

# Planning and Access Statement

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**Shop Direct, Speke**

**Application for a Temporary Car Park**



Prepared for Shop Direct  
By IBI Group

December 2015

CLIENT:	Shop Direct
PROJECT NAME:	Shop Direct Temporary Car Park
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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning and Access Statement is written in support of the full planning application for a temporary car park at the Shop Direct head office 'Skyways' site in Speke.
- 1.2 This statement should be considered in conjunction with the full submission, which comprises the following:
  - Application form and certificates
  - Full set of plans
  - Planning and Access Statement, December 2015 (this document)
  - Shop Direct Skyways Travel Plan – Report, JMP, 30/11/2015
- 1.3 Shop Direct, formerly Littlewoods Shop Direct Group and comprising the former Littlewoods Group of companies and Great Universal Stores (Manchester), is the online retailer behind the Littlewoods and Very businesses. It is one of the North West's biggest businesses, employing around 5,000 employees, of which circa 3,800 are employed in Merseyside.
- 1.4 Shop Direct has been based in Speke since 2006, relocating business operations from other locations in Liverpool and from Manchester. Its premises currently comprise:
  - At Estuary Business Park, Speke Road – the 'Skyways' site:
    - Skyways House (Hangar 2)
    - Skyways 2
    - Data Centre
    - Parking bays for 737 vehicles, made up of:
      - o 36 visitor bays
      - o 24 disabled bays
      - o 100 car share bays
      - o Several motorcycle and bicycle shelters
      - o 577 standard parking bays
      - o Temporary car parking for 220 cars on the adjoining Plot D1 (permission expires 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016).
  - At the Southern Gateway, Speke Boulevard:
    - Product Centre and Studio
    - 35 car parking spaces within the Southern Gateway car park

## 2 Proposed Development

- 2.1 This application is for planning permission for a period of three years for Plot D1 to continue to be used as a temporary car park for up to 220 cars.
- 2.2 The temporary car park will be treated as it is currently. The area used for car parking is surfaced with hardcore and edged by kerb stones, painted white. The kerb stones restrict the area to accommodate only up to 220 cars, and prevent parking on the remainder of the plot.
- 2.3 The remainder of the plot will stay as existing, grassed with a small bund at the road edge. There is a landscaped bund edging the plot to Estuary Boulevard, which was planted with a mix of wildflowers in 2010 and continues to be maintained by Shop Direct, according with the landscape scheme approved by the Council.
- 2.4 Access would remain as already established from the south west corner of Plot D1, via the main Skyways car park, to which access is controlled by a barrier. The access point at the north side of Plot D1, off the approach road to the main car park (immediately off Estuary Boulevard) will not be in use.

## 3 Site Context

### Site Location

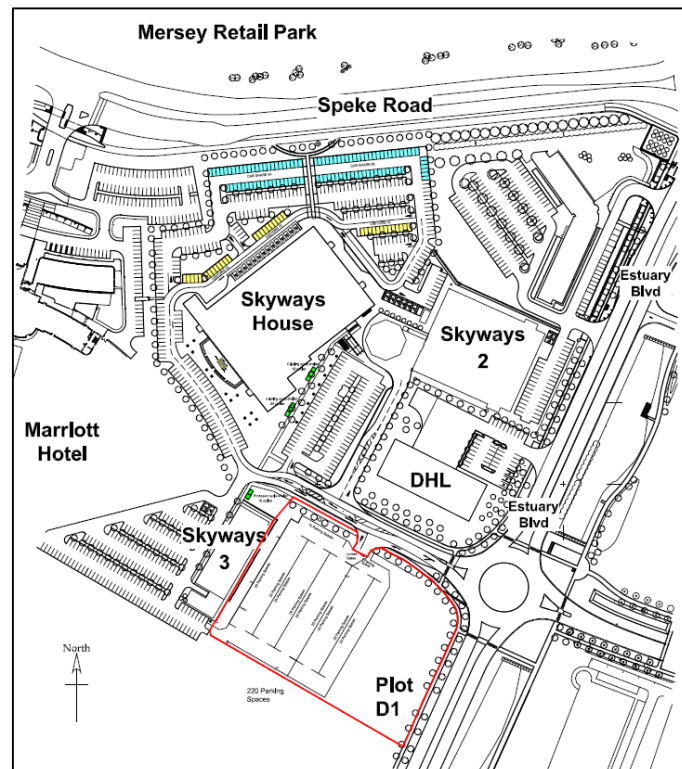
- 3.1 The application site is in Speke, an area located approximately 7.7 miles to the south east of the city centre of Liverpool. The site is within the Estuary Business Park, and is accessed off Speke Road.

### Surroundings

- 3.2 The Estuary Business Park offers an attractive setting for a wide range of business occupiers, with water features, landscaping and high quality premises. Estuary Boulevard runs through the centre of the Park, and the Shop Direct plot lies immediately to the west of this.
- 3.3 There are no local NCP car parks or off road parking near to the site.
- 3.4 To the south of the site is a vacant development plot (Cell 3). To the west, beyond the permanent car park is the apron of the former Liverpool Airport, now a Crowne Plaza hotel. To the east is the main part of the Estuary Business Park, which includes a number of businesses, as well as remaining development plots, and to the north, on the opposite side of Speke Road is the New Mersey Retail Park.

### Site Description

- 3.5 The proposal site is located to the south of the main Skyways car park, which is to the south of the Skyways House and Skyways 2 buildings, within the Estuary Business Park. The site area is 13,059 sqm (1.3 hectares).
- 3.6 The site is 0.9 miles from the Shop Direct Product Centre which is located in the Southern Gateway industrial estate off Speke Boulevard.



**Application Red Line Boundary**

## 4 Background to the Proposals

### Site Planning History

- 4.1 Temporary car parking has been provided on Plot D1 since Shop Direct relocated to the Estuary Business Park in 2006. Initially, this was a temporary solution to provide extra parking to accommodate the high numbers of staff relocating to the premises, the majority of whom had a contractual right to a parking space regardless of their home location. Since then, it has been an essential resource to accommodate the changing needs of this growing and successful business which attracts talented colleagues from outside of the region.
- 4.2 The following paragraphs give the full history of temporary permissions that have been in place since 2006.
- 4.3 **January 2006:** Skyways House opens, staff relocate from former Littlewoods premises in Liverpool. Temporary permission for Plot D1 to accommodate up to 350 vehicles was approved by Liverpool City Council in March 2006, to be reduced to 250 by February 2007 and to cease altogether by August 2007, to be secured by a Section 106 agreement.
- 4.4 **2007:** For a number of business reasons, including additional transfers of staff to the building from GUS in Manchester (Devonshire Street and Arndale), the reduction in total parking demand was not achieved. In 2007, LCC granted planning permission to continue to use the temporary car park for a further 2 years, initially for up to 350 vehicles. This approval was subject to the reduction of the number of temporary spaces to 300 within 12 months (by August 2008) to cease by August 2009, and the adoption of a Travel Plan, which was to set clear targets for the next 5 years.
- 4.5 The Travel Plan was approved, put in place and implemented. However, due to increased levels of staffing and business activity, a significant reduction in parking demand was not reached by the end of the planning permission period.
- 4.6 **2009:** Shop Direct applied again in 2009 to continue to use the temporary car park, but for a reduced number of 175 bays, for a further 2 years and to cease by August 2011.
- 4.7 This application was refused on the grounds that, firstly, the level of parking exceeded the standards set by the LCC Supplementary Planning Document – Ensuring a Choice of Travel, and the Regional Spatial Strategy. Temporary car parking was allowed previously on the basis that it would be gradually reduced and removed, through the reduction of permits and implementation of the Travel Plan. The reduction of permits was not seen as sufficient.
- 4.8 Secondly, the application was refused as it was considered that the continued ‘oversupply’ of parking on the site would set an undesirable precedent for other operators within the business park, and at other business parks.
- 4.9 **2010:** Shop Direct undertook a review of its parking permits system and of the parking demand across the business in Speke. It was apparent that parking on site could be reduced through introducing better car park controls, by revoking temporary permits and by not allowing any new starters or contractors a permit. This was implemented, together with an increase in car sharing bays, with special permits for car sharers.
- 4.10 However, it was also clear in looking at how the business operates, that there was a unique situation for this business, whereby the staff using the Product Centre premises at Southern Gateway are actually based at Skyways House as well. The staff parking demand generated by the Product Centre, located 0.9 miles away at Southern Gateway, actually needs to be met at the Estuary site, where staff start and end their day, accessing the Product Centre over the course of the day and week, by sharing lifts.

- 4.11 Hence, the case was made in a new planning application that, in parallel to Shop Direct taking action to reduce parking demand and permits, there is justification for some additional parking at the Estuary site to accommodate staff from the business's wider Speke premises.
- 4.12 Planning permission was granted in 2010 for the use of Plot D1 as a car park for up to 150 cars for a period of 2 years (10F/1077). This permission expired at the end of June 2012, by which time despite continued implementation of the Travel Plan, and removal of permits, the need for parking to serve the Estuary and Southern Gateway sites continued.
- 4.13 **January 2013:** Planning permission was granted for the use of Plot D1 as a temporary car park for a further period of three years (12F/1722) for up to 220 cars, with the Planning Officer recognising the existence of an 'exceptional case' for the parking requirement in his reason for approval. This use ceases to be permissible in January 2016.

## Planning History Summary

- 4.14 Shop Direct has worked consistently, with particular focus since 2010, at reducing parking demand at their Speke premises.
- 4.15 They have implemented a significant raft of Travel Plan measures (with the support of transport advisers JMP) and introduced better car park controls, revoking temporary permits, creating a postcode exclusion zone for permits, and not allowing contractors a permit. The number of car sharing bays was increased, with special permits for car sharers. Additional visitor's bays were also created, due to the high volume of visitors that come to the site by car. The company has also introduced a Bike 2 Work Scheme, free travel passes for new starters, showers and pool bikes that colleagues can hire out to get to and from the workplace and video conferencing capabilities on the majority of Shop Direct sites
- 4.16 The business continues to review and implement its Travel Plan to further reduce travel by car and the need for parking at the site (see Section 6 below).
- 4.17 It has been demonstrated that there is a unique situation for this business, whereby the staff using the Product Centre premises at Southern Gateway are actually based at Skyways House. The staff parking demand generated by the Product Centre, located 0.9 miles away at Southern Gateway, actually needs to be met at the Estuary site, where staff start and end their day, accessing the Product Centre over the course of the day and week, by sharing lifts.
- 4.18 The grant of permission was recognition by the Council that car parking at the Skyways site serves a larger business premises than just the Skyways buildings, and that the parking allowance in policy terms can be 'transferred' from the Product Centre site to the Estuary site.



## 5 Current Parking Requirements

- 5.1 As can be seen from the planning history in the previous section, the need for additional parking at Skyways House has reduced considerably since the original move to the site in 2006.
- 5.2 Through control of parking permits and other travel planning measures, Shop Direct has reduced its need for temporary parking on site by 130 spaces in the last 10 years, from 350 spaces in 2006 to 220 spaces now in 2015.
- 5.3 However, it has not been possible to reduce the demand for additional parking so far as to be able to remove the temporary car park on Plot D1 at this time. This is due to the main factors discussed below:
  1. The need for parking at Skyways House for Product Centre staff
  2. The changing business operations and their associated parking demands.
  3. The home location of those based at Skyways House. Increased distances travelled based on skills required and historical former business locations (meaning public transport is not an option for many staff).
  4. Wider area parking restrictions/lack of alternative off-site parking

### 1. Product Centre Parking

- 5.4 As above, Liverpool City Council recognised in granting the 2013 permission that there are unique circumstances for the business that justify a level of parking at the Skyways site which is above that set out in Council parking standards.
- 5.5 This 'transferred' parking demand from the Product Centre is still needed at the Skyways site, as the business continues to lease the Product Centre building. The current lease runs for a further 3 years, until 15th November 2018, with no breaks.
- 5.6 There is a new shuttle bus which runs every 30 minutes to transport staff from the Skyways site to the Product Centre and back. The majority of staff working at the Product Centre over the course of the day, will start and end their day at the Skyways site.

### 2. Changing Business Operations

- 5.7 **Changing business operations:**

Although changes in the market, and subsequently in the business structure, have meant changes at other Shop Direct sites, the Skyways site and its associated Product Centre have continued to adapt and remain profitable. Key changes to the operations that have impacted on the site include:

  - Refinement of the company's brands from 5 into 2 (Very and Littlewoods), and the launch of the "Very Exclusive" brand which has resulted in extra specialist online digital employees being recruited into the business. Greater emphasis on online shopping, meaning increase in jobs in data research and profiling.
  - Net increase of SD employees (+181 vs 2013) and increase in contractors.
- 5.8 In line with the changes in the business, Shop Direct continually reviews how they use their buildings. The Skyways site is the Head Office for Shop Direct and its functions and internal spaces need to adapt to accommodate the changing needs of the business. With this comes changes in the personnel required to deliver the business and the range of visitors to the site.

- 5.9 Of particular note is that one of the three studios has now moved from the Skyways site to the Product Centre, and part of Skyways 2 building will be turned into a new "Town Hall" space. This will be a multi-functional area for conferences/ meetings/ leisure/ wellness facilities and many other things.
- 5.10 This Town Hall function will need to be supported by adequate parking, which will include bringing staff from other sites by minibus and cars more frequently to use those facilities.
- 5.11 **High staff and visitor numbers:**  
Despite the recession, Shop Direct has continued to prosper, and despite the economy remains a considerable employer in the area. There are 1539 Shop Direct staff located permanently at the site (as of Nov. 2015), as well as in the region of 600 contractors on site. There has been an increase of 181 Shop Direct staff since 2013, resulting in a total staff and contractor number of 2139. We reported 1800 total staff (including contractors) in 2013.
- 5.12 This means that the numbers of staff on site well exceed the typical staff density of 10sqm per workspace (HCA Employment Densities Guide, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 2010), but this is not reflected in the way that parking standards are calculated or applied.
- 5.13 Visitors to the site are also increasing from the estimated 250 per day in 2013, despite the introduction of video conference facilities in the majority of Shop Direct's sites. The visitors include a large numbers of suppliers bringing multiple product ranges of samples and as such for those people it would not be practical to use public transport or other non-car modes.
- 5.14 Shop Direct regularly monitor the usage of their car parks, including the temporary car park. Evidence from this, taken from weekly averages of the period July 2015 to mid-September 2015, is that the number of vehicles attending the site on an average day is 946. In terms of capacity, the counts undertaken on site found that the car parks were at 91% in the am peak and at 86% in the pm peak. Given that these findings were taken from the summer months when many staff take annual leave, this is could even under-represent the typical demand and use of the car park.

### 3. Staff home locations

- 5.15 Shop Direct remains an employer which draws its staff from a large geographical area. Although the business is now well established in its Speke head office and some longer serving staff members will have relocated to the area, the business has needed to continue to recruit specialists from a wide catchment area to source the skills needed for this multi award winning e-tailer (online retailer).
- 5.16 The postcode mapping undertaken by JMP illustrated the wide geographic spread of staff at the site, and that there has been an increase of at least 85 people travelling to work from outside the North West, in comparison with the 2013 data. There are currently 40% of employees living outside Merseyside and 72% living over 10 miles from the site.
- 5.17 Regardless of the efforts of Travel Planning, it would be less likely that those people would travel by means other than by car, given the distances involved and the out-of-town location of the business. Therefore the impact of reducing parking on site at this time would be to force staff to find alternative parking in the area, causing problems for neighbouring residents and businesses.

## 4. Wider Area Parking Restrictions

- 5.18 We have discussed above the current special circumstances whereby the business can justify the temporary provision of car parking, above that which would normally be allowed by parking standards.
- 5.19 In addition, Shop Direct's desire to provide adequate parking to avoid overspill into the surrounding area is also driven by the lack of available alternatives locally, as follows:
- There is no on-street parking allowed throughout the Estuary Park and this condition is specified in the building lease. The business park enforces this without exception.
  - Restrictions on parking in residential streets – local residents get extremely upset if Shop Direct staff park in their roads and, as the LPA (Highways Department) is aware, this has been brought to the attention of the local MP on previous occasions.
  - The New Mersey Retail Park is only for their own customers and they have recently introduced an enforced maximum 4 hour parking limit. After this time a £100 charge will be levied.
- 5.20 Shop Direct is seeking to find a balance of providing sufficient on-site parking to meet their specific needs, but without undermining their travel plan efforts or causing problem in the local area by pushing parking off site.

## 6 Travel Plan Measures

- 6.1 Shop Direct has been extremely proactive in implementing its Travel Plan, which includes an extensive range of measures to reduce car travel. There has been ongoing implementation of Successful Travel Plan Measures supporting staff to travel sustainably in line with car park management measures.

### Measures Introduced Since 2012:

- Car share scheme (395 members) / increased provision to 100 car share bays (from 65).
- Includes a multi modal match system. Spent £6,600 (including VAT) on set up at Speke / Shaw and ongoing admin annual £2,400 (including VAT) charge.
- 50 annual season ticket loans distributed (Nov 2014 – Nov 2015) – ongoing promotion of these.
- Free one month sustainable travel pass available to all new starters. To date, twenty new staff taken up this offer (cost £1,567.20), however ten of these have redeemed their vouchers (cost £820.80) – the offer is included in recruitment packs. (cost £743.30) five have been handed out recently (cost £392.10) – the offer is included in recruitment packs
- Shuttle bus in operation between Product Centre and Skyways House – brings products and staff between sites on a half hourly basis every day.
- How to Get to Guide produced. This heavily promotes the use of public transport, cycling and the car share scheme and is included in all recruitment packs and promoted regularly to existing staff.
- Business Travel Measures - 11 video conferencing facilities used to reduce travel between sites and Metrics added on car mileage so have reduced business travel mileage by a couple of thousand miles.
- Bike security has been improving in recent years through improved cycle parking / Bike security training has occurred on site.
- Promotion of the CityBike Scheme internally to all staff, highlighting the various locations of the bikes close to the Skyways campus.
- Successful bike to work scheme launched ([bike2workscheme.co.uk](http://bike2workscheme.co.uk)). This has resulted in 162 cycle purchases to date across all our sites.
- Improved bus shelter extension outside site funded through Merseytravel Grant funding.
- All permits reissued (included postcode exclusion zone) in 2013 as part of new car park management strategy - enforcement. No new permanent permits have been issued since 2013.
- Introduced secure motorcycle spaces.

## Measures Ongoing since previous Plan (2012)

- Sustainable Travel Promotion Roadshows occur regularly on-site with a mode focus as appropriate (also in collaboration with local bus operators to promote services).
- Digital Digest (weekly all staff email), Yammer (internal communications tool) and the intranet used regularly to market the Travel Plan (includes Bicycle User Group set up)
- Ongoing monitoring of car park usage.
- Ongoing sustainable transport information provision – HTGTG etc.
- Improved shower and changing facilities.
- Regular Travel to Work events at Skyways, promoting alternatives to use of private car and engaging Bike2Work, CityBike, car share, Arriva, Merseytravel and many other suppliers.
- 12 Pool bikes also available for business travel (350 uses this year).
- Ongoing promotion of public transport discount tickets.
- Continual review of permit issue system and eligibility criteria with an aim to reduce permit allocation.

## 7 Planning Policy Context

### Planning Policy

- 7.1 In accordance with s38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), the purpose of this planning policy appraisal is to review national and local planning policy relevant to the development of the site, and to assess the scheme in light of these policies.
- 7.2 In England there is a hierarchical structure of guidance and plans covering national and local planning, which includes the National Planning Policy Framework and Local Development Frameworks. This appraisal addresses each of these levels of guidance and plans.
- 7.3 In responding to the policy in this appraisal, references are made to the supporting documents of the planning application, such as the Design and Access Statement, Transport Assessment and other technical environmental information.

### Determining Planning Applications

- 7.4 LPA's are advised in national planning guidance that they must determine planning applications in accordance with the statutory Development Plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. If the Development Plan contains material policies or proposals and there are no other material considerations, the application should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan. Where there are other material considerations, the Development Plan should be the starting point, and other material considerations should be taken into account in reaching a decision.

### Policy Framework

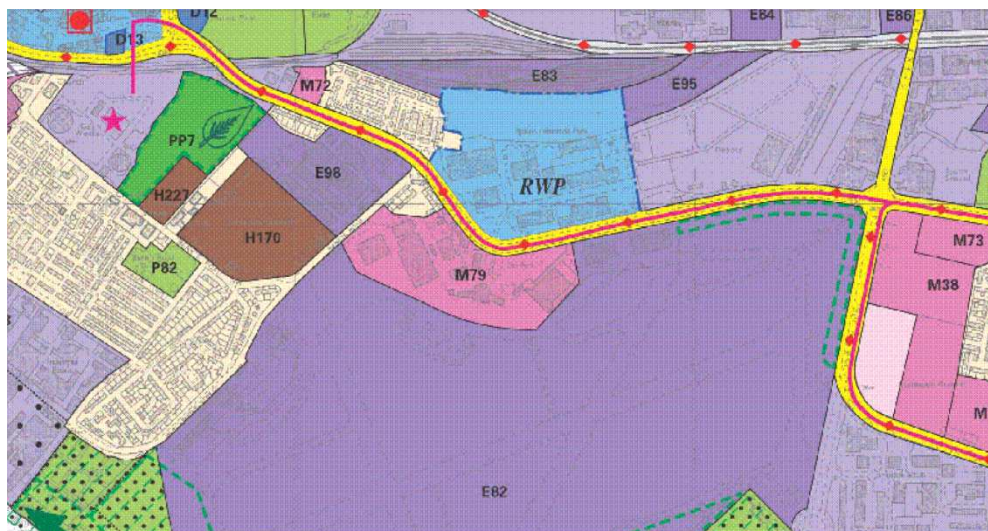
- 7.5 The Development Plan, against which the application will be considered, comprises the following adopted policy documents:
  - National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012) (NPPF)
  - Liverpool UDP (adopted 2002)
- 7.6 Determination of the application will also take into account further material considerations in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Other relevant policy which would be material considerations include:
  - The Core Strategy Submission Draft (2012) – The initial consultation on the Local Plan took place between December 2013 and 30th April 2014, during which, 140 representations were received.
  - Ensuring a Choice of Travel SPD

## 8 Planning Policy Review

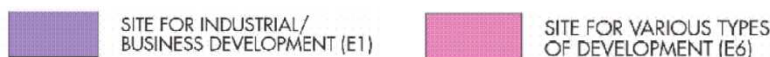
- 8.1 This section of the report deals with planning policy by theme, and under each theme summarises key national and local planning policy, and how it has been considered and responded to as part of the proposed development. Most themes are detailed further in other supporting documentation and cross referenced accordingly.
- 8.2 The key themes are as follows:
- **Principle of Proposed Car Parking**
  - **Transportation and Access**

### Principle of Proposed Car Parking

- 8.3 The principle of the proposal is considered to be acceptable as it accords with policy guidance at all levels. It is designated in the UDP as a Site for Industrial or Business Development, where policy in relation to Primarily Industrial Areas applies (Policy E1).



Extract from UDP Proposals Map



- 8.4 **UDP Policy E1 Primarily Industrial Areas** states that within such areas, planning permission will be granted for industrial/ business uses (Use Classes B1/B2/B8) and small scale ancillary uses. The proposed temporary car parking is not a use in its own right, but ancillary to the Shop Direct development which is predominately B1 use, and hence appropriate in this location.
- 8.5 Allowing for temporary additional parking, which will support Shop Direct to continue its business operations in Speke, is in accordance with the aims of national and local policy relating to regeneration and economic growth.
- 8.6 The UDP's regeneration policies identify the Speke/ Garston as an area where land will be protected for use for industrial/ business purposes to improve Liverpool's reserve of this resource, and as an important location for existing employment generating activity, with the potential to consolidate and enhance this function.
- 8.7 The emerging **Core Strategy** recognises the importance of the development of industries with strong potential in delivering economic growth. Included within the business sectors to which the policy

relates are Knowledge based-industries including ICT and digital technology (Strategic Policy 3). The Estuary Business Park is listed as a development which has come about as a result of improvement in Liverpool's economic fortunes within such sectors, and expansion and investment in making these sectors and locations more attractive to investors and employees is supported.

- 8.8 The **NPPF** states that the Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth, and that significant weight should be placed on this through the planning system. At paragraph 22 it is stated that: *'Where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for the allocated employment use, applications for alternative uses of land or buildings should be treated on their merits having regard to market signals and the relative need for different land uses to support local communities.'*
- 8.9 The proposal is for a temporary use of the plot which Shop Direct own, as a car park which supports an employment use, and the justification for it is based on the specific needs of the Shop Direct business operation, as set out in Section 5 of this statement. This will not compromise the longer term potential for the plot being developed for employment, something that Shop Direct are hopeful to achieve in the future as the business continues to grow and prosper.

## Transportation and Access

- 8.10 The proposal will accord with the guidance set out nationally and locally as it is accessible by a range of modes of transport, and is providing car parking to meet the business's operational need, whilst avoiding over provision such that would encourage car travel. Travel planning at the site is continuing to promote sustainable transport and reduce travel to the site by the private car in accordance with policies T6, T7 and T8 of the UDP and Strategic Policy 34 of the emerging Core Strategy. The Travel Plan sets out the measures which have and continue to be implemented at the site, as discussed above in Section 6 of this statement.
- 8.11 As discussed earlier in this statement, the car park at the Estuary site actually accommodates both the parking demand for the business located on site, and also for the majority of staff of the Product Centre, 0.9 miles away. It was agreed in both 2010 and 2012 that, due to this arrangement of the business functions, a proportion of the parking allowance for the Product Centre building be provided at the Estuary site, for a temporary period.
- 8.12 Shop Direct have continued to build on the functions of the Product Centre and have and agreed a new lease on the space for a further 3 years, until November 2018. Staff move between the two sites during the course of the day, using the shuttle bus which runs every 30 minutes, or by sharing lifts.
- 8.13 This proposal is for the parking 'allowance' for the increased floorspace at the Product Centre to continue to be provided at Skyways House temporarily, as approved in 2012. This will accommodate the parking demand of the business at the intensively used Skyways site, and avoid problems being created in the local area by staff and visitors having to find off-site parking.
- 8.14 The current policy in relation to car parking provision is set out in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document - Ensuring a Choice of Travel. Policy T12 'Car parking provision in new developments' requires all new developments including changes of use, which generate a demand for car parking to make provision for car parking on site, to meet the minimum operational needs of the development.
- 8.15 The relevant maximum parking standards for the Product Centre in its current location, according to the SPD are:
- B1 (Elsewhere, single offices) 1 space per 32 sqm
  - B8 (Elsewhere, storage and distribution) 1 space per 60 sqm



- 8.16 Based on the local standards, with a total floor area of 12,921 sqm each of B1 and B8 uses at the Product Centre, 305 spaces would be the maximum permissible (201 spaces for the B1 space, plus 107 spaces for the B8).
- 8.17 As only 35 spaces at Southern Gateway are available for use by Shop Direct, as per the 2012 permission, this application seeks for that allowance to be 'transferred' to the Skyways site, as 220 temporary car parking spaces on Plot D1 for a further temporary period of 3 years. During that time Shop Direct will continue to manage and control the car parking requirements at Skyways and continue to implement the Travel Plan.
- 8.18 It is considered that the 'transferred' allowance for the Product Centre is justification enough for the proposals, but in any case at Section 5 above, we have set out further justification for the proposals in relation to the changing business operations and their associated parking demands, the home locations of staff (which have become further geographically distant since 2013) and the wider area parking restrictions. These issues should be taken into consideration in the planning decision.
- 8.19 These parking spaces are necessarily 'temporary' because they are laid out in a temporary manner and are on a site which Shop Direct own, demonstrating their commitment to its permanent redevelopment in the coming years as business growth allows.
- 8.20 This is considered to be a reasonable justification of the proposals, as it allows for the car parking to be provided where it is needed and does not result in a cumulative overprovision of parking across the two separate sites of the Shop Direct business in Speke.

## 9 Access

- 9.1 The Estuary site is easily accessed by car from the main highway network; it is off the A561 Speke Road, with access to the Plot D1 and main car park at the first roundabout on Estuary Boulevard. The vehicle entrance is controlled by a barrier and rising bollards, and also a Shop Direct funded security guard at peak times to ensure only those permitted to park are admitted.
- 9.2 The out of town location means that there is a lower level of public transport available in the area, although it is served by a number of bus routes, which run frequent services to south Liverpool and the city centre, as well as services to Hale and Runcorn. Bus routes also connect with rail services at Liverpool South Parkway.
- 9.3 The disparate home locations of staff means that there are still a high number of staff with long commutes, for whom public transport is not an attractive option due to the length of journey, multiple modes/ routes and pricing.
- 9.4 There is very little public car parking provision in the locality, on street parking is not permitted within the Business Park and there are no public car parks within easy reach of Skyways House. Hence the majority of parking demand for the business needs to be met on site.
- 9.5 Pedestrian entrances to the site are available from Estuary Boulevard and Speke Road.
- 9.6 The Travel Plan submitted with the application discusses these matters in detail, as well as measures to reduce travel by private car.

## 10 Conclusion

- 10.1 This Planning and Access Statement, supported by the accompanying forms and plans and Travel Plan, describes the details of the proposal and makes justification for it in the light of national and local planning policy.
- 10.2 The Skyways site and the Product Centre, although physically separate, are intrinsically linked in their business operations and staff resource. In addition, the Skyways site is intensively used as Shop Direct's head office which currently generates a demand for on site parking that is higher than the standards make allowance for.
- 10.3 This application if approved will allow for the practical location of car parking, meeting the needs of the business as a whole.