

**Stantec UK Limited**

61 Oxford Street  
Manchester  
M1 6EQ

Telephone: 07843 652 044

email: [bernard.greep@stantec.com](mailto:bernard.greep@stantec.com)

Our ref: 49727

28 May 2021

Phil Jordan  
Principal Planning Officer  
Development & Growth  
South Kesteven District Council  
Council Offices, St. Peter's Hill  
Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 6PZ

Dear Phil,

**RE: OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION REF. S17/2155 – DOWNTOWN, OLD GREAT NORTH ROAD, GREAT GONERBY**

#### **RETAIL PLANNING ADVICE**

The Council has received two recent objections from Rioja Developments in relation to the above planning application:

- A "Planning Appraisal" by NTR Planning on behalf of Rioja Developments, dated April 2021; and
- A letter from Taylor Wessing on behalf of Rioja Developments, dated 16 April 2021.

Council officers have requested that we consider whether these objections alter our advice in relation to the key retail tests.

The points that we consider it appropriate for us to advise on further, in line with our scope of works, are as set out below. We consider that Council officers will form their own view as to whether the application proposals are in accordance with the Development Plan, as raised in Rioja Developments' objections and thus, we do not discuss this matter in this letter.

#### **Future High Streets Fund**

In the "Planning Appraisal", NTR Planning sets out that, in the Future High Streets Fund bid, the Council provided a SWOT analysis of the health of Grantham Town Centre and that the number of weaknesses outweighs the strengths of the town centre. Also described are some additional weaknesses as set out in the 'Grantham Future High Streets Fund Film'. NTR argues that [the application proposals] will cause an adverse impact on the planned investments which are proposed through the fund.

The first point to make is that it is not unusual for a Future High Streets Fund bid to focus on the weaknesses of a town centre. In fact, such a bid would be unlikely to obtain funding if the bid focused on the strengths of a town centre.

Secondly, we have considered the planned investment in Grantham Town Centre as part of the FHSF and the applicant's commentary on the impact of the application proposals on this planned investment. The Council submitted its bid for the FHSF funding in the knowledge that there was a resolution to grant planning permission for the application proposals subject to a Section 106 Agreement. We consider that such planned investment will be delivered in Grantham Town Centre regardless of whether planning permission is granted for the application proposals. It is also important to consider the extent to which the application proposals will impact on the planned investment; whilst the planned investment should increase the turnover of main town centres within the town centre, will those benefits be outweighed by the diversion of trade?

We consider that the proposed development will have no impact on the planned investment to repurpose retail space to other uses including residential uses. As set out above, there is likely to be some impact on existing retail facilities within the town centre; however, this is not an impact on planned investment and should be protected by the proposed S106 Agreement and restrictive conditions. The application proposals should, in the main, draw different custom than the existing town centre offer does. The applicant will put in place some measures to create linkages between the application proposals and Grantham Town Centre. The monies set out in the Section 106 Agreement, referred to above, will help add to the planned investment in infrastructure and public realm. In our view, the application proposals will not impact on the planned investment in infrastructure and public realm. On the basis of the above, we are satisfied that the application proposals will not have a significant adverse impact on the planned FHSF investment in Grantham Town Centre.

### **Sequential Assessment**

In the "Planning Appraisal", NTR Planning sets out its view that disaggregation is identified as being relevant to the sequential test for the application proposals.

In relation to disaggregation, Dundee, Rushden Lakes, Scotch Corner, Tollgate and Aldergate are well-known for being key judgments/appeal decisions when considering the interpretation of the sequential test. There has been no Secretary of State decision, post Dundee, where the Secretary of State has endorsed disaggregation. Clearly, the disaggregation or sub-division of a proposal is not part of the sequential test. A development split into separate parts does not amount to a closely similar size or type of development. When considering whether alternative sites are available or suitable for a proposal, the task to assess alternative sites (plural) means in order to see whether any one (singular) of them can accommodate the proposal, not to see whether a number of sites (plural) can accommodate parts or elements of the proposal. On this basis, we do not consider that the application proposals should be disaggregated.

### **Impact Assessment**

In the "Planning Appraisal", NTR Planning disagrees with a number of inputs to the applicant's Updated Impact Assessment, notably:

- The design year;
- Special Forms of Trading percentage deductions;
- A reliance on old market share data; and
- Reduced turnover as a result of competition with Grantham Designer Outlet Village.

We know from our extensive town centre and retail planning experience that applicants, objectors and consultants in general reach different conclusions in relation to inputs into retail impact assessments. The design year is a matter of judgement. The applicant has forecast a likely design year and NTR Planning disagrees with the design year. The objection from NTR Planning has used more recent Special Forms of Trading percentage deductions, but this is because their objection was made after the new data were released. In any event, impact assessments are difficult forecasts to make in the middle of a pandemic. Whilst the applicant has used older market share data, any market share data collected

at the current time, would be in a midst of a pandemic and it is very uncertain as to whether current shopping patterns are the new normal, or whether they are just as a result of a “needs must” during a pandemic. As such, we do not take issue with the market share data used by the applicant. We are strongly of the opinion that the application proposals and Grantham Designer Outlet Village will take trade from each other and, as a result, the application proposals will have a reduced turnover. In reality, it is implausible that there would be no trading interactions between the two outlet facilities that could be developed at Grantham. A cumulative impact scenario whereby both designer outlet centres trade at 25% below benchmark levels, is, in our view, realistic.

### **Centre Health**

In the “Planning Appraisal”, NTR Planning states that they have done their own health check assessments of Grantham Town Centre and Newark-on-Trent Town Centre. NTR Planning concludes that Grantham Town Centre has an above average and increasing vacancy rate, a steady decline in the number of comparison goods retailers and a decline in the town centre’s environmental quality, particularly as a result of the number of vacant premises. NTR Planning concludes that Newark-on-Trent Town Centre has declined in health since NTR Planning’s previous survey work. The vacancy rate has increased in the town centre as a whole and in the town centre’s Primary Shopping Area. NTR Planning also claims that confidence in the town centre is low, and that the pandemic has led to closures, with vacancies expected to rise.

Stantec has been instructed to assess the submitted material rather than undertake the health check assessment fieldwork ourselves. Based on the applicant’s submitted material, the health of each of the centres within the primary catchment area has either stayed the same, or, in the case of Grantham Town Centre, improved from being relatively weak, to relatively healthy. We raise the following points in relation to NTR Planning’s conclusions regarding the health of Grantham and Newark-on-Trent Town Centres. Just because a town centre has an above average vacancy rate, this does not mean that it cannot withstand any impacts from retail development outside of town centres. By its very nature, ‘an average’ means that some centres will be below average and others above average. A decline in the number of comparison goods retailers is a trend happening nationwide and is not specific to Grantham. More vacant units in a town centre, will have an effect on environmental quality. It is very difficult to accurately determine town centre health during a pandemic and multiple lockdown periods. People’s shopping patterns have changed dramatically over the past fifteen months and no-one knows to what extent such a change in shopping patterns will become the new normal. Predictably, during the pandemic, vacant units have increased nationwide and we do not know how many vacant units will be recycled after the pandemic ends. It is also difficult to tell whether units are vacant during a pandemic or are just temporarily closed due to government instructions. It can be expected that the applicant would focus on the strengths of the town centres and an objector would focus on the weaknesses of the town centres. Council officers will need to form their own view as to the health of the town centres.

### **Retail Impact Implications**

In the “Planning Appraisal”, NTR Planning argues that in its own retail impact assessment, they have forecast that the application proposals and commitments combined will have an impact on Grantham Town Centre of 7.0%-9.8%. NTR Planning cites Secretary of State decisions such as Scotch Corner and Cribbs Causeway where similar level of impacts on town centres were considered. NTR Planning states that, at Scotch Corner, the Inspector concluded that a 6.9% impact on Darlington Town Centre would not be significantly adverse. NTR Planning states, that at Cribbs Causeway, the Inspector concluded that a 6.4% impact on Bristol City Centre would be significantly adverse. At the time of the inquiries, both centres displayed varying health. NTR Planning makes the point that both decisions were pre-pandemic.

In our view, whether a percentage impact of a retail proposal will have a significant adverse impact on town centre health is a judgement call to be made by the decision maker. It is too simplistic to cite

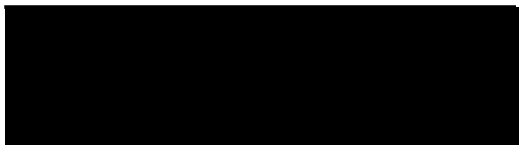
previous Inspectors' decisions and state that just because a decision maker reached a conclusion in relation to the impact test elsewhere, that that same conclusion should be reached here. If the Council is satisfied that the applicant's percentage impacts and conclusions in relation to town centre health are robust, then we are of the view that a 4.4% impact on Grantham Town Centre and a 8.1% impact on Newark-upon-Trent Town Centre are unlikely to be considered to be significantly adverse.

**Conclusion**

We have considered the retail planning aspects of the documents submitted on behalf of Rioja Developments and we remain of the opinion that the proposals have satisfied the impact and sequential tests.

We trust this advice is of assistance to the Council. If you have any queries, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Bernard Greep  
For and on behalf of  
**STANTEC UK LIMITED**

**Stantec UK Limited**

61 Oxford Street  
Manchester  
M1 6EQ

Telephone: 07843 652 044

email: [bernard.greep@stantec.com](mailto:bernard.greep@stantec.com)

Our ref: 49727

28 May 2021

Phil Jordan  
Principal Planning Officer  
Development & Growth  
South Kesteven District Council  
Council Offices, St. Peter's Hill  
Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 6PZ

Dear Phil,

**RE: OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION REF. S17/2155 – DOWNTOWN, OLD GREAT NORTH ROAD, GREAT GONERBY**

#### **RETAIL PLANNING ADVICE**

We set out below our retail planning advice in respect of the above application proposal for a Designer Outlet Centre, additional large goods retail, garden centre, training academy, leisure unit and offices at Downtown, Old Great North Road, Great Gonerby. Stantec (formerly known as Peter Brett Associates) provided the Council with retail planning advice on the Downtown Designer Outlet Centre proposals in March 2020.

The scope of our advice is:

- Consideration of whether the submitted updated Retail Impact Assessment ('RIA', dated July 2020) includes the requested additional work.
- Whether, in our opinion, the planning application passes the retail sequential and impact tests. This is to include consideration of the impact of the proposed development on the planned investment at Grantham Town Centre.
- Consideration of the retail planning aspects of the documents submitted by Taylor Wessing and limited to Taylor Wessing's commentary on the impact and sequential tests. We envisage that Council officers will consider the other planning issues raised.

#### **Scope of the updated Retail Impact Assessment (dated July 2020)**

In our advice letter to the Council of 20 March 2020, we recommended that the Council request the following information from the applicant<sup>1</sup>:

---

<sup>1</sup> The underlined text sets out what was asked of the applicant in our letter to the Council of March 2020. The non-underlined text sets out our assessment as to the extent of the applicant's compliance with our requests, following further information submitted in July 2020.

1. An assessment as to the conformity of the application proposal with the Development Plan, as it currently stands: The applicant has set out the planning policy context in Section 3 of its RIA and reached conclusions in relation to the compliance of the proposals with the retail tests later in the RIA.
2. A review of the sites previously considered and a conclusion as to whether any of the sites are both available and suitable for the proposed development, in accordance with the requirements of the sequential test as set out in Policy GR4 of the new Local Plan and paragraph 86 of the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF'). The applicant should also consider any relevant additional sites as part of the sequential test: The applicant has provided an updated sequential assessment in Section 4 and Appendix C of its RIA, albeit some different conclusions have been reached when compared with the previous RIA.
3. An update of a number of inputs in the applicant's RIA including: population projections; per capita expenditure; comparison goods market shares / turnover; sales efficiency per annum; trade draw of the application proposal from residents; commitments; and new trade diversion patterns of the application proposal: The applicant has updated the inputs mentioned above as set out in Section 5 and Appendix D of its RIA.
4. An update of the health check assessments previously considered: The applicant has provided updated health check assessments of the town centres of Grantham, Bourne, Sleaford, Stamford, Bingham, Newark-on-Trent, Melton Mowbray and Oakham (all desktop-based) as set out in Section 5 and Appendix F of its RIA. The applicant has been unable to visit these centres in person due to prolonged lockdown periods during the pandemic.

On the basis of the above, we are now satisfied that the applicant has updated its RIA sufficiently, as per the request in our advice letter dated 20 March 2020.

### **Consideration of whether the planning application passes the retail sequential and impact tests**

#### Sequential Test

Paragraph 86 of the NPPF states that local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Main town centre uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations; and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of centre sites be considered.

Policy GR4 – Grantham Town Centre, as set out in the Local Plan 2011-2036, states that a sequential approach will be applied to main town centre uses outside of the town centre.

The February 2019 Committee Report, in relation to the sequential test, set out that there are no suitable sites occupying a sequentially preferable location to the application site. The applicant had adopted an appropriate search area for the development and demonstrated flexibility in scale and format of the proposals. Accordingly, it was concluded that the sequential test was passed.

The February 2019 Committee Report concluded that the seven sites in the table below were either not available and / or suitable for the application proposals. In its current submission, the applicant has also reached the conclusion that the seven sites are either not available and / or suitable for the proposed development, albeit the applicant considers that the Jessop Way, Newark-on-Trent and the Former Advanta Seeds, Sleaford sites are not available for the proposed development, which we discuss

further below. We agree with the applicant that the seven sites mentioned below are not available and / or not suitable for the application proposals. We are not aware of any other sequentially preferable sites that should be considered by the applicant as part of the sequential test.

Site	February 2019 Committee Report		July 2020 Retail Impact Assessment Update	
	Available	Suitable	Available	Suitable
King 31 Grantham	Yes	No	Yes	No
Bourne Core Area, Bourne	No	No	No	No
Jessop Way, Newark-on-Trent	Yes	No	No	No
NSK Factory, Newark-on-Trent	No	No	No	No
Bass Maltings, Sleaford	No	No	No	No
East Road, Sleaford	No	No	No	No
Former Advanta Seeds, Sleaford	Yes	No	No	No

In contrast to the February 2019 Committee Report, the new submission material suggests that the Jessop Way, Newark-on-Trent site is not available for the application proposals. This is because the applicant has said that the site is being marketed as part of a wider industrial site ('G.PARK Newark') and is therefore considered to be unavailable for the proposed development. In its October 2017 Retail Impact Assessment, the applicant considered that the site was being marketed as an industrial site and was considered to be available. We agree with the applicant's current submission material that the Jessop Way, Newark-on-Trent site, as the site is not being marketed for the uses proposed by the application.

Likewise, in contrast to the February 2019 Committee Report, the new submission material suggests that the Former Advanta Seeds, Sleaford site is not available for the proposed development. This is because the applicant has said that on the basis that planning permission has recently been granted for a comprehensive mixed-use scheme, the site is not available for the proposed development. In its October 2017 Retail Impact Assessment, the applicant considered that the site was not available as Tesco previously pulled out of its proposed redevelopment of the site (it is also understood that the permission expired). On the basis of the recently granted planning permission, we agree with the applicant's current submission material that the Former Advanta Seeds, Sleaford site is not available for the proposed development.

In our view, the seven sites mentioned in the table above are not suitable and / or available for the application proposals. We are not aware of any other sequentially preferable sites that are both available and suitable for the application proposals. As such, we conclude that the sequential test is passed.

#### Impact on Centres

Paragraph 89 of the NPPF states that when assessing applications for retail and leisure development 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 a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold (if there is no locally set threshold, the default threshold is 2,500 sq.m of gross floorspace).

This should include the assessment of 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).

Policy GR4 – Grantham Town Centre as set out in the Local Plan 2011-2036 contains a locally set impact threshold of 1,000 sq.m for proposals for main town centre uses outside of Grantham town centre.

A comparison between the previous impact figures and conclusions in relation to town centre health (taken from the February 2019 Committee Report) and the current impact figures (taken from the July 2020 Retail Impact Assessment Update) are set out in the table below.

Centre	February 2019 Committee Report	July 2020 Retail Impact Assessment Update	February 2019 Committee Report	July 2020 Retail Impact Assessment Update
	<b>Impact assuming 25% less 'DOC' Sales 2025</b>		<b>Health of centre</b>	
<b>PCA</b>				
Grantham	3.7%	4.4%	Relatively weakly	Relatively healthy
Bourne	2.2%	2.7%	Performing well	Performing well
Sleaford	2.6%	3.0%	Vulnerable	Performing well
Stamford	2.7%	3.1%	Performing especially well	Vital and viable
Bingham	1.7%	1.9%	Performing well	Healthy and vibrant centre
Newark-on-Trent	5.0%	8.1%	Performing especially well	Performing well
Melton Mowbray	4.1%	4.4%	Performing well	Performing well
Oakham	3.2%	3.7%	Performing especially well	Performing well
Uppingham	0.1%	0.1%	-	-

In the table above, we have set out a scenario whereby impact assumes 25 per cent less 'DOC' sales due to both outlet developments taking some trade from one another. This is because, in reality, it is implausible that there would be no trading interactions between the two outlet facilities that could be developed at Grantham. A cumulative impact scenario whereby both designer outlet centres trade at 25 per cent below benchmark levels is more realistic.

In relation to impact, the February 2019 Committee Report set out that the application was assessed on the basis of a 'worst case' scenario where both the King31 and the Downtown Designer Outlet centres were constructed and operating. It was concluded that the Downtown proposal would not significantly harm the vitality or viability of any existing retail centres.

As set out in the Planning Practice Guidance<sup>2</sup>, a judgement as to whether the likely adverse impacts are significant can only be reached in light of local circumstances. Stantec has been instructed to assess the submitted material rather than undertake health check assessment fieldwork ourselves. In the table above, we have compared the percentage impacts and the health of centres within the catchment area of the proposal as set out in the February 2019 Committee and the current updated information as

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph: 018 Reference ID: 2b-018-20190722



submitted by the applicant. It can be seen that, in the main, the cumulative impact of commitments and the proposed development on centres within the catchment area of the proposal have increased in all cases, except Uppingham. Based on the new material submitted, the health of each of the centres within the primary catchment area has either stayed the same, or, in the case of Grantham Town Centre, improved from being relatively weak, to relatively healthy. If Council officers agree with the applicant regarding the health of centres within the primary catchment area, then we are of the opinion that the cumulative percentage impacts identified by the applicant are unlikely to lead to a significant adverse impact on centres within the catchment area of the proposed development. On the basis of the above, we are of the opinion that this element of the impact test is passed.

#### Impact on Investment in Centres

Paragraph 89 of the NPPF states that when assessing applications for retail and leisure development 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 a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold (if there is no locally set threshold, the default threshold is 2,500 sq.m of gross floorspace). This should include assessment of the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres within the catchment area of the proposal.

The February 2019 Committee Report concluded that the application proposals would not give rise to significant adverse impacts on investment in centres.

On 26 December 2020, the Council was selected to receive £5.6m of investment to improve Grantham Town Centre as part of the Future High Streets Fund ('FHSF'). Currently, the Council does not know if it can carry out all of the proposals or which elements will be omitted / scaled back, due to the reduced in principle funding offer from MHCLG. The proposals which were the subject of the FHSF bid include:

- Transforming the access gateway into town (around Grantham station with a mixed used development focused on office and residential uses).
- Converting empty retail units into new homes (in the town centre but concentrating on Westgate, Market Place and High Street).
- Investing in public realm enhancements around Market Place.
- Investing in enhancements around St Peter's Hill Gardens, presently 'cut-off' as a consequence of the existing infrastructure.

On 26 January 2021, Council officers requested that the applicant provide commentary on how the application proposals will impact on the planned investment in Grantham Town Centre as part of the FHSF. On 4 February 2021, the applicant provided such commentary. The applicant has firstly focused on the impact of repurposing of retail space towards other uses. According to the applicant, there has been significant discussion with the Council during the last 12-18 months, now concluded, in relation to the S106 Agreement. The S106 Agreement and restrictive conditions are designed to protect town centre uses within Grantham, Newark and Balderton town centres. The applicant considers that these controls are significant and extensive, setting closely defined parameters for the scale and nature of development at the Downtown retail site. The applicant considers that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse impact on this part of the FHSF bid, particularly as it involves repurposing retail space towards other uses, including residential uses.

In its commentary, the applicant also considers the investment proposed of strengthening external links to Grantham Town Centre, notably through the station and A1. The applicant sets out a number of measures as to how the application proposals will help claw back expenditure to the town centre and enhance linkages between the application proposals and Grantham Town Centre. These include a proposed tourist information and visitor centre at the application site and a pop-up shop unit to

showcase the town centre / positive attributes of local Grantham businesses. The applicant argues that such measures will help 'claw back' trade currently captured by retail facilities outside of the district, and maximise the opportunity of existing transport links, notably the A1 which runs alongside the Downtown site. The initiatives will also, through enhancement of existing public transport with the railway station, help to attract people to Grantham, its town centre and wider visitor attractions.

The applicant also sets out its proposed investment in the enhancement of infrastructure and public realm, including the S106 Agreement setting out monies towards town centre enhancement, town centre car parking management / signage initiatives, enhanced signage in and around the town centre and for the provision of promoting tourism within Grantham Town Centre and wider environment as well as monies towards a tourist officer.

We have considered the planned investment in Grantham Town Centre as part of the FHSF and the applicant's commentary on the impact of the application proposals on this planned investment. The Council submitted its bid for the FHSF funding in the knowledge that there was a resolution to grant planning permission for the application proposals subject to a Section 106 Agreement. We consider that such planned investment will be delivered in Grantham Town Centre regardless of whether planning permission is granted for the application proposals. It is also important to consider the extent to which the application proposals will impact on the planned investment; whilst the planned investment should increase the turnover of main town centres within the town centre, will those benefits will be outweighed by the diversion of trade?

We consider that the proposed development will have no impact on the planned investment to repurpose retail space to other uses including residential uses. As set out above, there is likely to be some impact on existing retail facilities within the town centre; however, this is not an impact on planned investment and should be protected by the proposed S106 Agreement and restrictive conditions. The application proposals should, in the main, draw different custom than the existing town centre offer does. The applicant will put in place some measures to create linkages between the application proposals and Grantham Town Centre. The monies set out in the Section 106 Agreement, referred to above, will help add to the planned investment in infrastructure and public realm. In our view, the application proposals will not impact on the planned investment in infrastructure and public realm. On the basis of the above, we are satisfied that the application proposals will not have a significant adverse impact on the planned FHSF investment in Grantham Town Centre.

We are not aware of any other existing, committed or planned public and private investment in the centres within the study area of the proposal which have the potential to be significantly adversely affected by the application proposals. As such, in our view, this element of the impact test is passed.

### **Consideration of the documents submitted by Taylor Wessing**

A document authored by Taylor Wessing and dated June 2020, sets out five suggested reasons for refusal of the planning application and a separate document by Taylor Wessing, dated 19 March 2020, discusses these issues in more detail.

We have considered the impact of the proposals on Grantham Town Centre above. Taylor Wessing asserts that the proposals are not in accordance with the Local Plan, specifically paragraph 3.23. Of course, the decision maker should consider the accordance of the application proposals with policies of the Local Plan, as opposed to other text in the Local Plan that is not policy wording.

Likewise, we have considered the sequential test above. Taylor Wessing sets out that the sequential test should be re-run with the Downtown proposals split into component parts. Dundee, Rushden Lakes, Scotch Corner, Tollgate and Aldergate are well-known for being key judgments/appeal decisions

when considering the interpretation of the sequential test. There has been no Secretary of State decision, post Dundee, where the Secretary of State has endorsed disaggregation. Clearly, the disaggregation or sub-division of a proposal is not part of the sequential test. A development split into separate parts does not amount to a closely similar size or type of development. When considering whether alternative sites are available or suitable for a proposal, the task to assess alternative sites (plural) means in order to see whether any one (singular) of them can accommodate the proposal, not to see whether a number of sites (plural) can accommodate parts or elements of the proposal. On this basis, we do not consider that the application proposals should be disaggregated.

We have also considered the impact on investment above. Taylor Wessing sets out that considerable private investment has been made in satisfying all of the pre-commencement conditions attached to the Buckminster permission. Paragraph 89 of the NPPF requires assessment of the impact of an out-of-centre retail / leisure proposal (that exceeds a locally set floorspace threshold or 2,500 sq.m gross floorspace) on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal. The Buckminster permission is not in a defined centre that benefits from policy protection. On this basis, the applicant does not need to consider the impact of the proposed development on the Buckminster investment. Taylor Wessing raises an important point about the need for the applicant to consider the impact of the application proposals on planned investment such as Grantham's FHSF proposals and we have assessed the applicant's response above.

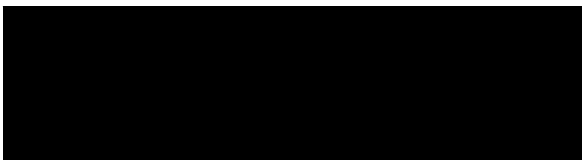
Taylor Wessing's document dated June 2020 sets out why they consider that letting the market decide is bad for Grantham. In February 2019, there was a resolution to grant planning permission for planning application ref. S17/2155 subject to a Section 106 agreement. The Buckminster proposals had previously been granted planning permission. We consider that in deciding to grant planning permission for both proposals, the Council was happy to 'let the market decide'. We do not consider that there is any reason why the Council should change its view on 'letting the market decide'.

We have considered the retail planning aspects of the documents submitted by Taylor Wessing and we remain of the opinion that the proposals have satisfied the impact and sequential tests.

We envisage that the decision maker will consider loss of employment and how the proposals contribute to sustainable development in its planning assessment of the proposals.

We trust this advice is of assistance to the Council. If you have any queries, then please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Bernard Greep  
For and on behalf of  
**STANTEC UK LIMITED**