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PROPOSED MIXED RETAIL AND RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

SITE AT
100, Booker Avenue
Liverpool
L18 7HH

**PLANNING,
DESIGN AND ACCESS
STATEMENT**

OUR REF: JT/MD/13/198

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We are instructed by TPS DEZ Developments, the owners of the site, to advise in relation to a redevelopment proposal at this former BP petrol filling station site at 100, Booker Avenue, Liverpool.
- 1.2 We have inspected the site and have reviewed the planning history for the site. We have assessed national planning policy guidance and have reviewed the relevant development plan policies and guidance.
- 1.3 We have worked closely with the architects for this scheme and detailed pre-application discussions have been undertaken with the Council's Planning Officer (Catherine Kelly). A pre-application meeting was held with written advice. Further correspondence also took place in relation to the need for a sequential assessment relating to the proposed retail unit. This resulted in concluding advice confirming that no further analysis would be needed. A copy of this correspondence is appended (Appendix 1).
- 1.4 Design and Access information prepared by the architect is incorporated within this statement.
- 1.5 A Transport Statement prepared by WYG is included as part of the application. This provides detailed parking, delivery and access information and a review of all relevant policies and guidance relating to these issues.
- 1.6 A decommissioning report taking account of the former use of the site as a petrol service station is included within this application submission.

2.0 THE SITE AND SURROUNDING AREA

- 2.1 The application site with an area of approximately 0.18 hectares is a corner site located on the southern side of Booker Avenue at its cross road junction with Greenhill Road. The site is bounded by a neighbourhood parade to the south and a bungalow to the west. On the northern corner of the crossroads is the Greenhills Public House. On the opposite corner, to the north east, is a site currently being developed to provide a part three / part four storey block of flats. On the corner to the east is a pair of two storey semi-detached dwellings.
- 2.2 The site was last used as a BP petrol filling station with three existing accesses on Greenhill Road and Booker Road.
- 2.3 The surrounding area is predominantly residential in character.
- 2.4 The site is located in a sustainable and accessible position, well served by public transport.

3.0 PLANNING HISTORY

The relevant planning history for the site is set out below:

- 3.1 Reference 87P/1059 – To redevelop the existing Booker Service Station to include a convenience store / sales area at ground floor and office / staff accommodation at first floor level. Permission granted at appeal on 17th June 1988.
- 3.2 Reference 09F/0008 – To erect a new building containing 2 retail units (800 sq. m approx.) and lay out service area and 15 space car park at rear with access from Booker Avenue. This application was withdrawn.

4.0 THE APPLICATION PROPOSAL.

- 4.1 This application proposal has been designed following detailed advice within pre-application discussions and taking account of the existing surrounding residential and neighbourhood retail development.
- 4.2 A single storey retail development (Class A1) is proposed comprising a retail unit of 372 sq. m (4,000 sq.ft) with 13 car parking spaces and a pair of semi-detached dwellings (Class C3) with 4 car parking spaces. The access road onto Greenhill Road is proposed to be closed, retaining two existing accesses onto Booker Avenue to serve the proposed development.
- 4.3 Details of the layout and elevations are shown on the submitted drawings and computer generated images. An explanation of the proposed design prepared by the architect is set out below:
- 4.4 The proposal has been designed taking account of pre-application advice and the specific requirements of the likely user of the proposed retail store, including the corporate approach to the design of the unit, the provision of a small equipment yard and space for plant to service the store, along with welfare and storage facilities.
- 4.5 The store is proposed to be accessed by the public from Booker Avenue, taking account of the position of trees on Greenhill Road which are protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Delivery and servicing is proposed from the previous Greenhill Road access, through a small yard to the proposed building.

4.6 A pair of semi-detached houses is proposed, rooms and a cloakroom next to the store and forming a transition from this type of housing on Booker Avenue and the local area. The houses are proposed to front 1 of which has 3 bedrooms and the other with 4 bedrooms, and both with 2 bath Booker Avenue and to be provided with a shared parking area for 4 cars at the front and gardens, separated by fencing, at the rear.

4.7 Store Design

Although the area is primarily residential and, in fact, houses in terms of the built environment with strong manifestations to this effect along local roads, such as Booker Avenue, there are nonetheless changes to this rhythm in the area. Some of these have been evident for a long time, such as The Greenhills public house and the two small shopping areas along Greenhill Road, and the recent approval for a three/four storey apartment building with associated parking on the corner diagonally opposite to the site, continues this.

The former BP Station would have continued in that scene with its single storey building and canopy and we would contend so too will the store, being of a differing provision in modern material terms but, nonetheless, working with and completing the framework on the corner as will be seen from the circle on our site plan of that junction. The buildings fronting it are dissimilar and discrete and, in that respect, our proposal is in good company continuing the rhythm of parking on the corner as with The Greenhills public house and in the same relationship to that node point of the junction and its neighbours.

With respect to convenience shopping here, the former BP Station had such a kiosk whilst there is a mini-market to the south and a larger store on Greenhill Road to the north adjacent to The Greenhill public house.

The building itself is a single storey building about 4.5m high providing the 3.6m clear internal height required by the operator and also incorporating the strong elements of corporate identity referred to earlier on its visual impact, notable among these being the strong appearance of the glazed entrance elevation facing the parking area.

Glazing is set in thermally broken aluminium frames and finished RAL7043 Grey to windows and to the entrance door. Glazing is low e-glass in sealed double glazed units.

The building uses a portal frame to provide a column free interior to the shopping and storage area and the building is clad, outside of the glazed entrance area, with modern highly efficient insulated aluminium panels finished in a neutral Silver Grey above a 1.4m high red brick plinth wall.

The roof is metal clad with a low pitch and with no upstands or balustrades since there will be significant leaf fall from the nearby trees in the autumn and this approach will provide for easier maintenance in connection with this issue.

It was intended to align the building with the building line of the adjoining shops but this would have had serious repercussions in terms of its relationship with the group of 4 trees at this point at Greenhill Road. These are protected and, enclosed with this submission, is a report on their condition, along with recommendations for their future health prepared by Mulberry Arboriculturists at the request of our client. This gives guidance as to the position of the root-ball and, along with the site survey also purchased by our client, we are able to determine the size of the crowns. As a direct consequence, therefore, we have had to adjust our thinking on this and position the building further away from the trees. This also informed our approach to the store entrance, which is now located facing Booker Avenue rather than Greenhill Road, to protect them further.

Mulberry recommend some work to the trees which is spelled out in their report and among these is the removal of the lower growth which will have the effect of exposing the side elevation of the building here which, being neutral in colour, will complement the trees when viewed from the road in the way that the former use would not.

The cladding is continued around the back of the building next to 190-192 Greenhill Road, where it is protected by a boundary fence, and to the side of the garden adjacent to the new houses.

The front of the building is provided with a horizontal fascia above the main glazing for the company's signage, which will be the subject of a separate application, and also a cased roller shutter to protect the building when the shop is closed. At the side to Greenhill Road, the elevation of the building is clad in panels to provide a neutral appearance so that the focus is on the trees and vegetation as mentioned above. In addition, the height of the building ties in with its neighbours with the eaves being at the same level and indeed with the low pitch roof subordinate to the predominant tiled roofs of the area.

4.8 House Design

The proposed semi-detached houses are designed to continue in the manner of most of the houses on Booker Avenue, albeit in a more modern fashion. They are still traditional in appearance with red brick ground walls and red tiled hipped roofs above an external rendered first floor. The hips are to the same angle as the existing houses to maintain continuity and context. The entrance lobby and cloakroom on the ground floor project out from the building and is covered by a red tiled roof.

The windows are modern, efficient, thermally broken frames, finished white and fitted with low e-glass with patio doors at the rear for access to the gardens which

are divided by 1.8m fence and bounded to the yard to the store by a further 1.8m close boarded fence.

The houses are designed to Lifetime Homes' standards and provide a cloakroom and kitchen and the front of the house on the ground floor, with a living/dining room at the rear giving out on to the garden through sliding patio doors. To the first floor of both there is a master bedroom with en-suite, a double bedroom and either one or two single bedrooms, with a bathroom, to service their needs.

Renewables can be fitted to the rear south facing roof pitch.

The houses are set back from the main building line along Booker Avenue to form a transition from this alignment to the new store and to provide adequate space to manoeuvre cars in the shared parking area for 4 cars. This is to allow them to use the existing access crossover to the road and protect and retain the London Plane tree at this point on Booker Avenue.

A feature of the houses along Booker Avenue is a low wall to define the pavement from the gardens and crossovers and this is continued to the front of the houses and also across the front of the store into Greenhill Road.

4.9 External Area and Car Parking

To the front of the store on the corner, parking is provided for 13 cars, including 1 disabled space and 1 mother and child space with an access aisle. These are screened from the pavement by a low wall and planting. The area is further screened from the new housing by a 1.8m high close boarded timber fence with concrete posts. To the back and side of the store near to 190-192 Greenhill Road, a small yard is provided for deliveries along with bins and for plant, mostly condensers. This is separated with a close boarded timber 2m high fence with a

lockable gate wide enough to allow easy passage for deliveries and refuse collections.

The parking area is accessed from Booker Avenue by use of modifying the existing crossover from the filling station at this point and which does not affect the existing trees in the road. Bollards are sited at 1400mm centres across the front of the store to protect it from possibilities such as ram raiding.

4.10 Accessibility

The scheme is designed to fully satisfy the obligations of the Disability Discrimination Act and the Council's Design for Access to All SPD and so provides a true and level floor within the store with flush access threshold to the entrance door. This is an automatic opening and closing door and is wide enough at 1200mm for wheelchair access. The disabled parking is situated closest to the store entrance door. Tactile paving and dropped kerbs will be provided as necessary at crossover points to the satisfaction of the Highways Department.

The parking area is flat with drainage falls at a gradient no steeper than 1:80. It is laid to low drainage falls and finished with smooth tarmac with bays marked out in white. The area across the front of the store is finished with non-slip concrete paviors.

4.11 Consultation and considered design response

Pre-application meetings have been held between Philip Barton, acting on behalf of the client and the store operator, and Catherine Kelly for Liverpool City Council. There was a guarded positive reaction to the proposal with a number of considerations by the Council and these have been minuted.

Concern was expressed at the proximity to the bins and delivery area to the new houses on the earlier plans and this has been addressed by moving the delivery area and yard to the other side of the store on Greenhill Road and giving more area to one of the house gardens with a 1.8m high close boarded timber fence for separation. The plant and bins in this yard are located away from residential properties.

The proposed housing has been changed following concerns raised from the proposal for three in a terrace, which is out of character in the area, to two semi-detached which forms the bulk of the local housing provision.

There was also comment about parking cars on the corner but we would suggest that this is not dissimilar to the situation at Greenhill public house and our sketch layout drawing shows that our proposed building addresses the corner in the same way at the same distance as the others facing the corner. Moving the building forward on the site to the corner would create very difficult problems in the parking and store delivery access provisions and work against the relationship of the three other buildings fronting the junction, including the most recent new building which is significantly larger in presence than our proposal.

As a result, we consider this to be the optimum position after testing several options and would suggest that, whilst small corner sites such as this are always difficult and subject to compromises, our approach is rational, modern, economical and efficient in terms of its response to the environment and locale. The proposal replicates the Urban Grain of other local junctions and, as such, will fit well into the local context.

5.0 **PLANNING POLICY CONSIDERATIONS.**

5.1 Planning Policy considerations comprise relevant Government Policy within the National Planning Policy Framework including recently published Planning Practice Guidance. Also, the Development Plan for the site that comprises Liverpool Unitary Development Plan Policies (November 2002), as highlighted at the pre-application advice stage. Consideration has also been given to relevant Liverpool City Council Supplementary Planning Guidance.

National Planning Policy Framework

5.2 The Framework sets out a presumption in favour of sustainable development, encouraging the approval of such development without delay. Core planning principles set out within this Framework that are relevant to a retail development include the following:

- Meeting the housing needs of an area.
- Meeting the business and other development needs of an area.
- Seeking a high standard of design and good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants.
- Encouraging the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed provided that it is not of high environmental value.

5.3 Section 2 (Ensuring the vitality of town centres) advises that planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for management and growth.

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- 5.4 Paragraph 24 advises of circumstances where local planning authorities should apply a sequential assessment in relation to proposed retail developments outside an existing centre. *This issue was, as detailed earlier in this statement, given careful consideration during the pre-application stage. The information supplied by the proposed retail user's Regional Planning Manager in his letter dated 17th February 2014 explains this in detail. As advised in an e-mail from Catherine Kelly dated 17th March 2014, the information submitted within this letter adequately demonstrates that the catchment area of the proposed store will be very localised and will not therefore negatively impact upon the viability of nearby district / local centres. No further analysis was requested. A copy of this correspondence is appended (Appendix 1).*
- 5.5 Paragraph 26 advises that retail impact assessments will be required for sites providing 2,500 sq. m or more. *This site is below this threshold and therefore such as assessment is not a requirement.*
- 5.6 Section 6 of the Framework (Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes) encourages housing development to meet housing needs. Paragraph 49 advises that housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.
- 5.7 Section 7 of the Framework (Requiring good design) advises that good design is a key aspect of sustainable development and should contribute to making places better for people. Paragraph 58 advises that developments should respond to local character and history, and reflect the identity of local surroundings and materials, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation. Development should be visually attractive as a result of good architecture and appropriate landscaping. Paragraph 64 advises that development should improve the character and quality of an area and the way that it functions.
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The proposed development is a sensitively designed scheme to allow a balanced approach taking account of the above principles. Care has been taken to design the development proposed to allow for the provision of new housing and a commercial retail unit on a previously developed site. As explained by the architect, carefully considered buildings of a good quality are proposed to meet local need, whilst protecting the character of the surrounding area and the amenities of neighbouring residents.

- 5.8 Paragraph 120 of the Framework advises that to prevent unacceptable risks from pollution planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development is appropriate for its location. Where a site is affected by contamination or land stability issues, responsibility for securing a safe development rests with the developer and/or landowner. *A site decontamination report is submitted as part of this application.*
- 5.9 Advice within the Framework on decision taking, from paragraph 186, advises that Local Planning Authorities should approach decision taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development and should look for solutions rather than problems.
- 5.10 At paragraph 196 of the Framework Government advises that planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The Framework is a material consideration in planning decisions.

The Development Plan

- 5.11 The Development Plan for the application site comprises the saved policies of The Liverpool Unitary Development Plan – adopted 2002.
- 5.12 Policies within the Liverpool Unitary Development Plan are a material consideration provided they are in compliance with the more recent National Planning Policy Framework.

The following sets out policies of relevance to the development proposed:

- 5.13 Policy S9 (Neighbourhood Centres and Parades) advises that the City Council will seek to maintain and enhance the role of neighbourhood centres and parades, in order to provide a range of shopping and other services and facilities to serve local everyday needs. This policy allows for the provision of new retail units adjacent to such parades, as is proposed. This is provided that design and scale is appropriate, vitality and viability is not undermined, highway, traffic and servicing issues are addressed and residential amenity is not affected.

The proposed development is considered compliant with this policy in the following ways:

- 5.13.1 *As explained above and within the letter provided by the retailer's Regional Planning Manager, a local convenience food store is proposed to meet a primarily walking catchment area that will not harm more distant local centres. It will complement and add vitality to the established neighbourhood parade.*
- 5.13.2 *The Transport Statement submitted confirms that the proposed store will not have an adverse impact on the adjoining highway network and will provide parking spaces in compliance with the LCC car parking standards.*

5.13.3 The architect has designed the proposed development to prevent any adverse impact on local residential amenity, with the proposed store located alongside the existing retail properties and the proposed residential unit alongside neighbouring residential properties.

5.14 Policy H4 (Primary Residential Areas) advises that in such areas, planning permission will be granted for new housing development and new business development where there will be no detrimental impact on the amenities and character of the residential area. *This mixed use development proposal has been designed in compliance with this policy, a carefully designed development taking account of the character of the local area and the need to protect local residential amenity. This is as explained by the architect in the earlier part of this statement.*

5.15 Policy H5 (New Residential Development) sets out criteria for the consideration of new residential development.

The architect has designed the proposed development to comply with these criteria:

5.15.1 A design, density and layout to respect the character of the surrounding area, representing an enhancement in comparison with the current condition and the former petrol service station use.

5.15.2 A proposal offering a safe highway impact and policy compliant parking provision, as confirmed within the Transport Statement prepared by a transport planner involved throughout the pre-application stage.

5.15.3 A proposal designed to a high standard taking account of the criteria set out within policy HD18.

5.16 Policy HD18 (General Design Requirements) sets out further detailed design criteria with which the proposal has been designed to comply:

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- 5.16.1 *A scale, density and massing to relate well to the locality, incorporating a single storey retail building, and a pair of traditionally designed houses.*
 - 5.16.2 *A development including design influences in common with the local area, as detailed by the architect.*
 - 5.16.3 *Building lines and a layout to relate to the locality, taking account of protected trees, neighbouring building locations and patterns of development, again, as explained by the architect.*
 - 5.16.4 *External boundary and surface treatment to be of a high standard.*
 - 5.16.5 *Plant and machinery to be located discretely within a screened yard area.*
 - 5.16.6 *A development that will protect the amenities and privacy of neighbours, an improvement for this vacant former petrol service station site.*
 - 5.16.7 *With arrangements for the storage and collection of refuse, within a screened yard for the retail unit and within separate screened bin areas for each residential unit.*
 - 5.16.8 *External materials are proposed to discourage graffiti.*
 - 5.16.9 *Carefully considered access, parking and delivery arrangements are proposed, as fully detailed within the Transport Statement.*
- 5.17 Policy HD19 (Access for All) requires development to offer a fully accessible environment for all. Consideration has also been given to the Council's SPG (Design for Access for All). *The development has been designed in compliance with this policy as detailed above.*
- 5.18 Policy T12 and T13 (Car Parking Provision in New Developments and Car Parking for the Disabled). *Please refer to the Transport Statement submitted with this application that provides a detailed review of all relevant transport, parking and*
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highway safety policies and explains how the proposed development has been designed in compliance with these policies.

- 5.19 Policy EP9 (Waste Storage) seeks to ensure that commercial waste is stored and transferred. *As detailed on the submitted drawings, a separate screened storage and collection area is proposed.*
- 5.20 Policy EP2 (Contaminated Land) *A decommissioning report relating to this site is submitted as part of the application. This details remedial works undertaken.*
- 5.21 Policy HD22 (Existing Trees and Landscaping) requires a tree survey to be submitted in relation to applications that may impact on trees. *An arboricultural implications assessment and method statement are submitted as part of this application to ensure that the development can be implemented without harm to existing protected trees. One existing tree within the site is proposed to be removed, a category 3 multi stemmed apple tree with poor form and having previously been crown lifted.*
- 5.22 Policy HD23 (New Trees and Landscaping) states that all new developments should make provision for new trees and landscaping. *In this case new landscaping is proposed, as detailed on the application drawings.*

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The application proposal represents a well-designed, sustainable redevelopment proposal for a previously developed site, adhering to pre-application advice.
- 6.2 The application proposal embodies the principles set out in Government Guidance in making efficient use of previously developed land for sustainable development, to enhance the vitality of the area with a new local retail unit to serve the community and provide employment opportunities. Also, two new family homes.
- 6.3 This proposed development has been carefully designed to complement the character of the local area whilst taking account of the need to protect the amenities of neighbouring residents, offering an enhancement in comparison with the current vacant site.
- 6.4 The application proposals accord with adopted Development Plan Policy and with Government advice and guidance. It is respectfully requested that planning permission is granted.