1.1 This planning application is supported by a number of technical reports, the findings of which are summarised below.
- 9.1.2 The site is located within the Great Yarmouth and Caister-on-Sea defined strategic gap between settlements, which the Council seeks to protect from development individually or cumulatively, significantly reduces either the physical size of the gaps themselves, their general openness or, where relevant, their rural character.
- 9.1.3 The site is largely surrounded by developed land. It is located directly north of Yarmouth Stadium, part of which is already in lawful use as an overspill car park. To the west is the recycling and water treatment works and to the north is Tesco, which forms part of the defined Caister-on-Sea settlement. As result, the site does not benefit from a 'rural character'. The defined gap between Great Yarmouth and Caister-on-Sea is already largely developed. Lidl want to continue to provide a discount retail offer to the residents of Caister-on-Sea, and the application site provides the most preferable option available, which enables the delivery of a fit-for-purpose foodstore.

9.2 Transport

- 9.2.1 A Transport Assessment has been prepared in support of the development proposal and details the access to the new store and drive-thru restaurants will be from a new exit from the adjacent roundabout. A new Toucan crossing is proposed at the northern arm of the roundabout to assist with sustainable access.
- 9.2.2 The access and site layout has been designed to allow a 16.5m articulated HGV to be able to enter and exit the site to make deliveries, in a forward gear with appropriate visibility splays.
- 9.2.3 Parking will be provided for 141 cars, including 6 for parent & child; 6 for the disabled and 2 with rapid charging points for electric vehicles, with passive infrastructure to allow additional chargers to be added as demand increases. Sheffield cycle stands will provide parking for 12 bicycles under the shelter of the store canopy. The drive thru restaurants plots will include a total of 96 additional spaces, each with 2 disabled spaces.
- 9.2.4 The existing overspill carpark will be relocated to the north of the drive thru plot. It has been demonstrated that this area is sufficient to accommodate the majority of events held at the Stadium. On the occasional event that additional parking is required, usually in relation to



stock car racing, the wider area to the north-west will be used. It should be noted that planning permission is not required where the use of any land for any purpose is used for less than 28 days in a total. This is the case in this scenario.

- 9.2.5 Overall, the site is considered to have good levels of accessibility – access on foot and by bicycle is good and there are bus stops nearby.
- 9.2.6 A new review of highway collision data shows that the vicinity of the site there are no existing highway safety patterns or problems.
- 9.2.7 In respect of trip generation the nature of the use means that limited numbers of customer trips will be new to the highway network, rather most will be a combination of linked trips (undertaken to the store as part of another trip); pass-by (a trip already on the network directly adjacent to the access into the site); transfer (a trip already on the network that transfers from a similar site in close proximity to the proposed development) and diverted (a trip already on the network but not the road from which access is taken).
- 9.2.8 The Transport Assessment assumes a robust approach that 60% of trips will be pass-by / diverted / linked trips, and only 40% will be entirely new to the local highway network.
- 9.2.9 A trip generation exercise has been undertaken to confirm the scale of traffic forecast to be generated by the store. It has been demonstrated that the roundabout junction will operate within theoretical capacity in the 2023 assessment. There is a scenario where the roundabout operates slightly above capacity, however, the impact of the proposed development is minimal with an increase of 5 vehicle queue on the Jack Chase Way arm.
- 9.2.10 It is concluded that the development is acceptable from a traffic and transport perspective.

9.3 Ecology

- 9.3.1 A preliminary ecological appraisal has been undertaken of the site, which included a survey for signs of protected species, as well as an assessment of habitats to determine their potential to support protected or otherwise notable flora and fauna. Consideration has also been given to habitats outside the site, to evaluate its ecological context within the wider landscape.
- 9.3.2 No records of badgers were returned from 1km of the site boundary. The site has limited foraging habitat, but no signs of activity were noted nor were any setts located within the site. No further action is proposed.
- 9.3.3 There is potential foraging habitat for bats and the site sits within a commuting corridor for a range of bat species. The site is therefore assessed as having moderate suitability for use by



bats. Surveys are ongoing and full details will be provided in a supplementary Bat Report.

- 9.3.4 In terms of birds, the site is located away from the coastal and intertidal habitats and is therefore largely unsuitable for seabirds and wading bird species. However, the scrub and dense ruderal vegetation are suitable to support a range of common and widespread bird species. It has been concluded that no further bird surveys are required at this stage.
- 9.3.5 A desktop study has shown no records of Great Crested Newts within 1 km of the site and the survey concluded that there were unlikely to be suitable breeding habitat on site. In terms of invertebrates, it is recommended that an insect hotel within a suitable area of green space is incorporated into the development.
- 9.3.6 Survey for reptiles are ongoing and full details will be provided in a supplemental Reptile Report. Finally, hedgehog boxes are proposed to be installed in areas of green space to provide sheltering opportunities for this species.
- 9.3.7 The existing site will be stripped clean as part of the development, which will result in a loss of biodiversity from the removal of existing scrub. The new soft landscaping will seek to offset this loss, including the planting of 23 new trees on the Lidl foodstore site, and a further 29 trees on the drive thru plots. Lidl will be happy to discuss will prepare an assessment of the existing and proposed biodiversity on the site and is happy to discuss the results with the Council in due course.

9.4 Flood Risk and Drainage

- 9.4.1 The site is wholly contained within the Environmental Agency (EA) Flood Zone 3a. The NPPF states that an Exception Test is not required as buildings used for shops are classified as less vulnerable and this use is acceptable in areas categorised as Zones 3a.
- 9.4.2 The Flood Risk Assessment demonstrates that the development of the site should not increase flooding elsewhere.
- 9.4.3 The site is not suitable for infiltration but there are a number of watercourse in the vicinity, one of which can be used as an outfall for all flows generated by the foodstore and highway, with the second and third to be made into watercourse to the south.
- 9.4.4 The new site drainage will be design with sufficient capacity not to flood during a 1 in 30-year storm even as well as to contain flood water generated from a 1 in 100 year store event plus 45% within the site. The risk of off-site flooding would not be increased as a result of the development and safe access and egress will be maintained.



9.4.5 The nearest foul water asset may be too problematic to reach, as such, the possibility of individual plot septic tanks is being considered. This will be reviewed when further information is received about the site.

9.4.6 The potential for pollution of controlled water is considered to be low provided best practice procedures are followed during construction and drainage systems are maintained to ensure that they do not become blocked and unable to discharge.

9.5 Sustainability

9.5.1 Local policy requires development to achieve high levels of energy and water efficiency and to encourage the development of renewable energy sources wherever they have prospects of being economically attractive and environmentally and socially acceptable.

9.5.2 In respect of energy from renewable sources for the foodstore, all heating and cooling within the store will be provided by heat pumps and there will be photovoltaic panels on the roof of the building. Overall, the development will achieve 202.22% on-site renewable energy (the total energy demand being 161,137kWh and the energy generated from renewable being 178,811kWh). This will result in a 180.25% reduction in CO2 emissions. In addition to the PV panels and heat pumps the construction will also use low climate change impact building materials, including sustainable timber; low or zero carbon global warming insulation materials; will incorporate low water fittings with leak detection.

9.5.3 The details of the drive-thru units are yet to be calculated but by the nature of the development, a similar approach will be taken.

9.6 Mineral Resources Safeguarding

9.6.1 The site is located in a Mineral Resource Safeguarding area. The application is supported by a Mineral Assessment, prepared by SLR which reviews the geology of the site and considers the potential extraction of the North Denes Formation. It is concluded that the viability of this deposit is sub-optimal on the basis of its low overall tonnage, minimal thickness and low quality of the deposit. There is no strain on supply nor increased demand for the mineral in the region and since the deposit is of a small scale it would not have a significant impact on the regional resource for sand and gravel. On this basis, it is considered an economic mineral deposit is not present and therefore the proposed development should be considered acceptable by the Council.



9.7 Land Contamination

- 9.7.1 The risk of soil contamination beneath the site to the long-term health of retail workers and customers for a supermarket, and drive thru use is very low to negligible. There are no identified off-site sources of contamination considered likely to impact on the site, and off-site receptors including surface water and groundwater receptors from soil contamination is very low. There are no identified sources of hazardous ground gases in the area, other than natural peat pockets, which are not normally considered to present unacceptable risk to building occupants. Overall, the development of the site on land contamination grounds is considered acceptable.



10.0 Summary and Conclusions

10.1.1 This Planning and Retail statement has been prepared on behalf of Lidl Great Britain Ltd, to accompany a planning application seeking permission to develop land to the north of Yarmouth Stadium for a Class E discount foodstore of 2,187sqm gross area with 141 car parking spaces, together with two drive thru retail units with associated 96 car parking spaces. All plots will have associated landscaping and drainage solutions.

10.1.2 With regard to the prevailing planning policy context, the pertinent facts are as follows:

- The existing Lidl store in Caister-on-Sea is an important part of the retail offer to residents, being the only Limited Assortment Discount store in the village, and its value / importance is likely to grow as the cost of living continues to increase. However, it is a dated unit that cannot provide the same level or quality of offer as more modern LAD stores. Lidl has identified a need to improve their offer, both to better serve local residents but also to remain competitive against other food retailers in the catchment. There is no way of expanding their existing outlet, so a relocation is required.
- The drive thru restaurants will provide an alternative offer to the area. There are currently no nationally recognised outlets within Caister-on-Sea. It is anticipated that the majority of customers will be from linked trips to the foodstore, or passing the site in any event and will not detract from the food and beverage offer in Caister-on-Sea.
- In relation to the sequential test, it has been concluded that there are no more centrally located sites that could accommodate the development that is proposed, even adopting a flexible approach, such that the sequential test is passed.
- The relocated store will have no significant impact on the town centre as the turnover of the existing store will simply transfer to the new one. S
- The proposed application site is already bounded by other development nearby, with Yarmouth Stadium directly to the south, Tesco to the north and the water treatment works and recycling centre to the west. The site will therefore not impact on the openness of the area or compromise a rural setting.
- It is also concluded that there are no technical considerations relating to drainage, highways, noise, ecology, mineral resources or ground conditions that would impact on the deliverability of the proposals.



10.1.3 It is considered that the proposal meets the relevant policy requirements with no material considerations running counter. Therefore, it is respectfully requested that the Council supports this application.

