

Public attitudes towards retirement housing

Homes for Later Living developments may bring numerous economic benefits to local areas but how welcome are they in the eyes of local residents?

Our UK-wide polling indicates that the vast majority of people would approve of retirement housing being built near them. Indeed, when people were asked whether they would approve or disapprove of certain developments being built within a mile of their home, retirement housing was among the three developments with the highest net approval ratings. The other two highest scorers were care homes and developments of family homes.

Across the UK, retirement housing scored a net 68% approval rating - rising to 70% in London and south west. This was slightly higher than the rating given to a development of first time buyer homes (67%) and significantly higher than the rating given to a conventional block of flats (45%) and a development of student accommodation (42%).

The approval rating given to retirement housing was also significantly higher than was given to commercial developments of all kinds. For example, a commercial development (retail) got a 47% net approval score and a commercial development (offices) scored 41%.

More generally, our polling established that more people than not want to see some kind of new housing built near where they live. A third of people think it is important that homes are built in their local area, compared to a quarter who do not.

Finally, our polling asked people what, if anything, they thought was particularly important in any new building development in their local area. The highest scoring answer here was "creating jobs" with 50% of respondents opting for this. Also scoring highly on 42% was "leads to more money being spent in local shops and businesses".

Savanta ComRes polled 2178 adults across the UK from 27-29 November 2020.

Summary of benefits

The figures presented in this report are net additional figures, which show the benefits of retirement developments versus a counterfactual. The below table highlights the benefits of Homes for Later Living developments versus letting a site remain undeveloped. This is in line with best economic practice. N.B. these figures are not the same as direct employment figures. Averages for direct employment can be found in the annex.

	45 apartments – i.e. the benefits of a typical Homes for Later Living development	30,000 apartments – i.e. one year of national building, 10% of the new homes target and the current level of demand	300,000 apartments – i.e. 10 years of national building
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85 construction jobs for the duration of the build • £7.6m in gross value added in the local area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14,820 construction jobs for the duration of the build • £1.4bn in gross value added nationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14,820 jobs sustained for 10 years • £14bn in gross value added nationally
Repairs and Renovations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 permanent jobs • £1.6m in gross value added in the local area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 174 permanent jobs • £285m in gross value added nationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,740 permanent jobs • £2.85bn in gross value added nationally
Management and Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.3 permanent jobs • £1.6m in gross value added in the local area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 523 permanent jobs • £366m in gross value added nationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5,230 permanent jobs • £3.66bn in gross value added nationally
High Street Spend ^a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.2 permanent jobs on the high street • £2.25m of gross value added to the high street 	Displacement would mean benefits would net off nationally.	Displacement would mean benefits would net off nationally.
Total	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 85 construction jobs for the duration of the build • 6.4 permanent jobs • £13m in gross value added in the local area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14,820 construction jobs for the duration of the build • 700 permanent jobs • Nearly £2bn in gross value added nationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14,820 construction jobs sustained for 10 years • 7,000 permanent jobs • Nearly £20bn in gross value added nationally, equivalent to 1% of GDP



Boosting local economies through jobs and growth

- A typical retirement development of 45 units could generate over £13m of additional economic activity in a local area, compared to letting a brownfield site lay undeveloped.
- Building 30,000 retirement properties could generate £2bn of economic activity across the country every year, compared to leaving sites undeveloped.
- A typical retirement housing development could also generate 85 additional construction jobs.
- There would also be permanent jobs created in management and maintenance of retirement developments as well as the renovation works and investment that follow moves further down the housing chain.

There has never been a more urgent time for stimulating local economic growth and revitalising our communities. Construction is central to this mission and the Prime Minister has called for an “infrastructure revolution” to “repair and refurbish the fabric of our country”.

The Planning White Paper is intended to help deliver this revolution through modernisation of the planning system and will help to drive up the number of new homes being delivered. The great hope is that a burst of construction will generate the kind of economic growth that this country needs to get back on track from the pandemic. The changes made to the planning algorithm have further evidenced the need to make the most of our brownfield sites.

For local authorities who need to accommodate challenging housebuilding targets but are seeking to protect greenfield sites there is a strong case for factoring specialist retirement properties into these plans.

We already know that this type of housing is largely focused on brownfield land. In fact, c. 97% of Homes for Later Living properties are on brownfield land. We know that it meets a critical need to enable older people to stay in their own homes for longer, thereby reducing health risks and generating significant health and social care savings. And we know that it stimulates both ends of the local housing market, ultimately releasing more for first time buyers.

Now we can also see how retirement housing can boost local economic growth and create jobs. These benefits stem from construction activity, repairs, renovations and onsite management and care jobs including property managers, gardeners, window cleaners among others.

That said, there is no suggestion that specialist retirement housing should come at the expense of new conventional housing in any area. Rather, specialist retirement housing should be built in addition to conventional housing to ensure that we have the diverse housing stock we need, offering choice to potential purchasers and tenants. This will mean that the many benefits brought by specialist retirement housing do not come at the expense of existing housing aimed at families and young people.

The importance of building

Construction of any kind is critically important to economic growth. A site laying undeveloped carries a major opportunity lost. In order to grasp the full extent of this cost, we have modelled out the economic comparison of building Homes for Later Living developments on brownfield sites versus allowing those sites to lay undeveloped.

Our estimates show how construction activity and other factors combine to bring substantial economic benefits. We found that building 30,000 retirement properties a year would add £2bn a year to the UK economy through additional economic activity, partly owing to the specific construction requirements of our properties. It would add 15,000 total construction jobs for the duration of the construction, as well as 700 permanent jobs in the management, renovation, and care work associated with retirement properties and the downstream renovation of properties in the existing housing stock.

Research undertaken on behalf of the CBI as well as research done by FTI Consulting, cited by Shelter, shows that for every pound of capital spent in construction, between £2.09 and £2.80 was returned to the local economy.⁴

If the Government undertook a 10 year programme of building 30,000 retirement properties each year, we could therefore expect to see nearly £20bn added to the UK economy. On top of this would be 15,000 construction jobs sustained over 10 years and 7,000 jobs in the management, renovation and care jobs associated with retirement properties. These include managers, carers, gardeners and others who help to ensure that Homes for Later Living developments are vibrant and happy communities.

Over the lifetime of the 300,000 developments, this would be equivalent to adding nearly 1% to UK GDP, just by building one type of housing at the level of demand that exists for that kind of property.

The benefit of Homes for Later Living versus other developments

Having established the economic benefits of Homes for Later Living developments, the question is: how do these economic benefits compare to those that other residential units can provide to our local communities?

The answer is that Homes for Later Living developments compare favourably to both conventional houses and apartments, with additional economic benefits and additional jobs created, which are derived from multiple factors.

Firstly, the majority of retirement living developments are on brownfield sites near town centres and local transport links, this being a key driver of reduced car use and increased local spend.

Secondly, retirement properties employ additional staff, in management, care and service roles which have been included in the model, as well as bringing in local residents for part-time work like hairdressing for the residents, which has not. The manager is a net additional job compared to conventional houses, as will be the services of a gardener, cleaner and maintenance staff. In some cases, and in all Extra Care developments, there will also be a team of newly appointed on-site carers, as well as caterers and hospitality staff. These benefits are enumerated in the annex.

Thirdly, building retirement properties will free up more second-hand homes than building conventional apartments or houses for open market sale. The effect of this is to increase the number of moves occurring in the existing housing stock. When this happens, the numbers of renovation and repairs are increased. Our previous report, Chain Reaction, showed that older households tend to 'stay put' in their family home beyond the age of 65, partly due to the lack of availability of attractive downsizing options. Of course, building high quality retirement properties is one way to ensure that those looking to downsize have more options to choose from.

The construction benefits themselves are also large and derive from the particular specifications and requirements of building retirement properties.

Our modelling shows how retirement properties free up considerably more local homes in the chain of transactions than conventional flats and houses for open market sale. These additional freed up homes will create additional renovation and repair activity. Some of this work will be DIY efforts, but otherwise the use of tradesmen such as decorators, bathroom and kitchen fitters, central heating or window installers will support jobs and generate economic benefits nationally and locally. There may also be additional economic benefits through the local purchase of materials.

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Pegasus Jesmond Assembly - from school site to specialist retirement housing

One current example of a site development is the Pegasus Jesmond Assembly in Newcastle-Upon-Tyne. In July 2016 Central High School for Girls merged with Church High School to become Newcastle High School for Girls. The former school site became vacant in December of that year. A planning application to redevelop the site was submitted and approved by Newcastle City Council in 2018 for 63 much needed homes exclusively for the over 60s in Jesmond. The development is over five floors, with shared communal facilities including a shared landscape deck to the rear, communal lounge and social kitchen. Construction is due to be completed in early 2021, with owners and tenants moving in Spring 2021.

The development was designed by local award winning architects Faulkner Browns, with Tolent appointed as main contractor. Tolent is a local business established in 1983, that has since grown into one of the North East's largest construction companies. With 20 people employed directly by Tolent on site and a further 26 subcontracts. At any point in time, there are between 100-125 subcontractors on site. 95% of the contractors are local to the Newcastle City Region, employing local labour and providing apprenticeships on site to help train and develop skills for the next generation of construction workers.



Some of the jobs at Homes for Later Living developments

Alongside the construction jobs brought about by the development of specialist retirement properties, there are a host of management, renovation and care jobs associated with Homes for Later Living schemes. For example:

A **House Manager** oversees front of house management, facilities, event coordination and customer service in a typical Homes for Later Living property of 45 units. They help homeowners settle into their new homes and remain on hand to offer help, support and advice as necessary. The House Manager also provides a professional front of house service, welcoming visitors, and helps to maintain a safe, secure, well maintained and pleasant environment.

An **Estate Manager** is a pivotal point in an Extra Care retirement community, leading the care and support and duty management teams and working with colleagues across the wider business to deliver operational requirements. An Estate Manager will have full accountability for the successful day-to-day running of a development and its budget requirements. They will also coordinate and facilitate activities in communal lounges to improve social and physical opportunities for residents.

A **care and support assistant** plays a vital role in empowering our residents to live life to the full through domestic support and housekeeping and personal care, including bathing, dressing, toileting and help with mobility. They may also provide lifestyle services such as chaperoning homeowners to medical appointments, and/or other community related services, or simply offering social support.



A day in the life of one of McCarthy Stone's Estates Managers during the pandemic

Rhona Hill is Estate Manager at the Dairy in Tunbridge Wells, a community of people over 70 who live independently in their own apartments, whether privately owned or rented. She is responsible for the smooth day-to-day running of the community and is the first port of call for the retirees who have made the development their home.

When Covid-19 arrived in the UK last year and the country went into lockdown, life took an unexpected turn for Rhona, her colleagues and residents.

She says: "In my role as an Estates Manager, no two days are ever really the same, especially since the world was turned upside-down in the wake of the Covid-19 outbreak. Since March last year, my day-to-day role has been governed by the needs of the homeowners, whether it is helping them FaceTime loved ones, picking up essentials or just being a friendly face to chat to.

"The biggest challenge here at The Dairy has been fitting everything into one day, it's been a huge team effort and we are lucky enough that we haven't had any Covid-19 cases, a testament to everyone's hard work."

Rhona and the team have dedicated their time to helping homeowners by posting letters and fetching all of their groceries, and they continue to do everything that is needed to minimise the number of trips homeowners feel they need to make outside of the development to help keep them safe.

"We were lucky enough to be able to host a range of socially distanced outdoor activities over the summer months, with homeowners enjoying live performances from local musicians, sweet treats and coffee in the gardens as well as themed quizzes delivered through their doors," she says.

Speaking of her enjoyment for her role, Rhona says it is especially rewarding to be able to take the hard work away from the homeowners and support them to lead their independent lives. "Usually within six months of moving-in to The Dairy, the homeowners blossom into what I can only describe as what they would have been like ten years prior - relaxed, happy and full of life. It's a joy to witness," she says.

Rhona adds: "The support that both the team and the homeowners have received from McCarthy Stone has been second to none. McCarthy Stone have sent magazines to the development for the homeowners to enjoy, hosted virtual talks, a chess club and created quiz and puzzle sheets to keep everyone entertained. As employers, they have been phenomenal. The team and I have been constantly informed and kept up-to-date and they have ensured that all of the staff feel appreciated and supported through this difficult time."



CHAPTER 2 Reviving the high street

- **Homes for Later Living Developments are typically located on or close to high streets, ensuring the residents have easy access to local shops and services.**
- **On average, 63% of residents' annual expenditure is in local shops. This is much higher than the average local spend by 80+ year olds in the general population.**
- **The residents of a typical 45-unit retirement development generate £550,000 of spending per year, £347,000 of which goes to local shops, supporting retail jobs and keeping shops open.**
- **Assuming a shop has an owner and two full time equivalent employees, one Homes for Later Living development would support one shop on the high street.**

Retirement properties can have a further positive impact on the local economy through the purchasing power of Homes for Later Living residents, also known as the 'grey pound' effect. This spending by older people can help maintain outlets from the newsagents and the butchers to the flower shop and the local cafe - in other words the shops and community spaces which make up the heart of local communities.

In this section of the report we look specifically at the high street benefits. Other reports have included other local spending benefits like those on local contractors like window cleaners and gardeners. We include those benefits as part of our management and care figures.

We know that there is an increased likelihood of older residents spending their money locally, as opposed to nationally or online. And this is especially the case with residents of Homes for Later Living developments which tend to be brownfield sites in urban locations close to town centres or high streets where there are clusters of local shops and services, which will most likely also be already familiar to older residents but will benefit from the new-found immediate proximity.

Previous research found that people in a McCarthy Stone development regularly use shops and local facilities. The study for Henley Business School found that 80% of the residents used the shops almost daily or often; over 40% used the library or post office almost daily or often. In the schemes, owners were asked about the extent to which they used local services and facilities in their current home. More than three-quarters (78%) said that they used local shops at least once a week; and around 90% used local shops and/or supermarkets more than once a month. Other local services were also used regularly by residents, with around a quarter using services such as local taxis, hairdressers, pubs, cafes and restaurants more than once a week.⁵

In order to get an idea of how much residents of specialist retirement properties spend on retail items compared to residents of other housing developments, we started by looking at ONS figures for average annual spending by households by household age band. These show that people aged 75 and over spend an annual average of £13,354 – whilst this is not surprisingly a little less than other age brackets how it is spent is of greater significance. Our polling evidence suggests that over 80 year olds in the general population spend 45% of their money in local shops - similar to 35-64 year olds. But we should not assume the residents of retirement properties fall into line with all older people when it comes to spending habits. Indeed, our survey of residents tells a very different story.

Through our polling, we found that Homes for Later Living residents actually spend on average 63% of their money in local shops. This is much higher than the average local spend by 80+ year olds in the general population. This can be explained by residents' close proximity to local shops, meaning that car journeys out of town often become unnecessary.

Using 'propensities to spend locally' we can apportion spending figures to households in alternative housing developments to get the aggregate spending in local shops and cafes. Were there to be other homes in the place of a Homes for Later Living development, it is difficult to ascertain whether this 'proximity' effect would have quite the same influence on the local spending propensity of younger households that would be living there. Therefore we have assumed two possibilities. The first is that younger household local spending propensities remain the same as the general population of the same age. The second is that they rise proportionately to the increase seen for Homes for Later Living residents.

Through our modelling, we can see that building retirement properties can be hugely beneficial to local high streets when co-located amongst shops, services and transport connections. The residents of a typical retirement development generate over £553,250 of spending per year. By our residents' survey, and based on where the residents were spending before moving into retirement properties, our modelling shows that just under 63% - or £347,441 - of this will be spent on the local high street every year. This amounts to £224,176 that previously was not spent on the local high street.

Our modelling estimates that for every one retirement housing development created in a local authority it has the potential to support more than 3 local retail jobs. Assuming that a small shop has 3 full time equivalent workers (possibly the owner and two employees) this is equivalent to each retirement property keeping one shop open on the high street. Over the lifespan of each development this is more than £2m of gross value added to each local high street versus building nothing. It is an additional £600,000 over using the same land to build conventional houses.

Finally, it is worth highlighting that unlike the construction impacts considered previously, these are 'ongoing effects' occurring through regular spending in shops in cafes each week over a 60-year period, which is how this report measures the lifespan of a development.

Greening communities

- **With c. 97% of developments on brownfield sites, building Homes for Later Living properties helps to safeguard green field land.**
- **Many retirement developments are on the cutting edge of energy-efficiency and green generation.**
- **Younger families moving into vacated properties likely induce energy efficient renovations down the chain creating better energy efficiency across the market.**
- **We estimate that building one retirement development of 45 units takes up to 15 cars off the roads.**

Homes for Later Living properties do not just bring economic benefits to communities. Both the developments and the residents that live in them can bring a number of environmental benefits.

We have already noted that the vast majority of sites used for Homes for Later Living are previously developed brownfield land. Whether that is a former garage, an old police station or surplus municipal building, this means that retirement developments often contribute to saving green fields and reducing green belt encroachment across the UK.

Land near retirement properties can also benefit as developers take steps to create habitats that will benefit local wildlife and enhance an area's appearance for local people to enjoy. This is the case in Thame, Oxfordshire, where Churchill Retirement Living has teamed up with a local environmental group on plans to create a new bio-diverse area of land opposite a new development. Prompted by support for principles embraced in the 'Thame Green Living plan', there are plans to sensitively landscape and plant the area with a variety of native trees, shrubs and flowers.

Inside Homes for Later Living developments, apartments typically include electric hobs and electric heating, pre-empting the Government's forthcoming move away from gas boilers. Many properties, including 50% of McCarthy Stone developments, now have smart meters installed, encouraging more efficient energy consumption. This both reduces carbon in the environment and also saves money for our residents.

Homes for Later Living EPC ratings are largely in line with the new build average (EPC band B), making them more energy-efficient than the UK-wide average (EPC band D). We also know that long time residents are less likely to upgrade their homes, and so residents moving into Homes for Later Living are likely to induce higher energy efficiency in properties down the chain.

As the Government aims to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050, all Homes for Later Living developers are committed to playing their part by exploring new, efficient and sustainable systems. For example, Churchill Retirement Living properties are pioneering use of air and ground source renewable heat pump technology, which reduces energy bills and cuts CO₂ emissions by as much as 75%.

Alongside measures to promote low energy usage, a number of developments have car club partnerships with rental firms to reduce car usage. Some developments now have electric car charging points and this is something we fully expect to see more with sales of new petrol and diesel cars to end in the UK by 2030.

Already, Homes for Later Living residents are helping to reduce levels of pollution and carbon output in the local community by driving less. Instead of getting in the car, the location of most developments means that shops and high streets can be reached on foot. For when desired destinations are not in easy walking distance, many schemes are also on bus routes.

Going by our resident polling, we can see that half of those still driving say that they drive less than they did before moving. Nearly half of those who don't drive have given up because of moving to a retirement property.

Broadly, Homes for Later Living residents are a third less likely to drive - 51% vs 77%. This reduced likelihood of driving can almost wholly be attributed to those saying that moving to a Homes for Later Living property meant that they chose to give up driving.

Looking at self-reported driving among our residents, our analysis suggests that building 45 Homes for Later Living properties could take up to 15 cars off the roads who would otherwise drive a collective roughly 1,800 miles a week.

It is critical to note that these benefits do not come at the expense of residents' independence. Rather, residents are likely more mobile because of the proximity of our properties to local high streets and shops. Our residents also show wellbeing scores consistent with people 10 years younger than them in the general population.

Car Clubs - helping residents to rent electric and hybrid vehicles

People living in selected McCarthy Stone developments have been taking to the road following the introduction of an innovative 'pay as you go' Car Club initiative.

In partnership with Enterprise, McCarthy Stone has provided residents with access to a dedicated all-electric vehicle, which is available to rent for anything from 30 minutes to a couple of days – meaning residents can make short journeys to the shops and enjoy days out or even weekends away.

The scheme is aimed at retirees who don't want to give-up driving for good but are looking for an alternative to the responsibility and hassle of having to maintain their own vehicle. But the use of electric and hybrid vehicles across McCarthy Stone's fleet of Enterprise cars does not just benefit residents who want to get behind the wheel.

With electric vehicles having 43% less carbon emissions compared to the average UK car, as the programme expands it is set to have environmental benefits for many local areas. Furthermore, Car Clubs have been shown to lead to a reduction in car ownership among members, as well as a reduction in car usage in the 12 months after becoming a member.

Ground source renewable heat pump technology

At Churchill Retirement Living's Lewis Carroll Lodge in Cheltenham, residents have been making the most of the developer's pioneering use of ground source renewable heat pump technology.

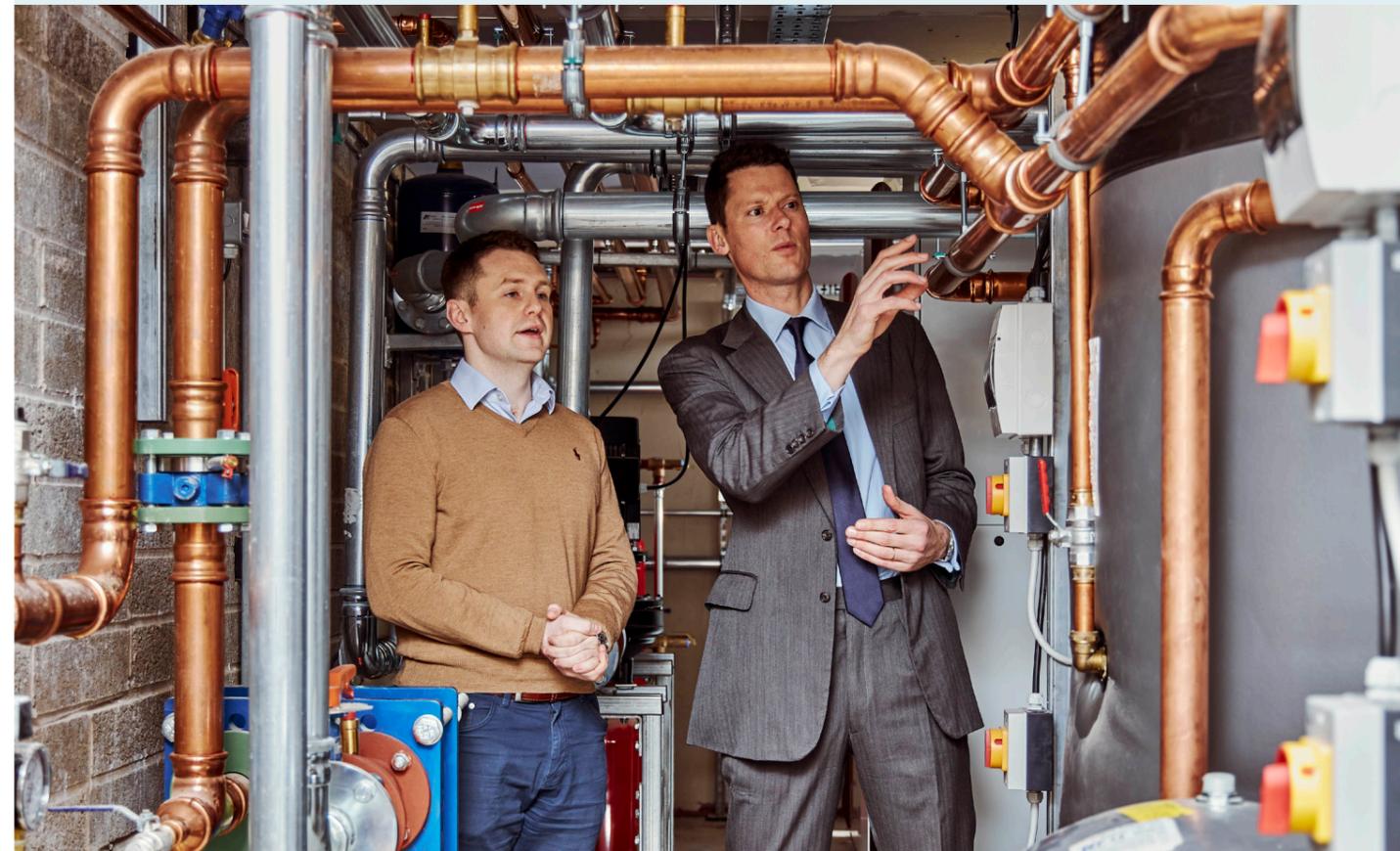
Each apartment and all the communal areas at the Lodge have heating and hot water provided via the communal ground source heat pump. Designed and installed by sustainable energy company 'The Renewable Design Company', the pump system extracts heat directly from the earth to provide heating and hot water to residents.

The heat extracted from the earth is four times greater than the energy used by the process making it the most efficient heating solution for both cost and carbon emissions. At Lewis Carroll Lodge, the ground source heat pumps produce 33 tonnes of CO₂ per year to heat residents' apartments and to supply hot water compared to 134 tonnes of CO₂ per year generated by an electric heating system - a 75% reduction in CO₂ emissions.

On a recent visit, Cheltenham MP Alex Chalk (pictured) praised what he had seen as a "great example of sustainable, low carbon, development".

John and Doreen Pitt moved to Lewis Carroll Lodge last year and have been enjoying the benefits of a warm and cosy environment since then. "We think it's absolutely marvellous," says John. "The whole building is so nice and warm all the time that we've hardly had to use the heating inside our apartment.

"When we do turn it up a notch or two it's nice to know we don't have to worry about the cost or the environmental impact, as it's all so energy efficient and covered within our annual service."



Conclusion and recommendations

There is no doubt we need more housing of all types.

There is no doubt we need more housing for older people - we have an ageing population with increasing housing needs. It is estimated that 90% of the household growth until 2050 will be among our over 65 population. As a result, we have to build more suitable housing to cater for their specific needs.

Homes for Later Living has lacked priority in new housebuilding over many years. However this report shows that building more housing for older people will not only address the existing shortfall, it will do more than any other type of residential development to support local jobs, businesses and High Streets. It will also help improve the environmental footprint of a local area.

This is in addition to the clear socio-economic benefits identified in earlier reports which found that:

- On a selection of national well-being criteria such as happiness and life satisfaction, an average person aged 80 feels as good as someone 10 years younger after moving from mainstream housing to housing specially designed for later living.
- Each person living in a Homes for Later Living property enjoys a reduced risk of health challenges, contributing to fiscal savings to the NHS and social care services of approximately £3,500 per year.
- Roughly two in every three retirement properties built releases a home suitable for a first-time buyer. A typical Homes for Later Living development which consists of 40 apartments therefore results in at least 27 first time buyer properties being released onto the market.

Given that 1 in 4 over 65s want to downsize and in so doing will play their part in unlocking these benefits to society it only remains for Government, councils and house builders to play their part in making it possible. For this to happen we are calling for:

1. A commitment to building 10% of the Government's national house building target as retirement properties.

Having committed to building 300,000 new homes a year by the middle of this decade, ministers must now ensure that the right homes get built. With an ageing population, it no longer makes sense to focus almost exclusively on first-time buyers. We will need homes of different tenures to meet different demands.

We are therefore urging ministers to commit to building 30,000 retirement properties a year in England. This would be a tenth of the existing national target and would cater for the increased demand for quality homes among our ageing population. It would also be additional, and not in place of, existing supply. This is a target which is undeniably necessary – over the next decade 50% of the growth in the number of households will be amongst the over 80s.⁶ It is also a target which is realistic and acceptable to existing local communities.

2. All local plans have to include specific targets for approving Homes for Later Living.

Over 65 households will make up 90% of the household growth of the UK. We also know that 25% of this group want to downsize but many do not end up moving, causing a bottleneck at the top of the housing market.

All local authorities should be responding to the growing need for more suitable housing for older people in their local plans. To ensure that this is the case, the Government should require that local plans include an objectively assessed look at the need for types of housing by demographic, and that local authorities commit to building for this level of need.

Of course, no government can afford to ignore the many problems faced by the younger generation when it comes to housing. But as the UK gets older, action is urgently needed to ensure that all older people can live in suitable accommodation where they will experience healthy and happy retirements. Looking at the latest ONS household projections, we expect that the 3.9 million homes owned by those aged 65 and over today will grow to at least five million by 2030.

In this report, we have mapped a route for achieving both of these outcomes simultaneously. In doing so, we have demonstrated that helping more people to move into homes for later living would be a win-win for those politicians who are genuinely interested in bridging the growing generational divide.



Annex

The additional benefits of building specialist retirement properties versus building a conventional housing development on the same site:

Conventional housing developments are developments of family sized homes. There would be approximately 13 family sized homes on the same size development as 45 retirement properties.

	45 apartments – i.e. the benefits of 1 Homes for Later Living Development	30,000 apartments – i.e. one year of national building, 10% of the new homes target and the current level of demand	300,000 apartments – i.e. 10 years of national building
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 46 jobs for the duration of the build • £4.2m of gross value added in the local area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8163 jobs for the duration of the build • £737m in additional economic activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8163 jobs sustained for 10 years • £7.4bn in additional economic activity
Repairs and Renovations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 permanent job • £1.6m of gross value added in the local area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 174 permanent jobs • £285m in additional economic activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1740 permanent jobs • £2.9bn in additional economic activity
Management and Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.3 permanent jobs • 1.6m of gross value added in the local area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 523 permanent jobs • £366m of gross value added in the local area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5230 permanent jobs • £3.7bn of gross value added in the local area
High Street Spend	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.3 permanent jobs on the high street • £1.6m of additional spend on the high street 	Displacement would mean benefits would net off nationally.	Displacement would mean benefits would net off nationally.
Total	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 46 construction jobs for the duration of the build • 5.4 permanent jobs • £9m of gross value added in the local area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8163 construction jobs for the duration of the build • 700 permanent jobs • £1.4bn in additional economic activity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8163 construction jobs sustained for 10 years • 7000 permanent jobs • £14bn in additional economic activity

The additional benefits of building retirement properties versus building a conventional block of flats on the same site:

Conventional apartments are suitable for first time buyers and there would be 31 first time buyer flats on the same size site as a retirement development.

	45 apartments – i.e. the benefits of 1 typical Homes for Later Living development	30,000 apartments – i.e. one year of national building, 10% of the new homes target and the current level of demand	300,000 apartments – i.e. 10 years of national building
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 jobs for the duration of the build • £2.7m of gross value added in the local area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5231 jobs for the duration of the build • £476m of additional gross value added nationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5231 jobs sustained for 10 years • £4.8bn of additional gross value added nationally
Repairs and Renovations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 permanent job • £1.6m of gross value added in the local area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 166 permanent jobs • £277.4 of additional gross value added nationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,660 permanent jobs • £2.8bn of additional gross value added nationally
Management and Care	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.25 permanent jobs • 1.6m of gross value added in the local area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 523 permanent jobs • £366m of gross value added nationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5230 permanent jobs • £3.6bn of additional gross value added nationally
High Street Spend	Negligible	Displacement would mean benefits would net off nationally	Displacement would mean benefits would net off nationally
Total	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 construction jobs sustained over the duration of the build • 3 permanent jobs • £5.8m of additional gross value added in the local area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5231 construction jobs for the duration of the build • 689 permanent jobs • £1.1bn of additional gross value added nationally 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5231 construction jobs sustained for 10 years • 6890 permanent jobs • £11.2bn of gross value added nationally

Retirement Living and Extra Care developments:

Some developments are Retirement Living only properties and some are Extra Care properties which have additional care associated with them. The models for the benefits of a single one of these developments are below as well as the comparison, where appropriate, to the general model. An Extra Care development directly employs c. 17 people. A single Retirement Living development directly employs c. 1 person. The below numbers are net additional jobs in the local community resulting from the development of either a standard Retirement Living development and an Extra Care development versus a series of counterfactuals.

Construction activity local GVA & jobs, per 45 RL or RL+ homes developed

	Additional local GVA			Additional local jobs			Duration of jobs
	v std flats	v std houses	v fallow	v std flats	v std houses	v fallow	
RL	+£2.4m	+£3.87m	+£7.29m	+27	+43	+81	1 year
RL+	+£3.9m	+£5.4m	+£8.8m	+43	+60	+98	
RL:RL+ 80:20 (General model)	+£2.7m	+£4.2m	+£7.6m	+39	+46	+85	

Renovation & repair activity GVA & jobs, per 45 RL or RL+ homes developed

	Additional local GVA			Additional local jobs			Duration of jobs
	v std flats	v std houses	v fallow	v std flats	v std houses	v fallow	
All	+£1.6m	+£1.6m	+£1.6m	+1	+1	+1	Permanent

Retail spending activity local GVA & jobs, per 45 RL or RL+ homes developed

	Additional local GVA			Additional local jobs			Duration of jobs
	v std flats	v std houses	v fallow	v std flats	v std houses	v fallow	
All	0	+£1.6m	+£2.25m	0	+2.3	+3.2	Permanent

Management / social care activity local GVA & jobs, per 100 RL or RL+ homes developed

	Additional local GVA			Additional local jobs			Duration of jobs
	v std flats	v std houses	v fallow	v std flats	v std houses	v fallow	
RL	+£1m	+£1m	+£1m	+1	+1	+1	Permanent
RL+	+£3.7m	+£3.7m	+£3.7m	+8	+8	+8	
RL:RL+ 80:20 (General model)	+£1.6m	+£1.6m	+£1.6m	+2.3	+2.3	+2.3	

Endnotes

- 1 This is for an 80:20 Retirement Living / Extra Care development. Extra Care developments (also known as Retirement Living Plus developments) typically "net add" around 12 permanent jobs to the local community. Extra care developments employ c 17 people directly. The lifetime of a development is cited as 60 years in line with best practice.
- 2 Knight Frank, 'Retirement housing 2016' https://www.housinglin.org.uk/_assets/Resources/Housing/OtherOrganisation/KF_Retirement_Housing_2016.pdf
- 3 Some spending benefits could fit across multiple buckets. For example, a study by the Institute of Public Care in 2014 for McCarthy Stone includes different benefits in its retail spend that we have included in our Management and Care numbers which makes up the vast majority of the difference between these two figures
- 4 CBI (2012). Bridging the gap: backing the construction industry to generate jobs; and Shelter (2010) Research: briefing: Housing Investment: Part 1. Available at: http://england.shelter.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0008/276668/Briefing_Housing_Investment_Part_1.pdf
- 5 Ball, M (2011), Housing markets and independence in old age: expanding the opportunities
- 6 ONS Household Projections (2016-based)



WPI Strategy

50 Broadway
London
SW1H 0RG.

@wpi_strategy

<https://wpi-strategy.com>

February 2021

APPENDIX J: Legal advice from Killian Garvey

DUNTON GREEN EMPLOYMENT POLICY

ARGUMENTS CONCERNING THE INTERPRETATION OF EMPLOYMENT POLICIES

1. **Introduction**

- 1.1 McCarthy & Stone Retirement Lifestyles are seeking to redevelop the Robins and Day Vauxhall, Mill Road, Dunton Green, Kent TN13 2UZ ('the Site') for the following description of development:

The erection of 37 retirement living apartments with associated communal facilities, parking and landscaping

- 1.2 The Site is within the administrative boundary of Sevenoaks District Council as the relevant local planning authority.
- 1.3 The Council have provided pre-application advice in respect to the Site, wherein they advise that the requirements of Policy EMP5 of the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan ('ADMP') have not been satisfied, in particular the failure to 'demonstrate through marketing evidence that the site has been marketed for similar employment uses unsuccessfully for a period of six months and that there is no reasonable prospect of a continued business use at the site into the future'.

1.4 The essential question is whether this policy would apply to the development of the Site and whether further marketing/employment analysis is warranted.

1.5 The production of this advice has been delayed to ensure that it reflects the current NPPF, which was updated on 20 July 2021. I can confirm that the changes to the NPPF are not material to the interpretation of the employment policies.

1.6 In short, this document seeks to present the position that the Council are misapplying Policy EMP5, as it does not apply to the Site.

2. **Policy Background**

2.1 The pre-application advice document that was submitted to the Council described the former use of the Site as:

‘The site was formerly used as a Vauxhall Garage and is currently vacant’

2.2 The key issue is whether this former use would fall within the remit of the employment policies in the Council’s development plan.

2.3 The key documents comprising the Council’s development plan (for this purpose) are:

- i. the Core Strategy – adopted February 2011; and

- ii. the Sevenoaks Allocations and Development Management Plan ('ADMP') – adopted February 2015.

2.4 The Council were previously promoting an emerging local plan, which involved an examination in September/October 2019. However, the examination inspector found the plan to be unsound. The Council unsuccessfully pursued a legal challenge to that plan. As a consequence, the emerging plan has essentially stalled. Thus, it is the policies in the existing development plan which are of relevance.

2.5 Section 5.4 of the Core Strategy deals with 'Economic Development and Employment Land'. Within this section, Policy SP8 of the Core Strategy says:

*Sites used for business purposes **will be retained in business use unless it can be demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of their take up or continued use for business purposes during the Core Strategy period.** Redevelopment for mixed use of business sites in urban areas may exceptionally be permitted where such development would facilitate the regeneration of the site to more effectively meet the needs of modern business, where the employment capacity of the site, represented by the commercial floorspace, is maintained and where a mixed use development would represent a sustainable approach consistent with the general distribution of development.*

2.6 Accordingly, the policy requires that sites used for 'business purposes' will be retained unless 'there is no reasonable prospect' of their take up or continued use for business purposes. The relevant period for marketing purposes is the 'Core Strategy period'.

2.7 The policy does not define what is meant by ‘business purposes’ or ‘land for business’. However, the supporting text to the policy says:

*5.4.7 Taking account of these findings the emphasis of the policy is on retaining and making effective use of existing employment land. Support is given to the principle of intensification and regeneration of existing sites where necessary to better meet modern business needs. **The District’s employment sites are seen as a flexible resource that can be adapted, through redevelopment or change of use if necessary, for a range of different types of business use, including new and expanding sectors of the regional economy.***

2.8 Thus, whilst there is no definition of ‘business use’ in the development plan, the highlighted section above reveals that it is intended to embrace a range of uses for different types of business.

2.9 The only other point to note from the Court Strategy is that paragraph 5.4.5 of the Core Strategy refers to an Employment Land Review:

With regard to employment land, the Employment Land Review examines the District’s existing stock of employment land for business use. It shows that there is a significant supply on a wide range of sites and that the great majority is acceptably located, although some sites are in need of modernisation to meet current business needs.

2.10 Thus, it is worthy of note that the Employment Land Review (‘the ELR’) did seek to identify those Sites that are in the District’s existing stock of employment land.

2.11 The ELR did review sites in Dunton Green (such as the North Downs Business Park and Westerham Trading Centre). However, it did not include the Site. The ELR makes clear that the field survey team visited 41 business areas, including approximately 260 business sites. The ELR indicates that its purpose is ‘to provide a robust evidence base to support the retention of existing employment land where appropriate’ (para 1.2).

2.12 Turning next to the ADMP, Section 4 of the ADMP deals with the economy and employment. The opening of this section makes clear that ‘a business use’ for the purposes of the development plan necessarily includes a number of different uses:

4.1 The Council is committed to providing and preserving a range of employment sites for a variety of business uses.

2.13 The supporting text (at para 4.6) refers to Core Strategy Policy SP8 as being the ‘overarching strategic policy that provides for the retention and creation of employment and business facilities and opportunities throughout the District.’

2.14 Significantly, the ADMP makes it clear what Sites Policy SP8 relates to:

4.8 Core Strategy Policy SP8 promotes a flexible approach to the use of land for business and employment purposes and as such it is the role of this document to formally identify the sites to which Policy SP8 of the Core Strategy applies.

4.9 Individual location plans for each of these existing sites, indicating the site boundaries, are included in Appendix 4.

2.15 Accordingly, the ADMP defines which sites Policy SP8 relates to through Appendix 4 to the plan; the Site is not identified within this document. Thus, the ADMP clarifies that Policy SP8 of the Core Strategy cannot apply to the Site. However, the ADMP proceeds to provide a further policy that relates to ‘Non-allocated Employment Sites’, namely Policy EMP5.

2.16 Policy EMP5 of the ADMP says:

The Council will permit the loss of non-allocated lawful business premises and sites to other uses provided it can be demonstrated, to the satisfaction of the Council, that the site has been unsuccessfully marketed for re-use in employment for a period of at least 6 months and that there is no reasonable prospect of their take up or continued use for business use at the site/premises in the longer term.

2.17 Thus, Policy EMP5 relates to ‘non-allocated lawful business premises and sites to other uses’. However, the supporting text to the policy clarifies the scope of this policy:

4.34 Policy EMP5 below relates to Core Strategy Policy SP8 and acts as a supplementary development management policy to cover non-allocated employment sites. These sites will usually be below 0.2 ha, as sites above this threshold will have been assessed through the Council's Employment Land Review and either be allocated for employment purposes or recommended for release.

3. National Planning Policy Framework

3.1 The NPPF¹ refers to ‘employment land’ at several points. It is worthy of note that it distinguishes between a ‘retail use’ and an ‘employment use’ at paragraph 123, suggesting that they are different uses:

Local planning authorities should also take a positive approach to applications for alternative uses of land which is currently developed but not allocated for a specific purpose in plans, where this would help to meet identified development needs. In particular, they should support proposals to:

*a) **use retail and employment land** for homes in areas of high housing demand, provided this would not undermine key economic sectors or sites or the vitality and viability of town centres, and would be compatible with other policies in this Framework; and*

b) make more effective use of sites that provide community services such as schools and hospitals, provided this maintains or improves the quality of service provision and access to open space.

4. Discussion

4.1 The former use of the Site is as a Vauxhall Garage. The pre-application design statement clarifies that it is 0.77 acres in area. The key consideration is whether this falls within the remit of the Council’s employment policies.

4.2 Policy SP8 of the Core Strategy is notionally broad in its scope as it applies to ‘Sites used for business purposes’. However, it is tolerably clear through the ADMP that this policy is only intended to relate to those sites identified within Appendix 4 to the ADMP – which does not include the Site. Accordingly,

¹ Dated 20 July 2021

Policy SP8 does not relate to the Site. Indeed, I note that the Council's pre-application advice does not refer to this policy.

4.3 Policy EMP5 of the ADMP relates to 'Non-allocated Employment Sites'. It says that the Council will permit the loss of 'non-allocated lawful business premises and sites to other uses' subject to the marketing. The policy does not define what is meant by a 'business use' or 'sites to other uses' (this latter phrase is unclear on any view).

4.4 However, paragraph 4.34 of the ADMP clarifies that Policy EMP5 relates to sites that are not covered by Policy SP8. It says that such sites 'will usually be below 0.2 ha, as sites above this threshold will have been assessed through the Council's Employment Land Review'.

4.5 In this context, there are a number of reasons why Policy EMP5 does not apply to the Site.

4.6 Firstly, the supporting text to the policy provides an aid to interpret it. The supporting text says that the Sites covered by Policy EMP5 'will usually be below 0.2ha'. The Site is 0.77ha and is thus comfortably above this threshold. I acknowledge that the supporting text refers to the sites as 'usually' being below 0.2ha, making clear that this is not mandated by the policy. However, it gives a strong indication that the Site ought not to be included.

4.7 Secondly, the Employment Land Review did not assess the Site. This would suggest that the Site did not fall within the remit of the employment land to be retained, given that this was the point of the ELR.

- 4.8 Thirdly, the policy relates to ‘lawful business premises and sites to other uses’. This would suggest that it relates to sites that are currently in use as a business premises. It is clear that the previous lawful use of the Site is a business premises, insofar as this use of the Site cannot sensibly be described as being abandoned in planning terms. However, the Site is vacant and is not currently being used for business premises. This would suggest that the policy does not apply to it.
- 4.9 Fourthly, the policy relates to ‘lawful business premises and sites to other uses’. On one view, this could apply to every conceivable site across Sevenoaks. Indeed, any site could notionally be described as either a business or an ‘other’ use. However, it would plainly be unworkable and unrealistic to suggest that every site would need to be subject to the requirements within Policy EMP5. Accordingly, this suggests that the sensible way to interpret the policy is more narrowly, namely through examining whether the Site can be described as a ‘non-allocated employment site’, which is the focus (and title) of the Policy.
- 4.10 The Site was a former garage. This would naturally provide some employment, insofar as the garage would be manned by staff who are presumably employees. However, the same is true of most sites. Indeed, a restaurant, bar, casino or retail store all provide employment to staff. However, such sites/venues would not typically be recognised as ‘employment’ sites. Indeed, the NPPF draws a distinction between an ‘employment’ land and a ‘retail’ land (paragraph 123 of the current NPPF), suggesting they are not one and the same.

4.11 Thus, whilst a garage would provide some employment, it cannot sensibly be described as an ‘employment’ site as this would stretch the definition of an ‘employment site’ to an unworkable and unrealistic extent.

4.12 Thus, for all these reasons, the Site does not fall within the remit of Policy EMP5, meaning that the marketing requirement within the Policy does not apply.

Killian Garvey

22 July 2021



Case No. 20/05221/FULMAJ

Item No. 03 at 3:45

Location: Lookers Ford, Knaresborough Road, Harrogate, HG2 7LU

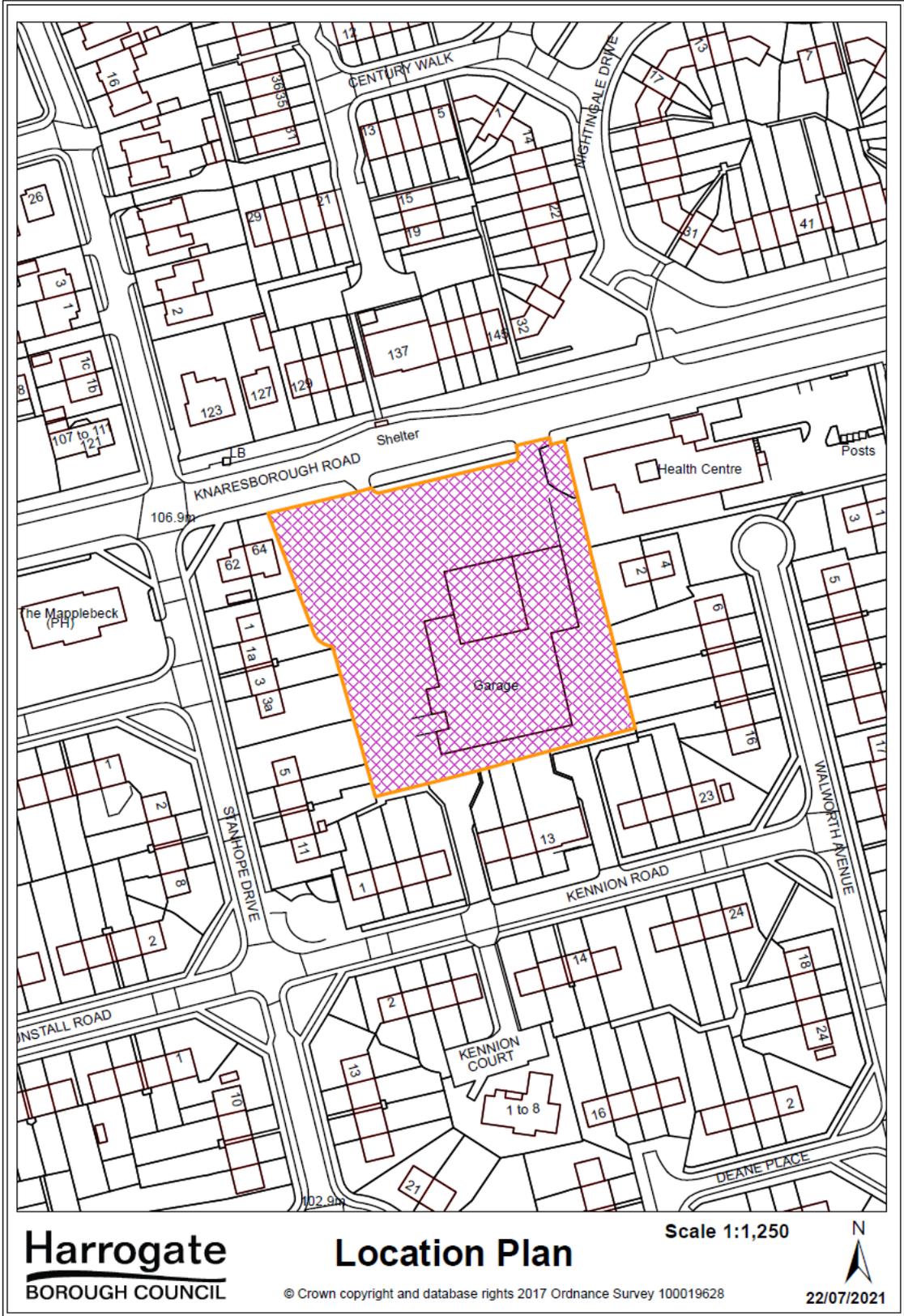
Proposal: Demolition of existing buildings and erection of a new Lidl food store (Use Class E) with associated car parking and landscaping.

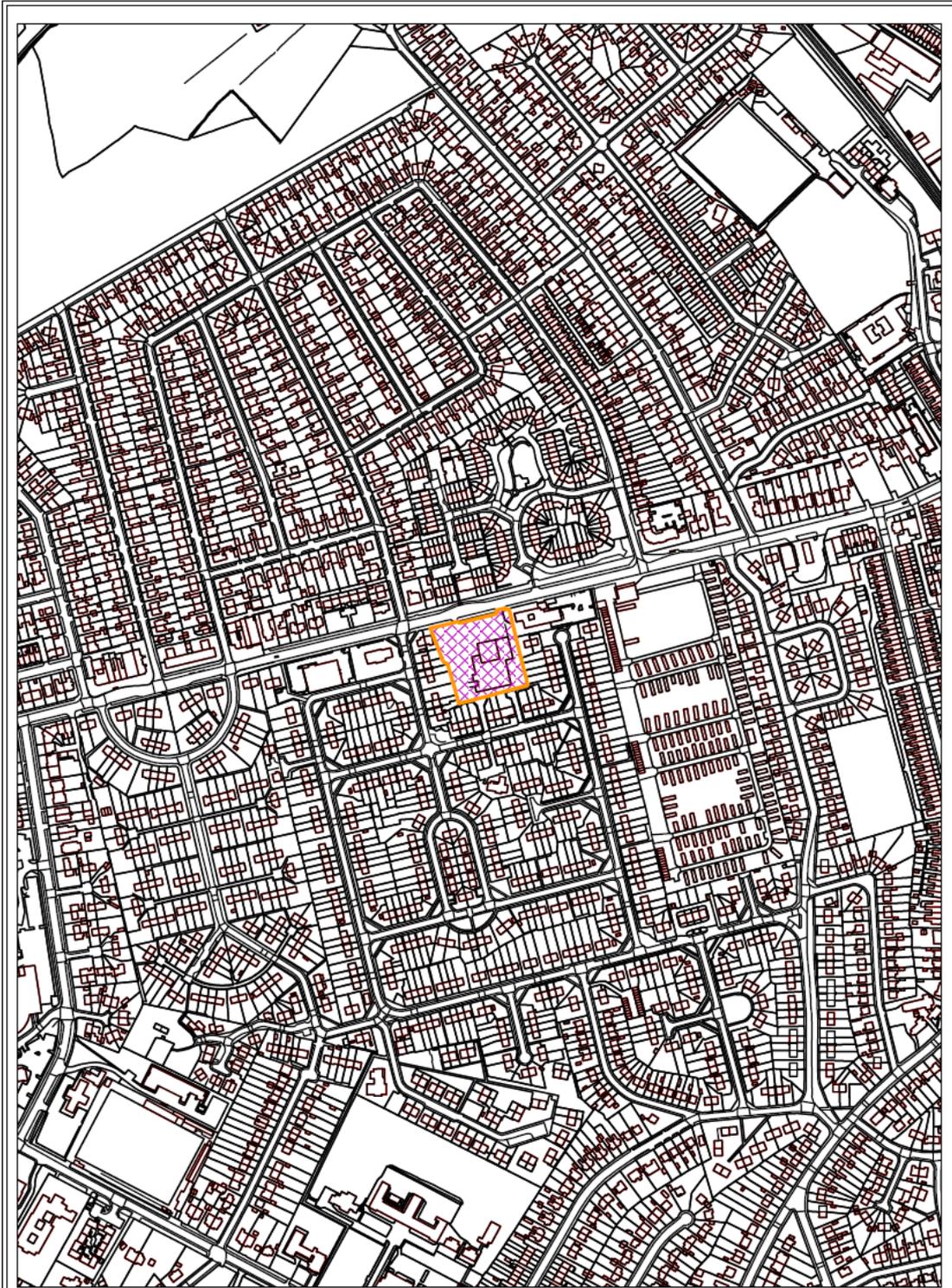
Applicant: Lidl Great Britain Limited

SUMMARY

The application proposes the development of a Lidl food store. The site is in a sustainable location within the urban area, accessible by means other than the private car. The proposal meets the sequential and retail tests set out in national and local planning policies. The design of the building, with additional landscaping, is considered acceptable and visually appropriate for the character of the area. Impacts upon residential amenity are acceptable with mitigation proposed by conditions. There are economic benefits arising from this proposal through the creation of employment opportunities. The proposal complies with the development plan and NPPF as a whole.

RECOMMENDATION: That the application be **DEFERRED to the Executive Officer for Development Management and Building Control and APPROVED** subject to the receipt of a S106 Agreement to secure highway improvements and Travel Plan monitoring.





Harrogate
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Site Plan

Scale 1:5,000



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22/07/2021

1.0 PRELIMINARY MATTERS

- 1.1 Access to the case file on Public Access can be found here:- [view file](#)
- 1.2 This application is to be presented to the Planning Committee at the request of the Executive Officer for Development Management and Building Control due to the application potentially being of a significant, controversial or sensitive nature due to the number of representations received.

2.0 MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 The main issues are:
- Principle and Retail Assessment;
 - Loss of Employment Land;
 - Highways and Accessibility;
 - Design and Sustainability;
 - Amenity;
 - Flood Risk and Drainage;
 - Landscaping;
 - Ecology;
 - Other Matters
 - Contributions and S106 Agreement

3.0 ASSESSMENT

3.1 Principle and Retail Assessment

- 3.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires applications to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Harrogate District Local Plan 2014-2035 was adopted by Harrogate Borough Council on 4 March 2020. Following adoption, a legal challenge was raised against the new settlement policies. In line with the court order received, the whole of the plan was remitted to the Council and formally adopted, with the new settlement policies, on 9

December 2020. All the policies in the Local Plan can therefore be given full weight.

- 3.3 Paragraph 86 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.
- 3.4 Paragraph 87 states that local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then edge of centre locations; and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of centre sites be considered.
- 3.5 Paragraph 88 states that when considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites which are well connected to the town centre. Applicants and local planning authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale, so that opportunities to utilise suitable town centre or edge of centre sites are fully explored.
- 3.6 Paragraph 90 states that when assessing applications for retail and leisure development outside town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, local planning authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold (or 2500sqm if no locally set threshold). This shall include:
 - a) The impact of the proposal upon existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre of centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and
 - b) 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).
- 3.7 Local Plan Policy EC5 requires proposals for retail developments that do not serve a purely localised need outside of town centres to undertake a sequential assessment. Proposals for convenience retail developments of more than

1000sqm (comparison retail 2500sqm or more) outside the town centre of Harrogate but in the development limits, will only be permitted if the application is supported by an Impact Assessment, which provides clear evidence that the proposal will not lead to a significant adverse impact upon the centre.

3.8 The proposed Lidl store measures 1919sqm gross floor space and therefore the sequential and impact assessments are required. The applicant has provided both assessments, along with updates, which have been considered by the Council. An external retail consultant, Nexus, has also peer reviewed the submission. The site is considered to be an 'edge of centre' location in the context of the defined local centre along Knaresborough Road to the west.

3.9 **Sequential Assessment**

3.10 The sequential assessment provided by the applicant has focussed upon potential sites within the development limits of Harrogate. This is agreed to be an appropriate search area. Two sites have been identified within the assessment: 59 Station Parade, Harrogate and Dragon Road Car Park, Harrogate. The applicant's submissions for these sites conclude that neither are considered to be both available and suitable to accommodate the proposed development and Officers would concur with this assessment. It is therefore considered that the application conforms to the requirements of the sequential test as set out in Policy EC5 and paragraphs 87 and 88 of the NPPF.

3.11 **Impact Assessment**

3.12 A detailed Impact Assessment has been provided by the applicant, as well as further updates in response to the Council's Consultant, Nexus. The purpose of the test is consider the impact over time of the development upon town centre vitality/viability and investment. Impact should be assessed on a like-for-like basis, i.e. retail uses tend to compete with their most comparable competitive facilities.

3.13 The first part of the impact test assesses the impact of the proposal upon existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre of centres in the catchment area of the proposal. It is not considered that there are any such investments that would be affected by this proposal.

- 3.14 The second part of the impact test assesses 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). The existing health of Harrogate town centre and the High Harrogate, Knaresborough Road and Starbeck local centres have been assessed. All are considered to function well and are in a good state of health, despite Covid-19 impacts upon vacancy rates.
- 3.15 The impact assessment establishes the existing turnovers for comparable stores as a basis upon which to assess trade diversion. It then considers the extent to which trade may be diverted from the existing centres or stores and whether this would be significant. Nexus Planning has provided specialist retail advice with regards to this aspect.
- 3.16 In summary, the highest proportion of trade is expected to be diverted from Morrisons, Hookstone Close (approximately 21%) and Sainsbury's, Wetherby Road (approximately 19%) with 15% from Asda in the town centre and 7% from Waitrose. Nexus agree that the highest proportion of trade is likely to be diverted from Morrisons given its proximity to the application site and the nature of the operator. Nexus are of the view that there is potential for the proposal to draw a higher proportion of trade from Asda (town centre) and Aldi (Oak Beck), however, this is not considered to materially alter the conclusions reached.
- 3.17 It is concluded that the proposal will not have an unacceptable adverse impact upon any centre in the study. Diversion from existing stores in Harrogate town centre is not considered to be at a level which would result in the closure of existing convenience stores and therefore, would not result in a significant adverse impact.
- 3.18 The assessment has taken into consideration the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is concluded that the consequences of the pandemic are having a greater impact upon the comparison goods and leisure sectors and that the convenience goods sector is more resilient and less susceptible to such pressures. Therefore, any impacts arising from the pandemic are unlikely to be exacerbated by the pandemic.

3.19 Potential loss of footfall between the existing Asda and Waitrose stores and the existing linked-trips which occur between these food stores and the town centre has also been considered. Whilst there is the potential for the loss of some trips between the stores and the town centre, this is not considered to be at a level which would have a significant adverse impact upon the town centre and overall vitality and viability. Nexus advise that this is particularly the case given the dominance of the leisure sector in the centre, which is expected to continue to attract residents and visitors to the centre, which the proposed food store would not replicate.

3.20 It is therefore concluded that the application satisfies the requirements of the retail impact test as set out in Policy EC5 and the NPPF.

3.21 Loss of Employment Land

3.22 Policy EC1 of the Local Plan provides protection to existing employment sites. Proposals for the use of employment sites for non-business, general industrial and storage distribution uses will be resisted unless the proposal meets criteria listed in the policy.

3.23 Information has been submitted by the applicant advising that the previous use of the site was a car showroom, which is a Sui Generis use. The business also included a car repairs/servicing area, which amounted to approximately 10% of the site area. Whilst this would be classed as a B2 use, it is considered to be ancillary to the main use of the site and secondary to the principle use of showroom and car sales. It is therefore considered that Policy EC1 is not applicable to this proposal. The Council's Economic Development Officer has no objections to the scheme.

3.24 Highways and Accessibility

3.25 The site is currently served by two separate priority-controlled T-junctions with the A59 Knaresborough Road. It is proposed to close the eastern access and reinstate the footpath along this part of the frontage. The western access will be improved to form a priority T-junction with a ghost island right turn lane maintained on Knaresborough Road. Pedestrian access to the site will be

provided by new footpaths either side of the vehicular access and a separate pedestrian access at the eastern end of the site frontage.

- 3.26 An additional pedestrian refuge island is to be provided to the east of the site access to provide access between Nightingale Drive and the residential area to the north. Improvements to the dropped crossings and tactile paving on Stanhope Drive to the west will also be provided as part of the Section 278 works to improve accessibility to the site. These works will be secured by condition and a Section 106 Agreement.
- 3.27 Parking will be provided within the western portion of the site. A total of 87 parking spaces is provided including 6 disabled spaces, 7 staff spaces, 3 motorcycle spaces, 8 parent and child spaces, 2 EV charging spaces and 61 standard spaces. Cycle parking is provided to the front of the store.
- 3.28 The site is a sustainable location with bus stops within recommended walking distances, acceptable pedestrian and cycle access and Starbeck Railway station approximately 10 minutes' walk / 5 minutes cycle distance.
- 3.29 The Local Highway Authority has confirmed that the access arrangements and traffic impact is acceptable. The development therefore complies with Local Plan Policies TI1 and TI3.

3.30 Design and Sustainability

- 3.31 The proposed store will be sited in the eastern portion of the site on the approximate footprint of the former car garage. The store covers the majority of the length of the site with a buffer to the boundaries provided along the north, east and southern boundaries of the building. In response to concerns regarding the impact of the building upon No.2 Walworth Avenue to the east, the building was offset from the eastern boundary by 7.3m, to match the position of the existing building.
- 3.32 The entrance to the store is on the western elevation with pedestrian access provided from the car park and along the street frontage of the building via steps. The store includes the sales area, bakery, bottle bank and back of house areas including freezer/chiller areas, warehouse and delivery area and staff

facilities. Deliveries are to the rear of the building off the main access through the car park.

- 3.33 Topography at the site slopes down from west to east and the internal layout utilises this change through having the office and staff facilities at a lower level to the main part of the store. The remainder of the site, including the car park will be relatively flat. The eastern elevation is closest to the adjacent residential dwellings along Walworth Avenue. The proposed eaves height of the building on the eastern elevation will measure 6.9m to the eaves and 8.4m to the ridge. This is 0.8m less than the existing Lookers Ford building and is therefore considered to be acceptable. Due to the changes in topography, the building will measure 5.1m to the eaves along the western elevation and 6.6m to the ridge.
- 3.34 The building will be constructed from a single height glazed curtain walling in blue and insulated metal cladding panels in white. The base of the wall cladding will have a render strip in grey and the doors will be powder coated steel in blue. The roof will be metal composite insulated roof panels with steel coping flashing along the perimeter in grey to match the cladding with aluminium gutters and rainwater pipes. Whist adverts are shown on the elevations of the building, these would require separate consent via the Advertisement Regulations. The design and appearance are considered to be acceptable and satisfy Policy HP3.
- 3.35 Local Plan Policies CC3 and CC4 deal with renewable, low carbon energy and sustainable design. Policy CC4 requires developments over 1000sqm to provide an energy statement setting out how the energy hierarchy has been applied to make the fullest contribution to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. New non-domestic development of more than 500sqm is also required to achieve a minimum standard of BREEAM Excellent.
- 3.36 The applicant has provided an Energy Sustainability Statement and a BREEAM PreAssessment. The design of the building includes passive and active design strategies such as use of natural daylighting, enhanced fabric efficiencies, heat recovery ventilation, low energy lighting, building energy management systems and air source heat pumps. The proposed measures are expected to show a

188.66% carbon dioxide reduction and a 184.09% energy reduction when assessed against Part L2A 2013 Building Regulations.

3.37 Roof mounted photovoltaic panels are also proposed and are expected to generate more than 100% of the store's regulated energy consumption. These are shown on the plans and will be controlled by condition. The proposed solar panels will not have an unacceptable adverse impact upon the landscape, natural environment, biodiversity, the cultural environment, historic environment, adjoining land uses or residential amenity and therefore satisfy the requirements of Policy CC3.

3.38 With regards to BREEAM, Policy CC4 requires developments to meet the Excellent standard. Where an applicant can demonstrate that achieving this level is unviable, a lower level may be acceptable.

3.39 A Pre-Assessment Report advises that the building will achieve a BREEAM rating of Very Good. Further information has been provided by the applicant to explain why an Excellent rating cannot be achieved. In terms of carbon reduction and energy use, the building will actually meet BREEAM Outstanding, which is higher than Excellent. The applicant advises that due to the nature of the building, its use as a food store and site specific factors, they cannot achieve various credits that would reach an Excellent rating.

3.40 For example, the public transport accessibility score is low under BREEAM despite its location close to bus stops and within walking distance of residential areas. This is due to the frequency of bus and train services. Ways to increase the BREEAM score include requesting additional public transport services or car sharing measures for example. However, for a scheme of this size and nature such would not be reasonable. Internally, additional daylight levels and natural ventilation would score higher credits however are not suitable for a food store, which has to carefully control internal temperatures.

3.41 Given that the proposed building will have a significant carbon reduction of 188.66% and a 184.09% energy reduction it is considered that the proposal is on balance acceptable, despite not achieving a BREEAM Excellent rating.

3.42 Amenity

3.43 Policy HP4 of the Local Plan requires proposals to ensure that they will not have significant adverse impacts upon the amenity of occupiers and neighbours. Policy NE9 requires proposals to ensure redevelopment is acceptable in terms of land contamination.

3.44 The site is enclosed to the east, west and south by existing residential dwellings. The closest dwelling is 2 Walworth Avenue to the east, which is separated from the site by tall Leyland Cypress tree screening. Whilst this screening is proposed to remain, the overhanging crown will be pruned back to facilitate the build. In order to mitigate impact upon this dwelling, the proposed building has been brought in to match the building line of the existing car garage. The eaves of the building along the east elevation are also 0.8m lower than the existing building. The proposed building is considered to have an acceptable relationship with 2 Walworth Avenue and will result in a small betterment in terms of height.

3.45 The southeast corner of the store will be closer to the boundary of the neighbouring dwellings than the existing car garage. However, by using the changes in ground levels and including a flat roof over the welfare areas of the store, the closest part of the building will measure 4m in height, adjacent to the boundary fence measuring 3.4m. The existing boundary fence measures 3m in height therefore the new fence will be marginally higher. The eaves of the building in this location will measure 6.9m compared to an existing roof height of 7.6m. The development is not considered to result in adverse impacts in relation to overlooking, overbearing, privacy and loss of light.

3.46 Other amenity impacts include noise, dust, light and odours. Main potential sources of noise breakout are from external plant, vehicle deliveries and use of the car park. This is in comparison to the former use as a car garage with servicing taking place to the rear of the site. **It is considered that the impact of the proposed Lidl store will be less than that of the former car garage in this regard.** Noise impact has been assessed and the Council's Environmental Health Officer has concluded that, with mitigation, the proposal is acceptable.

3.47 Mitigation includes the removal of the existing steel palisade fence and replacement with a 2.4m acoustic close boarded fence around the east, west and south boundaries. The height of the acoustic fence in the southeast corner will be 3.4m, taking account of a 1m high retaining wall in this section of the site and enclosing the loading and delivery bay. The height of the proposed fence is considered to be acceptable given the distance of the boundary to the dwellings along Walworth Avenue to the east of 22.5m and between 16.5m and 18.5m from the boundary fence to Kennion Road to the south. A condition is included covering the acoustic barrier and ensuring it is retained throughout the life of the development.

3.48 Conditions required by the Environmental Health Officer in relation to noise also require submission of a Noise Management Scheme, a limit on external noise levels and a restriction upon hours of operation for both customers and external servicing.

3.49 Further conditions are also proposed relating to control of external lighting, odours and contamination. The proposal therefore meets the requirements of Policies HP4 and NE9 of the Local Plan.

3.50 Flood Risk and Drainage

3.51 The site is located in Flood Zone 1. The submitted Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy advises that the existing site connects to the public sewers in Knaresborough Road for both foul water and surface water drainage.

3.52 Proposed foul water drainage will connect to the existing sewer. The proposed surface water drainage system will include on site attenuation and an interceptor prior to connecting to the existing public sewer. The LLFA and Yorkshire Water are satisfied with the details provided and recommend conditions.

3.53 Landscaping

3.54 Policy NE7 advises that development should protect and enhance existing trees of value and which contribute to the character and/or setting of a settlement. The existing site is largely hardstanding with trees along the

boundaries. The scheme proposes the retention of all existing trees apart from one on the southern boundary and one on the western boundary. A detailed landscaping plan has been provided, which includes additional tree planting along all boundaries and within the car park, ornamental shrub and ground cover planting along boundaries.

3.55 An objection was received by the Council's Arboricultural Officer on the grounds that no tree planting was proposed along the site frontage. An amended plan has been received, which proposes two trees along the eastern part of the site frontage and two west of the vehicular access. Conditions are also proposed relating to protection of root protection areas and sustainable methods of tree planting.

3.56 Ecology

3.57 Local Plan Policy NE3 aims to protect and enhance features of ecological and geological importance and provide net gains in biodiversity. The existing site is almost entirely buildings and hardstanding with some boundary trees and shrubs. The applicants have provided details which identify that the landscaping scheme will result in a small net gain in biodiversity at the site, which would meet the requirements of Local Plan Policy NE3. Some additional biodiversity enhancement is also proposed for species in the form of swift and bat bricks and permeability of the site for hedgehogs. Conditions are proposed relating to the timing of removal vegetation, provision of bat/bird bricks and control of Japanese knotweed.

3.58 Other Matters

3.59 67 Letters of support have been received, the content of which is summarised in paragraph 8.0 below.

3.60 A small number of letters of objection have been received from nearby residents, including the owner of No.2's and 4 Walworth Avenue. These raise concerns relating to noise and removal of vegetation. These matters are addressed within this report and appropriate conditions attached where required.

3.61 Letters of objection have also been received by Asda and Waitrose, with Asda also providing an objection in relation to noise and traffic. These representations have been considered by Highways and Environmental Health; both consultees are satisfied with the information provided by the applicant and appropriate conditions are attached.

3.62 CIL Contributions and S106 Agreement

3.63 CIL contributions are payable of £40 per square metre as the proposal is a small supermarket under 2500sqm gross floor area.

3.64 A S106 will be required to provide the offsite highway works and Travel Plan monitoring.

4.0 PLANNING BALANCE AND CONCLUSION

4.1 In summary, the development is acceptable in principle and meets the requirements of the sequential and retail impact tests.

4.2 The scheme uses previously developed land and is in a sustainable location within the development limits of Harrogate.

4.3 The design and landscaping of the buildings are appropriate for this site and impacts with regards to the residential amenity, environmental impact and highways are acceptable.

4.4 The development will create jobs and provide social, environmental and economic benefits to the local area.

4.5 The scheme is in accordance with the development plan policies as a whole and represents sustainable development as required by the National Planning Policy Framework.

5.0 RECOMMENDATION

5.1 That the application be **DEFERRED to the Executive Officer for Development Management and Building Control and APPROVED** subject to conditions and a S106 to secure offsite highway improvements.

6.0 PLANNING CONDITIONS

Time condition – 3 years

Condition stating approved plans

Detailed plans of road and footway layout

Construction of road and footway

Closure of existing access

Visibility splays

Delivery of off-site highway works

Provision of access, turning and parking

Travel Plan

Construction Management Plan

Construction hours of work

Acoustic Barrier

Hours of operation

Noise Management Scheme

Noise

External lighting

Conditions relating to land contamination

Conditions relating to surface water drainage

Grease trap

Conditions relating to ecology.

Landscaping scheme

RPA condition

Replacement planting

EVCP Condition

Details of solar panels

ASHP

BREEAM

In the event of any changes being needed to the wording of the Committee's decision (such as to delete, vary or add conditions/informatives/planning obligations or reasons for approval/refusal) prior to the decision being issued, the Chief Planner has delegated authority to do so in consultation with the Chairman of the Planning Committee, provided that the changes do not exceed the substantive nature of the Committee's decision.

APPENDICES

7.0 Consultations

- 7.1 **Economic Development Officer** – No objections.
- 7.2 **NYCC Lead Local Flood Authority** – No objections subject to conditions.
- 7.3 **Environment Agency** – No objections subject to conditions.
- 7.4 **Yorkshire Water** – No objections, provides suggested conditions.
- 7.5 **Highway Authority** – No objections, recommends conditions.
- 7.6 **HBC Community Services** – No objections.
- 7.7 **Environmental Health** – No objections, recommends conditions.
- 7.8 **Ecologist** – No objections, recommends condition and S106.
- 7.9 **Drainage** – No objections, recommends conditions.
- 7.10 **Arboriculture** – Objection to lack of tree planting to site frontage, recommends conditions.

7.11 **Police Architectural Liaison Officer** – No objections.

7.12 **HBC Estates** – No objections.

7.13 **Leeds Bradford Airport** – No safeguarding objection.

8.0 Representations

8.1 79 representations have been received; 67 in support and 7 objections.

Comments in support of the scheme are summarised below:

- The site will be very convenient location; it will encourage more local shopping and reduce the need to shop by car;
- Creation of jobs;
- The site needs redeveloping;
- This area of town is not served by a larger supermarket; and,
- It would reduce car trips across town to other supermarkets.

8.2 Objections/other comments are summarised below:

- No need for another supermarket;
- The site is next door to our house, trees are proposed to be removed and there will be noise nuisance;
- Traffic impact and congestion;
- There are too many of these type of shops; would prefer a Home Bargains or B&M;
- Negative impact upon local businesses; and,
- Cycle parking needs to be provided at the front of the store.

Case Officer: Kate Broadbank

Expiry Date: 06.08.2021