SEQUENTIAL AND RETAIL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

CENTRAL ENGLAND CO-OPERATIVE

GEORGE HOTEL BIRKDALE SOUTHPORT

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SEQUENTIAL AND RETAIL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

On behalf of: Central England Co-operative

In respect of: George Hotel Birkdale Southport

Date: February 2022

Reference: 4515LE/R001

Author: CH/WM

DPP Planning
One Park Row
Leeds
LS1 5HN

[redacted]

www.dppukltd.com

Contents

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Retail Statement has been prepared on behalf of Central England Co-Operative in support of a full application for the erection of two retail units (Use Class E) with associated access, car parking and landscaping on the site of the former George Hotel, Birkdale, Southport, PR8 5DH.

1.2 This Retail Statement provides a brief overview of the site and the development proposal. The Statement then considers the proposed development in relation to national and local retail planning policy in line with guidance set out in Section 7 of the NPPF entitled 'ensuring the vitality of town centres' and provides both a Sequential Assessment and a Retail Impact Assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the vitality and viability of nearby centres.

1.3 The statement is set out as follows:

Chapter 1 – Introduction
Chapter 2 – Site Description and Proposed Development
Chapter 3 – Planning Policy
Chapter 4 – Retail Impact Assessment
Chapter 5 – Sequential Assessment
Chapter 6 – Conclusions

1.4 In addition, the statement is supported by an appendix containing the retail assessment tables.

2.0 Site Description and Proposed Development

The Site

2.1 The site is located on Duke Street and lies to the east of Birkdale and is approximately 1.5km south of Southport. In total the site is approximately 0.18ha in size and was previously a public house, namely 'The George'.

2.2 In terms of access, the site is currently accessed off Duke Street. This will remain the same and will be unaffected by the proposal.

Proposed Development

2.3 The proposed development involves the part demolition of the existing building and conversion and extension to form a new Cooperative food store at ground floor with adjoining sub-unit with new shopfront, signage zones, reconfigured car park, residential amenity space and new secure yard/plant enclosure, including installation of external plant.

2.4 The new residential amenity will be located on the first floor will consist of the redevelopment of four new residential units.

2.5 The new conversion and extension will create a 395sqm GIA convenience store which includes 279sqm of sales area and 116sqm of associated back of house. There will be an additional sub-unit consisting of 116sqm. 28 car parking spaces will be included split between retail and residential.

3.0 Planning Policy Context

National Planning Policy Framework (the 'NPPF')

3.1 The NPPF was updated in August 2021 and sets out the Government's proposed economic, environmental and social planning policies for England. This is an iteration of the earlier Framework which was published in February 2019. The NPPF carries forward the Government's commitment to supporting sustainable economic growth and indicates that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic recovery through the planning system.

3.2 The NPPF confirms in Paragraph 2 that applications for planning permission will be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

3.3 It confirms that the NPPF must be taken into account as a material consideration in planning decisions.

Ensuring the vitality of town centres

3.4 Section 7 of the NPPF ensures the vitality of town centres. Paragraph 86 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."*. It further refers, at part (e), that sites within town centres should be suitable and viable for town centre uses.

3.5 Paragraph 87 states that local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are not in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan; it indicates that sites should be assessed sequentially, i.e., located within centres first, otherwise in edge of centre locations (within 300m), and only then should out of centre sites be considered. Paragraph 88 states that *"when considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preferences 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 proposed town centre uses 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 proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold. *"This should include assessment of:*

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

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)."*

National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG)

3.7 The PPG gives further guidance on the application of the sequential approach at paragraph: 011 Reference ID: 2b-011-20190722 which states:

"The application of the test will need to be proportionate and appropriate for the given proposal. Where appropriate, the potential suitability of alternative sites will need to be discussed between the developer and local planning authority at the earliest opportunity.

The checklist below sets out the considerations that should be taken into account in determining whether a proposal complies with the sequential test:

with due regard to the requirement to demonstrate flexibility, has the suitability of more central sites to accommodate the proposal been considered? Where the proposal would be located in an edge of centre or out of centre location, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre. It is important to set out any associated reasoning clearly;

is there scope for flexibility in the format and/or scale of the proposal? It is not necessary to demonstrate that a potential town centre or edge of centre site can accommodate precisely the scale and form of development being proposed, but rather to consider what contribution more central sites are able to make individually to accommodate the proposal;

if there are no suitable sequentially preferable locations, the sequential test is passed."

Relevant Local Plan Policies

Sefton Local Plan – April 2017

3.8 The site lies within Sefton Council's jurisdiction. The development plan consists of the Local Plan which was adopted in April 2017.

3.9 Policy SD1 Presumption in Favour of sustainable development – indicates that applications that fully accord with policies within the local plan will be approved unless material considerations indicate otherwise. If there are no policies relevant to the proposed development or relevant policies are out of date then permission will be granted unless material considerations indicate otherwise. This will also take into consideration any adverse impacts which would outweigh the benefits or any specific policies in the NPPF which indicate that the development should be restricted.

3.10 Policy ED2 Retail, Leisure and other town centre uses – outlines that retail, leisure and other town centre uses will be directed towards the boroughs existing centres. All proposals will be subject to a sequential approach. When considering proposals in out of centre locations, preference will be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the defined centres. Impact assessments will also be required to accompany planning applications based on floor space thresholds. Where more than one impact threshold applies, the lower impact threshold will take precedence. The thresholds are outlined below:

a) "outside of the Primary Shopping Areas (for retail) or the town, district and local centres (for leisure and office uses) impact assessments will be required for development which proposes more than 500m2 gross floorspace;

b) within 800 metres of the boundaries of the district centres, an impact assessment will be required for development which proposes more than 300m2 gross floorspace; and

c) within 800 metres of the boundaries of the local centres, an impact assessment will be required for development which proposes more than 200m2 gross floorspace."

Impact assessment will also be required for the change of use or variation of conditions from one form of retail development to another is proposed.

4.0 Sequential Assessment

4.1 In accordance with Paragraph 87 of the NPPF and policy ED2 of the Sefton Local Plan a Sequential Assessment of sites has been prepared to support the application.

4.2 The following section addresses the sequential assessment, first dealing with the scope of the assessment and defining its interpretation through case law; followed by an assessment of any sequentially preferable sites

The Requirement for the Sequential Assessment

4.3 The application seeks the development of two retail units with associated plant, delivery bay, parking, and landscaping. It is intended that the larger of these stores will be used by the applicant, Central England Co-operative, whilst the smaller is intended to be a complimentary use such as a café. As this site is located 750m away from the nearest defined centre for retail purposes, which is Birkdale Local Centre, it is necessary to demonstrate compliance with the sequential approach outlined in paragraphs 87 and 88 of the NPPF; Southport Town Centre is also approximately 750m away. Consequently, it is necessary to demonstrate that there are no suitable, available and viable sequentially preferable sites that could accommodate the proposed development in accordance with the relevant provisions of both local and national planning policy.

4.4 In undertaking the sequential assessment, it is important to establish an appropriate area of search. Following the establishment of the proposed development's PCA, it is considered appropriate and proportionate (in line with the guidance of the PPG) to use the Primary Catchment Area (PCA) as the outer edge of the sequential search area. In light of the above Birkdale Local Centre and Southport Town Centre have been assessed in sequential terms. This approach has been confirmed on review with the Council's retail consultant, Nexus Planning.

Case Law

4.5 It is important at the outset to correctly interpret and apply the sequential test, considering best practice and relevant appeal decisions. The NPPF has removed the specific need to address disaggregation and is supported by the absence of any reference to disaggregation in the updated Planning Policy Guidance Notice issued in 2020.

4.6 Case law on the issue of disaggregation and the sequential approach can be summarised as follows:

The Supreme Court Decision in 2012 re Dundee established as a matter of law, that a site has to be suitable for the commercial needs of the operator and that provided that flexibility has been shown in terms of format and scale then a proposed development should not have to be altered or reduced to fit a site.

The English application of Dundee was established in 2012 through High Court case of North Lincs. The decision maker is 'bound' to take the Applicant's assessment that a site is neither commercially viable nor suitable for their commercial requirements.

A 2014 High Court Decision at Moreton-in-Marsh applied Dundee to guidance now set out in the NPPF and concluded no material difference between NPPF and Scottish policy statement.
2014 Rushden Lakes High Court Decision establishes that the Secretary of State agrees that the sequential assessment relates to the accommodation of the proposal.

4.7 As such, in considering the requirements of the sequential test, we have considered the application proposals as a whole, whilst applying a reasonable degree of flexibility in terms of scale and format, as required by national policy.

The Scheme to be Assessed

4.8 The context for the sequential assessment is that the proposed development is intended to have a foodstore , which would have a floorspace and net sales area of 511sqm, and a smaller retail unit of 116sqm. Whilst the smaller unit is intended to be of a complimentary use, for the purposes of this test, both units have been considered as potential convenience retailers. This has been done to establish a 'worst case' scenario and ensure flexibility for the applicant by not specifying a subgroup of the E Use Class.

4.9 In addition, the store is to be served by a car park (24 spaces) and associated land for servicing/deliveries. In total, the functional land required to deliver the proposed development (excluding grassed areas and landscaping) amount to approximately 1,900sqm. It is acknowledged however that where units are identified within or on the edge of local centres which benefit from existing on-street parking or good public transport access; as a result, the sequential search exercise has also assessed smaller sites in such locations rather than dismissing them in the initial site sift exercise.

4.10 The Co-operative have an immediate need for the store and therefore any potential site needs to be available prior to the end of 2022. As expected with convenience stores, the Co-operative also require a site that provides good visibility from the road in order to be attractive to customers and provide easy and legible access into the store and associated car park.

Methodology

4.11 Given the above, a series of parameters can be devised and used to identify suitable sites; these are set out below.

Table 1 – Site parameters

Size Requirements	
Unit Size	500sqm (±10%)
Vacant Units (for conversion/occupation)	Units at least 90% of the proposed unit size
Other Requirements	
A site that can allow for the safe manoeuvring of customer vehicles	
A site with the ability to attract passing trade	

A site that is able to offer adjacent surface level car parking, so that customers can easily transfer food to their vehicles
A site that can accommodate a dedicated service area to the rear of the store and associated HGV deliveries and manoeuvres
A single storey, open and unrestricted sales floor area which benefits from a generally level/flat topography, or which has the ability to be developed as such

4.12 Vacant sites were identified through online marketing databases such as Rightmove, Property link, Zoopla, PrimeLocation and OnTheMarket; through the online websites of commercial agents such as JLL, Carter Towler, Ryden and Knight Frank; and based on local knowledge of the district and the availability and history of a number of potential sites. DPP also looked for potentially vacant units as part of the physical health checks undertaken in February 2022.

4.13 Thus, in accordance with the retail hierarchy the following centres were assessed:

Town Centres
- Southport

Local Centres
- Birkdale

4.14 Any identified sites were then assessed based on their capacity to accommodate the proposed development as a whole in accordance with the 'Dundee' approach cited above. Any site that is not capable of accommodating the proposed development, in terms of physical size, cannot be considered suitable.

4.15 Should any sites be found to be suitable, they will also need to be sufficiently available and viable for development. For example, sites must be actively marketed as available for development/occupation.

Sequential Sites

Birkdale Local Centre

4.16 Our survey of Birkdale local centre found the following vacant site:

1. Resource House, 1st And 2nd Floor, 33 Liverpool Road

4.17 The location of the above site and the relationship with the local centre is shown on the below map:

Figure One: Map of advertised sites within Birkdale Local Centre

Site 1 - 1st And 2nd Floor, 33 Liverpool Road, Birkdale, Southport, Merseyside

4.18 33 Liverpool Road is located at the heart of the local centre. The size of the unit is 127sqm and is therefore inadequate for the purposes of a retail food store similar to that proposed. The site is also located above ground floor level meaning it has inadequate access and prominence for the proposed development. It is therefore considered that this site is not sequentially preferable.

Birkdale edge-of-centre

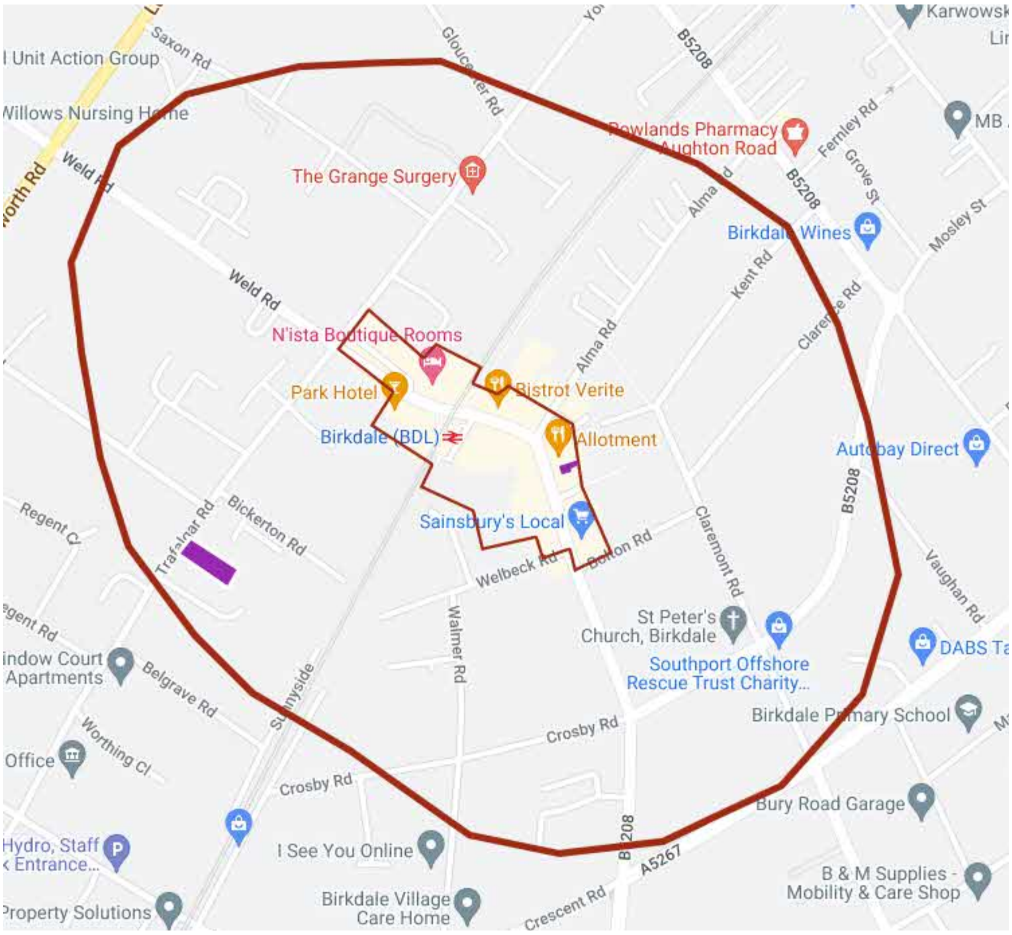
4.19 The NPPF defines edge-of-centre locations as those which are well connected to the primary shopping area and within approximately 300m, although it is accepted that this can vary depending upon local circumstances.

4.20 The desktop research of Birkdale has reveals that there is one vacant site available on the market:

1. 4 & 6, Trafalgar Road, Birkdale, Southport

4.21 The site is shown on the map below alongside an approximate boundary indicating 300m from the local centre:

Figure Two: Map of advertised sites within Birkdale edge-of-centre



<u>Site 1</u> - <u>4 & 6, Trafalgar Road, Birkdale, Southport</u>

4.22 The site comprises two imposing Victorian properties which have been used as a nursing home for approximately 25 residents. The total floorspace of the unit is 985sqm and is therefore too large for the proposed development. Due to this and the site having a large residential element to it, it is not considered sequentially preferable.

Southport Town Centre

4.23 Our survey of Southport town centre found the following vacant sites:

1. King Street, Southport, Merseyside
2. The Fire Pit, West Street, Southport
3. Club Premises, West Street and Waverley Street, Southport, Merseyside
4. King Street, Southport
5. Former Coronation Pub, King Street, Southport, Southport, Merseyside
6. Queen Anne Street, Southport

7. 16-18 Eastbank Street, Southport, Sefton

8. 117 Eastbank Street, Merseyside

9. 9, 9B, 11 & 9A, Bridge Street, Southport, Southport, Merseyside

10. Rawcliffe Chambers, 33-39 London Street and 1-5B Hoghton Street, Southport

11. The Edge, Hoghton Street, Southport

12. Garden Court Guest House, Bank Square, Southport

Site 1 – King Street, Southport, Merseyside

4.24 This site was last used as a 'party pamper place' and consists of a commercial shop/office front, the first floor contains two one-bedroom self-contained apartments, currently tenanted and to the rear of the building there is an office space with private entrance. Due to the size of the space being 70.2sqm in total and the lack of surrounding space as well as the residential aspect and this being currently tenanted, this site would not be suitable to accommodate the proposed development and would therefore not be sequentially preferable.

Site 2 - The Fire Pit, West Street, Southport

4.25 This site consists of one unit which was previously used as a bar. In total, the unit comprises 316sqm.This site does not comprise of any areas to accommodate the enclosed service yard or car park. Therefore, due to the size and lack of surrounding space, this site is not considered sequentially preferable.

Site 3 - Club Premises, West Street and Waverley Street, Southport, Merseyside

4.26 This former nightclub located in Southport town centre comprises of three separate bars/night clubs. The total floorspace is 632sqm. The site is therefore not considered sequentially preferable based on size.

Site 4 - King Street, Southport

4.27 This freehold unit is available with vacant possession. This is a two-storey property with ground floor retail. It is located within the town centre within close proximity to the main retail areas of Southport. The overall floorspace is 202sqm and due to this the site is not considered sequentially preferable as it is too small to accommodate the proposed development.

Site 5 - Former Coronation Pub, King Street, Southport, Southport, Merseyside

4.28 Site 5 consists of a former town centre pub situated within Southport Town Centre. The existing premises provides a large dining area with 70 covers, pool room and lounge. Planning permission was granted for the change of use with the ground floor to retain bar/leisure unit and new self-contained retail unit and for the first and second floors to be converted. The total site area is

428sqm and the site is therefore not considered sequentially preferable as it is too small to accommodate the proposed development.

Site 6 - Queen Anne Street, Southport

4.29 This site is being advertised for sale by conditional online auction. The site was previously used as a restaurant but would be suitable for a variety of different uses. The total site area is 294sqm and the site is therefore not considered sequentially preferable as it is too small.

Site 7 - 16-18 Eastbank Street, Southport, Sefton

4.30 This unit is being advertised as being suitable for ground floor retail. The ground floor retail floorspace totals 260sqm and therefore for the size of the site precludes it being sequentially preferable.

Site 8 - 117 Eastbank Street, Merseyside

4.31 This site is currently used as a Hairdressers/Barbers with a total floorspace of 30sqm. Due to the size of this site being too small for the proposed development it precludes it being sequentially preferable.

Site 9 - 9, 9B, 11 & 9A, Bridge Street, Southport, Southport, Merseyside

4.32 This site contains three self-contained flats plus one commercial retail unit. This whole unit is for sale and has a total floorspace of 241sqmand is therefore not considered sequentially preferable.

Site 10 - Rawcliffe Chambers, 33-39 London Street and 1-5B Hoghton Street, Southport

4.33 This site consists of six separate retail units with a separately accessed first and second floor offices. Rawcliffe Chambers is stated to the junction of Hoghton Street and London Street within the core of the Southport town centre. This is a three storey property. The first floor office is currently vacant, the second floor is used as additional storage for a retail store below. The site area is approximately 286sqm. Due to the fact there is a large residential element to this site as well as the fact there are still tenant in situ, this site is not considered to be sequentially preferable.

Site 11 - The Edge, Hoghton Street, Southport

4.34 This mixed used development opportunity comprises 25 two and three bedroom apartments constructed over four floors. The ground floor comprises three self-contained retail units and covered rear car parking area. The site is located within Southport town centre close to all its retail and leisure amenities and public transport links. The overall commercial space available in this unit is 299sqm. Due to the size of the unit being too small to accommodate the proposed development it would not be deemed sequentially preferable.

Site 12 - Garden Court Guest House, Bank Square, Southport

4.35 This site is located near Southport promenade and consists of a bed and breakfast comprising 10 bedrooms with en-suite shower rooms. The site area is approximately 214sqm. Due to the size being too small and the current use of the unit and lack of outdoor space, this site is not deemed sequentially preferable.

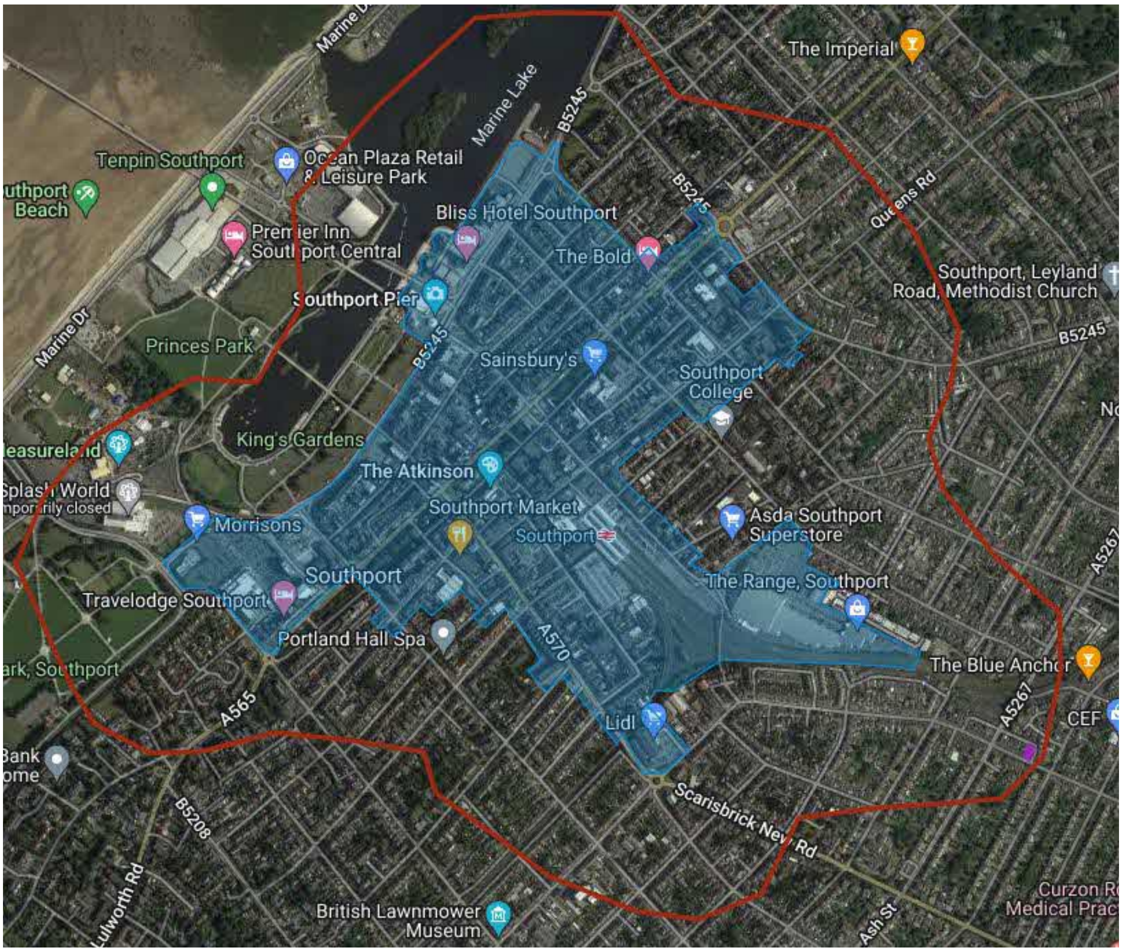
Southport edge-of-centre

The desktop research Southport Town Centre has revealed there was one vacant site on the market within the edge of centre boundary. The following site was identified:

1. 25-27 Forest Road And, 59-61 Ash Street, Southport, Southport

4.36 The site is shown on the map below alongside an approximate boundary indicating 300m from the local centre (the site is highlighted in purple in the right hand corner):

Figure Three: Map of advertised sites within Southport edge-of-centre



Site 1 - 25-27 Forest Road And, 59-61 Ash Street, Southport

4.37 This site consists of two retail units and size self-contained flats. The lower ground floor stores and ground floor offering two retail units which are already let. The upper floors provide six self-contained flats which benefit from their own individual accessed from separate entrances. The unit is approximately 543sqm in size. Due to the retail units already being occupied by way of a new three year lease, this site is not considered sequentially preferable.

Potential Site Allocations

4.38 In addition to the above, we also looked at potential site allocations within the local and town centre as well as within the edge of centre boundary. This research found that there are no allocated sites for retail or mixed use within these boundaries.

5.0 Retail Impact Assessment

5.1 In accordance with paragraph 87 of the NPPF and Policy ED2 of the Local Plan, as the development is in an out-of-centre location this section assesses the impact of the proposed development on defined town centres. This should be read in conjunction with the economic tables at Appendix 1 which are referred to throughout this section.

5.2 The NPPF requires an assessment of the impact on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres, and the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade.

Methodology

5.3 This sub-section provides details on the methodology adopted in the preparation of the retail impact assessment having regard to the guidance set out within the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

5.4 As set out previously, Paragraph 17 of the PPG sets out a step-by-step approach in the preparation of Retail Impact Assessments, as follows:

1) Establish the state of existing centres at the base year;
2) Establish the nature of current shopping patterns at the base year;
3) Determine the appropriate time frame for assessing impact, focussing on impact in the first five years, as this is when most impact is likely to occur;
4) Examine the 'no development' scenario;
5) Assess the proposal's turnover and trade draw;
6) Consider a range of plausible scenarios in assessing the impact of the proposal on existing centres and facilities (which may require breaking the PCA down into a series of zones to gain a finer-grain analysis);
7) Set out the likely impact of that proposal clearly, along with any associated assumptions and reasoning, including in respect of quantitative and qualitative issues; and
8) A judgement as to whether the likely adverse impacts are significant can only be reached in light of local circumstances.

Primary Catchment Area (PCA)

5.5 Defining the PCA seeks to establish the areas of population from which the majority of the proposal's trade would be drawn from.

5.6 There is no firm guidance on the extent of a catchment area for a proposed development, however it is reasonable to establish a catchment area based on the type of development proposed, the context of the surrounding area (including existing shopping provision) and the scale of the development. In this context, the proposed development is for a small foodstore to serve a localised population on a frequent basis; it is likely that the majority of customers of the proposed development would arrive by foot from nearby areas within a 10 minute walk time.

5.7 As such, the first step in establishing the PCA is to establish an isochrone area around the site which represents a 10-minute walk time catchment of the site. This is considered to be a robust and appropriate catchment given the size of the proposed store and nature of the goods to be sold. The area is shown in the image below:

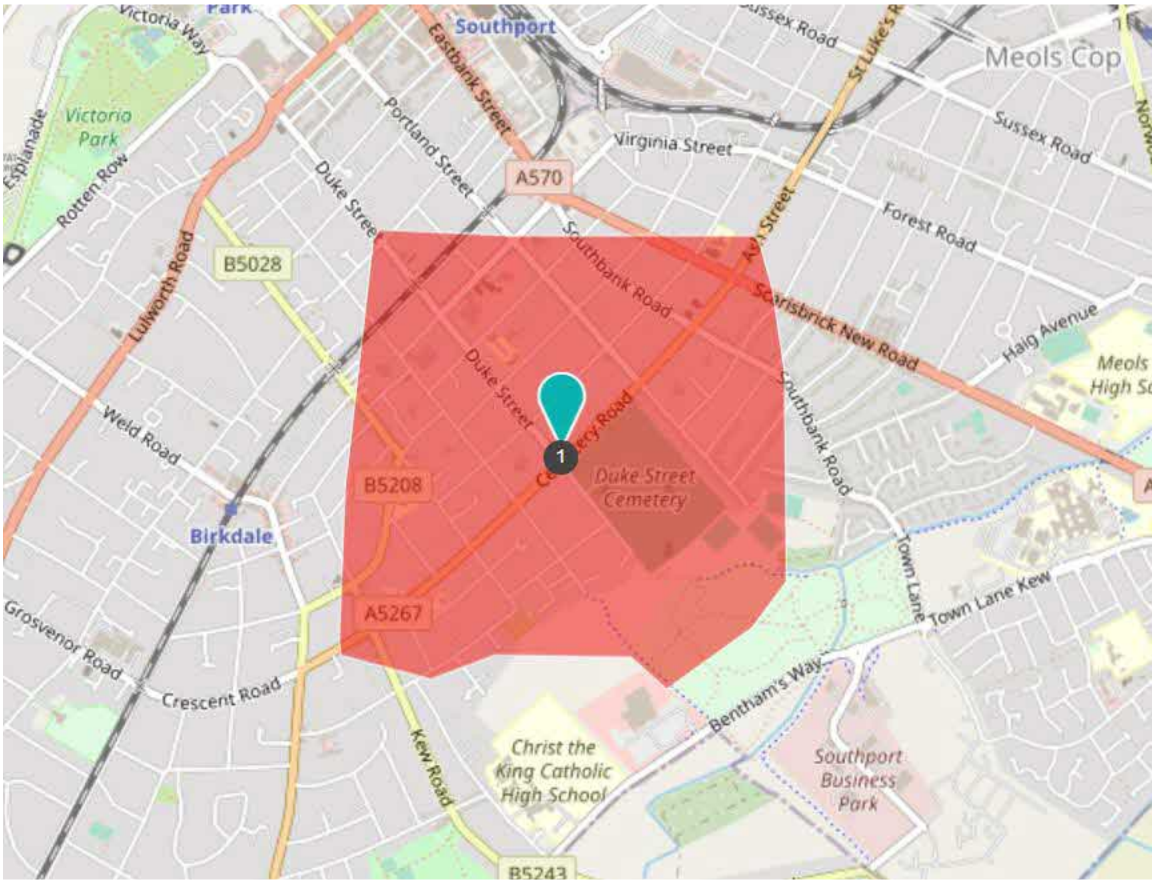


Figure 4: Map showing 10-minute walk time isochrone and the wider area around the site.

5.8 In terms of nearby existing convenience provision there are a small number of major retailers within the area, mainly to the north in Southport Town Centre and to the east in the Meols Cop development. All of these are outside of the PCA, however due to the size of the proposed store, these major retailers are unlikely to be competitors. Smaller retailers, providing a similar offer to that of the proposed, are also located within the vicinity of the site with three within Birkdale Local Centre, consisting of a Sainsbury's Local, McColl's, and Spar, as well as a Costcutter in an out-of-centre location approximately 160m from the site. Together, these destinations will restrict the

PCA to the 10-minute walk distance as it is unlikely that residents will walk or drive past these existing destinations to access the proposed development.

Population and Expenditure

5.9 The population and projected growth within the PCA are shown in Table 1 of the Retail Tables in Appendix 1 and are taken from the Sefton Retail Strategy Review document prepared by WYG in 2015 (SRSR). These figures show that population in the Borough will remain largely static, increasing slightly from 86,300 in 2015 to 87,400 in 2025; an increase of approximately 100 a year.

5.10 In considering the available convenience and comparison 'per capita' expenditure, these have been derived from Tables 6.1, 6.4 and 6.5 of the SRSR with base data provided for 2015 with special forms of trading (SFT) stripped out at this base year using Appendix 3: Figure 5 of the Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note (RPBN) 19 (January 2022). Expenditure growth has then been applied in line with the RPBN to the design year of 2025. The per capita convenience and comparison expenditure figures are provided in Tables 2B and 3B respectively. All prices are expressed in a 2015 price base.

5.11 Based on the above population and per capita expenditure figures, assessment shows that in 2022, total convenience goods expenditure within 'Zone S' as defined by the SRSR stood at £163.6m (Table 4A) in 2015, whilst comparison goods expenditure was £208.6m (Table 4B). After population growth is taken into account, it is estimated that in 2025 convenience expenditure will decrease slightly to £161.4m, and there will also be a decrease in comparison goods expenditure to £194.2m.

Turnover of the Proposed Development

5.12 The proposal is for a convenience retail unit and adjacent café. These are proposed to be occupied by the Central England Co-operative and complimentary operator however, for the purposes of this assessment and to allow flexibility, these units will be considered together as both comprising retail floorspace, under a 'worst-case' scenario. As a result, the net sales area of the unit is proposed as 395sqm, which accounts for 116sqm of back of house facilities, such as an office, storeroom, toilets, and circulation; these are based on the submitted plans.

5.13 In order to calculate the likely turnover of the proposed development, the following methodology has been relied upon:

The unit and floorspace have been assessed as 87.6% convenience retailing based upon figures 138-140 of Mintel Retail Rankings 2019 which provides averages for Co-op retail stores.

The convenience goods sales densities figure for Co-op has been taken from the Global Data Foodstores Densities December 2021, expressed in 2015 prices.

The sales density figure has been multiplied by the floorspace of the proposal to provide a turnover figure for 2015.

The turnover figure has then been multiplied by the growth rates for sales densities provided by the RPBN 19 to allow for growth up to the 2025 design year.

5.14 Table 1 below sets out the calculation of the proposed retail unit's likely turnover at the design year of 2025.

Table 2 – Turnover of Proposal

Lidl Store	Net Sales Area (sqm)	Sales Density (£ p.sq.m.)	Turnover at 2022 (£m)	Turnover at 2025 (£m)
Convenience	346	10,082	4.40	4.75
Comparison	49	8,668	0.55	0.61
Totals	395		4.95	5.36

5.15 As can be seen from the above table, the proposed development would turnover at approximately £4.95m in 2022, rising slightly to £5.26m in 2025.

Existing Centres

5.16 There is one Town Centre and one Local Centre within Zone S of the SRSR that are within close proximity to the PCA in the form of Southport and Birkdale respectively. As such, these centres will be assessed as part of the retail assessment and, for robustness, physical health checks have also been carried out. This methodology was again confirmed as acceptable by Nexus Planning on behalf of the Council.

5.17 All health checks were carried out by DPP on 16th February 2022 and there were no national or local lockdown measures in place. Weather was largely dry, though cold and windy, with some short and infrequent light rain. As such, the conditions are considered to be normal with no reduced footfall.

Birkdale Local Centre

5.18 Birkdale Local Centre is situated to the southwest of Southport and is centred around Birkdale Merseyrail Station, extending northwest along Weld Road but largely to the southeast along Liverpool Road. No specific health check for Birkdale was provided within the SRSR due to the fact that it is a local centre; however it was considered alongside the other six local centres in the Borough. Detailed health checks are also provided within Appendix 2 of the Sefton District Centres Local Centres and Shopping Parades Retail Study (LCSPRS) carried out in May 2012.

5.19 Figure X below details the number and type of units within the centre, and their respective percentages, alongside the LCSPRS data. Types of occupiers have been taken from the LCSPRS survey which utilised the Experian Goad Classification of Retail and Service Uses, for clarity examples of these are as follows:

Convenience:
- Bakers
- Butcher
- Confectionery, Tobacco & News
- Greengrocers
- Off Licences

Comparison
- Antiques
- Carpets & Flooring
- Charity Shops
- Furniture Stores
- Crafts & Gifts
- Toiletries, Cosmetics & Beauty Products
- Toys, Games & Hobbies
- DIY & Home Improvements
- Clothing Store

Retail Services
- Dry Cleaners & Laundrettes
- Health & Beauty Salons
- Opticians
- Post Offices
- Travel Agents

Leisure
- Public Houses, Bars, Cafes, & Restaurants
- Takeaways
- Sports & Leisure Facilities
- Hotels

Finance & Business Services
- Building Societies & Banks
- Building Supplies
- Financial Services
- Legal Services
- Property Services
- Printing & Copying

	SCSR 2010		February 2022 Health Check		Difference	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Convenience	11	18.6%	9	15.8%	-2	-2.8%

	SCSR 2010		February 2022 Health Check		Difference	
Comparison	17	28.8%	19	33.3%	+2	+4.5%
Total Retail	28	47.4%	28	49.1%	±0	+1.7%
Vacant Units	2	3.4%	1	1.8%	-1	-1.6%
Services						
Financial & Business	6	10.2%	4	7.0%	-2	-3.2%
Leisure Services	10	16.9%	15	26.3%	+5	+9.4%
Retail Services	13	22.0%	9	15.8%	-4	-6.2%
Total Services	31	52.6%	28	49.1%	-3	-3.5%
Total Retail and Service	59	100%	57	100%	-2	

Figure 5: Birkdale Local Centre Health Check Statistics comparing the 2012 and 2022 health checks and differences.

5.20 The table above shows that since 2012 the overall number of units has remained relatively constant, reducing by just two. Convenience retailing has reduced by two however comparison has increased. The greatest change is the fall in retail services and its replacement with leisure services in the form of cafes, restaurants and pubs. Diversity within the centre is excellent, with no specific category dominating and an even split between retail and services. In addition, the presence of three main convenience retailers in the form of McColl's, Sainsbury's, and Spar is unusual for a Local Centre.

5.21 Only one vacant unit was found which was in the form of an office unit within Resource House, 33 Liverpool Road; this reflects the slight fall in business and financial services seen in the table.

5.22 Parking within the centre was considered poor with only a small amount of on street parking which was all full. However, the centre is considered very accessible given the proximity to the train station and the frequent buses running through the centre during the site visit.

5.23 Environmental quality is considered to be very good with wide pavements, trees, and lots of benches. There was also a high number of outside seating available that was associated with the cafés and restaurants, which mainly appeared full or near to capacity. Footfall was relatively quite however this is not considered unusual given the fact that the health check was carried out mid-week.

5.24 Overall, Birkdale Local Centre is considered to be a very healthy centre with a highly diverse offer and an attractive environment.

Southport Town Centre

5.25 Southport Town Centre is located within the north of the Borough and somewhat equidistant from Preston and Liverpool on the west coast of England. Similarly to Birkdale the centre is largely centred on the rail station, with the main high street being Lord Street which runs southwest to northeast. Since the adoption of the new Local Plan, newer retail units located to the southeast of the rail station have been included within the centre boundary.

5.26 Due to the size of the centre, a full list of uses and units, which would run into the several hundreds, was not carried out. Within the SRSR however, a health check was carried out in 2015 which stated that 97 units were vacant, representing 13.1%. During DPP's health check visit, 13 vacant units were found to be advertised with a small handful appearing vacant but not advertised. Even assuming an appropriate level of units removed from commercial uses, such as 25%, this fall in vacant uses is considered to show that Southport Town Centre is strengthening. This indication supports the national picture following the COVID-19 pandemic where smaller centres have fared better than larger centres due to increased local spend due to travel restrictions and lesser reliance on town centre workers.

5.27 The centre is considered accessible via a wide range of transport options, including a rail links to the wider suburbs and numerous bus routes. Parking within the centre was considered somewhat difficult due to the one-way road system however on-street parking was available alongside some multi-storey car parks.

5.28 Again, similar to Birkdale, pavements were wide in most places, with some streets pedestrianised, and with a large amount of outdoor seating. Green infrastructure was also present on some streets, with a large amount just beyond the northwest boundary in the form of King's Gardens and Victoria Park.

5.29 No evidence of redevelopment was discovered however it is noted that there are plans to provide a new marine lakes event centre adjacent to the centre. Areas for redevelopment were identified in the form of vacant land, however this was all being used as surface car parking.

5.30 Overall, despite a number of vacancies, Southport Town Centre is seen as relatively healthy with a good environmental quality and a wide offer available.

Appropriate Timeframe

5.31 Subject to planning approval it is estimated that that construction of the proposed development will start in late 2022. Upon completion and opening of the store it is also anticipated that there will be a period of 'settling in' before the store is considered to be trading at full capacity. As such, 2025 has been used as the 'design year' for the purposes of this assessment, which is within the 5-year period suggested by the PPG.

Turnover of Existing Stores and Centres

5.32 In accordance with the NPPG, the existing turnover figures have been established by calculating the benchmark turnover of existing stores and centres using the Global Data Foodstore Sales Densities December 2021 (for Tesco, Sainsbury's, Asda, Morrisons, M&S, Co-op, Iceland, Aldi, and Lidl) and Mintel Foodstore Densities August 2021 (for Farmfoods, Spar, Heron Foods, One Stop, McColls, Premier, Costcutter, B&M, and Home Bargains). Floorspace for stores has been calculated through review of planning applications, business rates figures, and previous listings combined with floor space mix outlined in the Global Data and Mintel reports.

5.33 Whilst the household survey carried out for the SRSR dates to 2015, it is useful to established shopping patterns for Zone S, which equates to the study area. Therefore, though the household survey has not been used to inform turnovers of the proposed stores, it has been used to inform the anticipated trade diversion, as will be discussed.

5.34 On the basis of the benchmark turnover figures, the most popular convenience shopping destinations within Zone S are likely to be:

Tesco Extra, Meols Cop - £103.7m

Morrison's, Winter Gardens - £53.4m

Asda, C12 Shopping Park - £43.6m

Sainsbury's, Lord Street - £28.1m

5.35 In terms of the two centres within Zone S that are being assessed, Southport Town Centre (£150.1m) has a considerably larger turnover when compared to Birkdale Local Centre (£5.5m) as expected. Convenience turnover is likely to reduce slightly within the study period when applying growth rates, with both Southport and Birkdale reducing to £149.8m and £5.4m respectively.

Impact on Vitality and Viability

5.36 Central England Co-operative are a food retailer who predominantly sell convenience goods, such as grocery items, chilled and frozen foods, and toiletries, with a small comparison offer that sells basic and seasonal items that will often change throughout the year. Their business model is to provide high quality products with a key focus on Fairtrade products and supporting the local community.

5.37 In this regard, the retail unit will principally compete against other convenience retailers, particularly those belonging to the major retailers such as Sainsbury's Local, Tesco Express, and Morrison's Local. In addition, the store is not one that is expected to be a location for a main food shop due to the size of the store and limited products on offer. Instead, it is anticipated that visits to the store will be local and on foot.

5.38 In order to undertake the impact workings, we have used the following methodology:

Existing convenience turnover for stores in 2022 calculated using the benchmark figures at the 2015 base price

Convenience turnover has been grown to 2025 using RPBN 2022.

5.39 In undertaking our assessment, we have followed Planning Practice Guidance in largely relying on the existing trading patterns and trends within Zone S found within the household survey for the SRSR and then to apportion the trade diverted based upon the character of development, geographic location and brand loyalty factors.

5.40 As a result of this, Table 7 in Appendix 1 sets out the expected convenience trade diversion of the proposed development and the impact on the existing shopping destinations within the area. As can be seen, it is anticipated that the majority of the proposal's turnover will be diverted from the most popular main convenience retailers within and closest to the PCA.

5.41 The Given this, it is anticipated that the majority of trade will be diverted from Lidl, Virginia Street, the Asda at C12 Shopping Park, Tesco Express on Eastbank Street, and the nearby Costcutter on Cemetery Road. This reflects the shopping patterns within the SRSR 2015 household survey which showed that each received a strong proportion of top-up shopping expenditure. In addition, the proximity to the proposed development has been taken into account as a factor. Other stores anticipated to be impacted upon are those larger stores within Southport and the other nearby convenience stores that are found as traditional 'corner shops' within the area.

5.42 It is anticipated that Birkdale Local Centre will be less impacted upon than those mentioned above due to the location outside of the PCA but mainly due to the strong performance of this centre when the health check was carried out, with a high diversity of uses and just one vacancy. Birkdale is also seen as a highly attractive centre with wide pavements, good public realm, and outside seating; again, this was evidenced during the health check visit.

Impact on Planned Investment

5.43 There are no committed developments of an appropriate scale or proximity to the site to be impact upon by the proposed development or have a cumulative impact on the identified centres. In addition, there are no allocations or proposed future expansions or renovations of retail centres within the Local Plan and within the PCA.

6.0 Conclusion

6.1 This Retail Statement has been prepared on behalf of the Central England Co-operative for a full application for the erection of two retail units (Use Class E) with associated access, parking, and landscaping at the site of the former George Hotel, Cemetery Road, Southport.

6.2 The Retail Impact Assessment has provided a robust and thorough assessment of the impact of the proposed development on the two designated centres adjacent to the Primary Catchment Area, in accordance with Paragraph 90 of the NPPF and policy ED2 of the Local Plan.

6.3 The assessment has confirmed that the impact on the designated centres within the PCA would be minimal and would not harm the vitality and viability of those centres. We are also unaware of any impact on existing, planned or committed private or public sector investment in any of these centres. Conversely the proposed development constitutes a large investment and will help to increase consumer choice within the area.

6.4 The Sequential Assessment has examined a number of sites within the PCA for their suitability for the proposed development, however no sequentially preferable sites have been identified either within or on the edge of any designated centres.

6.5 Overall, it is considered that both the sequential test and the retail impact assessment as set out within the NPPF have been passed.

Appendix 1 – Retail Tables

TABLE 1 - POPULATION

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Zone S	[redacted]										
TOTAL	[redacted]										

Table 1 Notes

Source: Sefton Retail Strategy Review 2015, Table 6.1: Population by Survey Zone (2015 to 2030)

TABLE 2A- PER CAPITA CONVENIENCE EXPENDITURE (£)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	[redacted]										
Growth Rate	[redacted]										
Total Per Capita Expenditure	[redacted]										

Table 2A Notes

Source: 2015 figure derived from Table 6.1 and 6.4 of Sefton Retail Strategy Review 2015. 2015-2025 figures based on growth rates taken from Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 19 (January 2022) Appendix 3: Figure 6 'Growth in sales volumes (retail spend) per head 2010-40 (% per annum) total'.

TABLE 2B - PER CAPITA CONVENIENCE EXPENDITURE (£) ADJUSTED FOR SFT

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	[redacted]										
	[redacted]										
Annual Deduction	[redacted]										
Multiplier	[redacted]										
Total Per Capita	[redacted]										

Table 2B Notes

Source: Reduction for Non Retail Forms of Trading taken from yearly rates contained in Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 19 (January 2022), Appendix 3, Figure 5: 'Estimated and projected market share of non-store retail sales', 'Adjusted for SFT sales from stores' column.

TABLE 3A - PER CAPITA COMPARISON EXPENDITURE (£)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	[redacted]										
Growth Rate	[redacted]										
Total Per Capita Expenditure	[redacted]										

Table 3A Notes

Source: 2015 figure derived from Table 6.1 and 6.6 of Sefton Retail Strategy Review 2015-2025. 2015-2025 figures based on growth rates taken from Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 19 (January 2022) Appendix 3: Figure 6 'Growth in sales volumes (retail spend) per head 2010-2040 (% per annum) total'

TABLE 3B - PER CAPITA COMPARISON EXPENDITURE (£) ADJUSTED FOR SFT

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
	[redacted]										
	[redacted]										
Annual Deduction	[redacted]										
Multiplier	[redacted]										
Total Per Capita Expenditure	[redacted]										

Table 3B Notes

Source: Reduction for Non Retail Forms of Trading taken from yearly rates contained in Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 18 (October 2020), Appendix 3, Figure 5: 'Estimated and projected market share of non-store retail sales', 'Adjusted for SFT sales from stores' column.

TABLE 4A TOTAL AVAILABLE CONVENIENCE EXPENDITURE (£)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
All	[redacted]										
	[redacted]										
	[redacted]										
TOTAL	[redacted]										

TABLE 4B TOTAL AVAILABLE COMPARISON EXPENDITURE (£)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
All	[redacted]										
	[redacted]										
	[redacted]										
TOTAL	[redacted]										

Tables 4A and 4B Notes

Source: Sefton Retail Strategy Review 2015-2025

TABLE 5 - TURNOVER OF THE PROPOSAL

Lidl Store	Net Sales Area (sqm)	Sales Density (£ p.sq.m.)	Turnover at 2015 (£m)	Turnover at 2016 (£m)	Turnover at 2017 (£m)	Turnover at 2018 (£m)	Turnover at 2019 (£m)	Turnover at 2020 (£m)	Turnover at 2021 (£m)	Turnover at 2022 (£m)	Turnover at 2023 (£m)	Turnover at 2024 (£m)	Turnover at 2025 (£m)
Convenience	[redacted]												
Comparison	[redacted]												
Totals	[redacted]												

Notes:
2015 Prices
Proposed unit is proposed as 395sqm based on submitted plans and 116sqm of back of house functions (i.e., circulation, office, storage, toilets etc.)

Sales area split taken from Mintel Foodstore Sales Densities August 2021 RPBN 19 Update based on Co-op occupying proposed store.
Sales Densities taken from Global Data Foodstore Sales Densities - December 2021
Convenience Turnover 2015-2025 grown using Retail Planner Briefing Note 19 January 2022, Appendix 4b
Comparison Turnover 2015-2025 grown using Retail Planner Briefing Note 19 January 2022, Appendix 4b

TABLE 6 - TURNOVER OF EXISTING STORES AND CENTRES

	Net Floorspace (sq.m.)	Floorspace Split		Convenience					Comparison				Total		
		Convenience	Comparison	Net Sales Area (sqm)	Sales Density (£/sqm)	Benchmark Turnover @ 2022 (£m)	Benchmark Turnover @ 2025 (£m)		Net Sales Area (sqm)	Sales Density (£/sqm)	Turnover @ 2022 (£m)	Benchmark Turnover @ 2025 (£m)	Total Turnover @ 2022 (£m)	Total Turnover @ 2025 (£m)	
Growth Rate							1.000				1.029	1.019			
Allocated Centres within the Study Area															
Birkdale Local Centre	[redacted]														
McColl's Weld Road															
Spar, Liverpool Road															
Sainsbury's, Liverpool Road															
Other Convenience															
Other Comparison															
Total															
Southport Town Centre															
Asda C12 Shopping Park															
Farmfoods, Lord Street															
Iceland, King Street															
Lidl, Virginia Street															
M&S, Chapel Street															
Morrisons, Winter Gardens															
Sainsbury's, Lord Street															
Tesco Express, Eastbank Street															
Other Convenience															
Other Comparison															
Total															
Totals															
Out of Centre Locations															
Costcutter, Cemetery Road															
Go Local, Shakespeare Street															
One Stop, Belmont Street															
Tesco Extra, Meols Cop															
Aldi, Meols Cop															
Totals															
Commitments within the Study Area															
None															
Overall Totals															

Notes:
2015 Prices
Convenience/comparison floorspace split derived from Mintel Foodstore Sales Densities 2021
Sales Densities for Aldi, Asda, Co-op, Iceland, Lidl, M&S, Morrisons, Sainsbury's, Tesco, Waitrose taken from Global Data Foodstore Sales Densities - December 2021
Sales Densities for remaining sourced from Mintel Retail Rankings August 2021
M&S Food floorspace estimated at 5% of total floorspace
Sales Densities for Go Local store derived from average of 'Convenience Stores' from Mintel Retail Rankings August 2021
Convenience Turnover 2022-2025 grown using Retail Planner Briefing Note 19 January 2022
Comparison Turnover 2022-2025 grown using Retail Planner Briefing Note 19 January 2022
Floorspace for stores derived from business rates figures and planning applications

TABLE 7 - TRADE DIVERSION AND IMPACT

	Estimated 2025 Convenience Turnover	Estimated 2025 Comparison Turnover	Total 2025 Turnover	Convenience Trade Diversion (%)	Convenience Trade Diversion (£)	Comparison Trade Diversion (%)	Comparison trade Diversion (£)	Total Trade Diversion (£)	Total Turnover Post Construction (£)	Impact (%)
					£ 4,750,703		£ 605,423			
Allocated Centres within the Study Area										
Birkdale Local Centre	[redacted]									
McColl's Weld Road	[redacted]									
Spar, Liverpool Road	[redacted]									
Sainsbury's, Liverpool Road	[redacted]									
Other Convenience	[redacted]									
Other Comparison	[redacted]									
Total	[redacted]									
	[redacted]									
Southport Town Centre	[redacted]									
Asda C12 Shopping Park	[redacted]									
Farmfoods, Lord Street	[redacted]									
Iceland, King Street	[redacted]									
Lidl, Virginia Street	[redacted]									
M&S, Chapel Street	[redacted]									
Morrisons, Winter Gardens	[redacted]									
Sainsbury's, Lord Street	[redacted]									
Tesco Express, Eastbank Street	[redacted]									
Other Convenience	[redacted]									
Other Comparison	[redacted]									
Total	[redacted]									
	[redacted]									
Totals	[redacted]									
	[redacted]									
Out of Centre Locations Withing Catchment	[redacted]									
Costcutter, Cemetery Road	[redacted]									
Go Local, Shakespeare Street	[redacted]									
One Stop, Belmont Street	[redacted]									
Tesco Extra, Meols Cop	[redacted]									
Aldi, Meols Cop	[redacted]									
Other Local Stores	[redacted]									
Totals	[redacted]									
Commitments within the Study Area	[redacted]									
None	[redacted]									
	[redacted]									
Overall Totals	[redacted]									