

Planning Application Response of Planning Policy

Application No:	APP/24/00330
Address:	Land to the west of B&Q, Purbrook Way, Havant
Development:	Erection of retail foodstore with associated car parking, access, landscaping and engineering works
Case Officer:	Kayleigh Taylor
Comments by:	Jade Ellis
Date of Comments:	19 th November 2024

This response follows on from planning policy consultee comments dated 24th July 2024, and provide further comment on retail and parking matters.

Retail impact and the sequential test

In September 2024, Martin Robeson Planning Practice on behalf of Tesco Stores Limited submitted an objection on the basis that there had been a failure of the sequential test. The representations point towards the availability of the former Wilko Store in the Meridian Shopping Centre which was not previously considered as part of the applicant's Planning and Retail Statement dated 2024.

By way of background, the Meridian Centre (and Bulbeck Road car park) was purchased by Havant Borough Council in 2019. The Council's Property & Asset Management Team has confirmed that the unit was marketed when Wilko went into administration in September 2019. An initial offer to rent the whole unit was accepted from Poundstretcher, but did not subsequently proceed with change under new management. As owners, the Council is currently considering the possibility of sub dividing the unit.

The applicant provided a response to the objection in October 2024, which comments that there are multiple reasons as to why the former Wilko is unsuitable for the broad type of retailing proposed (as set out on page 6 of their letter dated 4th October 2024). Perhaps most significantly, it is noted that the former Wilko unit is too small to accommodate the application proposals, or accommodate a flexible form of them.

As set out in our earlier consultee comments, the Council commissioned an independent review of the applicant's Planning and Retail Statement during the previous application reference APP/20/01221. The review was undertaken by Stantec and included an assessment of the vacant Waitrose store in Waterlooville. Having regard to the conclusions of this assessment, similar conclusions can be drawn with the former Wilko unit. Specifically whilst the former Wilko unit should be able to physically accommodate a Limited Assorted Discounter of a smaller footprint, a number of significant compromises with the operators specific requirements would need to be made. On this basis, it is concluded that a policy objection could not be sustained on sequential test grounds.

Parking

The proposals would need to ensure that appropriate parking provision is provided in accordance with Policy DM14 and the Council's Parking SPD. In this respect, it is noted that the application proposes 110 spaces compared with a minimum of 156 parking spaces that would be required to meet adopted standards. It is noted that this would result in a shortfall of 46 spaces and a conflict in policy terms.

Summary

It is considered that the development proposals have demonstrated compliance with the sequential test, and as such an objection could not be sustained on this basis. It is noted that there would be a shortfall in parking provision which would result in a conflict with Policy DM14 and the Council's Parking SPD.