

**PROPOSED PETROL FILLING STATION AND DRIVE THROUGH COFFEE SHOP
AT LONGMAN DRIVE, SPEKE BOULEVARD, LIVERPOOL L24 1XZ**

APPLICATION REF . 13F/2767

RETAIL ASSESSMENT

For Euro Garages Ltd

INTRODUCTION

The application site is identified as a Site for Various Types of Development in the Unitary Development Plan and is within the South Liverpool International Gateway Strategic Regeneration Area (SRF) which sets out the local development aspirations and priority actions for this area for the next 15 years.

Euro Garages Limited is the UK's fastest-growing operator of filling station forecourts- it owns and operates over 170 sites. It has an established track record of working with a number of high profile partners to provide top quality support facilities in association with these forecourts. The partners have included Subway, SPAR, Burger King and Starbucks.

Euro Garages Ltd have also taken a franchise to provide Starbucks Drive Thru' Coffee Shops on some of their sites and it is proposed to add that facility on this site as a further complimentary component of a mixed use scheme.

PROPOSAL

The applicant seeks full planning permission for development of new petrol filling station and drive thru Coffee shop. Construct single storey A1 sales building, including underground tanks, forecourt canopy, ATM and customer parking. The site will be accessed off Longman Drive spur road, south of A561 Speke Boulevard.

The site is undeveloped land but has been cleared of vegetation and prepared for building during the development of the Dobbies Garden centre. The access road for the development which also serves as the service road for Dobbies has been implemented, providing direct access from Speke Boulevard.

The proposed development of Petrol filling station and coffee shop represents a significant investment by the applicant in providing local employment .

The proposed development will occupy the vacant land between 'Toby Carvery' Public House to East and Dobbies Drive garden centre to the west.

Convenience goods sold from the shop will be operated by 'Spar'. The range of goods will be simple convenience items and unlike other outlets alcohol will not be sold on site The sale of goods would remain ancillary to the main activity of modern fuel retailer. The product range will include cigarettes, newspapers, magazines, confectionary, hot and cold sandwiches, dairy products, cold drinks, selected groceries and car accessories and coffee vending machine.

A separate fuelling facility is provided for HGVs to the south of this building while, to the north, there is to be a car wash facility.

Separate parking is to be provided along the frontage of the control building/shop. The HGV facility provides capacity for three vehicles at any one time and has a separate canopy.

UDP

The application site is identified as a Site for Various Types of Development in the UDP and as Site M73 in the Schedule of Mixed Use Sites. The UDP identifies a suitable range of uses as the former Class A3 (Food and Drink), C1 (Hotels), car showroom and petrol stations. The uses proposed in this application are within Use Classes A3 (Restaurants) and a limited Class A1 (Retail) associated with PFS. The applicant considers that the range of uses proposed falls within the scope of the Development Plan allocation for the site.

The adopted local plan states that proposals for retail development in an out-of-centre location and detached from the defined town centre will only be supported when it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that:

- All town centre, edge-of-town-centre and other commercial centre options have been thoroughly assessed and discounted as unsuitable or unavailable (ie the sequential approach)
- There would be no significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of existing centres
- The proposal would enhance accessibility and choice in retail provision
- The proposal together with the existing retail floorspace could be supported by the relevant catchment population
- The site could be adequately served by public transport and there is good access from the principal road network
- There would be no adverse environmental impacts
- There would be no significant adverse infrastructure implications
- The proposal would contribute to remedying any quantitative or qualitative deficiencies in the existing retail provision
- The proposal conforms with other local plan policies.

There is a specific need for the proposed shop and filling station on Speke Boulevard in order to provide necessary support facilities for surrounding business uses, staff and passengers using Speke Airport and also to capture passing trade on the A561.

Accessibility and Choice

The filling station shop is being provided specifically in order to enhance accessibility and choice. It is generally accepted that employment areas such as South Liverpool require a range of support facilities in order to attract business users and to encourage employment generation. Until a shop is provided on the site it is inevitable that workers employed in the area will have to travel further afield for such facilities thus increasing the number and length of journeys unnecessarily. This would not represent a sustainable outcome.

Available Expenditure

As already noted, trade for the shop is expected to come primarily from workers within businesses located around Speke airport and along Speke Boulevard corridor and from passing motorists on the trunk road. Both represent new sources of expenditure, particularly the passing trade which – in the absence of the filling station and shop – can be expected to continue through South Liverpool without stopping. This represents a loss of potential spending in the area. By providing a good quality environment and a range of goods for sale and ‘food to go’ the proposed development can be expected to capture a lot of new expenditure from out with the local catchment area. As a result, there is no basis for concern that there is a lack of available expenditure to support the proposed development.

Conclusions

The operator of the proposed petrol filling station has an established track record of providing the type of quality facilities required on Speke Boulevard to support the prime business function in the area and to capture additional expenditure from passing trade.

Euro Garages Ltd recently acquired the land from Peel Holdings. The operate over 180 petrol station sites throughout the UK, some standalone services stations, trunk road services and motorway service stations.

The petrol station is a sui generis use and the shop associated with it is ancillary to that sui generis use. It is an A1 Use and provides for the needs of motorists in the form of a local convenience store. Petrol stations have had to expand on this side of the business to remain profitable as over the years the number of petrol filling stations that have closed are substantial. In the 1970’s there were about 100,000 petrol stations in the UK now there are less than 10,000. Those that remain have had to sell not only petrol but sell convenience goods for the needs of motorists in the form of local convenience stores.

The retail floor space of 290 m² currently proposed is not significant in retail policy terms. Clearly the shop cannot be located separately from the petrol station, with forecourt and canopy on a separate site, therefore the whole petrol station would have to be relocated somewhere else in the Town Centre to meet the sequential test.

Local Authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale (Paragraph 24 of the NPPF 2012) and clearly the shop could not be separated from the petrol forecourt area. The shop in this case is ancillary to the sale of fuel from the petrol filling station. It is not an A1 Use in its own right and the range of goods available would be limited and not compete with the Local Centre's so as not to divert trade away from the Local Centre's.

In summary, in view of the relatively small increase in net retail floor space proposed, and notwithstanding the increase in convenience goods floor space, the improved links and public realm enhancements between the proposed store and Armley centre, the number of jobs created and the limited impact on Armley centre, it is considered that the principle of the replacement store is acceptable.