

PLANNING, DESIGN,
ACCESS AND RETAIL
STATEMENT

**Demolition and
decommissioning of
existing PFS and linked
convenience store and
erection of replacement
convenience store and
associated works**

**Esso PFS, Fleetwood Road,
Anchorholme**

November 2021



Summary

Proposal:

Demolition and decommissioning of existing PFS and linked convenience store and erection of replacement convenience store and associated works

Location:

Esso PFS, Fleetwood Road, Anchorsholme

Date:

November 2021

Project Reference:

S21.282

Client:

EG Group

Product of:

Asbri Planning Ltd

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Disclaimer:

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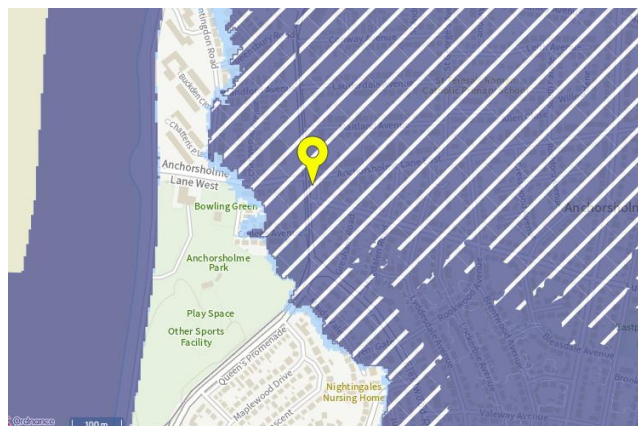
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1. Introduction

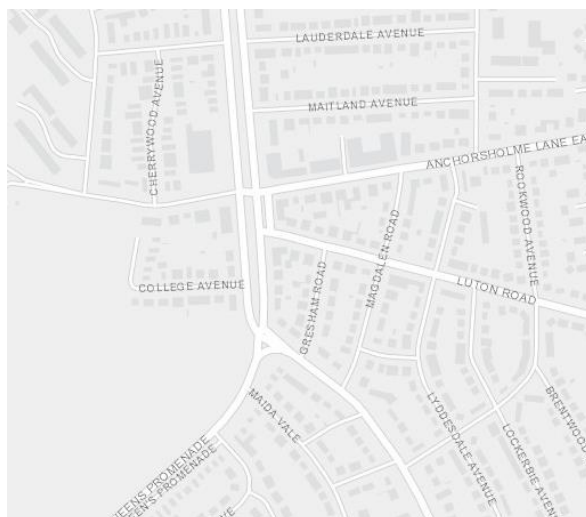
- 1.1 This Planning, Design, Access and Retail Statement has been prepared on behalf of EG Group to accompany a full application proposing the demolition and decommissioning of the existing PFS and linked convenience store and erection of replacement convenience store and associated works at the Esso PFS, Fleetwood Road, Anchorsholme.
- 1.2 The existing PFS is underperforming. EG Group, a market leader in the provision of fuel sale throughout the UK are seeking an alternative use in order to ensure to avoid the prospect of a long-term vacancy at the site.
- 1.3 The decommissioning of petrol filling stations is a time consuming and cost hungry process. There are few prospective uses which would enable a viable redevelopment to be undertaken and a positive use brought forward at such sites.
- 1.4 The use of the land as a convenience store would represent such a use and will result in a continuation of retail uses at the site, enable job retention and creation and an increased level of choice and value for customers who will overwhelmingly be drawn from the immediate locality.
- 1.5 The proposed store is small in scale and not large enough to give rise to impact concerns or impact on existing shopping patterns.
- 1.6 The purpose of this Planning and Retail Statement is to provide a clear and logical document to assess all material planning considerations associated with the proposed development.
- 1.7 The statement is subdivided into eight sections, including this introduction. Section 2 outlines the site context whilst Section 3 provides a profile of EG Group. Section 4 sets out a description of the proposed development. Section 5 identifies the relevant national and local planning policies which provide the framework for appraising the application. Section 6 relates to sustainable economic development. Following this, Section 7 provides a planning justification before drawing to a conclusion at Section 8.

2. Site Context and Planning Background

- 2.1 The application site is located to the South of Anchorsholme Lane West and the West of Fleetwood Road. It currently comprises an Esso Petrol Filling Station and linked Spar convenience store. It is 0.79 acres in size and the Spar store as existing comprises 161 sqm GIA.
- 2.2 Vehicular and pedestrian access is achieved via Fleetwood Road. A secondary servicing exit is located out onto Anchorsholme Lane West.
- 2.3 The site benefits from exceptional transportation links and is strategically located in order to access a wide highway network including the A587 – an arterial route running North / South within the Authority boundaries. A tram stop is located opposite (Anchorsholme Park).
- 2.4 The nearest bus stops are located adjacent on Anchorsholme Lane West within a two-minute walk. A summary of the main bus route which serve these stops are provided in the Transport Note which forms part of the application package.
- 2.5 The site is prominent at the junction of Anchorsholme Lane West and Fleetwood Road. The existing PFS is tired in appearance.
- 2.6 It is classified as an area benefiting from flood defences for the purposes of achieving a planning permission (extract below):



- 2.7 Surrounding uses are a mixture of residential uses to the South and West and commercial uses to the North and East.
- 2.8 Based on a Heritage England search, the site is free from constraints in this respect (extract below):



Planning History

- 2.9 A planning history search for the property and its surroundings has been undertaken via the Council's online planning search system. There are a significant number of applications forming the planning history though the overwhelming majority are minor in scale and operational requirements linked to the PFS.
- 2.10 Based on our search, planning permission LPA Ref-93/1078 is the prevailing consent at the site. The consent was approved on 31 January 1994 and allowed for - *Erection of Petrol Filling Station Comprising of Sales Kiosk, Canopy, Petrol Islands, Underground Fuel Storage Tanks, Automatic Car Wash, Tank Room and Amendment to Vehicle Crossing.*
- 2.11 Beyond on the use of the site for commercial and quasi retail purposes, none of the above applications are relevant in respect of the application to which this Statement relates.
- 2.12 In accordance with the above, it is not considered that there is any planning history which could be considered negative in the context of the application to which this statement relates. Therefore, it should be assessed in accordance with prevailing planning policy at a local and national level.

3. EG Group

- 3.1 Based in Blackburn, EG Group was founded in 2001 by brothers Mohsin and Zuber Issa with the acquisition of a single petrol filling station in Bury, Greater Manchester. In October 2017 the company rebranded its Europe Wide operations to the EG Group since establishing itself as one of Europe's fastest growing and most recognisable forecourt operators, with an expanding portfolio of 341 freehold-owned petrol stations located throughout mainland UK and a large number of separate roadside welfare facilities (roadside restaurants and motorway service areas). The company operates approximately 2,500 sites across Europe (including the UK) and employs approximately 12,500 people.
- 3.2 Alongside an innovative approach to roadside retail property, EG Group has forged high-profile relationships with nationally and globally recognised retail and convenience brands, now operating in excess of 142 Starbucks drive-to and drive-thru restaurants, 161 KFC restaurants, 12 Burger Kings, 153 Subway sub-stations, 4 Sbarro, 2 Cinnabon and 200 Greggs bakeries. EG Group is the largest franchisee for Subway in Europe and has also recently completed the purchase of Leon – a largely plant / vegan based fast food restaurant.
- 3.3 The company's vision is to collaboratively engage and work with leading retail brand partners to be able to deliver a world class fuel, convenience, food and drink offer that exceeds the expectations of the modern consumer.
- 3.4 The company promotes the following values and business ethos:
- Market awareness with active responsiveness to convenience consumer trends and demands.
 - Delivering value and results consistently to shareholders, stakeholders and partners.
 - Commitment to on-going infrastructure and people investment to build a sustainable business model.
 - Supporting local communities with a view to empowering individuals to grow, contribute and succeed.
- 3.5 EG Group make sustainability a key consideration. To that end, in 2014 they invested £2.6m in providing solar panels for over 20% of the EG sites. In May 2017, it was announced that they would be providing an additional £6m into reducing their carbon footprint. Additionally, six motorway service stations feature rain water harvesting systems, collecting rain water which is then filtered to be used on site.
- 3.6 In 2014, EG Group invested £3.2m in the installation of LED lighting on sites throughout the estate. As well as consuming less energy than

incandescent and high-intensity discharge (HID) lights, LED lights use only 2-17 watts of electricity, which is 25%-80% less energy than standard lighting systems, decreasing cost and impact significantly.

Sustainability

- 3.7 As a responsible developer, Euro Garages have investigated and implemented a series of core sustainable design principles within our project design, delivery and operation that align with a number of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (2015). Our developments also reduce potable water consumption through high quality water saving technologies within WC and Shower areas, where possible looking for opportunities to recycle / reuse water.
- 3.8 Environmental impact is further reduced on each of our sites with extensive landscaping promoting an increase in Biodiversity and Ecological habitats, we adopt detailed surface water drainage strategies that extensively provide improvement to run off rates and surface water pollution management through SUDS technology.
- 3.9 As a central part of our BREEAM and sustainability design response Euro Garages operate a Sustainable Material Procurement policy, this aims to influence design decisions in the specification of materials that are appropriate to the design and operation of the development considering; life cycle, maintenance, end of use, environmental management systems, responsible and local sourcing opportunities and capital cost. Our Sustainable Material Procurement policy also extends to the construction phase, establishing supply chain and local resource and training opportunities alongside material product certification and ISO accreditation.

4. Proposed Development

- 4.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the demolition and decommissioning of the existing PFS and linked convenience store and erection of replacement convenience store and associated works at the Esso PFS, Fleetwood Road, Anchorsholme.
- 4.2 It is the intention for the convenience store to be occupied and operated by Asda.
- 4.3 It is noted that there are other convenience goods retailers in the vicinity of the site. These comprise, a Lidl store which is opposite the application site a McColls newsagents. The proposed development therefore provides potential for linked trips with existing operators in addition to a "walk to" top up facility for those living in the vicinity of the site, particularly to the South and South West.
- 4.4 The proposed store will fulfil a local "top up" function rather than act as a comprehensive convenience store. The GIA of the unit will comprise 490 sqm with a back of house comprising 97 sqm. Accordingly, the tradable area will comprise just 393 sqm.
- 4.5 The proposed development will largely make use of the existing vehicular entrance which will be upgraded to enable vehicles to also exit from this point. The existing vehicular exit will be closed.
- 4.6 The proposed development will provide 21 spaces (inc 2 disabled spaces). Within the car park, 5 spaces will comprise EV charging points for use by customers. Secure cycle storage comprising 2 spaces will also be provided.
- 4.7 The tracking drawings submitted as part of the application package highlight the delivery bay to the East of the proposed store. The delivery yard will be located to the southern elevation and away from any residential properties to ensure no adverse impact in respect of amenity.
- 4.8 It is now a fundamental part of design standards to ensure that new developments are as accessible as possible by several modes of transport. In this regard and as identified in Chapter 2, the site lies within close proximity to Anchorsholme Road West, along which tram and bus stops are located providing services to a variety of locations within Blackpool.
- 4.9 The accompanying layout shows proposed areas of landscaping where possible. These areas of soft landscaping will ensure that the site has high levels of visual amenity, and a pleasant environment is provided for customers.

- 4.10 In regard to appearance of the proposed drive units, it will be engineered to 1.5 stories and comprise a modern design which will comprise a positive enhancement to the site and surrounding area.
- 4.11 It is proposed that the unit will operate on a 24 hour basis.
- 4.12 Finally, the proposed development will result in economic benefits in the form of significant job creation in the form of circa 8 FTE positions.

5. Planning Policy Context

5.1 The policy framework against which the application will be assessed is considered to comprise the following:

- National Planning Policy Framework;
- Blackpool Core Strategy
- Saved Policies from the Blackpool Local Plan (2006)

National Planning Policy Framework

5.2 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 27th March 2012 and updated in July 2021. The document consolidates national planning policy guidance (including all previous Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance) and is a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

5.3 The overall emphasis of the NPPF is to reiterate the Government's key objectives of facilitating economic growth and securing sustainable development. These overarching policies seek to integrate the needs of planning and transport whilst focusing development in the most appropriate locations, thereby protecting and enhancing the environment.

5.4 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF defined 'sustainable development' and highlights that it has three interrelated dimensions: economic, social and environmental as follows. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles.

- *An economic role – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support economic growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;*
- *A social role - supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high-quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and supports its health, social and cultural well-being; and,*
- *An environmental role – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy."*

- 5.5 Importantly, these roles should not be undertaken in isolation but should be seen as mutually dependent.
- 5.6 The NPPF is committed to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity, building on the country's inherent strengths, and to meeting the twin challenges of global competition and of a low carbon future (paragraph 148).
- 5.7 The NPPF, at Paragraph 119 states: *Strategic policies should set out a clear strategy for accommodating objectively assessed needs, in a way that makes as much use as possible of previously-developed or 'brownfield' land.*
- 5.8 Paragraph 85 states: *Planning policies and decisions should recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport). The use of previously developed land, and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements, should be encouraged where suitable opportunities exist.*
- 5.9 Paragraph 87 states: *Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main City centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Main City centre uses should be located in City centres, then in 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.*
- 5.10 Another key consideration outlined in Section 11 of the NPPF is making effective use of land, highlighting the importance of ensuring that developments make good use of sites that are underutilised. It also highlights the need to make such sites accessible by a range of transport, including options that suit those with limited ability and disabilities.

Blackpool Core Strategy

- 5.11 The Blackpool Core Strategy was adopted by the Council in January 2016. It is the principal document against which applications are assessed at a local level.
- 5.12 As shown on the Proposals Map extract below, the site white land (unallocated) within the settlement boundary It is located to the

immediate south of Kelso Avenue / Anchorsholme, Lane Local Centre and therefore could reasonably be described as a edge of centre site:



5.12 The following policies contained within the document are considered relevant to the proposed development:

- **Policy CS1: Strategic Location of Development**
- **Policy CS3: Economic Development and Employment**
- **Policy CS4: Retail and Other Town Centre Uses**
- **Policy CS5: Connectivity**

5.13 The key policy in relation to the proposed development comprises Policy CS4 Retail and Another Town Centre Uses. It states:

1. In order to strengthen Blackpool Town Centre's role as the sub-regional centre for retail on the Fylde Coast, its vitality and viability will be safeguarded and improved by:

- a. Focusing new major retail development in the town centre to strengthen the offer and improve the quality of the shopping experience*
- b. The preparation and implementation of a Town Centre Strategy and Action Plan, working with stakeholders to arrest decline and restore confidence in the town centre*

2. For Town, District and Local Centres within the Borough, retail and other town centre uses will be supported where they are appropriate to the scale, role and function of the centre.

3. In edge of centre and out of centre locations, proposals for new retail development and other town centre uses will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that:

- a. It is a tourism attraction located in the Resort Core in accordance with policy CS21; or*

b. There are no more centrally located/ sequentially preferable, appropriate sites available for the development; and

c. The proposal would not cause significant adverse impact on existing centres; and

d. The proposal would not undermine the Council's strategies and proposals for regenerating its centres; and

e. The proposal will be readily accessible by public transport and other sustainable transport modes

4. The Council, through the Site Allocations and Development Management DPD, will identify a range of sites for new retail development in Blackpool Town Centre to allow for new comparison goods floorspace over the plan period.

Saved Policies from the Blackpool Local Plan (2006)

5.14 The Blackpool Local Plan comprised the Development Plan for the Council prior to the Adoption of the Core Strategy in 2016.

5.15 Notwithstanding, elements of it have been retained as saved policies. There are a number of saved policies which remain relevant to new development proposals.

5.16 None of the saved policies are relevant to the development proposed by way of the application to which this Statement relates.

Supplementary Planning Guidance

5.17 In respect of the Council's SPG, of relevance to the application subject of this Statement is SPG 6 (Shopfronts and Signs). The document largely relates to existing premises and signage proposals, however the principles of good design are set out in respect of Council's aspirations for retail units.

6. Sustainable Economic Development

- 6.1 Sustainable development is identified in NPPF as a golden thread running through the planning system.
- 6.2 The application site comprises the existing Esso PFS and Spar convenience store at Anchorsholme Lane West. The existing PFS is underperforming. EG Group, a market leader in the provision of fuel sale throughout the UK are seeking an alternative use in order to ensure to avoid the prospect of a long-term vacancy at the site.
- 6.3 The site is brownfield in nature and within the settlement boundary. This application proposes the redevelopment and decommissioning of it in order to provide a small-scale convenience store for local “top up” shopping which will be occupied by Asda.
- 6.4 The site is free from any planning history which could be considered detrimental in the context of the application to which this statement relates.
- 6.5 The decommissioning of petrol filling stations is a time consuming and cost hungry process. There are few prospective uses which would enable a viable redevelopment to be undertaken and a positive use brought forward at such sites.
- 6.6 The proposed development is therefore considered a positive use of a potentially long-term vacant site which will result in a series of benefits for the local community, in addition to economic benefits by way of job creation.
- 6.6 The site is located in a highly sustainable and accessible location. This is evidenced and expanded upon in the Transport Note which forms part of the application package. It can realistically be described as an edge of centre site in respect of retail policy.
- 6.7 As shown on the proposed elevational drawings, the design/appearance of the unit will be modern. The proposed development is proportionate within its surroundings and the site more generally in order to provide a “top up” shopping facility.
- 6.8 It is considered important for the image of the site in general that it is in occupation and providing the employment generation which it has the potential to provide – thus avoiding its continued potential underuse given it’s prominent roadside location.
- 6.9 The proposed units will allow for the employment of circa 8 people. The economic benefits arising from the proposed development are therefore significant and form a material consideration in the determination of the application to which this statement relates.

- 6.10 It is likely that staff will be locally based and benefit from a training and employment programme. Therefore, should the application be approved, the development will make a positive contribution towards local employment provision.
- 6.11 Further to the above, the Covid-19 health crisis has had a direct impact upon the property market through the disruption of both existing property transactions and proposed development and construction projects. The full 'demand-side' impact upon the wider economy is yet to unfold. Notwithstanding, the Bank of England and Office of Budget Responsibility have both predicted that the UK could face its deepest recession in over 200 years.
- 6.12 The crisis has had an immediate impact on the use of employment floorspace. Whilst a number of national stores have recently announced closures resulting in job losses, terms have been agreed with Asda to occupy the site subject to receipt of a satisfactory planning permission. It is therefore not speculative and the full-time employment positions identified above can be delivered in an expedient manner upon receipt of planning permission.
- 6.13 Further to the above, the following is of note in respect of the UK economy and retail sector looking forward:
- The UK economy is expected to shrink by 11.3% this year and not return to its pre-crisis size until the end of 2022.
 - The government's independent forecaster, the Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) expects the number of unemployed people to surge to 2.6 million by the middle of next year.
 - The unemployment rate is expected to reach 7.5%, its highest level since the financial crisis in 2009.
 - The OBR said the coronavirus pandemic had "*delivered the largest peacetime shock to the global economy on record*", while recent restrictions across the UK had taken "*the wind out of an already flagging recovery*".
 - The OBR also predicted a 2% decline in the UK's economic output while driving up inflation, unemployment and public borrowing.
 - In July 2020, the Centre for Retail Research identified – "*Our new forecast is that total retail sales in 2020 will fall overall by -4.6% compared to 2019 (or a reduction of £17,281m). The level of retail sales will not regain last year's level (2019) until 2022.*"
 - In respect of bricks and mortar retailers, the prediction states – "*The Centre for Retail Research forecasts that the lockdown will have a severe impact on the retail sector, most of which was in a poor state even before coronavirus. It will survive a long lockdown only with great difficulty. Department store groups, fashion and footwear, large general stores as well as the smaller independents are most vulnerable. We estimate that*

in 2020, a total of 20,622 stores will close (against 16,073 in 2029) and job losses will rise to 235,704 people (against 143,128 last year)."

- 6.14 It is therefore concluded that the proposed development comprises sustainable economic development which will continue to enable sustainable economic growth in a highly appropriate roadside location.

7. Appraisal

7.1 In this section, an appraisal of the proposed development is provided. The following observations set the context for the appraisal:

- The site is strategically located with immediate access to a wide highway network including A587 and Anchorsholme Road West.
- The existing PFS is underperforming and therefore, EG Group, a market leader in the provision of the sale of fuel is seeking an alternative use for the site in order to safeguard its positive use;
- The application proposes the redevelopment and decommissioning of the site in order to provide a small-scale convenience store to be occupied by Asda. It is not speculative;
- The application site is located in an edge of centre location in retail policy terms;
- The proposed development will result in significant economic benefits in the form of circa 8 full time positions;
- The unit is not of a scale to give rise to retail impact considerations and will fulfil a “top up” shopping function. It will compliment existing facilities within the Kelso Avenue / Anchorsholme Lane Local Centre;
- The site is highly prominent and therefore it is considered important that it is in positive use and providing jobs / services;
- As existing, the site includes an unrestricted Spar store comprising 161 sqm.

7.2 The application proposes the demolition and decommissioning of the existing PFS and linked convenience store and erection of replacement convenience store and associated works at the Esso PFS, Fleetwood Road, Anchorsholme. Evidence of compliance with relevant policy and a local and national level is provided below.

Compliance with Policy CS1 & CS4 - Retail and Another Town Centre Uses

7.3 Policy CS1 directs development towards the identified centres within the hierarchy set out in the Policy. As identified in Section 5 of this report, the application site is located on the edge of Kelso Avenue / Anchorsholme, Lane Local Centre and benefits from good connectivity to it. The site would therefore be classified as edge of centre in respect of retail policy.

7.4 Given the status of the site, in assessing the acceptability of the proposal against the land management policies for the area contained within the Blackpool Core Strategy, the most pertinent policy to consider is Policy CS4 which sets out various criteria for new retail development outside of defined centres in Section 3. Each element of the policy is addressed in turn below:

a. It is a tourism attraction located in the Resort Core in accordance with policy CS21; or

- 7.5 It is acknowledged that the site is not located within the Resort Core as defined by Policy CS21 or the Core Strategy. Accordingly, elements B-E of the policy are relevant in the determination of the application to which this Statement relates. Each element is discussed in turn below.

b. There are no more centrally located/ sequentially preferable, appropriate sites available for the development; and

- 7.6 A sequential assessment is included in the application package. The assessment is undertaken on relevant centres in respect of suitable, available and viable alternatives within sites which would serve the same catchment area as the proposed development.

c. The proposal would not cause significant adverse impact on existing centres; and

- 7.7 Given the edge of centre location of the site in respect of in retail policy, it is considered that there are two main retail policy issues to address as part of the proposed development. They comprise the sequential test (see above) and retail impact.
- 7.8 The sequential assessment of relevant centres includes a health check which identifies them as healthy in respect of both vitality and viability in accordance with the requirements of the NPPF.
- 7.9 The proposal comprises the development of a 390 sqm (net tradeable area) convenience store which as identified via the sequential assessment of relevant centres, could not be readily accommodated within a nearby centre.
- 7.10 The proposed use is considered appropriate given the edge of centre status of the site, the proximity to a significant number of households in the immediate vicinity (i.e. walk to customers) and lack of similar scale operations serving the area within a reasonable walking distance – particularly for those properties to the South and South-East of the application site.
- 7.11 Given the small scale nature of the proposed store, the catchment area for it to trade within is limited in the extreme. To this end, it is considered that the area will be limited to a 10 minute walking radius. In a practical sense, the catchment area will likely be even more restricted.

- 7.12 For example, given the existing convenience operations at Victoria Road West, comprising both a large-scale Aldi supermarket, M&S food hall and Sainsbury's Local, it is highly unlikely that the proposed development would result in a significant adverse impact or alteration to shopping habits of existing users of such stores. This is the case given the limited scale of the unit proposed and thus product lines sold from it.
- 7.13 The above is evidenced via innumerable small scale convenience store offerings from national supermarket operators throughout the UK which trade in harmony with each other within, on the edge of and indeed outside of retail centres. Such stores are overwhelmingly used by customers on foot, living in close proximity to such operations.
- 7.14 Specifically in respect of retail impact, NPPF requires impact assessments to be undertaken in support of retail proposals of over 2,500 sqm in out of centre locations. There is no locally set threshold below this figure requiring an impact assessment for stores of the scale proposed.
- 7.15 The unit subject of this application comprises 490 sqm. It is reasonable to assume a net to gross ratio of 80-20 in respect of sales floorspace vs back of house. Therefore, the sales area of the unit will comprise circa 393 sqm. The sales floorspace therefore comprises just 16% of the impact threshold as set out by NPPF. It is therefore de minimis in scale when compared to large scale convenience stores and highly improbable that it would result in significant adverse impact on existing centres.
- 7.16 Given the size of the unit proposed and performance of similar scale convenience units throughout the UK, the proposed store will fulfil a "top up" shopping role which will overwhelmingly be used by residents living in close proximity to the site.
- 7.17 Indeed, given the edge of centre status of the site, the proposed development has the potential to boost the overall performance of the Kelso Avenue / Anchorsholme, Lane Local Centre via linked trips with existing operators within it and the overall ancillary role the unit will play in the function of the centre.
- 7.18 It is therefore concluded that Kelso Avenue / Anchorsholme, Lane Local Centre is vital and viable as existing. The proposed store would play an ancillary role in the overall context of the centre and has the potential to improve its vitality and viability via linked trips with other traders within it.

d. The proposal would not undermine the Council's strategies and proposals for regenerating its centres; and

- 7.19 The scale of the proposed development comprises a convenience store of limited size. It has been evidenced above that given the scale and format of such stores, it will not result in a significant adverse impact on nearby centres. The proposed development falls significantly below the threshold to trigger an impact assessment.
- 7.20 Irrespective, our assessment of nearby centres highlights them as vital and viable in overall good health. Further to this, EG Group is not aware of any existing, committed or planned public and private investments within relevant centres which could be adversely affected by the proposed redevelopment of the existing PFS and linked Spar store at Anchorsholme Road West to provide a small-scale convenience store.
- 7.21 On the basis of the above, the development comprises sustainable economic development of a reasonable scale within an appropriate location.
- 7.22 Consequently, the vitality and viability of nearby centres, nor the aims of the Council in regenerating centres will be compromised as a result of the proposed development given its fundamentally separate characteristics to those provided within the Town Centre and evidenced type of users.
- 7.23 Irrespective, a comprehensive sequential assessment has been undertaken in respect of neighbouring centres. The assessment has failed to highlight any sites or vacancies which could be considered suitable, available and viable alternatives to the application site.
- 7.24 In accordance with the above, it is considered that the proposed development will result in no detrimental impact on the Council's strategies and proposals for regenerating its centres and is therefore considered to be fully compliant with this criterion and those of paragraph 89 of the NPPF.

e. The proposal will be readily accessible by public transport and other sustainable transport modes

- 7.25 The application is accompanied by a Transport Note prepared by Dynamic Transport Planning. The report discusses the accessibility of the site via a range of sustainable travel options including walking and cycling. As aforementioned, the proposed development is to be provided with adequate cycle provision and benefits from exceptional transportation links.

- 7.26 The report identifies various transportation options in Section 2 which confirm the sustainable nature of the development site.
- 7.27 In accordance with the above, it has been evidenced that the proposed development is accessible via a range of public and sustainable transportation options. The Note highlights the connectivity of the site via a range of transportation options and therefore also evidences that the proposed development complies with Policy CS5 – connectivity.

Conclusion

- 7.28 It is clear that Policy CS4 is crucial in the determination of the application to which this statement relates. The policy has been comprehensively addressed above and in the sequential assessment which forms part of the submission package. Policy CS3 promotes Economic Development and Employment. Section 6 of this Statement evidences compliance with the aims and aspirations of the policy. Accordingly, it is concluded that the application is policy compliant in respect of the above in addition to Policy CS5.

Other Material Planning Considerations

- 7.29 A summary of other material considerations is provided below:

Economic Considerations

- 7.30 A summary of economic considerations is provided in Section 6 of this Statement. Notwithstanding, it is reiterated that the use will result in the creation of 8 jobs.
- 7.31 The importance of sustainable economic development is a golden thread running through planning policy at a national level. Given this, the Council should be minded to adopt a positive approach in the determination of the planning application.

Design

- 7.32 The design of the proposed development is shown on the drawings which form part of the application package. The drawings show a modern design which will comprise an aesthetically pleasing development.
- 7.33 The existing PFS and liked store at the site is tired and in need of updating, accordingly, the proposed development will represent a significant improvement in comparison to the existing development on it.

- 7.34 Given the prominence of the site and its proximity to Fleetwood Road / Anchorsholme Lane West., it is therefore considered that the proposed unit will positively contribute to the site and will comprise a strong design statement.

Ecology

- 7.35 A Phase 1 Ecology Assessment has been undertaken by Rachel Hacking Ecology which confirms:

Depending on the timing of the vegetation clearance, the following survey may be required:

- *Nesting Birds - If any work to suitable bird nesting habitat needs to be carried out within the bird nesting season (which is generally March to August), then a nesting bird survey will be required immediately prior to work commencing.*

Protected Species

If a protected species is found at any time during the development, work must stop and a suitably experienced ecologist be contacted for advice.

Invasive Species

The Japanese Knotweed must be carefully removed from site, using a recognised methodology. This should be digging out and removal off-site to a licensed landfill or digging out and deep burial with a suitable barrier membrane on site.

Biodiversity Enhancement

During soft landscaping design, the following measures should be implemented to increase the biodiversity value of the site:

- *Soft landscaping should include the provision of native and non-native flowering perennial species, to provide a pollen and nectar source for invertebrates.*
- *Grassland should be species-rich wherever it is created, e.g. wildflower amenity turf.*
- *Bird boxes and bat boxes should be erected/incorporated onto the new building or retained mature trees.*

Highways

- 7.36 Policy CS5 of the Core Strategy identifies the importance of connectivity in respect of new proposals. Dynamic Transport Planning have prepared a Transport Note which forms part of the application. The report highlights:

The proposed redevelopment of the site consists of the demolition of the existing PFS and construction of a new convenience store with associated car parking. The proposals include improvements to the southern site access to allow for two-way vehicle movements and the closure of the site egress to Fleetwood Road. No changes are proposed to the existing Anchorsholme Lane West access.

A review of the highway accident data for the site access locations and adjacent highway has been reviewed and identified no pre-existing patterns or trends of incidents that could be impacted by the redevelopment proposals.

As part of the redevelopment a total of 28 car parking spaces will be provided inclusive of mobility impaired and EV charging spaces. This level of provision is consistent with the local parking standards.

The servicing arrangements for the site will remain essentially unchanged with vehicle tracking provided to demonstrate the largest anticipated service vehicle can be accommodated within the site.

A review of the sites accessibility by non-car modes of travel has identified that an excellent level of access would be available.

A trip-generation assessment has been undertaken which demonstrates that the proposals, would result in a significant reduction in vehicular activity during the highway peak periods. It is therefore considered that the redevelopment would have a beneficial impact on the operation of the local highway network as vehicle movements associated with this site would be significantly reduced.

On the basis of this TN, it is concluded that there are no reasons why the proposed redevelopment of the site should not be granted planning permission on highways grounds.

Drainage

- 7.37 A Drainage Strategy has been prepared by Goodsons and forms part of the application package. The report confirms the acceptability of the proposal and its accordance with prevailing local and national planning policy.

Flood Risk Assessment

- 7.38 A Flood Risk Assessment has been prepared by Nicola Sugg and forms part of the application package. The report confirms:

The Environment Agency flood zone map for planning indicates that the application site is located within defended Flood Zone 3 associated with tidal flood risk from the River Wyre and coast; therefore, a detailed site-specific FRA is required.

A review of all potential sources of flooding to the application site has been undertaken and the Environment Agency has been consulted to obtain site-specific predicted flood risk information.

The application site has not recorded flooding in the past and is defended from tidal flooding by the Anchorsholme tidal flood defences constructed in 2017. Site-specific predicted flood water level data have been provided by the Environment Agency from the 2014 Lancashire Tidal Study, which pre-dates the current flood defences. The model indicates that the application site lies within fluvial Flood Zone 1 and the current flood defences protect the application site from flooding during the design flood event (0.5% annual probability tidal flood event with climate change). Therefore, the risk of tidal flooding is very low due to the presence of flood defences.

The FRA concludes that the risk of flooding from all potential sources is assessed as low or negligible, with the exception of potential localised flood risk from the urban drainage network during extreme and/or prolonged rainfall events.

It is also acknowledged that the site is at residual risk of flooding in the very unlikely event of a breach of the local flood defences combined with an extreme tidal flood event.

The following site-specific flood risk mitigation measures are therefore proposed for the development:

- The predicted flood water level at the application site in the unlikely event of a flood defence breach is 4.59mAOD. Therefore, the proposed finished floor level of the development is 4.7mAOD (300mm above existing site levels) to minimise the risk of flooding in the event of a flood defence breach or local sewer flooding.*
- A Flood Warning and Evacuation Plan shall be prepared for the development prior to occupation. The property manager shall sign up to the Environment Agency's free Flood Warning Service and the Plan shall*

set out appropriate actions to be taken in the event of a Flood Alert or Flood Warning being issued.

• A surface water drainage strategy has been prepared for the development to ensure surface water runoff would be effectively managed on site, prior to controlled discharge to sewer, and to ensure no increased surface water flood risk to others.

This FRA concludes that the proposed development of a convenience store, classified as 'less vulnerable' development, off Fleetwood Road, Anchorsholme is appropriate and sustainable with regards to flood risk.

Conclusion

7.39 It has been comprehensively evidenced that the proposal will result in significant economic benefits in the form of job creation. Further to this appropriate retail assessments have been undertaken – there are no sequentially preferable sites and the impact of the proposal will be minimal. The proposed store is located in an edge of centre location and will complement existing facilities in the area.

8. Conclusion

- 8.1 This Planning, Design, Access and Retail Statement has been prepared on behalf of EG Group to accompany a full application proposing the demolition and decommissioning of the existing PFS and linked convenience store and erection of replacement convenience store and associated works at the Esso PFS, Fleetwood Road, Anchorsholme.
- 8.2 The existing PFS is underperforming. EG Group, a market leader in the provision of fuel sale throughout the UK are seeking an alternative use in order to ensure to avoid the prospect of a long-term vacancy at the site.
- 8.3 It has been evidenced within this statement that the impact arising from the proposed development will be minimal linked to the small scale of the unit proposed which comprises just 16% of the threshold for such impacts set out in NPPF.
- 8.4 A sequential assessment has been undertaken to demonstrate that there are no preferable sites which are suitable, viable or available in the relevant centres.
- 8.5 The proposal will result in significant economic benefits in the form of 8 FTE positions. This comprises a material consideration in the determination of the application.
- 8.6 This Statement has demonstrated that the development, as proposed, is compliant with relevant policies contained within the Core Strategy and is considered to be in accordance with the document.
- 8.7 Further to the above, a comprehensive suite of relevant supporting documents is included within the application package. The documents identify the acceptability of the proposal in respect of relevant material considerations.
- 8.8 In conclusion, the proposed development will result in a series of benefits including significant economic benefits. It is therefore respectfully requested that the Council grant planning approval for the proposed development.