

# Public Document Pack



## TRAFFORD COUNCIL

### **AGENDA PAPERS MARKED 'TO FOLLOW' FOR PLANNING DEVELOPMENT CONTROL COMMITTEE**

Date: Thursday, 11 July 2013

Time: 6.30 pm

Place: Committee Suite, Trafford Town Hall, Talbot Road, Stretford, Manchester  
M32 0TH

<b>A G E N D A</b>	<b>PART I</b>	<b>ITEM</b>
5.	<b>APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION 79984/FULL/2013 - PROPERTY ALLIANCE GROUP - HANGER 14, LYON INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, ATLANTIC STREET, BROADHEATH WA14 5FY</b>	
	To consider the attached report of the Acting Chief Planning Officer.	5
6.	<b>APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION 80577/FULL/2013 - WM MORRISONS SUPERMARKETS PLC/B &amp; Q - ATLANTIC STREET RETAIL PARK, ATLANTIC STREET, BROADHEATH WA14 5BW</b>	
	To consider the attached report of the Acting Chief Planning Officer.	6

**THERESA GRANT**  
Chief Executive

#### Membership of the Committee

Councillors Mrs. V. Ward (Chairman), D. Bunting (Vice-Chairman), R. Chilton,  
T. Fishwick, P. Gratrix, E.H. Malik, D. O'Sullivan, B. Sharp, B. Shaw, J. Smith, L. Walsh,  
K. Weston and M. Whetton.

Further Information

For help, advice and information about this meeting please contact:

Michelle Cody, Democratic Services Officer

Tel: 0161 912 2775

Email: [michelle.cody@trafford.gov.uk](mailto:michelle.cody@trafford.gov.uk)

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# Agenda Item 5

**WARD: Broadheath**

**79984/FULL/2013**

**DEPARTURE: Yes**

**DEMOLITION OF EXISTING WAREHOUSE BUILDINGS AND ERECTION OF SUPERMARKET (USE CLASS A1) WITH CAR PARKING, PETROL FILLING STATION AND ASSOCIATED SERVICING AND LANDSCAPE WORKS.**

Lyon Industrial Estate, Atlantic Street, Broadheath, Altrincham, WA14 5FY

**APPLICANT:** Property Alliance Group

**AGENT:** Walsingham Planning

**RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE**

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**Councillor Mrs Denise Western has called the application in for consideration by the Planning Development Control Committee for the reasons outlined in the Representations section below**

## **SITE**

The application relates to a large site of some 2.8 hectares (6.96 acres) located in the Broadheath Industrial Estate. It is some 650m to the west of the junctions of the A56 with George Richards Way and Atlantic Street. The site is bounded by Atlantic Street to the south and George Richards Way to the north with accesses into the site from both roads. The site is occupied by a large warehouse building, currently vacant, and extensive hardstanding areas. The surrounding area is characterised by a range of business and industrial uses with the Altrincham Business Park situated on the opposite side of Atlantic Street.

## **PROPOSAL**

The proposal involves the demolition of all buildings on the site followed by:-

- Erection of supermarket comprising 6,545sq.m gross internal floor area 6,667sq.m of gross external area
- A sales area of 3,754sq.m providing food and non-food goods
- A home shopping delivery service
- An in-store café
- A self-pay 4 pump petrol filling station – this will be self-service, self-pay with no kiosk
- 390 car parking spaces including 40 accessible spaces – 20 for disabled users and 20 parent & child spaces
- 20 motorcycle spaces and racks to accommodate 48 bicycles
- Customer drop-off bay and separate taxi rank

The main food store building would be single storey with a maximum height of 9 metres; it would be some 93 metres wide and 103 metres long (including a cage marshalling area). The design of the building would be fairly typical of a large supermarket with a curved roof (grey cladding with 10% of the area made up of rooflights) and large areas of glazing to the frontage. External materials would comprise a palette of glazing, white cladding panels, timber cladding and glazing. The petrol filling station would essentially be a canopy only and would be positioned close to the western boundary of the site, the main store would be positioned towards the south western corner of the site close to the boundary with Atlantic Street; the service yard area, including the home shop pick up area, would be in the south-western corner of the site.

The main access to the site would be in the form of a new roundabout at the western end of the site opposite the junction with the Altrincham Business Park on the opposite side of George Richards Way. Access to the Business Park would be included as part of the new roundabout. A second main access into the site would be formed onto Atlantic Street, again at the western end of the site. Service yard access would utilise the existing access onto Atlantic Street located at the eastern end of the site.

Six new bus stops are proposed, 2 along the stretch of George Richards Way adjacent to the site; the one on the carriageway immediately adjacent to the site would incorporate a new bus pull-in area whilst that on the opposite side of the road would be a marked bus stop within the carriageway; 2 on Atlantic Street close to the site and a further 2 at the western end of Atlantic Street. A pedestrian crossing is also proposed across George Richards Way towards the eastern end of the site.

A new pedestrian access would be provided into the site from George Richards Way located centrally along that frontage and close to the new bus stop.

Off-site highway works include the provision of a new right turn lane into George Richards Way from the A56.

## **DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

### **The Development Plan in Trafford Comprises:**

- The **Trafford Core Strategy** adopted 25th January 2012. The Trafford Core Strategy is the first of Trafford's Local Development Framework (LDF) development plan documents to be adopted by the Council; it partially supersedes the Revised Trafford Unitary Development Plan (UDP), see Appendix 5 of the Core Strategy.
- The **Revised Trafford Unitary Development Plan** adopted 19th June 2006. The majority of the policies contained in the Revised Trafford UDP were saved in either September 2007 or December 2008, in accordance with the Planning

and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 until such time that they are superseded by policies within the (LDF). Appendix 5 of the Trafford Core Strategy provides details as to how the Revised UDP is being replaced by Trafford LDF.

- The **Greater Manchester Joint Waste Plan** adopted 01 April 2012. On 25th January 2012 the Council resolved to adopt and bring into force the GM Joint Waste Plan on 1 April 2012. The GM Joint Waste Plan therefore now forms part of the Development Plan in Trafford and will be used alongside district-specific planning documents for the purpose of determining planning applications.
- The **Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan** adopted 26<sup>th</sup> April 2012. On the 13th March 2013, the Council resolved that the Minerals Plan, together with consequential changes to the Trafford Policies Map, be adopted and it came into force on the 26th April 2013. The GM Joint Minerals Plan therefore now forms part of the Development Plan in Trafford and will be used alongside district-specific planning documents for the purpose of determining planning applications.

## **PRINCIPAL RELEVANT CORE STRATEGY POLICIES**

### **The Strategic Objectives of the Plan are:**

- S01 – Meet Housing Needs
- S02 – Regenerate
- S03 – Meet Employment Needs
- S04 – Revitalise Town Centres
- S05 – Provide a Green Environment
- S06 – Reduce the need to travel
- S07 – Secure Sustainable Development
- S08 – Protect the historic built environment

### **The Place Objectives for Altrincham and Neighbouring communities include:**

- to consolidate and retain Broadheath as the principal location in the south of the borough for industrial purposes (Strategic Objective 3 and 4)
- to continue to promote Altrincham as the Principal Town Centre and key economic driver, in terms of employment, retail and leisure opportunities (Strategic Objective 3)
- to manage the change of industrial land to other uses effectively in order to protect economic/employment uses in the area (Strategic Objective 3)
- to manage the high levels of congestion and improve the quality of public transport provision, particularly along the A56, A560 and the A538 (Strategic Objective 6)
- to manage the adverse impact of new development along main transport corridors on the highway infrastructure/public transport provision (Strategic Objective 6)

W1 - Economy

W2 – Town Centres and Retail

L3 – Regeneration and Reducing Inequalities

L4 – Sustainable Transport and Accessibility  
L5 – Climate Change  
L6 - Waste  
L7 – Design  
L8 – Planning Obligations  
R2 – Natural Environment  
R3 – Green Infrastructure  
R5 – Open Space Sport and Recreation

#### **Proposals map notation**

E7 - Main Industrial Area

#### **Principal relevant revised UDP policies/proposals**

E7 - Main Industrial Area

S11 – Development Outside Established Centres

T8 - Improvements to Trunk and Primary Route Network

#### **SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

The following adopted SPD's are relevant:

- SPD1 – Planning Obligations and Technical Notes
- SPD2 – A56 Corridor Development Guidelines
- SPD3 – Parking Standards and Design

#### **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The Department for Communities and Local Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on 27 March 2012. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. With immediate effect the NPPF replaced 44 documents including Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance, Minerals Policy Statements, Minerals Policy Guidance, Circular 05/2005, Planning Obligations and various letters to Chief Planning Officers. The NPPF will be referred to as appropriate in the report.

#### **RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY**

H/53822 – Change of use from office/light industrial (use class B1) to motorcycle repair centre (use class B2). Granted 7<sup>th</sup> June 2002.

H/42352 – Erection of new boundary wall to Atlantic Street frontage following demolition of existing boundary wall. Granted 23<sup>rd</sup> May 1996.

## **APPLICANTS SUBMISSION**

The planning application is supported by the following reports, the main conclusions of which are incorporated in the Observations section below and will be referred to as appropriate:

- Planning and Retail Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Transport Assessment
- Interim Travel Plan
- Flood Risk Assessment
- Employment Land Review
- Environmental Site Assessment Phase 1 Investigation
- Phase 1 Habitats Survey (Ecological Appraisal)
- Statement of Community Involvement

A Report from PR consultants was submitted with the application. Prior to submission, a consultation exercise including a half-day Public Exhibition at Trafford College and leaflet distribution in the locality with other feedback opportunities was described. This indicated the following:

10354 leaflets distributed

794 feedback comments returned                      80%+ answer yes to question

100 attended public exhibition

53 feedback forms completed                      80%+ answer yes to question

The question posed, to which the above positive response was indicated was:

“Do you support the redevelopment of this site at George Richards Way for a new ASDA foodstore?”

(However it should be noted that the planning application is not submitted by Asda and there is no named occupier, so it is speculative in that sense. The Planning and Retail Statement (Feb 2013) which accompanied the application stated at Para 5.17 that “Qualitatively, consumers in the area have a lack of choice as the main convenience operators are Tesco and Sainsbury’s. While there is no named operator for the proposals as yet, the applicants are in talks with two interested supermarket operators who are not currently represented in the area, but who have longstanding requirements in Broadheath. The presence of either operator on the application site will aid competition in the area and provide residents and people working in the area with a greater choice in supermarket fascia”.

The only operators not currently in the area are Asda and Morrisons, but the applicants have confirmed in discussions that they are currently in negotiation with Asda.)

- Subsequent letters rebutting objections raised during the course of the application, particularly in relation to matters of retail, transportation and employment policy.

Through the submission of this documentation the applicant has submitted that the proposal will result in the following benefits:

- **Addressing Local Needs**  
There is an identified quantitative and qualitative need for a new foodstore in Broadheath. The market is currently dominated by Tesco and Sainsburys. This proposal will aid competition and provide increased choice. There is evidence of overtrading in existing supermarkets.
- **Physical Regeneration**  
The proposal will secure the regeneration of a long-term vacant site which has been unsuccessfully marketed over a long period. It will enhance the appearance of the area.
- **Economic Development**  
The proposal will bring the site back into long term active economic use. The proposal will create 350 – 400 new jobs. There will be opportunity for career development and training, spin-off employment and construction jobs. It will provide an economic lift to the area, improve the accessibility to Broadheath and is supported by local businesses.
- **Aiding Regeneration in a Wider Area**  
The applicant is a long-term investor in the area. The opportunity to relocate 2 existing builders' merchants from Altrincham Town Centre is being explored to release land for redevelopment on the edge of that town centre. There is a mitigation Section 106 package to address harm caused by the proposal, which will be spent on initiatives identified in the Altrincham Town Centre Action Plan.

All these issues will be addressed in detail in the Observations section below, and will be weighed as material considerations in making Recommendations to Members.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**Strategic Planning** – Detailed comments are incorporated in the Observations section below.

**LHA** – Detailed comments are incorporated in the Observations section below.

**Pollution and Licensing** – No objections subject to the following:

- Noise - The applicant should submit an assessment of the impact of the proposal on neighbouring sensitive premises covering both construction and operational phases.
- Lighting - A scheme of lighting shall be submitted for approval prior to installation.



- Air Quality -The proposal includes significant new car parking and vehicle movement in the area, as such the applicant should submit an air quality assessment in order to determine the impact the proposal will have on air quality in the area.
- Dust Management - Prior to commencement a dust management plan shall be submitted for the approval of the LPA.
- Contaminated Land - Comments not yet received.

Further noise assessment submitted – this issue is resolved.

Further air quality assessment submitted – this issue is resolved.

**Drainage** – Any comments will be reported in the additional information report.

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**Environment Agency** – has now withdrawn its initial objection, which related to the adequacy of the Applicant’s Flood Risk Assessment, subject to appropriate conditions being attached in the event of an approval.

**GMEU** – Has raised no objection to the proposals:

- The application has included an ecological assessment that has provided sufficient information to determine the application with regards to ecological constraints. The only potential ecological constraint is nesting birds within the vegetated strip along the northern boundary of the site; the building was regarded as low risk for nesting birds and negligible risk for bats. The remainder of the site is hardstanding.
- Recommends a condition preventing vegetation clearance between 1<sup>st</sup> March and 31<sup>st</sup> July and recommends an informative relating to nesting birds

**GMP** – Any comments will be reported in the additional information report.

**TfGM** – Initial comments summarised as follows:

- Key transport issues are the impact on the A56, including junction operation, access by non-car modes and the adequacy of the Travel Plan.
- The Transport Assessment is being reviewed by TfGM’s Highway Forecasting and Analytical Services department and GM Urban Traffic Control Unit and a separate report has been submitted to the Council’s LHA.
- The site is not particularly well located in relation to public transport being over 400 metres; well over in the case of bus routes along the A56, from the site (this is beyond reasonable walking distance).
- These bus services may be used to access the site by those on public transport but they do not offer an attractive alternative that would encourage mode shift from the car.
- Future employees and customers would therefore have limited access to a choice of travel mode and without further incentive the proposals are unlikely to significantly reduce the amount of car travel generated by this development.

- In order to accord with national and local policy sustainable development needs to be accessible by a choice of sustainable transport modes to support reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, improve local air quality, reduce congestion and be socially inclusive.
- It is unclear from the supporting information what improvements to public transport services if any is being proposed.
- Detailed clarification should be provided of the applicant's intention regarding any improvement to bus accessibility of the development site.
- The Interim Travel Plan does not seem to provide for any dedicated funding of Travel Plan measures and day to day administration of the Travel Plan.
- Further development, submission, implementation and monitoring of the Travel Plan should be attached as conditions of any planning permission.

The applicant have submitted further information in respect of the proposed diversion of the 247 bus route. TfGM state that these proposals are not a viable option because:

- The diversion would inconvenience existing passengers who are travelling to/from Altrincham. Service 247 is a relatively long route and also serves Partington, Flixton, the Trafford Centre and Eccles.
- There are particular concerns for passengers travelling to/from Partington. As Service 247 is the only direct bus between Partington and Altrincham this diversion will make a relatively direct bus route circuitous adding time to passenger journeys
- In addition, it is not considered that this diversion would be sustainable once the S106 funding ceases without continued subsidy. Therefore it is considered likely the link to the area would be discontinued once the Section 106 funding has expired. TfGM have also confirmed that to achieve the intended diversion would require agreement from both TfGM and Arriva.
- Note that the A56 Altrincham – Manchester is one of the worst performing sections of road in Greater Manchester and a priority for improving journey time and reliability.
- Concerned about cumulative impact if both current supermarkets approved.
- Should Trafford be minded to approve either or both applications, appropriate mitigation measures will be needed to manage the impact on the A56.

**Electricity North West** – Raises no objection.

**United Utilities** – Raises no objection subject to the following condition:

- No surface water from the development shall be discharged either directly or indirectly into the combined sewer network.
- The site must be drained on a separate system with only foul drainage connected into the foul sewer.

## **REPRESENTATIONS**

### **In support**

**Neighbours and others** – 28 individual expressions of support, a letter from BizSpace and accompanying petition signed by 9 of their tenants, a letter from the 2 Little Ducks Community Group and accompanying petition - names and phone nos. only – with 158 indicating support for the proposals and 6 against; Trafford College has also written in to express support for proposals. The expressions of support cover the following points:-

- Developers have confirmed measures to combat traffic problems.
- Developers have confirmed that plans do not include chemist or post office.
- The application proposal is more favourable than the B&Q site as it would result in more new jobs, bringing an underused warehouse site back into use and hopefully keep B&Q.
- It would create a large number of jobs for local people and for people in Partington.
- An ASDA petrol station would be beneficial to local people as it would be competitively priced.
- It would create better competition and be good for consumers as it would provide more choice and cheaper products.
- Local stores and those in Altrincham are more expensive.
- A lot of local people would use it.
- ASDA would be good for the area and better than an empty warehouse.
- The development would improve the area.
- There would be improvements to the local road network.
- There would be improvements to a local bus route.
- It would reduce the need for people to drive to Altrincham.
- The development would make no difference to the traffic situation.
- The development would have no impact on Altrincham town centre.
- It would boost the economy of the area and be better for local businesses.
- The proposed store would bring many benefits including employment, training, regeneration of the area and increased choice for consumers.
- The college, students and the wider area would benefit.

**Arriva** – Has expressed support for the proposals and comment as follows:

- Arriva supports the proposal to extend the existing bus service Route Number 247 subject to further feasibility studies and discussions to secure appropriate levels of financial support via the applicant.
- This would benefit existing users of the surrounding industrial estate as well as future staff and shoppers associated with the proposed foodstore.
- Section 106 contributions to public transport improvements as sought by the Council would provide a suitable mechanism for this to happen should permission be granted.

## **Objections**

**Cllr Mrs Western** – Is expressing concerns of many constituents relating to traffic along the A56 in particular and the impact on the local economy.

**Cllr Mrs Wilkinson** – Has concerns regarding increased traffic, impact on local shops and businesses, impact on the retail park and on local residents.

**Neighbours and other 3<sup>rd</sup> parties** – 69 individual letters and 91 individually signed standard letters of objection from residents and local businesses. The objections cover the following areas of concern:-

### Policy

- The proposals are contrary to national (NPPF) and local (Trafford Core Strategy) policies seeking to put town centres first.
- The development does not meet the sequential tests set out in policy.
- It is contrary to Place Objectives ALO13 and ALO14 of the Core Strategy, contrary to Policy W2, and conflicts with employment land policies.
- Great weight should be put by the Council on its own up to date Core Strategy policies.

### Impact on town centres and local shops

- Broadheath is becoming a new high street with a wide range of non-bulky goods.
- The area already takes business from Altrincham and Sale town centres.
- Broadheath is not and should not be allowed to become a town centre.
- The proposed development will take more business from Altrincham town centre resulting in even more closures.
- The development will have a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of Altrincham.
- The Council should be assisting its town centres.
- Taking trade from existing town centre supermarkets will also reduce footfall in the town and reduce linked trips.
- There is no need and no demand for the development.
- The area is already well served by a variety of supermarkets offering a wide choice to consumers with Aldi and Waitrose within 5 minutes, and 2 Sainsbury's, 2 Tesco Express within 10 minutes, numerous smaller stores and the increasing use of online shopping.
- The retail case takes no account of the Morrisons proposal at B&Q site, Halfords, Sale town centre, the recently vacated New Look premises in Altrincham.
- The retail case does not take account of the impact on the medium and smaller stores in the town centre and the impact on these smaller stores would be contrary to the aims of Altrincham Forward.
- The proposal flies in the face of all the initiatives for Altrincham promoted by the Council, Altrincham Forward, business and community groups and residents.

- The development should be in Altrincham town centre and could fit on the Altair site.
- The development would have a massive effect on Altrincham; if it was located in Altrincham it would benefit the town instead.
- The development would be better in Partington.
- The proposal for Lidl nearby was refused and it would be inconsistent to approve this development.
- The Inspector in the Hale Barns inquiry said that scheme which was smaller than the one now proposed would have an adverse impact on Altrincham.

#### Traffic and transport

- The A56 is already congested in the area and traffic backs up.
- The existing junctions in the vicinity are at capacity and the development will result in an increase in traffic, congestion, queues.
- The proposed new right turn lane off the A56 is not enough and the development will make the traffic situation worse.
- There is only one exit from the development site going south on the A56 and no improved access back onto the A56 is proposed which will result in traffic backing up along George Richards Way and to the retail park and industrial estate.
- The development will result in more traffic taking rat runs along Oldfield Road, Sinderland Lane, Seamons Bridge and Gorsey Lane.
- There would be an increased risk to pedestrian safety resulting from increased use of these rat runs as well as the safety of other road users including cyclists and horse riders.
- There is no public transport and the 247 is slow, indirect and infrequent.
- The development is not in a sustainable location as there is not a choice of means of access to the development whereas Altrincham town centre is very well served.
- It is over 500m to the nearest existing bus stop.
- The development will maximise car use and even with the proposed bus stop there would be inadequate public transport links.
- It is contrary to Trafford's Core Strategy policies seeking to reduce the need to travel by car.
- Increased traffic would mean increased noise and pollution and late night traffic along Sinderland Road.
- There are insufficient long stay cycle-parking facilities.
- The new access/roundabout will cut across the existing Trans-Pennine Trail route (TPT National Cycle Route 62) which is a segregated cycle path.

#### Loss of industrial land, impact on existing businesses and employment issues

- This will result in a continued erosion of industrial/employment land for retail/residential use and compromise the primary purpose of the area.
- The industrial park will become less attractive for industrial type businesses.
- The new jobs promised by the developer will not be full time; they will be part time, poorly paid and do not take account of jobs lost due to the development.

- Overall there would be a loss of jobs in the area.
- There will be permanent gridlock in the area.
- The extra traffic will affect the flow of lorries through the industrial area.
- Extra traffic will affect local businesses some of which make use of on street parking.
- There will be an overall loss of jobs in the area.

#### Trees and wildlife

- Loss of existing mature trees and wildlife benefit along George Richards Way.

#### Piecemeal development

- There are 3 current proposals for supermarkets – the application, Morrisons and Sale town centre which should all be considered together not in a piecemeal manner.

#### Public Consultation

- There was only limited public consultation on the proposals.

**Altrincham and Bowdon Civic Society** – Object to the proposals on the following grounds:

- There is no need for the development.
- It does not meet the sequential test where the preference is for town centre locations.
- Altair is a suitable, available and viable site if the Council chooses to enable it.
- The development would have a significant adverse impact on Altrincham town centre contrary to Policy W2 and the NPPF.
- The impact has not been adequately assessed by the applicant who has failed to address the impact on stores other than the major supermarkets and does not take account of the impact on linked shopping benefits.
- It is not in a sustainable location contrary to Policy L4 of the Core Strategy.
- Not accessible by a choice of transport modes, public transport access is poor.
- Contrary to SPD on A56 corridor as it would add to congestion and extend journey times.
- Congestion is not assessed properly by the applicant.
- There is no extra provision for the increase in cars that would be trying to get back onto the A56 particularly those wishing to travel south.
- Application does not address the rat running that will occur along residential roads including Gorse Lane, Oldfield Road and Seamons Road at all times of day.
- It would result in sporadic siting of retail proposals along George Richards Way.
- Recent studies suggest that such a development actually results in a reduction in the number of jobs in an area.
- Contrary to Core Strategy policy W1.8 which identifies Broadheath as the principal employment location in the south of the borough.

- It would compromise the function of the area as an employment/industrial zone.
- The development does not meet the 5 criteria set out in policy W1.12 for the release of land from employment use.
- There was inadequate public consultation.

**Altrincham Town Centre Partnership** – Objects to the proposal on the following grounds:

- The developer did not carry out full and proper consultation.
- There is no justification for a further new supermarket of the size proposed.
- Suitable town centre sites are available and town centre first policies must prevail.
- If located in the town centre the development would increase trade rather than draw it away.
- If the Council's Altrincham Forward initiative is to have any meaning the application must be refused.
- The proposal is contrary to local planning policies.
- The submission does not acknowledge the number of jobs that would be lost.
- The proposal would increase car usage and travel contrary to the NPPF and the Councils policies.
- There would be traffic and transport problems and the proposal would adversely affect Altrincham town centre.

**Retailers/developers** - Objections have been received by and on behalf of other main retailers, including those with current supermarket proposals, namely B&Q, Morrisons, Maloneview (the owners of Sale Shopping Centre) and Waitrose:

B&Q/Morrisons –Have raised the following concerns:

- B&Q has an agreement with Morrisons to redevelop its existing store on Atlantic Street for a new Morrisons food store.
- A public consultation will take place on this later this month.
- Morrisons have entered pre-development discussions with the Council and an application is forthcoming.
- This should form a material consideration to any determination of the current Property Alliance Group (PAG) proposals.
- the PAG application should not be determined in advance of the B&Q proposals, they should be determined at the same time.
- The PAG application has not considered the B&Q site as part of its sequential assessment and it should be required to do this.
- The B&Q site is an established retail destination.
- It is well served by public transport unlike the PAG site which is some distance from the main road and public transport network.
- The B&Q site is closer to residential areas of Altrincham meaning it is a more sustainable proposal.
- The B&Q site is being promoted by a named retailer bringing certainty to deliverability, job creation and retail impact, the PAG proposal has no named operator.

- The B&Q site will allow a smaller store than the PAG site and Morrisons has a smaller than average non-food offer thereby reducing any potential impact on Altrincham town centre.
- The site is in a prominent position on one of the main approaches to the town centre meaning the Morrisons application represents an opportunity to improve the physical environment and linkages to the town centre.
- When considered against the tests set out in the NPPF and practice guides, the site is considered to better relate to Altrincham town centre and as such is sequentially preferable.
- Morrisons is not currently represented in the Borough so would bring increased customer choice and competition to reduce the dominance of Tesco and Sainsbury within the Altrincham catchment area.
- The PAG site is a Main Industrial Area under UDP Policy E7 and there is a requirement under Core Strategy Policy W1.12 to consider suitable alternative sites when non-employment uses are proposed on them – there is a requirement for the applicant of the PAG scheme to provide details as to why the B&Q site is not a suitable alternative site for a foodstore proposal.
- The B&Q site will not lead to the loss of employment land.

Subsequent to receipt of the above objections, an application (Ref: 80577/FULL/2013) has been submitted on behalf of B&Q/Morrisons and is reported elsewhere on the Agenda.

Maloneview (Sale) Limited – the owners and managers of The Square Shopping Centre in Sale town centre have submitted detailed objections to the planning application which can be summarised as follows:-

Failure to comply with the sequential test

- The Square site is available, suitable and viable and as such is a genuine sequentially preferable site.
- The owners are bringing forward a scheme for redevelopment on land which is either available or will be in a reasonable time period.
- The owners have entered pre-application discussions with the Council and expect to be submitting a planning application by July/August 2013, if successful it is hoped the store could commence trading in October 2015.
- The proposal includes a 40,000sq.ft net foodstore of the same type and scale as that in the PAG application.
- The scheme is expected to include a food retailer that is not currently present in Sale so this is competing for the same market opportunity.

Significant adverse impact on Sale Town Centre investment and its vitality and viability

- If the PAG scheme is approved it will remove tenant interest for the Sale town centre proposal undermining its viability and deliverability.
- This would be a significant adverse effect on planned investment which with the risk to the health of Sale town centre are sufficient to refuse the application as being contrary to the NPPF (Para 26) and Core Strategy Policies W2.5 and W2.12.



- Insufficient material considerations to outweigh the above concerns.

#### Highways

- The proposals fail to meet the requirements of transport planning tests.
- The site is not accessible by sustainable modes in any meaningful way.
- The submitted technical information fails to appropriately assess the traffic impacts of the scheme in the context of the significant traffic capacity issues that the area already experiences.
- The proposals are not deliverable and rely on entirely inappropriate highway mitigation which would create significant highway safety issues.

Maloneview submitted further comments to expand on and clarify various issues, in particular in response to comments submitted by the applicant's agents:

- The owners of The Square in Sale are currently in negotiations with Asda to agree Heads of Terms.
- Asda's requirements could be met by one store in the area to complement their existing Trafford Park store, Sale are therefore competing for the same retailer and market opportunity.
- It is also likely that a single new store would meet the current trading requirements in the medium-long term for any new entrant retailer.
- As such there is no prospect of an anchor food retailer tenant being secured in Sale if the application proposals proceed, this would then prevent the Sale scheme from proceeding.
- The applicants agree that The Square is a sequentially preferable site to Broadheath.
- The owners of The Square are committed to bringing their scheme forward and will be looking to submit an application later this year.
- The Government Practice Guide on retail proposals makes it clear that site availability can be determined over 3-5 years or longer depending on local circumstances.
- Discussions with landowners and tenants have been ongoing since 2010 and Maloneview are confident that these discussions can be concluded within 3-5 months.
- The Council can have confidence that there are no insurmountable legal or ownership problems which could prevent the scheme coming forward within a reasonable timescale.
- The PAG proposal is deliberately positioned and designed in highway terms to be accessible to both Sale and Altrincham residents.
- The impact on Sale town centre is likely to be much higher than estimated by the applicants particularly when the opportunity cost of failing to deliver the Sale scheme is taken into account.
- The Sale scheme should be given significant weight when compared with the Practice Guide as progress is being made; the likelihood of a food retailer being secured will be removed if the application scheme goes ahead; both schemes are competing for the same market opportunity (i.e. a food retailer that is not currently present in Sale or Altrincham); the Sale scheme is in line

with the Councils policies; there is not sufficient need for both schemes in retail capacity terms based on the Trafford Retail Study 2007, also any need in Broadheath was met by Waitrose; there is evidence of investor/developer interest in the Sale proposal; there are no positive benefits to the PAG scheme that outweigh the failure to deliver investment in Sale town centre; the creation of retail jobs and investment in Sale is a policy priority; there are no retail policy objectives to enhance Broadheath which is identified as an industrial location and should be retained as such.

- No weight should be given to short term economic investment in an out of centre retail location when there is an alternative and deliverable town centre opportunity.
- The Sale scheme would deliver a number of benefits including enhancement of convenience and comparison offer in Sale town centre; creation of 250 jobs in new anchor unit and further jobs in the wider scheme; provision of new and enhanced retail units; increase annual turnover of the Town Centre by circa £30m; wider physical and environmental improvements; additional footfall to the town centre generated by the anchor store; retention of existing tenants; provision of increased and enhanced residential accommodation for Trafford Housing Trust residents.
- These benefits significantly outweigh those suggested by the applicants for the PAG proposal.
- There are insufficient material considerations to outweigh the failure of the proposal to meet policy requirements.

It should be noted that a formal Pre-Application consultation in respect of the proposed development of Sale Square has now been submitted by retail consultants acting on behalf of Maloneview.

There is further correspondence from Maloneview which is addressed in the Observations Section below.

Waitrose – Objects to the proposed development and sets out the following conclusions:

- Waitrose opened relatively recently and was planned to meet a local need/deficiency in the Broadheath area identified by the Council.
- The Waitrose store fulfils such a role and there is no further justification to support a second larger store in the area which is actually further from the residential areas of Broadheath.
- The applicants fail to adequately recognise the role of Waitrose.
- There is no need for another foodstore in the Broadheath area.
- Any new proposals should protect and support existing centres including Broadheath.
- The existing Waitrose should be given the opportunity to continue to establish itself and fulfil this role in line with the Core Strategy without the threat of a new store.

- Concerned about the predicted level of impact modelled by the applicant and the more likely levels of impact based on Waitrose own estimates and knowledge of trading patterns in the area.
- The likely level of impact will be significant adverse impacts and a real threat to the trading stability of the existing Waitrose store as the Local Centre anchor.
- Any impacts will further undermine the health of the Local Centre.
- Concerns are further exacerbated by proposed Morrisons at the B&Q site; this represents a further threat and demonstrates the importance of protecting Broadheath Local Centre first when considering schemes in the local area.
- The application is speculative and is not supported by a named retailer.

## **OBSERVATIONS**

1. Members are being asked to consider 2 separate planning applications for supermarkets in the Broadheath Area. These are 79984/FULL/2013 for the Lyon' Industrial Estate, Atlantic Street (Hangar 14) and 80577/FULL/2013 B&Q Plc, Altrincham Retail Park, Atlantic Street (B&Q). Both applications are recommended for refusal.
2. The reason for taking the applications to Committee together is to enable Members to reach decisions based on full details of both proposals, and having regard to the following:
  - i. The NPPF Para 24 states that *"When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre"*.
  - ii. There is a requirement in adopted Core Strategy Policy W1.12 criterion 3, that, *"where a non-employment use is proposed, there should be no alternative sites in the locality to meet the need for development"*.
  - iii. The availability of other more suitable sites can be a material planning consideration
3. Each application will be considered in the manner set out below, with reference to the other, or both, where appropriate.
4. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that an application for planning permission shall be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Conversely, applications which are not in conformity with the Development Plan should not be allowed unless material considerations justify granting planning permission.
5. Each proposal will be assessed as to whether it meets development plan policies (as set out in the Planning Policy Section above); the relevant material

considerations, which include the NPPF, benefits arising from the scheme and any proposed mitigation measures, will be considered, and these will be weighed in making a recommendation to Members.

6. The advice of the Council's independent retail consultants is that the cumulative impact of both applications on the viability and vitality of nearby centres is unacceptable. The relative merits of each application are assessed in the event that Members decide not to follow the recommendations to refuse both applications for the reasons relating to failure of the Sequential Test and "*significant adverse*" impact on investment in Sale Town Centre, and the further reasons for refusal relating to each application.

### **PRINCIPLE OF THE DEVELOPMENT**

7. All proposals for retail development in an Out-of-Centre location must be assessed primarily against Core Strategy Policy W2 Town Centres and Retail; the NPPF (particularly Para's 23-27) and the Planning for Town Centres Practice Guidance (PTCPG).
8. Site specific policies relate to the location of the site within the Broadheath Industrial Area and proposals must be assessed against UDP Proposal E7 Main Industrial Area; Core Strategy Policy W1 Economy, and the NPPF (particularly Para's 18-22).

### **PRINCIPLE OF RETAIL DEVELOPMENT**

9. The Council have appointed HollisVincent (HV) as independent retail consultants; Walsingham Planning (WP) advised on behalf of the applicant in relation to the Hangar 14 proposal and Peacock and Smith (PS) for the applicant in relation to the B&Q proposal. The analysis of the retail issues is based on the following documents, in addition to those submitted with the original planning applications, and will be updated as necessary prior to the Committee Meeting:
  - HollisVincent Reports on Hangar 14
  - Hollisvincent Reports on B&Q
  - HollisVincent Reports on Hangar 14 and B&Q
  - Various Rebuttal Documents from Maloneview on Sale Square Development
  - Various rebuttal documents from WP
  - Correspondence with WP and PS on discrepancy in estimated turnover figures.
  - Correspondence from Morrisons and other supermarket operators
10. The relevant development plan Policy W2.12 Out-of-Centre Development states that:

*"Outside the centres identified above, there will be a presumption against the development of retail, leisure and other town centre-type uses except where it can be demonstrated that they satisfy the tests outlined in current Government*

*Guidance*". (The identified centres are Altrincham, Sale, Stretford, Urmston, Hale, Sale Moor, Timperley and the network of Local Centres)

The tests set out in the NPPF and accompanying Guidance are:

- The Sequential Test
- The Investment Impact Test
- The Impact on Vitality and Viability Test.

## **RETAIL APPRAISAL**

11. Hollisvincent were appointed by the Council to carry out an Audit of the Applicants' Support Material, Assessment of Cumulative Retail Impact and provide Retail Policy Advice in respect of both planning applications currently before the Committee. The following is a summary of their Reports and Addendum Reports which takes account of the application submission and subsequent representations from both applicants, and interested third parties.
12. The Hangar 14 application is indisputably an Out-of-Centre location for the purposes of the policy assessment
13. The NPPF sets out the national policy framework for Town Centres and Sustainable Economic Development, which is a material consideration in planning decisions. The principle of sustainability runs through the document, with a presumption in favour of sustainable development, but the statutory status of the development plan remains the starting point for decision making. In this case the policies are found in the Revised UDP and the Core Strategy DPD adopted in January 2012. The Core Planning Principles are set out which include the requirement to proactively drive sustainable economic development; awareness of the different roles and character of different areas and promotion of the vitality of main urban areas; encouragement of the effective use of previously developed land and focussing significant development in locations which are, or can be made, sustainable.
14. The Government is committed to building a Strong, Competitive Economy. The Section on Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres is particularly relevant to this application. Para 23 states that: "*planning policies should promote competitive town centre environments and that, in drawing up local plans, LPA's should, amongst other things:*  
*§ recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and support their vitality and viability;*  
*§ promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer;*  
*§ ensure that needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses are met in full and are not compromised by limited site availability, so that local planning authorities should undertake an assessment of the need to expand town centres to ensure a sufficient supply of suitable sites;*

*§ allocate appropriate sites for main town centre uses in accordance with the sequential approach; and*  
*§ plan positively for centres in decline”.*

15. Para 24 sets out the sequential test that applies to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres and secondly, sets out the impact test on the town centre vitality and viability.
16. Attention is drawn to Para’s 186 and 187 on Decision Taking which state that: *“the local planning authorities should approach decision taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development”.*
17. The overall conclusions in relation to the NPPF are that:
  - it emphasises the role of the development plan as the statutory starting point in the consideration of planning applications, so that applications which accord with the development plan should be approved without delay, whereas if there is conflict with the development plan, applications should be refused, unless material considerations indicate otherwise
  - the NPPF itself is a material consideration to which significant weight is given
  - the NPPF presumption in favour of *“sustainable development”* is similar to the presumption in favour of *“sustainable economic growth”*, as previously enshrined in Policy EC10.1 of the now replaced PPS4, but, in the decision taking context, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies only *“where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date”*
  - the NPPF maintains previous policy in seeking to promote competitive and healthy town centres; and that
  - the policy tests in relation to the sequential approach and impact, although expressed in more concise terms, remain essentially the same as the tests formerly set out in the former PPS4.
18. It is considered noteworthy; however, that paragraph 26 of the NPPF does not seek to reflect the separate test of scale that was formerly incorporated in Policy EC16.1e of PPS4. Thus, the issue of scale is subsumed within the tests that relate to impact on investment, impact on town centre vitality and viability (including local consumer choice) and the impact on trade in town centres in the wider area.
19. Para 27 of the NPPF is reflective of the provisions of Policy EC17.1 of the former PPS4 in stating that *“Where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have a significant adverse impact on one or more of the above factors [in Para 26], it should be refused”*. However, Para 27 does not replace the advice previously contained in Policy EC17.2 of PPS4, which required a balancing exercise to be undertaken in cases where there were no significant adverse impacts.

20. The application is then appraised against the retail and land use policy aspects of the current and emerging development plan. The policies in the UDP are effectively replaced by Policy W2 of the Core Strategy DPD, other than in respect of specific allocations and definitions of centre boundaries which will be addressed in a future Land Allocations DPD.
21. Policies W2.1 to W2.11 set out the hierarchy of centres and the strategies relating to these centres. Altrincham is the Principal Town Centre within the Borough; Sale, Stretford and Urmston are the other Town Centres; Hale, Sale Moor and Timperley are District Centres. Proposals for town centre uses in out-of-centre locations are dealt with under Policy W2.12 which states there will be a presumption against such proposals “.....except where it can be demonstrated that they satisfy the test outlined in current Government guidance” Para 19.9 of the Justification to the Policy states that the policy “.....does not propose or identify any new sites for large scale growth in the retail sector....” Instead it makes proposals to consolidate and enhance the retail offer available within Trafford’s Town, District and Local Centres.
22. Having conducted the relevant tests outlined in current Government guidance, HV conclude that the application to redevelop the Hangar 14 site for a food superstore is:
- Not consistent with the key objectives of the strategy for Altrincham and Sale Town Centres as set out in Policies W2.2 to W2.5 of the Core Strategy DPD; and
  - In conflict with Policy W2.12 of the Core Strategy DPD.

#### **Need for a supermarket in Broadheath**

23. Both applicants have submitted that the evidence which they have provided, which included detailed Policy Analysis, a Householder Shopping Survey, Sequential Assessment, Retail Impact Assessment and Public Consultation Exercise demonstrate that there is a quantitative and qualitative need for a further supermarket in Broadheath. HV have considered this evidence, together with the third party representations. WP have identified the benefits of their scheme in the section ‘Addressing Local Needs’ in the document quoted above. They say there is an identified qualitative and quantitative need for a new supermarket; this will improve competition with existing supermarkets; there is evidence of overtrading particularly at Tesco and Sainsbury in Altrincham and the proposal has local support. PS place emphasis on the improvement of local consumer choice; and addressing overtrading at Tesco Extra in Baguley and Aldi at Broadheath.
24. The assessment of need, as measured by expenditure capacity, is not a development management test as outlined in the NPPF, thus the absence of need on its own can no longer form grounds for a reason for refusal of an application for a town centre use. Conversely, the existence of need on its own does not necessarily mean that there will be no adverse impacts. Nevertheless,

the Planning for Town Centres Practice Guidance makes it clear that an assessment of need informs the consideration of the sequential approach and impact, both of which are requirements under the NPPF, for applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan. An assessment of the quantitative and qualitative need has therefore been carried out to inform those tests, in respect of the Hangar 14 application only. Need is also a relevant consideration in Para 22 of the NPPF relating to the alternative use of land allocated for Employment Use, and is also relevant to Policy W1.12 as the site is in a Main Employment Area, but this does not apply to the B&Q application.

#### Quantitative Need - Conflicts in Support Material

25. There is an important conflict in the support material put forward by both applicants. This has given rise to comment from third parties including local residents. The Expenditure Capacity, which is the measure used to assess need, has been derived from both applicants separate Householder Shopping Surveys using 1000 respondents from the same catchment area and using the same zoning systems. The primary difference is that the WP survey was conducted in October 2012 and the PS survey was more recent in April 2013 following the opening of Tesco at Stretford.
26. The surveys produce substantially different results in relation to spending patterns and the turnover estimates for large and medium sized foodstores. WP consistently identify higher convenience goods turnover for the medium and large sized foodstores, based on higher market shares for those stores. Part of the reason for this is that WP use per capita expenditure figures which are 13%-14% higher over all zones. Despite attempts, neither party has been able to resolve the difference.
27. The different figures on market shares of large supermarkets can relate to sampling error, the forms of questions asked and the different time of the surveys. The opening of Tesco Stretford would depress the turnover levels at other stores. However, HV agree with PS that the wording employed in the key question of WP's survey is likely to have resulted in overstating of the market share of supermarkets and superstores.
28. This results in the stark contrast between WP's conclusion that there is an aggregate level of overtrading in supermarkets in the Altrincham, Sale and Baguley areas of approximately £41.8m with expenditure capacity at £27.2m up to 2017, and that of PS which leads to an aggregate level of overtrading of £5.4m and a negative expenditure capacity of -£7m up to 2017.
29. HV considers that the PS survey findings which produce an aggregate position in the convenience goods sector are more realistic based on their own observations at the various stores. They agree with PS's observations that there is no evidence of significantly high levels of overtrading other than at the Aldi store in



Broadheath. The evidence is that Waitrose at Broadheath overtrades slightly, as stated in their representations, and there is little evidence of congestion or customer discomfort at the two food superstores in Altrincham Town Centre. Thus, on-the-ground evidence would suggest that PS's findings and expenditure data are more reliable.

	CUMULATIVE IMPACT ON ALTRINCHAM WITH 'EMERGING ALTAIR'					
	Using <b>Walsingham Planning</b> Expenditure Data			Using <b>Peacock and Smith</b> Expenditure Data		
	Comparison	Convenience	Combined	Comparison	Convenience	Combined
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Hangar 14 / PAG	-1.8	-14.9	-7.8	-2.0	-17.1	-8.9
B&Q / Morrisons	-1.2	-10.8	-5.6	-1.3	-12.5	-6.4
Two Store	-2.2	-21.4	-11.0	-2.4	-24.1	-12.3

Emerging scheme Altair has a convenience sales area of 375sq.m. and a comparison sales area of 400sq.m. Both sets of data utilises market share derived from the household survey commissioned by Walsingham Planning.

30. However, HV have used WP's expenditure data and shopping patterns which favour both applicants, but have undertaken sensitivity testing to assess the impact of using PS figures (see Impact Table above).

#### Quantitative Need

31. HV recalculated the Expenditure Capacity using WP's figures, allowing for the turnover requirements of commitments to redevelop the local centres in Hale Barns and Partington and the understanding of the broad content of the emerging proposals for a revised scheme at the Altair site, which is likely to be dominated by leisure, restaurant/bar and residential uses, with a limited Class A1 Retail component. This results in a residual expenditure capacity to support new convenience floorspace of £27m in the period up to 2017, as shown in the Table below:

	CONVENIENCE GOODS	
	Aggregate overtrading	Catchment Area Capacity at 2017
	£m	£m
Using WP Expenditure Data	41.8	27.2
Using PS expenditure Data	5.4	-7.0

This uses WP data, with results from PS data being slightly higher.

32. The residual expenditure is lower than the convenience goods expenditure requirement of the Hangar 14 store of £34m, but higher than the convenience goods expenditure turnover of the Morrisons store at £22m.

33. However, HV argues strongly that the £27m residual expenditure identified by using WP's data, should be channelled towards Altrincham Town Centre so as to

reduce the vacancy level, towards Sale Town Centre to support the emerging proposal for the redevelopment of The Square Shopping Centre and to Sale Moor District Centre, for which Policy W2.8 of the Core Strategy DPD identifies a need to plan for a small to medium sized supermarket.

34. Thus, HV's overall conclusion is that there is insufficient expenditure capacity, or quantitative need, to support the turnover requirements of either of the application proposals. HV points out, however, that the absence of need, on its own, is no longer a ground for refusal under the NPPF, although it does inform the approach to the sequential and impact tests.

#### Qualitative Need

35. Both applicants' submissions in respect of qualitative need rely mainly on the perceived level of choice in the catchment area, which is largely dominated by Tesco and Sainsburys. WP argue that there is evidence of consumer discomfort resulting from overtrading.

36. HV have analysed the evidence which does not indicate any significant levels of discomfort or congestion resulting from current trading levels. HV consider that the fact that the some stores trade at densities above their respective company averages is not a good indicator of qualitative need for a further large foodstore in an Out-of-Centre location in Broadheath.

37. The submitted surveys indicate:

- The Aldi store at Broadheath is extremely popular and demonstrates the consumer demand for a discount operator in this location.
- The Waitrose store at Sinderland Road Local Centre is also popular and draws trade from a wide area, in addition to meeting local need
- There is some level of dissatisfaction with the large foodstores in Sale Town Centre.
- The large and medium sized foodstores in Altrincham and Broadheath are all trading well.

38. The overall conclusion, therefore, is that there is no pressing qualitative need for an out of centre food superstore in the Broadheath area, and that the residents of this area already have a wide choice of convenience goods outlets, ranging from local stores, such as Nisa, to the discount offer provided by Aldi, the medium sized Waitrose supermarket, and the large superstores and market facilities offered in Altrincham Town Centre. Indeed, the NEMS Survey suggests that the most pressing qualitative need is to improve the large foodstore offer in Sale Town Centre.

39. The analysis of the latest GOAD Plan for Altrincham Town Centre (August 2012) (an independently produced survey) suggests that there is also a need to improve the representation of small independent convenience traders in the Town Centre. Indeed, these smaller convenience goods operators account for only 4% of all retail and service units in Altrincham and there is plenty of

opportunity for such retailers afforded by the vacant units which existed at the time of the last GOAD survey on 15th August 2012.

40. The above conclusion on absence of quantitative and qualitative need is relevant to the Hangar 14 application as it then fails the criteria in Policy W1.12 which requires demonstration that there is a clear need for the proposed land use(s) in this locality. Even if a need is considered to have been demonstrated, it is not locationally specific to the Broadheath area, but relates to the whole catchment area identified in the surveys, including Sale.

#### THE SEQUENTIAL TEST

41. The NPPF (Para 24) sets out the sequential test that applies to planning applications that are not in an existing centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan. Policy W2.12 requires such proposals to satisfy the tests set out in Government guidance.

42. Para's 6.36-6.50 of the Planning for Town Centres Practice Guidance (PTCPG) provides advice in relation to the three key components of the sequential test which must be addressed to establish whether there is a site in a sequentially preferable location which is "*available, suitable and viable*", with these terms defined as follows:

- Availability – whether sites are available now, or are likely to become available for development within a reasonable period of time (determined on the merits of a particular case, having regard to, inter alia, the urgency of the need).
- Suitability – whether sites are suitable to accommodate the need or demand which the proposal is intended to meet.
- Viability – whether there is a reasonable prospect that development will occur on the site at a particular point in time, which will depend in part on the nature of the need, and the timescale over which the need is to be met.

43. Taking into consideration the quantitative and qualitative need which has been identified above, it is considered that for a site to be considered sequentially preferable, it must be within the relevant area of search, must serve a similar function and achieve similar objectives to the proposal, and be capable of trading within a reasonable timescale.

#### Area of Search

44. This has been the subject of considerable debate between the parties. The applicants contend that the area of search for a sequentially preferable site should not include Sale Town Centre on the basis that:

- Altrincham and Sale have separate catchment areas, evidenced by the fact that Tesco, Sainsbury, Aldi and M&S all have stores at both centres
- The evidence that Waitrose at Sinderland Road draws trade from both Sale and Altrincham is not applicable to other supermarket operators as the trade draw in the case of Waitrose arises specifically as a result of the type of offer

available at Waitrose which distinguishes it from other supermarket operators.

45. The Council's retail consultant agrees that Sale and Altrincham have distinct catchment areas.
46. Of significant importance, however, is the fact that the Waitrose store at the Sinderland Road Local Centre draws convenience trade from throughout the catchment area of the application proposal. Therefore, although Sale and Altrincham have reasonably distinct PCA's, because most of the large and medium sized foodstores are present in both centres, it is clear that the introduction of a new operator, in the form of Waitrose, has led to trade being drawn into the Broadheath area from residents of Sale. Thus, it seems likely that the introduction of another new operator in Broadheath would draw trade from the residents of both the Altrincham and Sale PCA's.
47. In considering whether, or not, Sale Town Centre should be included in the Area of Search for the purposes of the Sequential Test, HV have taken account of the advice given in Para's 6.21 – 6.26 of the Practice Guidance. They note that:
  - the Core Strategy envisages new retail floorspace of 4000sq.m. in Sale, and the emerging proposals at Sale Square can accommodate the sales areas sought in relation to each of these proposals
  - both applicants define the catchment area as being approximately a 15 minute drive time, whereas Sale is less than 10 minutes drive from the application sites
  - the scale and size of the proposals will serve a materially wider catchment area than small local foodstores
  - there is no quantitative or qualitative need for a further large foodstore in the Broadheath area
  - there is no gap or deficiency in the range and choice of supermarket facilities available to residents in the Broadheath area.
48. HV are of the opinion that a new operator on the Hangar 14 site would draw trade from residents of Sale, Broadheath, Timperley, and Altrincham areas. This is due to the location of the site within a 10 minute off-peak drive time from Sale, and is confirmed by the applicants Transport Analysis showing a substantial proportion of traffic distribution from the north.
49. The representations from the owners of the Sale Square site draw attention to the likely draw of the proposal from Sale and Altrincham, pointing out the new right hand turn lane from Manchester Road, heading South onto George Richards Way provided for in the development proposal for Hangar 14, which in their view confirms this. They estimate as much as 40% of the trade could be drawn from Sale, compared to the HV estimate of 21% and WP estimate of 15%.
50. Furthermore, if the applicant is relying on its overall 15 minute study area for assessing quantitative need, then it must search for sequentially preferable

opportunities in all town centres within that catchment area in seeking to meet that need. It would not be possible for an operator such as ASDA or Morrisons to attract its required turnover from residents of Altrincham alone and the expenditure capacity identified by Walsingham Planning derives from all of the 244,000 population that are projected to live within the study area in 2017.

51. PS have suggested that Morrisons would seek to locate in both Broadheath and Sale, but HV are not persuaded that there is sufficient evidence to support this statement. Therefore HV conclude that Sale Town Centre should be included within the area of search for “Sequentially Preferable Sites” in terms of the tests set out in the NPPF

#### Sequential Site Search

52. The applicant examined 18 sites in seeking to apply the sequential approach. Having examined this material, HV considers that there is only one site which requires further examination, and this is the emerging opportunity to redevelop The Square in Sale Town Centre. It is agreed that each of the other 17 sites fail one, or more, of the ‘available’, ‘suitable’ or ‘viable’ components of the sequential test. One of these was the Altair site, in Altrincham. This has been discounted as not meeting the tests because the proposal would neither fit with the extant planning permission nor the development agreement. .

#### Availability

53. The recent submission of a formal Pre-application Consultation request by consultants acting on behalf of the owners of the Sale Town Centre site is an indication that the scheme is currently progressing and is expected to be the subject of a planning application in the near future.
54. Para 6.38 of the Practice Guidance emphasises that a site can be considered to be “available” for development “... when, on the best information available, there is confidence that there are no insurmountable legal or ownership problems...”
55. Both applicants have questioned the availability of the Sale Town Centre site, citing the need for various land and property acquisitions, the need to relocate both retailers and residential occupiers, and the availability of funding.
56. The owners responded to these points, setting out in detail the progress which had been made in land and property acquisitions. The funding availability was confirmed by the National Asset Management Agency, if a foodstore operator is secured. The plan to relocate existing occupiers was supplied.
57. HV conclude that, given the conclusion that there is no pressing quantitative and qualitative need for a further Out-of-Centre supermarket at Broadheath, the owners of the Sale Town Centre site should be given a reasonable period of time, to bring this sequentially preferable scheme forward. This is consistent with

Practice Guidance advice that major town centre sites can take 10-15 years to deliver.

58. A very late submission has been received from Tesco Stores which suggests that there may be some outstanding issues in relation to a right of way from the existing Tesco store in Sale and which would impact on the deliverability of the scheme and hence on the 'availability' of the site for the purposes of the sequential test. This is being followed up by officers and there will be a further report on this issue to Members.

#### Suitability

59. There is recent case law ('The Dundee Case') on the interpretation of this requirement, which HV summarise as being a need for all parties to demonstrate flexibility and realism and that the sequentially preferable location must be able to provide for a retail development that will serve a similar function and achieve similar objectives to the application proposal. The words in the Judgement are "*suitable for the development proposed by the applicant*".
60. HV conclude that the Sale Town Centre site can accommodate a food store of a similar size to that proposed in either scheme. The applicants suggest the main objectives are to meet an asserted localised need for a further large supermarket in the Broadheath area and enhance consumer choice and to provide more competition for the existing stores. HV dispute the evidence of need and consider that the objective of providing competition with existing stores could be achieved with the Sale Town Centre site, and that this is a more sustainable location and in accordance with planning objectives of the Core Strategy DPD.

#### Viability

61. Paragraph 6.37 of the Practice Guidance states that the 'viability' component of the sequential test is judging "*...whether there is a reasonable prospect that development will occur on the site...*" and paragraph 6.47 states that: "*this will be influenced by a range of market, cost and delivery factors*".
62. Walsingham Planning's representations raise a number of points in relation to viability, the most important being:
- questioning whether Maloneview has the financial capabilities to expend the substantial monies that will be required to promote the scheme (which is a matter that is dealt with in NAMA's letter of 24<sup>th</sup> May 2013)
  - the range of abnormal development costs, including site acquisition from the Council, Trafford Housing Trust and the Institute of Civil Engineers and Surveyors
  - the financial payment it envisages to Tesco in lieu of its 'easement' over part of the site (which is specifically refuted by Maloneview)
  - demolition costs
  - compensation and relocation costs for existing retailers and residents; and

- the costs involved in pursuing a compulsory purchase order if this proved to be necessary.
63. However, the Practice Guidance states at paragraph 6.49 that *'Where alternative sites are being actively promoted for new development by a developer/retailer, this is a reasonable indicator that the location is viable'*. Furthermore, the Practice Guidance states at paragraph 6.50 that *'It will rarely be necessary to undertake detailed development appraisals to test the viability of alternative sites'*. Maloneview's representations indicate that it is confident that a viable scheme can be delivered, and it is noted that expenditure is already being incurred in promoting the pre-application request.
64. HV consider that there is nothing in the representations submitted by WP or PS that seriously questions the viability of the emerging scheme in Sale and HV is satisfied that Maloneview has provided the necessary level of evidence required by the Practice Guidance to suggest that its scheme is viable.

#### Overall Conclusion on the Sequential Test

65. Given the conclusions that Sale Town Centre should be included in the 'area of search' for sequentially preferable opportunities and that the opportunity in Sale Town Centre is considered to be available, suitable and viable for the development proposed by PAG, both the Hangar 14 and B&Q application proposals therefore fail the sequential test. In these circumstances Paragraph 27 of the NPPF states that where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test it should be refused. However it should be noted that material considerations may exist to which such weight should be given as to indicate otherwise. In this regard there are representations received from both applicants which question the ability of the Sale site to satisfy all three elements of the sequential test. It should also be noted as indicated above that correspondence has now been received from Tesco which may have a bearing over the "availability" test for the Sale site. This matter is being investigated further and any necessary update will be provided by way of an additional information report.

#### THE IMPACT TESTS

66. Para 26 of the NPPF sets out the impact tests for applications for retail, leisure and office development that is located outside town centres and which is not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan. Where the development exceeds the national or a locally set threshold (200sq.m. as set out in the Core Strategy), the application must face the impact tests set out in paragraph 26 of the NPPF.
67. The impact tests require an assessment of:
- a) the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and
  - b) the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and wider area, up to five years from the time the application is made. For major schemes where the

full impact will not be realised in five years, the impact should also be assessed up to ten years from the time the application is made.

68. Planning for Town Centres Practice Guidance states that *“it will be for the decision maker to determine what constitutes an ‘acceptable’, ‘adverse’ or ‘significant adverse’ impact based on the circumstances of each case, having regard to national and local policy objectives”*. The Practice Guidance then goes on to state that *“...there are no meaningful benchmarks of what constitutes an ‘acceptable’ level of trade diversion... the relevant factors will depend on the circumstances of each case”*
69. In forming a judgment as to whether the effects of a proposal are likely to reach the *‘significant adverse’* threshold, it is for the decision maker to take account of:
- the vulnerability of the town centres likely to be affected by the application proposal and their state of health
  - the impact on the market share of the town centres
  - the effect on planned investment in the town centres
  - the impact on vacancies and quality of the retail offer in the centres affected
  - the impact on investor confidence.

#### Impact on Existing, Committed and Planned Investment

70. HV have agreed with both applicants that there is unlikely to be a ‘significant adverse’ impact on the planned investments in Partington and Hale Barns, or on the emerging Altair scheme in Altrincham Town Centre. However, the concerns expressed by the owners of the Sale Town Centre site are given significant weight. Quite simply, they state that *“If the Broadheath scheme (Hangar 14) goes ahead then the Sale Town Centre scheme will not”* and they express similar concerns regarding the B&Q proposal. The likely operators, Asda or Morrisons have not satisfactorily demonstrated any intention to operate in both Broadheath and Sale, and both schemes are competing for the same market opportunity.

#### Overall Conclusion on the Impact on Planned Investment

71. The overall conclusion is that the Hangar 14 application, which is speculative to the extent that it currently has no named food retail occupier or the B&Q application with Morrisons as the named occupier, are each likely to cause a significant adverse impact on planned investment in Sale Town Centre, which would undermine an important aspect of Policy W2.5 of the Council’s Core Strategy
72. Thus, in relation to the checklist set out under paragraph 7.21 of the Practice Guidance, which gives advice on how to measure the effects on planned investment in nearby town centres, it is concluded that:
- Maloneview appears to have secured funding support, has entered into formal pre-application discussion process, and is in detailed discussion regarding the necessary land and property acquisitions



- significant policy weight should be attached to the proposal to redevelop the Square Shopping Centre in Sale, since this would assist the objectives set out in Policy W2.5 of the recently adopted Core Strategy DPD
  - there is not sufficient need for a large foodstore in an out of centre location in Broadheath, as well as a large foodstore in Sale Town Centre
  - Sale Town Centre is in direct competition with the out of centre promoters for the same market opportunity i.e. ASDA or Morrisons
  - there is evidence of investor concern, through the representations from Maloneyview and NAMA
  - neither of the out of centre schemes has positive retail benefits that would outweigh the failure to deliver investment in Sale Town Centre.
73. On that basis it is concluded that there is a real likelihood of a “*significant adverse*” impact on planned investment in Sale Town Centre, and this risk is exacerbated by the fact that an operator could be trading from either of these sites sometime before the scheme in Sale Town Centre becomes operational.
74. Both proposals are therefore considered to fail the test relating to ‘Impact on Existing, Committed and Planned Investment’ in a town centre in the catchment area of the proposal and a Reason for Refusal referring to Policy W2.12 and the NPPF Para 26 and 27 is therefore recommended.

## **IMPACT ON TOWN CENTRE VITALITY AND VIABILITY, AND TURNOVER OF THE TOWN CENTRES**

### **Hangar 14**

75. The original HV Report of May 2013 has been updated following further correspondence referred to above. Originally, it was considered that the final composition of the Altair scheme in Altrincham town Centre would have a direct bearing upon whether the impact on trading levels in Altrincham Town Centre from the Hangar 14 proposal would be likely to cause a “*significant adverse*” impact on its overall vitality and viability and a reduction in consumer choice. The impact on Sale, Stretford, the District and Local Centres was not considered to be significant.
76. The revised assessment of June 2013 summarises the cumulative impact of the Hangar 14 proposal, together with the revised commitments (relating to Tesco Chester Road; Partington and the emerging Altair scheme). This results in a cumulative impact on Altrincham’s overall retail turnover of 7.8% as a result of a cumulative diversion of £21.5m. The impact on Altrincham’s convenience sector rises to 14.9%, but much of this impact falls on the Tesco and Sainsbury’s stores which are projected to lose 18% of their convenience trade.
77. HV considered that the overall impact on Altrincham’s retail trade of 7.8% is at the margins of acceptability, given the relatively fragile state of the town centre,

but the estimate of the direct quantitative impact does not reflect the benefits of the uplift in footfall associated with a well integrated development at the Altair site, which is not quantifiable. Thus, the overall conclusion is that the impact on Altrincham Town Centre as a result of the Hangar 14 application is below the 'significant adverse' threshold referred to in Para 27 of the NPPF assuming that Altair is developed out thus creating an uplift in expenditure in Altrincham Town Centre.

78. The impact on Sinderland Road Local Centre is 12.2%, rising to 13.7% in the convenience goods sector. Although these impacts are slightly lower than the original estimates because of the reduced convenience goods turnovers of commitments, they still appear comparatively high. HV consider that such an impact would be unfortunate given that the local centre has only recently been established, however they conclude that it is likely to be below the "*significant adverse*" threshold incorporated in Paragraph 27 of the NPPF, given that much of the impact will fall on the Waitrose store which is acknowledged by the operator to be '*...overtrading to a degree*'.
79. The impact on Sale's overall turnover is 6.4%, rising to 6.9% in the convenience goods sector. These levels of impact are lower than those identified in the original report, because of the reduction in convenience turnover of the commitments, and the opinion remains that the impact on Sale's Town Centre overall vitality and viability will remain below the '*significant adverse*' threshold. Similarly, the impact on Timperley District Centre is marginally lower than in the original report and again the impact is considered to be below the '*significant adverse*' threshold.
80. HV's overall conclusion, therefore, is that the Hangar 14 application will not cause a '*significant adverse*' impact on the overall vitality and viability of any of the Borough's Town, District or Local Centres, assuming successful implementation of Nikal's emerging proposal for the Altair site. Thus, there is no conflict with the second of the impact tests set out in Para 26 of the NPPF.

#### **B&Q**

81. In respect of the B&Q proposals, the figures are proportionately reduced, reflecting the smaller size of the store. When factoring in the emerging Altair scheme, the overall impact on Altrincham's Retail trade would be 5.6% - 6.4% as a result of a cumulative diversion of £15.4m, depending on which Expenditure Data is input. The impact on Altrincham's convenience sector rises to 13.7% of their convenience trade.
82. The impact on Sinderland Road Local Centre is 9.2% rising to 10.3% in the convenience sector. As with the Hangar 14 proposal, although these impacts are slightly lower than the original estimates because of the reduced convenience goods turnovers of commitments, they still appear comparatively high. HV consider that such an impact would be unfortunate given that the local centre has only recently been established, however they conclude that it is likely to be

below the “*significant adverse*” threshold incorporated in Paragraph 27 of the NPPF, given that much of the impact will fall on 84. the Waitrose store which is acknowledged by the operator to be ‘...*overtrading to a degree*’.

83. The impact on Sale’s overall turnover is 5.5% rising to 8.3% in the convenience goods sector; and on Timperley 5.5% with 8.3% in the convenience sector.
84. HV’s overall conclusion, therefore, is that the B&Q application will not cause a ‘*significant adverse*’ impact on the overall vitality and viability of any of the Borough’s Town, District or Local Centres, assuming successful implementation of Nikal’s emerging proposal for the Altair site. Thus, there is no conflict with the second of the impact tests set out in Para 26 of the NPPF.

#### Overall conclusion on Impact on Vitality and Viability

85. HV conclude that both proposals will remain below the ‘*significant adverse*’ threshold of government guidance. However there is a real concern that the B&Q proposal could prove more harmful in terms of its actual impact on Altrincham Town Centre. This is due to concerns that introducing a foodstore of the size of the Morrisons proposal into the existing retail park with its current mix of retail operators produces a very real likelihood of reinforcing a local centre effect at the Altrincham Retail Park. This effect could not be quantified by a retail impact assessment. Although there is the possibility that this effect could also be produced by the Hangar 14 proposal, it is likely that it would be more marked with the B&Q/Morrisons proposal given its relative proximity to other retail uses and the higher likelihood of pedestrian movements and other linked trips. Additionally it is noted that concerns have also been raised about the format of Morrison’s “market place” which could further impact on the vitality and viability of Altrincham’s market. However whilst any additional impact arising from these issues is unlikely to result in either proposal causing a significant adverse impact on Altrincham Town Centre it is appropriate to weigh these issues in the balance when considering the proposals.

#### Overall Conclusion on Retail Policy

86. The overall conclusion reached by HV on retail policy is that both proposals should be refused planning permission on the following grounds:
- a) failure of the sequential test, given the emerging opportunity to redevelop the Square shopping centre in Sale Town Centre; and
  - b) a “*significant adverse*” impact on planned investment in Sale Town Centre.
87. NPPF states at paragraph 27 that “*Where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact on one or more of the above factors, it should be refused*” (Acting Chief Planning Officer emphasis).
88. Core Strategy Policy W2.12 Out of Centre Development has a presumption against development which fails the tests in current Government Guidance (i.e. the NPPF); therefore, both applications should therefore also be refused as a result of their failure to comply with this policy.

## **PRINCIPLE OF LOSS OF EMPLOYMENT LAND**

89. Various documents and letters have been taken into account in considering this issue, in addition to those originally submitted with the planning application.

90. The relevant development plan policies are UDP E7 Main Industrial Area and Core Strategy Policy W1.12. In these, Broadheath is identified as a focus for employment development and is specifically to be retained and supported as a principal employment location in the South of the Borough. Para 22 of the NPPF advises that planning policies should regularly be reviewed which seek the long-term protection of employment land and applications for alternative uses should be considered on their merits, where there is no realistic prospect of the land being used for its allocated purpose. The applicant's supportive documentation included a Planning and Retail Statement and an Employment Land and Market Overview Report which described the unsuccessful attempts to find an occupier, despite extensive marketing, over 3 years. These Reports argued that the proposal complied with the exceptions in Proposal E7 in that there was sufficient employment land to meet demand beyond the plan period to 2026; that the site is not in a Strategic Location and that it was modest insofar as it only related to 5% of the total Broadheath Industrial Estate and would not compromise its primary function. They argue compliance with Policy W1.12 which requires demonstration that 5 criteria have been satisfied as follows:

- There is no need for the site to be retained for employment purposes, as evidenced by the above reports.
- There is a clear need for a supermarket in Broadheath based on the Retail Need evidence.
- There are no alternative sites to meet this need in the locality of Broadheath/Altrincham
- The primary function of the locality is not compromised due to the small size of the site and not compromising operations of neighbouring uses.
- The proposal is in accordance with other policies in the plan, particularly as it creates 350 plus jobs, drawn from the local area from links with Trafford College.

91. The above analysis was not accepted, consequently the applicant submitted further evidence on employment policy issues in response (22<sup>nd</sup> May 2013). This concluded that:

*"We have reviewed the comments of the Strategic Planning Manager in relation to employment issues and believe that they have not assessed the proposals properly or taken into account a number of important material considerations. Having regard to the Planning and Retail Statement and Employment Land Report and Market Overview submitted with the application and in particular the assessment contained within this letter the following conclusions can be drawn:*

- *While identified for employment development in the Development Plan, the relevant employment policies do not preclude against non-employment uses such as the application proposes.*
- *The application site is modest in size, accounting for less than 5% of the area of the Broadheath Industrial Estate, and its redevelopment for a food store will not compromise the primary function of the area. Accordingly Proposal E7 of the UDP is met.*
- *All of the criteria of Policy W1.12 have been addressed. In particular it has not been demonstrated that there is a need for the application site to be retained for employment purposes and even if it were, no such uses are likely to come forward.*
- *The regeneration of redundant brownfield land for a use that will create significant local employment in a sustainable manner has clear Government support. Moreover, the NPPF expressly advises that planning policies should avoid the long term protection of such sites where there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for its designated purpose.*
- *The application proposals will have the added benefit of delivering an extended bus service that will open up the Broadheath Industrial Estate to public transport.*

*We consider therefore, that there are no employment policy reasons why the application proposals should not be approved”.*

92. It remains the view however, that both Proposal E7 and Policy W1 are relevant to the determination of the application. Therefore, the following should be taken into consideration in respect of the 5 criteria to be satisfied in Policy W1.12:

The need for the site to be retained for employment purposes

93. Given its relatively recent adoption date and the rigorous Examination process to which the Core Strategy was subjected to, there is continued concern that insufficient evidence has been provided by the applicant to satisfy this first test. The Core Strategy seeks to plan up to 2026. Therefore should a relatively significant site such as this, within the heart of the industrial estate, be lost to non-industrial purposes, there is concern that insufficient land will be available to meet the needs of the south of the Borough over the life-time of the Plan.

94. The Trafford Employment Land Study (ELS) explains that the Local Plan should provide for a balanced ‘spread’ of land and premises that meet different business needs and provide good accessibility to employment opportunities for communities with different levels of skills and training. It is not considered sufficient to rely on locations such as Trafford Park and Carrington to meet these needs.

Would the proposed redevelopment compromise the primary function of the locality or the operations of neighbouring users?

95. The applicant considers that this point primarily relates to the protection of employment land from development which would be incompatible with existing

employment uses, such as residential next to warehousing or general industrial uses. Whilst it is true to say that this policy does seek to protect against such development, that is not its sole application and it therefore remains appropriate to apply it in this scenario.

96. The applicant has submitted a petition signed by employees of a local firm in support of their application. Whilst this statement of support is acknowledged, it is important to note that letters of objection have also been received from local firms in respect of this application. Therefore there remain concerns over the harm that this retail proposal could cause to the primary function of a principle employment location in the south of the Borough, both in terms of future investors and existing employers.

The proposed redevelopment is in accordance with other policies in the Development Plan for Trafford

97. In terms of this criterion, of particular importance is the proposal's ability to satisfy policies L4, L5, L7, L8 and R3 of that Plan. These matters are addressed elsewhere in the Report.
98. In relation to the criteria dealing with the need for the alternative use and the availability of alternative sites within the locality to meet an identified need, reference should be made to the conclusions in relation to HV's assessment of need, HV's assessment of sequentially preferable sites, and the assessment of the second, out of centre retail supermarket proposal before Members, that at B&Q.

Overall conclusion on Loss of Employment Land

99. The applicant has sought to demonstrate that there is no reasonable prospect of the site being used for its purpose as employment land, based on evidence of unsuccessful marketing over a long period. However, even if it is accepted that this justifies an alternative use of the land, other than employment, Proposal E7 and W1.12, and also Para 22 of the NPPF require assessment of the merits of that proposed alternative use. The criteria in Policy W1.12 provide such assessment tools. In this case, even if there is no need for the site to be retained for employment purposes, an Out-of-Centre supermarket would have to also satisfy Policies W2.12 (including meeting the Sequential and Impact Tests); would have to demonstrate need for the use in the locality; demonstrate that there was no suitable alternative site which would meet such need if it were identified (see Para 24 of the NPPF on giving "*preference to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre*") requiring consideration of the B&Q Morrisons site elsewhere in this report; and would have to meet inter alia Policies L4 Sustainable Transport and Accessibility, also discussed elsewhere. It is considered that the site is not in a sustainable location; that the need for a supermarket has not been demonstrated and that if such need exists, that there are suitable alternative sites and that it fails to comply with other Policies in the Core Strategy. The proposal is therefore contrary to Proposal E7 and Policy W1.

100. Whilst it is acknowledged that this proposal would provide employment it must be noted that it would not be employment as defined in Policy W1 of the Core Strategy. Policy W1 identifies land for five key economic growth sectors (within B1 (business/office), B2 (general industry) or B8 (storage and distribution) uses):
- Financial and business services;
  - Distribution;
  - Cultural, creative and media Industries;
  - Advanced engineering; and
  - Other personal services;
101. Other growth sectors such as retail, commercial leisure and hotels and waste management facilities are covered by other policies in the Core Strategy.

### **LOCATION OF THE SITE: ACCESSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY**

102. The site is in an Out-of-Centre location in relation to the nearest Town Centres of Altrincham and Sale.
103. The site is 450 metres from the nearest residential properties; and 500 metres to the nearest bus stop, and some distance from National Cycling Route 62 (Trans Pennine Trail), and TfGM conclude that the site is not particularly well located in relation to public transport.
104. These distances exceed those recommended in various guidance for accessibility by a range of non-car modes of transport on foot, cycling or public transport. The site is not accessible by a choice of sustainable modes of transport. This opinion is shared by the Council's Retail Consultant
105. The applicant submitted details of the proposed diversion of the 247 Bus Route and a letter from Arriva stated that they are supportive of this in principle, subject to further feasibility studies, and discussions to secure appropriate levels of financial support by the applicant. The applicant has stated that the funding for this would be from the Public Transport Schemes element of the Trafford Developer Contribution required by SPD1 Developer Contribution; It is not a Negotiated Element offered by the applicants.
106. The applicant's Highways Consultant acknowledges that *"It is recognised that further feasibility work will need to be undertaken"* and this together with costings, has been submitted as requested.
107. The response from TfGM is reported in the Consultations Section above, they are not supportive of these proposals to divert the 247 bus route, for the reasons stated, and their agreement would be necessary to implement such changes.

108. An Interim Travel Plan is submitted with the application. This states in Para 4.1:  
*“A key element of national and local planning policy is to ensure new developments are located in area where alternative modes of travel are available. It is important to ensure that developments are not isolated but are close to complementary land uses. This supports the aims of integrated planning and transport, providing more sustainable choices and reducing overall travel and car use”.*
109. The Transport Assessment proposes specific measures to improve accessibility of the site as follows:
- Pedestrian – links through the site to George Richards Way, with pedestrian crossing on George Richards Way.
  - Bus – Route 247 to be diverted and bus stops provided
  - Cycling – Facilities within the site itself, no off-site proposals
110. Generalised measures including the appointment of a Travel Plan Co-ordinator, Targets and Monitoring are described which would be agreed with a final Transport Assessment if planning permission is granted.

Overall conclusion on Accessibility / Sustainability

111. The site is poorly located in relationship to Altrincham and Sale Town Centres and in relation to the catchment population it is intended to serve. It is centrally positioned in a large established Main Employment Area and is not within reasonable walking distance of residential areas, nor is the location likely to encourage linked trips to the Town Centres.
112. TfGM published guidance in March 2013 which states that: *“It is essential that new development should have good accessibility by walking, cycling and public transport. People who do not have the use of a car will find it difficult to reach sites with poor access and will either be reliant on lifts or taxis or be faced with long journeys by public transport, perhaps including multiple changes. Developments with poor access are therefore likely to generate more car journeys, which add to congestion”.*
113. The route of the 247 bus does not serve the identified Primary Catchment Area of the site as it runs from Altrincham town centre to Partington, Flixton, Eccles and the Trafford Centre. Most people in the Primary Catchment Area would have to change buses in Altrincham town centre to access this site. Although the proposed diversion of this bus route would contribute to the choice of means of transport, particularly for staff and also for others accessing the Employment Area, it remains the case that the location of the development, away from residential areas and complimentary uses in the Town Centre would encourage reliance on the car. Shoppers are unlikely to be either willing or able to carry a weekly shop to areas beyond those immediately served by the 247 bus route, even as extended, and the location within an Employment Area,



away from the nearest Quality Bus Routes on the A56 is unlikely to attract top-up, opportune shopping or linked trips to the Town Centre on foot.

114. Whilst investment of part of the Trafford Developer Contribution is proposed to divert the 247 bus route, this is not supported by TfGM in their consultation response, this cannot therefore be considered as an appropriate or deliverable solution to the identified problem of the location of the site in relation to a choice of sustainable modes of transport.
115. The proposal in its current form, therefore, fails to satisfy Policy L4 and NPPF.
116. The applicants remain confident that a scheme can be provided which would include provisions to provide a bus link into the area and which would address the concerns of the Council and TfGM. Consideration should therefore be given to the question of whether a more comprehensive scheme for improving the site's accessibility could be achieved to the satisfaction of the LHA and TfGM through the use of a Grampian condition in addition to consideration of the appropriate source of funding for such a scheme and the appropriate mechanism for securing it for the life-time of the development in the event that Members were otherwise minded to approve this application.

## **HIGHWAYS**

### **A. Parking provision and layout**

117. The parking provision is 390 car parking spaces (40 are for disabled users); 20 motorcycle spaces and 48 cycle spaces. This is 86 (18%) below the car parking standard but at standard for motorcycles and cycles. There are some revisions required to the layout which can be dealt with by conditions.

### **B. Access arrangements**

118. The site is primarily accessed from George Richards Way with secondary access to Atlantic Street.
119. The junction with Atlantic Street is a priority junction with nearby zebra crossing style markings.
120. The junction with George Richards Way is laid out as a roundabout, which requires a pedestrian and cyclist refuge island, which is agreed in detail, and is to be conditioned.

### **C. Servicing**

#### **Petrol Station tanker servicing and Store servicing**

121. Satisfactory subject to amendments which could be the subject of conditions.

### **D. Travel plan**

122. The Interim Travel Plan needs to address further issues including self secure long term cycle parking for staff, and facilities for cyclists. The travel plan

should be carried out and monitored for 10 years. The use of the SPD1 contributions to enhance bus services and provide bus stops is noted.

**E. Modelling / Off-site highway improvements**

123. The peak traffic flows were modelled as required by TfGM's Urban Traffic Control, who were concerned about heavy congestion in the morning peak which queues back to the Park Road junction.

124. The TRICS analysis indicated the following:

	Vehicles -----	Arriving	Departing
Friday P.M. peak (16:45 to 17:45)		356	379
Saturday peak (11:45 to 12:45)		386	373
A.M. peak		201	153

125. The following accesses and junctions were analysed

A. George Richards Way/Stuart Road/Proposed Site Access

B. Atlantic Street/Proposed Access

Both are acceptable in principle, subject to clarification of details and subject to conditions.

C. A56/George Richards Way/Atlantic Street junction

1. Manchester Rd./Viaduct Rd./George Richards Way

126. These figures show increased degrees of saturation of the junction areas, with increased queuing and congestion.

127. The figures also show there is a clear need for mitigation at the junction and in response to this the applicant has proposed some alterations to try and counter this. Despite lengthy discussions being held between the applicant, The Council and Transport for Greater Manchester's Urban Traffic Control (UTC) team regarding the design and configuration of the junction, a definitive design has yet to be agreed that would mitigate the impacts of the development acceptably. It is felt by the Council and UTC that a more extensive scheme is required than the scheme proposed by the applicant. The Council and UTC are confident that a scheme can be delivered within the existing junction footprint, although to date, the applicant has failed to demonstrate an acceptable layout that mitigates the proposed development.

128. The layouts submitted have not fully addressed the requirements of an improvement of a junction of this type for all road users. On this basis the proposals in their current form are not acceptable on highways grounds.

129. Swept Paths are required to be undertaken and submitted as part of the detailed design of the junction.

2. George Richards Way/Davenport Lane

130. There is some concern from the LHA and UTC about capacity levels approaching saturation which do not give much room for growth or error in the flow predictions. AM modelling was not submitted for this junction, despite being requested.

3. Manchester Road/Salisbury Road/Sinderland Road

131. The junction is currently approaching capacity on various areas and this will be increased. The proposed mitigation scheme at Manchester Road/Viaduct Road/George Richards Way improves junction capacity at some areas at the expense of others.

4. Manchester Road/Navigation Road

132. No significant change with or without the development or mitigation measures.

5. Manchester Road/Navigation Road

133. The LHA's view is that there will be varying increases in saturation on the areas of this junction which have not been mitigated adequately within the proposals and are now approaching practical capacity.

6. Manchester Road/Retail Park Access-Egress

7. Atlantic Street/Retail Park Access

8. Atlantic Street/B&Q Access

9. Davenport Lane/Atlantic Street

134. There is no significant change to any of these 4, with or without the development or mitigation measures.

**F. Modelling Summary**

135. The proposed development would have an impact on the network as a whole with total delays increasing from 74.49 pcu/hr to 100.45 pcu/hr during the weekday pm peak period and will increase the maximum degree of saturation value of 96.8% on the Manchester Road North approach to the Manchester Road / Viaduct Road / George Richards Way traffic signals, leading to up to 25 vehicles queuing on this arm.

136. The modelling analysis in the Transportation Assessment states that the mitigation proposals will improve the operation not only for this junction but for the network as a whole during both peak periods. Notwithstanding this, the LHA requires conditions to be attached for the detailed design and delivery of junction improvements at the A56 / George Richards Way and the site access / George Richards Way junction.

**G. Waiting Restrictions on George Richards Way**

137. Due to the large increase in traffic flows through the junctions on George Richards Way, it is considered that amendments to the existing TRO's on

George Richards Way are essential and should be funded by the applicants, in addition to the SPD1 contributions.

### **Conclusion**

138. While there is no highways objection in principle to the proposed development it is acknowledged that it will generate a significant increase in traffic onto an already busy local highway network, and the applicant's traffic modelling work submitted in support of the application shows that the junction of the A56 / George Richards Way and the George Richards Way junction with Davenport Lane will be approaching capacity at times when the development traffic peak coincides with existing high traffic levels on the network.
139. It is the LHA's view that a refuge island should be installed at the site access junction on George Richards Way to provide a safe crossing refuge for both pedestrians and cyclists as the existing footway on George Richards Way is a shared pedestrian and cycle path. Pedestrian and cyclist access around the whole roundabout needs to be addressed fully in order to be acceptable on highway safety grounds. Detailed design of this junction should be conditioned on any approval. The applicant has confirmed that this will be undertaken by submitting an additional plan demonstrating the island.
140. In addition, in view of the earlier concerns raised within the LHA's comments, it is considered that the following issues will need to be addressed by condition should this application be approved, and that further detailed work will be required subsequently prior to any development commencing:
- The provision of lockable points within the motorcycle parking spaces
  - The provision of showers, lockers, changing areas and secure long term cycle parking for staff
  - Appropriate lining and signing for the hackney carriage rank
  - Appropriate lining and signing for the drop off/collect layby
  - Appropriate lining and signing for the cycle / pedestrian route from George Richards way into the site
  - Visibility within the service yard between the two shared accesses & action in regards to the narrowing of the servicing access to improve pedestrian safety and access to the superstore along Atlantic Street
  - That the applicant fund amended TRO's in the vicinity of the site in particularly on George Richards Way near to the existing retail park where disabled drivers occasionally park.
  - Detailed design and delivery of the site accesses should be conditioned and detailed design of other highway improvements that are necessary as part of the application. Including minimising the site access width at the servicing entrance.
  - Travel plan
  - Swept Paths to be undertaken for all amended junctions. These should be agreed with the LHA and form part of the detailed design of the junctions.

141. In addition, as indicated above, the analysis has demonstrated that there is a clear need for mitigation at the junction of the A56 / George Richards Way. Should Members be minded to approve this application it is considered that the concerns with regard to securing the required improvements could be addressed by the imposition of suitable conditions. It is recommended that in such circumstances an acceptable scheme for improving this junction could be achieved to the satisfaction of the LHA and UTC/TfGM through the use of a Grampian condition. This would need to be carefully drafted and would require that no development should take place until such time as a suitable scheme had been approved and that the improvements to the junction are provided at the applicants' expense prior to the opening of the development and delivered by the LHA or with the LHA's supervision at the cost of the developer.

### **DESIGN/LAYOUT/MATERIALS/LANDSCAPING**

142. The application was supported by a Design and Access Statement which set out to demonstrate compliance with Policy L7 Design. This describes the design approach which has resulted in the typical design of a supermarket with associated parking, servicing and a Petrol Filling Station. It is a large single storey building with a large footprint, simple design features and a uniform simple pallet of materials. Given its location, the design and appearance of the building is compatible with the surrounding area and complies with Policy L7.1.
143. The internal functionality of the site itself in terms of the access, parking and servicing arrangements is acceptable and has satisfied the requirements of the Highways Officer and complies with Policy L7.2.
144. Given the nature of the adjoining uses, there is no adverse effect on amenity (as set out above) and the proposal complies with Policy L7.3.
145. The proposal will comply with Policy L7.4 in terms of security of design and not adversely affecting public safety. The Greater Manchester Police have not responded to the consultation but should they comment prior to the matter being considered by Members, this will be reported in the additional information report.
146. In relation to accessibility within the site, this complies with Policy L7.5, although there remain concerns about the accessibility of the site in terms of its general location, as set out above, in relation to Policy L4.
147. A Landscape and Planting Plan is submitted with the application which shows planting to almost all the site boundaries, except the service yard, and planting within the site, particularly around the access and petrol filling station, within the car park.

## **RESIDENTIAL AMENITY**

148. Core Strategy Policy L7 – Design identifies that high quality design is a key element to making places better and delivering environmentally sustainable developments. It seeks to ensure a high standard of design and layout and compatibility with the character of the surrounding area and the amenity of the occupiers of adjoining property. Since the site is some considerable distance from residential properties, there being none within 400metres and a limited population within 800metres, there is no direct impact on residential amenity.

## **NOISE**

149. A Noise Report was submitted with the application which has been assessed by Pollution and Licensing as summarised in the Consultations above. At their request, a further noise assessment was submitted which has resolved any outstanding concerns. This measured noise from delivery activity, general car parking and mechanical plant. These matters could be dealt with by conditions if planning permission was granted.

## **LIGHTING**

150. This is not a sensitive location in respect of lighting as it is wholly within an established Employment Area. A scheme of lighting would require to be submitted for approval prior to installation.

## **AIR QUALITY**

151. The applicants have submitted an Air Quality Assessment which has been assessed by Pollution and Licensing. This assesses the air quality impact of the development at 3 receptor locations with and without the development in 2015 and 2020. There will be a small and imperceptible effect on air quality in these locations. The mitigation which is considered necessary is referred to in the Travel Assessment and Travel Plan submitted with the application. It is recommended that the findings in the Air Quality Assessment are accepted and the relevant measures referred to in the report are fully implemented. This could be the subject of conditions should Members be minded to grant the application.

## **ECOLOGY**

152. A Phase 1 Habitat Survey is submitted which demonstrates that the site has no habitats or species which have any value, or potential to support them. This complies with Policy R2.

## **FLOOD RISK**

153. The site triggers the requirement for a Flood Risk Analysis, which recommends a suitable drainage strategy which could be secured by condition. This complies with Policy L5.

## **CONTAMINATED LAND**

154. A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment was submitted which identifies the need for a targeted Phase 2 Assessment to identify the presence, character, extent and significance of potential contamination sources. This could be the subject of a condition to require implementation of any required remediation measures. This complies with Policy L5.

## **DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS**

155. Policy L8 sets out that planning obligations are an established and valuable mechanism for bringing development in line with policies and proposals contained in relevant national and local planning policies (Policy L8). L8.1 sets out that in relation to proposed development that would, if implemented, generate specific adverse impacts that cannot be provided for or mitigated against through the use of planning conditions, the Council will seek to negotiate appropriate planning obligation(s) to make the development acceptable and sustainable. Such an obligation can only be applied if it meets the three statutory tests of being necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development; and, be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
156. The Council's approach to contributions is based on two elements:- the Trafford Developer Contribution (TDC), which is the 'Required Element' and is set out above; and a 'Negotiated Element', which will only be applied on a case by case basis where there is a need to address a specific impact not covered by the TDC.

### **SPD1: PLANNING OBLIGATIONS CONTRIBUTION – THE REQUIRED ELEMENT**

157. The proposed development is of a scale and use that requires consideration of developer contributions under Core Strategy Policy L8 and the Council's SPD1: Planning Obligations. The Trafford Developer Contributions (TDC) required by SPD1 Planning Obligations are set out in the table below. The calculations are based on a floorspace figure of 6545sq.metres, with a 70:30 split between food, non-food and an existing Class B8 – Storage and Distribution building of some 22297sq.metres. It has been assessed on the basis of the site being in a Least Accessible area.

<b>TDC category.</b>	<b>Gross TDC required for proposed development.</b>	<b>Contribution to be offset for existing building/use or extant planning permission (where relevant).</b>	<b>Gross TDC required for proposed development.</b>
Affordable Housing	N/A		
Highways and Active Travel infrastructure (including highway, pedestrian and cycle schemes)	£198,922	£22,077	£176,845
Public transport schemes (including bus, tram and rail, schemes)	£610,972	£37,910	£573,062
Specific Green Infrastructure (including tree planting)	£40,610	£86,490	£0
Spatial Green Infrastructure, Sports and Recreation (including local open space, equipped play areas; indoor and outdoor sports facilities).	N/A		
Education facilities.	N/A		
<b>Total contribution required.</b>			<b>£749,907.00</b>

#### **OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS – THE NEGOTIATED ELEMENT**

158. The applicant has stated that they accept that the proposed foodstore will have an adverse impact on Altrincham Town Centre at a level where mitigation is necessary to make the application acceptable. They are in agreement that the proposed foodstore will draw trade from existing supermarkets in Altrincham town centre, and as such there would, in the absence of mitigation, be harm caused to the town centre. They have proposed financial contributions, through a Section 106 Agreement, to measures which are designed to draw people to the town, help to increase footfall, improve opportunities for linked trips and as such enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre, thereby helping to offset potential trade draw of shoppers to the proposed foodstore at Broadheath.

159. The mitigation measures proposed are based on the Altrincham Town Centre Action Plan and comprise the following:

1. Public Realm Improvements (£1,150,000) to:
  - Moss Lane/Cross Street/Shaw's Road
  - The Downs
  - Stamford New Road/Railway Street



- Cycle Infrastructure

2. Match Funding for High Street Renewal Award Supplementary Government Grant under High Street Renewal Award Initiative. (£150,000).
  3. Contributions towards Independents and Business Support. To promote and attract independent retailers and could assist in Fab Lab Altrincham project. (£100,000).
160. The Negotiated Element would therefore amount to £1,400,000 which would be payable on commencement of development.
161. The total Section 106 Contribution would therefore amount to £2.15m, comprised of the Trafford Developer Contribution and the Negotiated Element.

### **OFF-SITE HIGHWAY WORKS**

162. The development would have an adverse impact on the local highway network as set out above and significant highway works are necessary to mitigate this direct impact. These include works to the junction of the A56 with George Richards Way, the junction of George Richards Way with Davenport Lane and the new roundabout proposed at George Richards Way.
163. The developer will be required to carry out these works prior to the development first being brought into use and has confirmed that these will be funded by the developer and secured through a Section 278 Agreement in the normal way. The proposed bus stops would also be required to be provided prior to the development first being brought into use. The Council considers that there is no wider public benefit to the development in highway terms and as such the requirement to carry out such off-site highway works is in addition to the SPD 1 contributions set out above.
164. For the sake of clarification, it should be noted that the £294,000 required to divert the 247 bus route for a 3 year period only, would be taken from the Trafford Developer Contribution.

### **Comment**

165. The Trafford Developer Contribution is calculated on a formula which assesses the Accessibility of the site. The site is defined as Least Accessible. The criteria for Most Accessible sites are no more than 800metres from a Metrolink tram stop, train station or major bus station, or 400metres from a bus stop (service at least every 15 minutes) or 250metres from a bus stop (service at least every 30 minutes). The Least Accessible is any area not meeting the accessibility criteria above. The applicant's proposed bus route diversion would not address

the accessibility issues relating to the site, as analysed above. The site remains in a location which is not accessible to a range of non-car users.

166. Insufficient mitigation measures have been proposed to date to address the location in a Main Employment Area remote from the residential population from which it would draw trade. However, as detailed above, should Members be otherwise minded to grant this application, consideration could be given to dealing with this issue through the use of an appropriately worded Grampian condition.
167. The Negotiated Contributions relate wholly to Altrincham Town Centre and attempt to address concerns about the acknowledged adverse impact on the town centre. These measures, whilst welcome, are not quantifiable in terms of their mitigation benefits in relation to the harm which the development will cause. However it should be noted that the level of contribution is nevertheless relatively higher than the contributions to address this issue offered in relation to B&Q/Morrison's proposal, given the levels of impact on vitality and viability of the two schemes.
168. On the required balance, it is considered that the proposed Section 106 Contributions as a whole, together with the acknowledged benefits of the scheme, do not outweigh the harm otherwise caused by the proposal by reason of its failure to comply with the development plan and NPPF as detailed in this report.

## **THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

169. Members are advised that the decision on these applications should be approached as follows:
  1. The advice of HV is that both applications fail the Sequential Test and the Investment Impact Test and should be refused planning permission.
  2. There are other recommended Reasons for Refusal, which are different in the case of each application.
  3. If the advice on the Sequential Test and the Investment Impact Test, and all other Reasons for Refusal in relation to both applications were rejected, then the scenario of two stores being developed would have to be considered. HV have conducted such an analysis, as set out below in Cumulative Impact of 2 Supermarket Proposals in Broadheath.
  4. The result of this is that the two store scenario would result in unacceptable "*significant adverse*" impacts on the vitality and viability of Altrincham Town Centre, Timperley District Centre and Sinderland Road Local Centre. In this case, a choice would have to be made between the 2 proposals.

5. The choice between the 2 proposals would have to be made based on an overall planning balance of a number of considerations. These would include the economic, social and environmental aspects of the national and local sustainability agenda. These considerations are set out below in Comparison of Competing Applications.
6. The Section 106 Contributions to mitigate the impacts of the proposal could be considered in the balance at this stage.
7. If Members are Minded to Approve one of the applications, the other application should be refused planning permission as it would fail the Impact Test on the vitality and viability of nearby centres.
8. If Members are Minded to Approve either application, the application(s) would have to be referred to the Secretary of State as a Departure from the Development Plan.

### **CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF 2 SUPERMARKET PROPOSALS IN BROADHEATH**

170. HV have carried out a Cumulative Impact Assessment of proposals, taking account of existing commitments and assuming the emerging scheme at Altair. The results for the impact on the affected centres, is shown in the Table below:

Summary of Two Store Cumulative Impacts with Commitments and Emerging scheme at Altair

Destination	CUMULATIVE DIVERSIONS (£M)			PERCENTAGE IMPACTS (%)		
	COMPARISON	CONVENIENCE	TOTAL	COMPARISON	CONVENIENCE	COMBINED
Sinderland Local Centre	-0.1	-3.9	-3.1	-2.2	-19.4	-17.2
Altrincham Town Centre	-3.2	-27.1	-30.3	-2.2	-21.4	-11.0
Sale Town Centre	-2.3	-10.7	-13.0	-3.1	-12.0	-7.9
Stretford Town Centre	-0.9	-2.1	-3.0	NA	NA	NA
Timperley District Centre	-0.2	-2.6	-2.8	-2.0	-15.8	-10.8
Partington Local Centre	2.2	1.6	3.8	1353.0	63.7	144.8
Hale Barns Local Centre	-	5.4	5.4	-	174.3	240.6

171. In respect of the centres, it is concluded:

Altrincham Town Centre  
(-11%)      “Significant adverse” impact on overall vitality and viability

Timperley  
(-10.8%)      “Significant adverse” impact on overall vitality and viability

Sinderland Road Local Centre  
(-17.2%)      “Significant adverse” impact on overall vitality and viability

Sale  
(-7.9%)

*“Significant adverse”* impact  
on overall investment

172. Overall, it is concluded that both current proposals taken together fail the Impact Test on Vitality and Viability in the NPPF, and Policy W2.12. The strong advice of HV is that both applications cannot be approved because of the *“significant adverse impact which they would both have on the overall vitality and viability of a number of centres”*.

#### Note on highways

173. In considering the Cumulative Retail Impact of the 2 proposals, there would also be a requirement to consider the cumulative impact on the highway network, as both proposals are accessed from the A56 which is operating at near capacity. Whilst the cumulative impact exercise has not been undertaken by either applicant, it has not been requested by the LHA, in view of the overall recommendation to refuse both individual applications in any event. Should members choose to be Minded to Approve either application, then a further Reason for Refusal should be attached to the other application. This would be on the basis that a Transport Assessment had not been carried out taking account of the cumulative impact of the 2 proposals.

### **COMPARISON OF COMPETING APPLICATIONS**

174. This section provides the comparison between the 2 proposals, which is required if Members are minded not to follow the Recommendations for Refusal.

#### Retail Reasons for Refusal

175. HV’s advice is confined to retail policy matters. As a result, the only contribution they make in this overall planning balance is to state that the Morrisons/B&Q application will have lower levels of trade diversion on all of the Borough’s town, district and local centres than the Hangar 14 proposals, because it has a substantially smaller sales area, and a substantially smaller retail turnover. Thus, despite the Morrisons store incorporating its ‘Market Street’ concept (with potential to compete with some market traders) they consider that the Morrisons/B&Q application will also have a lower level of impact on Altrincham Town Centre’s overall level of trade than the Hangar 14 proposal.
176. The above analysis takes account of only Retail Policy in the scenario of choosing between 2 competing schemes. This concludes that neither scheme is sequentially preferable, both being Out-of-Centre and failing to meet the requirements of Policy W2.12 and the Sequential and Impact Tests of the NPPF.

### Other Reasons for Refusal

177. Both schemes are recommended for Refusal for additional Reasons, and Members would also have to reject the advice on those matters in order to approve either scheme.
178. In respect of the Hangar 14 application, this has been found to be in an unsuitable location for the proposed use as a food supermarket, due to the basic land use considerations and physical constraints to pedestrian linkages. It is not well placed to serve the population in the catchment area and is not accessible by a choice of means of transport. Whilst some measures may be proposed to create a bus connection (those for diverting the 247 bus route having been found to be unacceptable by TfGM), these cannot address more fundamental issues of accessibility. The proposal will inevitably generate additional car journeys and will not encourage linked trips on foot.
179. The site is located in a Main Employment Area and the proposal fails to comply with the criteria set out in Policy W1.12 for a number of reasons which include failure to demonstrate that the site is redundant for employment use; that there is a need for the proposed use; or that there is no suitable alternative site in the locality to meet the identified need (there being no proven need and Sale Square being a suitable alternative site in the catchment area of the proposed store, or the B&Q site if an amended acceptable scheme came forward).
180. There are outstanding issues relating to junction improvements on the A56, required to mitigate the acknowledged impact of the development which is otherwise unacceptable. However, these issues appear capable of resolution with an agreed design, which could be the subject of a Grampian Condition.
181. As far as the B&Q scheme is concerned, there are Policy conflicts with W2.14 in respect of Retail Warehouse Parks, although it is accepted that, in the event of Policy W2.12 being satisfied, a previous Inspector in the case of Trafford Retail Park found W2.14 to be thereby satisfied also. It is not accepted that the proposal satisfies Policy W2.12, as the above analysis has demonstrated that the proposal fails to meet the Sequential and Impact Tests in the NPPF, however, each case is judged on its own merits. It is considered important to protect Altrincham Retail Park for retail warehouse park development to protect town centres as set out in the retail study and also to minimise the effect of linked trips within the retail park, thus creating a "centre" effect.
182. The current B&Q scheme has been found to be unacceptable by reason of its design, on a prominent principal route and impacting on the setting of heritage assets in the vicinity. Similarly, the access and parking arrangements are unsatisfactory. However, there is no objection in principle to a well designed building which respects its setting and provides adequate access and parking arrangements, which is sustainable and is otherwise in accordance with the Development Plan, but such a scheme is not before Members.

### Measures for comparing schemes

183. PPS4 provided a format on how competing Out-of-Centre retail proposals should be assessed, but this is not taken forward in the NPPF. The only reference to this is at Para 24, which says that *“When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre”*.
184. Whilst WP argue that the proposed bus stops associated with the diversion of the 247 bus route make the Hangar 14 site more accessible, this is not agreed by TfGM, the LHA, HV or The Chief Planning Officer although consideration should be given to whether this matter can be addressed through the imposition of appropriately worded conditions . The location of the B&Q site, closer to the town centre, on the A56 Quality Bus Route Corridor with up to 17 bus services passing the site; in walking distance of residential properties and with potential connections to the Bridgewater Canal towpath/cycle link, is undeniably in a more accessible location for any use.
185. Policy EC10.2 of the withdrawn PPS4 provided a useful set of criteria for assessing economic development which can also be used to assess competing retail schemes. These are stated in “i to v” below.
- i Whether the proposal has been planned over the lifetime of the development to limit carbon dioxide emissions and minimise vulnerability and provide resilience to climate change  
Neither applicant has submitted any detailed appraisal of this aspect of their proposals in the form of specialised reports. Both applicants’ Design and Access Statements set out how a number of sustainability measures will be introduced, to comply with objectives of Policy L5 and to achieve BREEAM Very Good Assessment. In this respect, there is little to choose between them although the location and larger size of the Hangar 14 site is likely to result in a more car journeys and hence increased CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
  - ii The accessibility of the proposal by a choice of means of transport including walking, cycling, public transport and the car, the effect on local traffic levels and congestion (especially on the trunk road network) after public transport and traffic management measures have been secured See above.
  - iii Whether the proposal secures a high quality and inclusive design which takes the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of the area and the way it functions  
The Hangar 14 scheme is acceptable as presented and complies with Policy L7 - Design; the B&Q scheme currently fails to comply with Policy L7.

- iv The impact on economic and physical regeneration in the area including the impact on deprived areas and social inclusion objectives  
The Hangar 14 scheme achieves regeneration benefits of redevelopment of a vacant site, as set out in the applicants' submission however it would not be in conformity with land use planning policy objectives. However, its accessibility constraints do not foster social inclusion objectives, disadvantaging those reliant on walking or public transport. The B&Q site is not currently vacant, but if the current use was to cease, as has been stated, then a vacant site would detract from the general amenity of the area, in a very prominent gateway location with heritage assets in the vicinity. The existing building does not make a positive impact in the street scene and its replacement with a building which did this would be welcome. The economic benefits in terms of job creation are detailed below.
  
- v The Impact on Local Employment  
The Hangar 14 site would generate on-site employment for around 350 people and the B&Q site around 220.  
Whilst these figures are considered to be a realistic estimate for on-site employment, they do not reflect the actual net increased number of jobs but in any event, the Hangar 14 scheme would create more jobs.

186. Both schemes come with an offer of a local labour agreement. Therefore, should a decision be made to approve either proposal a local labour agreement should form part of a Section 106 Agreement.

187. In overall terms, there are aspects of both proposals which make them unacceptable in their current form, and in these circumstances it is difficult to draw a conclusion that either could be supported in preference to the other. However from the above analysis one could draw the conclusion that the Hangar 14 site performs better in terms of regeneration, design, and employment but worse in terms of sustainability, accessibility and has more impact on existing centres. The B&Q site performs better on sustainability, accessibility and has less quantifiable impact on existing centres; It has also attracted significantly less objection at the planning application stage.

#### Implications of s106 contributions

188. The relative total S106 Contributions offered are £2.15m (£1.4 for mitigation measures) for Hangar 14 and £675,000 (£350,000 for mitigation measures) for B&Q. It is considered entirely appropriate that the contributions offered are different, reflecting the respective size and impact of each proposal.

189. Whilst the total diversion from Altrincham Town Centre associated with the Hangar 14 proposal is around 28 per cent more than the diversion associated with the Morrisons proposal, the Hangar 14 applicant is also offering a Section

106 contribution that is around 75 per cent more than that offered by the Morrisons applicant.

190. However, it is not possible to quantify the mitigation effects that the respective contributions will have in relation to the impact on Altrincham Town Centre, and for this reason is not possible to determine whether or not the larger contribution offered by PAG will offset the higher diversions associated with its Hangar 14 proposal. In a scenario in which Members wish to permit one of the stores, the choice as to which one to permit will require a comprehensive planning balance appraisal in relation to each of the economic, social and environmental aspects of the national and local sustainability agenda.
191. HV advise that it is also important to record that in a 'one store' scenario, the impacts on Altrincham Town Centre, of whichever store is chosen, would be below the '*significant adverse*' threshold, but that even in these circumstances it is proper that financial contributions are being offered in order to mitigate the impacts, given the current concerns as to the health of the town centre. The priority for spending the contributions offered, from a retail impact perspective, is to improve the linkages between the Tesco and Altair sites, as major generators of footfall, with the town centre. Thus the priority for public realm improvements should be the linkages across Moss Lane, Cross Street and Shaws Road, so as to link the Altair and Tesco sites to the heart of the Primary Shopping Area in George Street and onto the Market Quarter.

## **CONCLUSION**

192. The Hangar 14 proposal for an Out-of-Centre supermarket in a Principal Employment Area, some 2km from Altrincham Town Centre, has been assessed against relevant adopted development plan policies and other material considerations, which include the NPPF, Section 106 Contributions offered by the applicant and the acknowledged benefits of the scheme.
193. The above analysis has concluded that the proposal fails to comply with development plan policies in respect of retail, employment, and sustainability and fails to meet the tests for retail development and sustainable development as set out in the NPPF.
194. The location of the site, central to a large Employment Area and surrounded by industrial and other uses appropriate to the area, is an Out-of-Centre location which is in the category of Least Accessible in the Council's SPD1. Proposed mitigation to its basic locational deficiencies has been considered, which does not address the requirement for it to be accessible by a choice of means of transport, nor does it encourage linked trips with the town centres. A condition could be imposed which could address some aspects of the harm arising as a result of the proposal's failure to otherwise address the policy concerns on this issue as set out in the report.



195. The designation of the site within the Main Employment Area for the south of the Borough does not preclude other types of development, but this is subject to a number of criteria which this scheme has failed to satisfy. Amongst these is compliance with other policies in the development plan. Even if it accepted that the applicants evidence on failed marketing attempts demonstrates no current demand for employment uses for the site, this does not mean that an Out-of-Centre supermarket is an appropriate alternative use, even if there was a proven demand.
196. The respective evidence of the various retail consultants advising in respect of this application, B&Q/Morrisons application and also the Sale Square site has been subject to review by the Council's independent retail consultant. The applicants have submitted various rebuttals to the HV report which has been circulated for consultation and subsequently reviewed. HV remain of the opinion that the proposals fail to meet relevant development plan policies and the tests set out in the NPPF. Specifically, there is no quantitative or qualitative need for a further supermarket in Broadheath; there is a sequentially preferable site at Sale Square and the proposal will have a significant adverse impact on the likely investment in that site.
197. The applicant has been in discussions with the Local Highway Authority and UTC but, despite attempts, have failed to produce satisfactory design solutions for the junction improvements which are required to cater for the additional traffic which the proposal will generate. However, it would appear that this issue could be resolved with revised details, which could be subject to a Grampian Condition.
198. It is acknowledged that the proposal brings a number of benefits which include job creation; redevelopment of a brownfield site and increased choice for shoppers in Broadheath. There is also support for the proposal as set out in the Representations section above. It is also acknowledged that mitigation measures will go some way to addressing the concerns in respect of the acknowledged harm to Altrincham town centre which has been agreed not to be "*significant*". However, it is concluded that on balance these benefits and mitigation measures are not of sufficient weight to outweigh the harm resulting from these proposals. Accordingly, the recommendation is to REFUSE the application for the Reasons set out below:

**RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE, for the reasons set out below:**

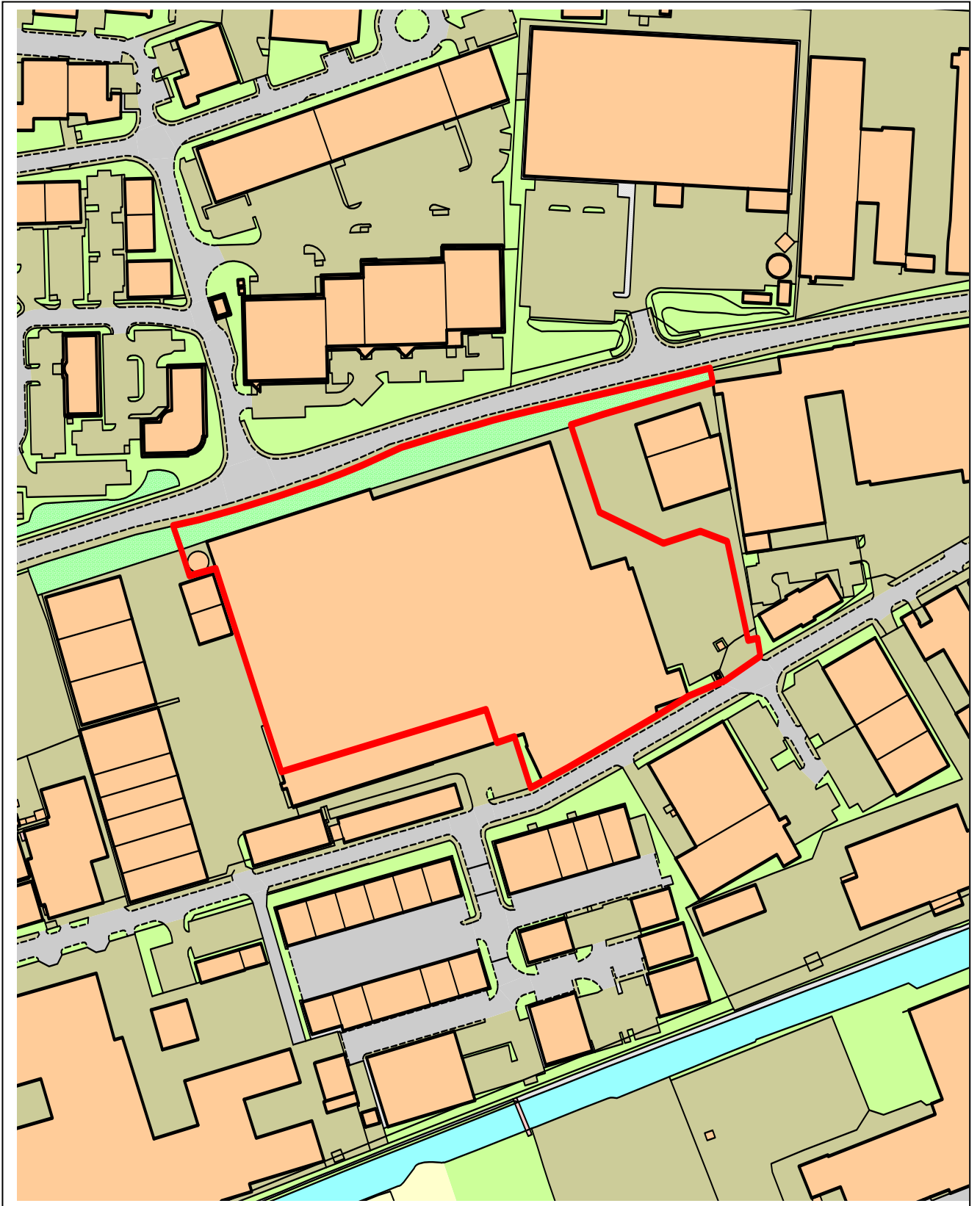
1. The application site is an unsustainable location for the proposed use, which would result in an unsustainable form of development, located centrally within a large Main Employment Area, not within reasonable walking distance of the target catchment population and not served by a choice of modes of transport, or likely to promote linked trips to nearby town centres, resulting in an increased reliance on the use of the motor car and

disadvantaging those reliant on other modes of transport. As such the proposal is contrary to the Trafford Core Strategy Policy L4 and Policy L7, and NPPF.

2. The proposal would result in an unsustainable form of development that fails to meet the Sequential Test in NPPF given the emerging opportunity to redevelop The Square Shopping Centre in Sale Town Centre.  
As such the proposal is contrary to the Trafford Core Strategy Policy W2 and NPPF.
3. The proposal fails to meet the Investment Impact Test as set out in NPPF as there is a “*significant adverse*” impact on the planned investment in The Square Shopping Centre in Sale Town Centre.  
As such the proposal is contrary to the Trafford Core Strategy Policy W2 and the NPPF.
4. The proposal is sited in a Main Employment Area and the applicant has failed to demonstrate that an Out-of-Centre supermarket would satisfy the criteria in Policy W1.12 for determining applications for non-employment use. In particular the proposal is likely to result in insufficient employment land to meet the needs of the south of the Borough over the lifetime of the Plan and harm to the primary function of a principle employment location in the south of the Borough, both in terms of future investors and existing employers.  
As such the proposal is contrary to Revised UDP Proposal E7, Trafford Core Strategy Policy W1, and NPPF.

IN THE EVENT OF MEMBERS BEING MINDED TO APPROVE APPLICATION 80577/FULL/2013 FOR B&Q/MORRISONS, THE FOLLOWING REASONS SHOULD BE ADDED TO THIS DECISION:

- A) The proposal fails to meet the Impact Test on Town Centre Vitality and Viability of Altrincham Town Centre, Timperley District Centre and Sinderland Road Local Centre.  
The proposal is contrary to Adopted Core Strategy Policy W2.12 and the NPPF Para 26.
- B) The applicant has failed to assess the effect on the local highway network resulting from the cumulative impact of the proposal together with the development at B&Q/Morrisons, Altrincham Retail Park (80577/FULL/2013).  
The proposal is contrary to the Trafford Core Strategy Policy L4.



*LOCATION PLAN FOR APPLICATION No: - 79984/FULL/2013*

Scale 1:2500 for identification purposes only.

Acting Chief Planning Officer

PO Box 96, Waterside House, Sale Waterside, Tatton Road, Sale M33 7ZF

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# Agenda Item 6

**WARD: Broadheath**

**80577/FULL/2013**

**DEPARTURE: Yes**

**ERECTION OF RETAIL FOOD STORE WITH NEW AND REVISED ACCESSES AND ALTERATIONS TO ATLANTIC STREET AND CLOSURE OF EXISTING ACCESS TOGETHER WITH PROVISION OF CAR PARKING FOLLOWING DEMOLITION OF EXISTING DIY RETAIL STORE.**

B&Q Plc, Altrincham Retail Park, Atlantic Street, Broadheath, WA14 5BW

**APPLICANT:** Wm Morrison Supermarkets Plc / B&Q Plc

**AGENT:** Davis Weatherill Partnership

**RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE**

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## **SITE**

The application site is an area of 1.76ha, located on the southern side of Atlantic Street adjacent to Manchester Road (A56), to the east and Bridgewater Canal to the south, and forms part of the Altrincham Retail Park. It is currently occupied by the B&Q Retail Warehouse and associated customer car park and a separate service yard adjacent to the A56. There is also a smaller vacant retail warehouse unit subdivided in two, to the west of the B&Q store, with a dedicated car park fronting Atlantic Street and Davenport Lane.

The main vehicular access to the site is from Atlantic Street, with a link to the smaller car park for the vacant retail units. The surrounding area is mixed in character. To the north are the retail units of the Altrincham Retail Park and the residential areas of Broadheath. To the east is the A56, then beyond that other retail and commercial uses and residential areas. To the south is the Bridgewater Canal, beyond which are commercial and residential uses. To the west is the start of the extensive Broadheath Industrial Estate.

## **DESCRIPTION**

The application has been submitted on behalf of Morrisons / B&Q Plc for a Fresh Format Morrisons, which is their latest store design and layout. This follows the recent announcement that B&Q are to close this store, following a nationwide review of its operations, with the loss of 70 jobs.

The application is submitted in full and seeks consent for the demolition of all the existing B&Q buildings on the site followed by the erection of a 4,655sq.m. gross

(2,279sq.m. net) foodstore with customer parking, a relocated vehicular access/egress on Atlantic Street and other off-site highway works. The retail floor area would be 80% convenience goods (1,823sq.m.) and 20% comparison goods (456sq.m.), with Morrisons offering a condition to retain these amounts. The proposed development comprises:

- A foodstore measuring 67m long x 65m wide x 8.4m high and 11.5m high in parts, comprising sales floor, café, preparation areas and a warehouse, with staff facilities at first floor.
- Customer car park of 276 spaces.
- Relocation of vehicular access to the west of existing access on Atlantic Street.
- Highway improvements to widen Atlantic Street to provide right hand turn lanes for traffic entering the site from the west and traffic leaving the site via Davenport Lane; new pedestrian islands on Atlantic Street and Davenport Lane.
- Enhanced perimeter landscaping along the Atlantic Street frontage.

The design of the building would be a typical supermarket style using a mixture of cladding, glass and facing brickwork with full height windows, with 2 feature towers.

## **POLICY BACKGROUND**

### **DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

#### **The Development Plan in Trafford Comprises:**

- The **Trafford Core Strategy** adopted 25th January 2012. The Trafford Core Strategy is the first of Trafford's Local Development Framework (LDF) development plan documents to be adopted by the Council; it partially supersedes the Revised Trafford Unitary Development Plan (UDP), see Appendix 5 of the Core Strategy.
- The **Revised Trafford Unitary Development Plan** adopted 19th June 2006. The majority of the policies contained in the Revised Trafford UDP were saved in either September 2007 or December 2008, in accordance with the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 until such time that they are superseded by policies within the (LDF). Appendix 5 of the Trafford Core Strategy provides details as to how the Revised UDP is being replaced by Trafford LDF.
- The **Greater Manchester Joint Waste Plan** adopted 01 April 2012. On 25th January 2012 the Council resolved to adopt and bring into force the GM Joint Waste Plan on 1 April 2012. The GM Joint Waste Plan therefore now forms part of the Development Plan in Trafford and will be used alongside district-specific planning documents for the purpose of determining planning applications.
- The **Greater Manchester Joint Minerals Plan** adopted 26<sup>th</sup> April 2012. On the 13th March 2013, the Council resolved that the Minerals Plan, together with consequential changes to the Trafford Policies Map, be adopted and it came into force on the 26th April 2013. The GM Joint Minerals Plan therefore now forms part of the Development Plan in Trafford and will be used alongside

district-specific planning documents for the purpose of determining planning applications.

## **PRINCIPAL RELEVANT CORE STRATEGY POLICIES**

### **The Strategic Objectives of the Plan are:**

- S01 – Meet Housing Needs
- S02 – Regenerate
- S03 – Meet Employment Needs
- S04 – Revitalise Town Centres
- S05 – Provide a Green Environment
- S06 – Reduce the need to travel
- S07 – Secure Sustainable Development
- S08 – Protect the historic built environment

### **The Place Objectives for Altrincham and Neighbouring communities include:**

- to continue to promote Altrincham as the Principal Town Centre and key economic driver, in terms of employment, retail and leisure opportunities (Strategic Objectives 3 + 4)
- to manage the high levels of congestion and improve the quality of public transport provision, particularly along the A56, A560 and the A538 (Strategic Objective 6)
- to manage the adverse impact of new development along main transport corridors on the highway infrastructure/public transport provision (Strategic Objective 6)

- W2 – Town Centres and Retail
- L3 – Regeneration and Reducing Inequalities
- L4 – Sustainable Transport and Accessibility
- L5 – Climate Change
- L6 - Waste
- L7 – Design
- L8 – Planning Obligations
- R2 – Natural Environment
- R3 – Green Infrastructure
- R5 – Open Space Sport and Recreation

## **UDP PROPOSALS MAP NOTATION**

- S12 – Retail Warehouse Park Developments (Replaced with Core Strategy W2)

## **PRINCIPAL RELEVANT REVISED UDP POLICIES/PROPOSALS**

- S11 – Development Outside Established Centres
- T8 - Improvements to Trunk and Primary Route Network

## **SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS**

The following adopted SPD's are relevant:

- SPD1 – Planning Obligations and Technical Notes
- SPD2 – A56 Corridor Development Guidelines
- SPD3 – Parking Standards and Design

## **NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The Department for Communities and Local Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) on 27 March 2012. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. With immediate effect the NPPF replaced 44 documents including Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance, Minerals Policy Statements, Minerals Policy Guidance, Circular 05/2005, Planning Obligations and various letters to Chief Planning Officers. The NPPF will be referred to as appropriate in the report.

## **PLANNING HISTORY**

In June 2001 a legal agreement between B&Q, the landowner and the Council was entered into preventing the use of the existing B&Q Warehouse for food sales for consumption off the premises. At the same time, the existing S52 Agreement was discharged.

H54169 – Erection of canopy over garden centre and part of service yard. Granted on 18<sup>th</sup> July 2002.

H52608 – Amendments to scheme approved under H51875 above. Granted on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2001.

H51875 – Extensions to form additional office block, entrance/exit to building, garden centre and link building following demolition of existing lean-to greenhouse, and removal of existing fencing and provision of a new service yard with fencing, new vehicular access and associated works. Granted on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2001.

H43632 – Extension to garden centre and erection of 3m high fence. Refused on 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1997.

H18232 – Extensions to garden centre and alterations to car park. Granted on 6<sup>th</sup> October 1983.

H15460 – Erection of a DIY retail store and Garden Centre. Granted on 18<sup>th</sup> May 1982. Associated Section 52 Agreement limited sales to DIY and associated bulky goods ranges.



## **APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

The planning application is supported by numerous reports, the main conclusions of which are incorporated in the Observations section below as appropriate. The reports will also be referred to in the Observations Section where necessary.

- Retail Planning Statement
- Design and Access Statement
- Transport Assessment
- Travel Plan
- Ecological Assessment
- Flood Risk and Drainage Assessment
- Site Investigation Report
- Air Quality Assessment
- Noise Impact Assessment
- Heritage Statement
- Statement of Public Consultation

The Statement of Community Involvement submitted by the applicants describes a Public Exhibition held on 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup> April 2013. During this event, approximately 83% of those who completed response forms expressed support for a foodstore-led redevelopment of the application site.

- Subsequent letters rebutting objections raised during the course of the application. highways and design matters  
Through the submission of this documentation the applicant has submitted that the proposal will result in the following benefits:

- **Substantial job creation (circa 220 jobs)**  
In the context of the existing B&Q warehouse store, which, if it were to close, would result in the loss of 70 jobs, there would be a significant net gain (+150 jobs) in local employment. Morrisons is unique in the amount of food that is prepared in store by trained bakers, butchers and fish mongers, which results in a higher than average employment density for a foodstore. Typically 75% of the Company's employees live within 3 miles of the store they work in, thus demonstrating that the local area is likely to benefit from job creation within the proposed development.
- **Economic investment and regeneration**  
The application scheme would represent a significant investment in the Altrincham area, and would provide for the redevelopment of a prominent previously developed site that will become vacant following the closure of the B&Q store. It would be a significant statement of the investor confidence that would provide employment, economic and other benefits to the Broadheath area, a part of the Borough that the Core Strategy confirms is a Regeneration area.

- **Environmental improvement**  
The proposal would deliver a modern, attractive landmark building on a site that is prominent to the A56 corridor and Altrincham Bridge. It would open up views to the canal corridor from Atlantic Street, and provide for new planting that would deliver an environmental improvement to the canal corridor and uses located on the opposite side of the canal.
- **Enhanced local shopping choice**  
The application scheme would deliver a significant improvement in the choice of main food shopping facilities available in Altrincham. The proposed Morrisons would provide for a highly accessible, alternative foodstore to Aldi, for Broadheath residents in particular.

All these issues will be addressed in detail in the observations section below, and will be weighed as material considerations in making Recommendations to Members.

## **CONSULTATIONS**

**Strategic Planning** – Detailed comments are incorporated in the Observations section below.

**LHA** – Detailed comments are incorporated in the Observations section below.

**Pollution and Licensing** – Any comments will be reported in the additional information report.

**Drainage** – Any comments will be reported in the additional information report.

### **Environment Agency**

- **Flooding** The site is within the Manchester and Trafford South Critical Drainage Area as identified in the Council’s Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA). In accordance with the SFRA User Guide, brownfield redevelopment should aim for a 50% reduction in run-off rates. The proposal indicates a 30% reduction, and it is for the Council to decide whether it will require the SFRA aims to be achieved. If the Council is minded to approve the application, a number of conditions are recommended.
- **Contamination** The Preliminary Desk Study indicates the site and surrounding land may be associated with potentially contaminative historic land uses. Further work should be carried out and the conditions would ensure any contamination is appropriately considered.

**GMEU** – The Ecological Assessment which has been submitted is a fair and accurate appraisal of the sites ecological value provides reasonable recommendations on how the biodiversity value can be enhanced and measures to protect the adjacent Bridgewater Canal SBI. It is recommended that further details on lighting along the Canal Corridor are provided prior to determination; a bat survey should be conducted along the Canal Corridor if lighting is an issue.

Other details relating to bats and nesting birds and enhancement to the net biodiversity gain and buffer to the Bridgewater Canal are recommended to be required by condition.

**GMP** – Any comments will be reported in the additional information report..

#### **TfGM**

- Note that the A56 Altrincham – Manchester is one of the worst performing sections of road in Greater Manchester and a priority for improving journey time and reliability.
- Concerned about cumulative impact if both current supermarkets approved.
- Notes the site has good public transport accessibility adjacent to the A56 Quality Bus Corridor.
- Further opportunities to create link to Bridgewater Canal towpath and fund further upgrade to Bridgewater Canal to finalise link to Trans-Pennine National Cycle Route 62 are welcomed
- Recommends secure cycle parking
- Welcomes inclusion in Travel Plan framework which should extend to full proposals to be implemented and conditioned.
- Should Trafford be minded to approve either or both applications, appropriate mitigation measures will be needed to manage the impact on the A56.

#### **Electricity North West**

- Notes that could have an impact on their infrastructure, being adjacent to or affecting their operational land or electricity distribution assets.
- Referred to applicant for comment.

**United Utilities** – No objection, subject to compliance with conditions.

This has been referred to the applicant for consideration

**Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service** – Any comments will be reported in the additional information report.

### **REPRESENTATIONS**

#### **In support**

**Neighbours and others** – 47 individual expressions of support for the proposal. These include the following points:

- increased local competition for Tesco and Sainsburys.
- A store residents can walk to
- Morrison's is an excellent store;
- It would be a benefit to the community;
- It would be a good addition to the retail park
- It would provide an increase in range and choice for customers;
- It would provide jobs;

- Better than the site remaining empty;
- Some reservations about traffic and access;
- An opportunity to carry out improvements.

## **Objections**

**Altrincham and Bowdon Civic Society** – Object to the proposals on the following grounds

- One of prime concerns of Society is the future success of Altrincham town centre.
- Significant adverse impact on Altrincham town centre
- Contrary to W2 and W2.12
- Should be located on Altair site
- Primary concern is shift from Altrincham town centre to out-of-town retail park
- Loss of linked trips to Altrincham town centre from Tesco and Sainsburys
- No assessment of impact on market and small traders. Morrisons Fresh Format in direct competition with market Health check inaccurate on town centre vacancies
- Compares with Hale Barns appeal decision
- Fails to meet sequential test
- Discrepancy between retail consultants' conclusions on overtrading of Tesco and Sainsburys in Altrincham.
- Increased traffic congestion on A56
- Questions net benefit of 220/150 jobs
- Concludes better than Property Alliance Group scheme
- Main objection is 22% impact on convenience trade in Altrincham

### **Bowdon Conservation Group**

- Altrincham has suffered in last 20 years from out-of-town development and internet shopping
- Altrincham dividing into 3 areas – Broadheath on West, Altair on East and Original town centre - Town centre needed for many reasons.
- Sufficient food stores in Altrincham
- Morrisons format directly in competition with market.
- Traffic congestion
- Reduction of trade in Altrincham
- Suggest site developed for housing.

### **Altrincham and Sale Chamber of Commerce**

- A Morrison's supermarket would be extremely detrimental to Altrincham Town Centre and would attract significant business from the town.
- The proposal would create the worst possible outcome as far as traffic flows are concerned;
- The proposal could open up the whole retail park for similar style retail stores to the detriment of Altrincham;

**Neighbours and Others** – 8 individual objections

- Originally allowed as MFI bulky flat-pack, now B&Q sells anything
- Retail Park now selling any goods, not just bulky, policy change by default
- Altrincham and Sale Town Centres struggling
- Access problems on A56
- Traffic congestion will discourage investment in Broadheath Industrial Estate
- Question whether B&Q definitely closing
- Concerned about loss of B&Q
- Job losses from existing stores losing trade
- Impact on Altrincham town centre
- Vitality and Viability Assessment of Altrincham town centre questioned
- Transport limited to buses
- Already good choice of food stores
- Detailed criticism of Transport Assessment (referred to LHA for consideration)
- Suggest pedestrian link to canal
- Development for housing would be better
- Inadequate detail on materials
- Need another supermarket like hole in the tooth think about last remaining shopkeepers
- Lack of consultation residents of Woodfield Road
- Design fails to respond to its context
- Poor elevations and use of materials
- Blank facades fails to provide landmark development
- Failure to increase pedestrian linkages to surrounding area
- Contrary to Policy L7 and other policies on retail outside centres
- Will draw trade away from Altrincham and Sale
- No need for another supermarket
- Encourages traffic congestion
- Noise to Budenberg residents
- Light pollution
- Trading hours
- Traffic congestion on A56
- Morrisons format threatens Altrincham Market

#### **Bowdon Downs Residents Association**

- Altrincham and Sale town centres failing because range of goods allowed on Retail Park
- Another 1-2 food stores will make bad situation even worse
- Smaller shops in accessible town centre will close, stranding those who cannot walk to shops as access limited to buses
- Morrisons format harmful to Altrincham market
- No need for more shops, range and choice already good
- Traffic problems on A56 with more cars turning
- Businesses on Industrial Estate already disadvantaged by traffic
- NO to both Asda and Morrisons

### **The Altrincham Town Centre Partnership**

- No evidence for need for another new supermarket based on figures provided by applicant but better than exaggerated numbers presented by PAG in their deceitful attempt to justify a much larger store for Asda.
- Significant adverse impact on Altrincham Town Centre
- Town Centre First Policy must be applied as no realistic town centre alternatives have been given proper consideration
- Will increase car usage, contrary to NPPF and Council policy
- Public consultation meaningless as no alternative locations offered
- Job creation figures ignore loss of jobs which will result in town centre
- Would cause serious transport problems and have detrimental effect on Altrincham Town Centre and should be refused

**Retailers / Developers** – objections received by and on behalf of other main retailers, including those with current supermarket proposals, namely Maloneview (Sale) Ltd (the owners of Sale Shopping Centre), PAG (the owners of Hangar 14) and Waitrose.

#### Maloneview

- Sale Square is suitable, available and viable opportunity for Morrisons and sequentially preferable site
- New supermarket in Broadheath will draw trade from Sale
- Waitrose trade-draw from Sale demonstrates overlap Sale/Altrincham catchment areas
- Failure to comply with sequential test
- Sale Square is suitable, available and sequentially preferable
- Impact on Town Centre Investment and Health
- Pre-application consultation submitted for Sale Square
- The Square is allocated in Development Plan
- Retailers would not develop in Broadheath and Sale
- If the Broadheath scheme goes ahead then Sale Town Centre Scheme will not
- No evidence of need for further store in Broadheath
- Evidence of investor concern re Sale
- No positive effects to outweigh harm
- Will remove any tenant interest in Sale
- Failure to provide cumulative impact assessment
- Impact on the highway
- Not accessible by sustainable modes in any meaningful way
- Proposed highway works on Atlantic Street not acceptable
- Highway capacity assessments inadequate
- Failure to comply with Policy L4 / NPPF Para 32
- Cumulative highway impacts of both schemes not submitted – would be severe

#### PAG

- Contrary to Policy W2.14 as sited in Retail Warehouse Park
- No evidence of marketing for allocated use
- Smaller (1.76ha) than PAG site (2.8ha) so would not accommodate size of store to meet identified need
- Insufficient car parking / cycle parking / taxi ranks / substandard layout

- Potential for adverse impact on surrounding road network due to queuing and overspill parking
  - Poor design not commensurate with location on A56 / historic context
  - No link to canal towpath
  - Compared to competing foodstore proposals
    - o Not more likely to form connections to Altrincham Town Centre
    - o 1.2km from Altrincham town centre
    - o 247 bus service will make PAG more accessible and closer to bus stops
    - o Sites have some sequential status as measured by access to different modes of transport
- PAG site preferable due to
- o 200 more jobs
  - o Public transport improvements
  - o New right hand turn on A56
  - o Long term investment - relocating 2 builders merchants
  - o Not elevating role and status of retail warehouse park
  - o Regeneration of long-term vacant site

### Waitrose

- Similar concerns to PAG application, both concerned individually and cumulatively about impact
- Need justification based on providing increased choice and competition to Tesco and Sainsburys should not be given any weight
- Role of Waitrose serves Broadheath Local Catchment as identified by Council and appropriately located in residential area
- Wide offer already available in Broadheath Area including Waitrose, Aldi and smaller stores
- HV report confirms no local need and insufficient expenditure capacity to support further foodstores
- No justification based on need/choice and competition
- Up to 14.3% impact on Waitrose trading
- Cumulative impact with PAG scheme will be severe and significant in magnitude
- Policy objection based on W2.9 and W2.12
- Level of trade diversion from Local Centres is significantly underestimated
- Protect Broadheath Local Centre first under NPPF, W2.9 and W2.12

## **OBSERVATIONS**

1. Members are being asked to consider 2 separate planning applications for supermarkets in the Broadheath Area. These are 79984/FULL/2013 for Lyon Industrial Estate, Atlantic Street (Hangar 14) and 80577/FULL/2013 B&Q Plc, Altrincham Retail Park, Atlantic Street (B&Q). Both applications are recommended for refusal.

2. The reason for taking the applications to Committee together is to enable Members to reach decisions based on full details of both proposals, and having regard to the following:
  - i. The NPPF Para 24 states that *“When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre”*.
  - ii. There is a requirement in adopted Core Strategy Policy W1.12 criterion 3, that, *“where a non-employment use is proposed, there should be no alternative sites in the locality to meet the need for development”*.
  - iii. There is also authority to say that the availability of other more suitable sites can be a material planning consideration and the advice of Counsel confirms this approach.
3. The individual applications will be considered in the following manner, with reference to the other, or both, where appropriate.
4. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that an application for planning permission shall be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Conversely, applications which are not in conformity with the Development Plan should not be allowed unless material considerations justify granting planning permission.
5. Each proposal will be assessed as to whether it meets development plan policies (as set out in the Planning Policy Section above); the relevant material considerations, which include the NPPF, benefits arising from the scheme and any proposed mitigation Measures, will be considered, and these will be weighed in making a recommendation to Members.
6. The advice of the Council’s independent retail consultants is that the cumulative impact of both applications on the viability and vitality of nearby centres is unacceptable. The relative merits of each are assessed in the event that Members decide not to follow the recommendations to refuse both applications for the reasons relating to failure of the Sequential Test and *“significant adverse”* impact on investment in Sale Town Centre.

## **PRINCIPLE OF DEVELOPMENT**

7. All proposals for retail development in an Out-of-Centre location must be assessed primarily against Core Strategy Policy W2 Town Centres and Retail; the NPPF (particularly Para’s 23-27) and the Planning for Town Centres Practice Guidance (PTCPG).
8. Site specific policies which relate to the location of this site in an existing Retail Warehouse Park are found in Policy W2.14.



## **PRINCIPLE OF RETAIL DEVELOPMENT**

9. The Council have appointed HollisVincent (HV) as independent retail consultants; Walsingham Planning (WP) advised on the Hangar 14 proposal and Peacock and Smith (PS) on the B&Q proposal. The analysis is based on the following documents, in addition to those submitted with the original planning applications, and will be updated as necessary prior to the Committee Meeting:
- HollisVincent Report on Hangar 14
  - HollisVincent Report on Hangar 14 and B&Q
  - Various Rebuttal Documents from Maloneview on Sale Square Development
  - Various rebuttal documents from WP
  - Correspondence with WP and PS on discrepancy in estimated turnover figures.
  - Correspondence from another supermarket operators
10. The relevant development plan Policy W2.12 Out-of-Centre Development states that:
- “Outside the centres identified above, there will be a presumption against the development of retail, leisure and other town centre-type uses except where it can be demonstrated that they satisfy the tests outlined in current Government Guidance”.*
- (The identified centres are Altrincham, Sale, Stretford, Urmston, Hale, Sale Moor, Timperley and the network of Local Centres)
11. Policy W2.14 states that:
- “Proposals to expand any of the three existing retail warehouse parks (White City, Trafford and Altrincham) should be justified against the tests set out in national guidance. Further development within the retail warehouse parks should be limited to the sale of bulky comparison goods only”.*
12. The tests set out in the NPPF and accompanying Guidance are:
1. The Sequential Test
  2. The Investment Impact Test
  3. The Impact on Vitality and Viability Test.

## **RETAIL APPRAISAL**

13. Hollisvincent were appointed by the Council to carry out an Audit of the Applicants’ Support Material, Assessment of Cumulative Retail Impact and provide Retail Policy Advice in respect of both planning applications currently before the Committee. The following is a summary of their Report and Addendum Report which takes account of the application submission and subsequent representations from both applicants, and interested third parties.

14. The B&Q application is indisputably in an Out-of-Centre location for the purposes of the policy assessment.
15. The NPPF sets out the national policy framework for Town Centres and Sustainable Economic Development, which is a material consideration in planning decisions. The principle of sustainability runs through the document, with a presumption in favour of sustainable development, but the statutory status of the development plan remains the starting point for decision making. In this case the policies are found in the Revised UDP and the Core Strategy adopted in January 2012. The Core Planning Principles are set out which include the requirement to proactively drive sustainable economic development; awareness of the different roles and character of different areas and promotion of the vitality of main urban areas; encouragement of the effective use of previously developed land and focussing significant development in locations which are, or can be made, sustainable.
16. The Government is committed to building a Strong, Competitive Economy. The Section on Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres is particularly relevant to this application. Para 23 states that: *“planning policies should promote competitive town centre environments and that, in drawing up local plans, LPA’s should, amongst other things:*
  - § *recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and support their vitality and viability;*
  - § *promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer;*
  - § *ensure that needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses are met in full and are not compromised by limited site availability, so that local planning authorities should undertake an assessment of the need to expand town centres to ensure a sufficient supply of suitable sites;*
  - § *allocate appropriate sites for main town centre uses in accordance with the sequential approach; and*
  - § *plan positively for centres in decline”.*
17. Para 24 sets out the sequential test that applies to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres and secondly, sets out the impact on the town centre vitality and viability.
18. Attention is drawn to Para’s 186 and 187 on Decision Taking which states that: *“the local planning authorities should approach decision taking in a positive way to foster the delivery of sustainable development”.*
19. The overall conclusions in relation to the NPPF are that:
  - it emphasises the role of the development plan as the statutory starting point in the consideration of planning applications, so that applications which accord with the development plan should be approved without delay, whereas if there

is conflict with the development plan, applications should be refused, unless material considerations indicate otherwise;

- the NPPF itself is a material consideration to which we give significant weight;
- the NPPF's presumption in favour of "*sustainable development*" is similar to the presumption in favour of "*sustainable economic growth*", as previously enshrined in Policy EC10.1 of the now replaced PPS4, but, in the decision taking context, the presumption in favour of sustainable development applies only "*where the development plan is absent, silent or relevant policies are out-of-date*";
- the NPPF maintains previous policy in seeking to promote competitive and healthy town centres; and that
- the policy tests in relation to the sequential approach and impact, although expressed in more concise terms, remain essentially the same as the tests formerly set out in Policy EC15 and in Policies EC16.1a, EC16.1b and EC16.1d of the former PPS4.

20. It is considered noteworthy; however, that paragraph 26 of the NPPF does not seek to reflect the separate test of scale that was formerly incorporated in Policy EC16.1e of PPS4. Thus, the issue of scale is subsumed within the tests that relate to impact on investment, impact on town centre vitality and viability (including local consumer choice) and the impact on trade in town centres in the wider area.
21. Para 27 of the NPPF is reflective of the provisions of Policy EC17.1 of the former PPS4 in stating that "*Where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have a significant adverse impact on one or more of the above factors [in Para 26], it should be refused*". However, Para 27 does not replace the advice previously contained in Policy EC17.2 of PPS4, which required a balancing exercise to be undertaken in cases where there were no significant adverse impacts.
22. The application is then appraised against the retail and land use policy aspects of the current and emerging development plan. The policies in the UDP are effectively replaced by Policy W2 of the Core Strategy DPD, other than in respect of specific allocations and definitions of centre boundaries which will be addressed in a future Land Allocations DPD.
23. Policies W2.1 to W2.11 set out the hierarchy of centres and the strategies relating to these centres. Altrincham is the Principal Town Centre within the Borough; Sale, Stretford and Urmston are the other Town Centres; Hale, Sale Moor and Timperley are District Centres. Proposals for town centre uses in out-of-centre locations are dealt with under Policy W2.12 which states there will be a presumption against such proposals "*.....except where it can be demonstrated that they satisfy the test outlined in current Government guidance*" Para 19.9 of the Justification to the Policy states that the policy "*.....does not propose or identify any new sites for large scale growth in the retail sector....*" Instead it makes proposals to consolidate and enhance the retail offer available within

Trafford's Town, District and Local Centres. Policy W2.14 refers to Retail Warehouse Parks and is referred to in detail below.

24. Having conducted the relevant Sequential and Impact tests outlined in current Government guidance, HV concludes that the application to redevelop the B&Q site for a food superstore is:
- Not consistent with the key objectives of the strategy for Altrincham and Sale Town Centres as set out in Policies W2.2 to W2.5 of the Core Strategy DPD; and
  - In conflict with Policy W2.12 and W2.14 of the Core Strategy DPD.

#### **Need for a supermarket in Broadheath**

25. Both applicants have submitted that the evidence which they have provided, which included detailed Policy Analysis, a Householder Shopping Survey, Sequential Assessment, Retail Impact Assessment and Public consultation Exercise demonstrate that there is a quantitative and qualitative need for a further supermarket in Broadheath. HV have considered this evidence, together with the third party representations. They say there is an identified qualitative and quantitative need for a new supermarket; this will improve competition with existing supermarkets; there is evidence of overtrading particularly at Tesco and Sainsbury in Altrincham and the proposal has local support. PS place emphasis on the improvement of local consumer choice; and addressing overtrading at Tesco Extra in Baguley and Aldi at Broadheath.
26. The assessment of need, as measured by expenditure capacity, is not a development management test as outlined in the NPPF, thus the absence of need on its own can no longer form grounds for a reason for refusal of an application for a town centre use. Conversely, the existence of need on its own does not necessarily mean that there will be no adverse impacts. Nevertheless, the Planning for Town Centres Practice Guidance makes it clear that an assessment of need informs the consideration of the sequential approach and impact, both of which are requirements under the NPPF, for applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan. An assessment of the quantitative and qualitative need has therefore been carried out to inform those tests, in respect of the Hangar 14 application only. Need is also a relevant consideration in Para 22 of the NPPF relating to the alternative use of land allocated for Employment Use, and is also relevant to Policy W1.12 as the site is in a Main Employment Area, but this does not apply to the B&Q application.

#### Quantitative Need - Conflicts in Support Material

27. There is an important conflict in the support material put forward by both applicants. This has given rise to comment from third parties including local residents. The Expenditure Capacity, which is the measure used to assess need, has been derived from both applicants separate Householder Shopping Surveys using 1000 respondents from the same catchment area and using the same zoning systems. The primary difference is that the WP survey was conducted in

October 2012 and the PS survey was more recent in April 2013 following the opening of Tesco at Stretford.

28. The surveys produce substantially different results in relation to spending patterns and the turnover estimates for large and medium sized foodstores. WP consistently identify higher convenience goods turnover for the medium and large sized foodstores, based on higher market shares for those stores. Part of the reason for this is that WP use per capita expenditure figures which are 13%-14% higher over all zones. Despite attempts, neither party has been able to resolve the difference.
29. The different figures on market shares of large supermarkets can relate to sampling error, the forms of questions asked and the different time of the surveys. The opening of Tesco Stretford would depress the turnover levels at other stores. However, HV agree with PS that the wording employed in the key question of WP's survey is likely to have resulted in overstating of the market share of supermarkets and superstores.
30. This results in the stark contrast between WP's conclusion that there is an aggregate level of overtrading in supermarkets in the Altrincham, Sale and Baguley areas of approximately £41.8m with expenditure capacity at £27.2m up to 2017, and that of PS which leads to an aggregate level of overtrading of £5.4m and a negative expenditure capacity of -£7m up to 2017.
31. HV considers that the PS survey findings which produce an aggregate position in the convenience goods sector are more realistic based on their own observations at the various stores. They agree with PS's observations that there is no evidence of significantly high levels of overtrading other than at the Aldi store in Broadheath. The evidence is that Waitrose at Broadheath overtrades slightly, as stated in their representations, and there is little evidence of congestion or customer discomfort at the two food superstores in Altrincham Town Centre. Thus, on-the-ground evidence would suggest that PS's findings and expenditure data are more reliable.

	CUMULATIVE IMPACT ON ALTRINCHAM WITH 'EMERGING ALTAIR'					
	Using Walsingham Planning Expenditure Data			Using Peacock and Smith Expenditure Data		
	Comparison	Convenience	Combined	Comparison	Convenience	Combined
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Hangar 14 / PAG	-1.8	-14.9	-7.8	-2.0	-17.1	-8.9
B&Q / Morrisons	-1.2	-10.8	-5.6	-1.3	-12.5	-6.4
Two Store	-2.2	-21.4	-11.0	-2.4	-24.1	-12.3

Emerging scheme Altair has a convenience sales area of 375sq.m. and a comparison sales area of 400sq.m. Both sets of data utilises market share derived from the household survey commissioned by Walsingham Planning.

32. However, HV have used WP's expenditure data and shopping patterns which favour both applicants, but have undertaken sensitivity testing to assess the impact of using PS figures (see Impact Table above).

#### Quantitative Need

33. HV have recalculated the Expenditure Capacity using WP's figures, allowing for the turnover requirements of commitments to redevelop the local centres in Hale Barns and Partington and the understanding of the broad content of the emerging proposals for a revised scheme at the Altair site, which is likely to be dominated by leisure, restaurant/bar and residential uses, with a limited Class A1 Retail component. This results in a residual expenditure capacity to support new convenience floorspace of £27m in the period up to 2017, as shown in the Table below:

	CONVENIENCE GOODS	
	Aggregate overtrading	Catchment Area Capacity at 2017
	£m	£m
Using WP Expenditure Data	41.8	27.2
Using PS expenditure Data	5.4	-7.0

This uses WP data, with results from PS data being slightly higher.

34. The residual expenditure is lower than the convenience goods expenditure requirement of the Hangar 14 store of £34m, but higher than the convenience goods expenditure turnover of the Morrisons store at £22m.

35. However, HV argues strongly that the £27m residual expenditure, identified by using WP's data, should be channelled towards Altrincham Town Centre so as to reduce the vacancy level, towards Sale Town Centre to support the emerging proposal for the redevelopment of The Square Shopping Centre and to Sale Moor District Centre, for which Policy W2.8 of the Core Strategy DPD identifies a need to plan for a small to medium sized supermarket.

36. Thus, HV's overall conclusion is that there is insufficient expenditure capacity, or quantitative need, to support the turnover requirements of either of the application proposals. HV points out, however, that the absence of need, on its own, is no longer a ground for refusal under the NPPF, although it does inform the approach to the sequential and impact tests.

#### Qualitative Need

37. Both applicants' submissions in respect of qualitative need rely mainly on the perceived level of choice in the catchment area, which is largely dominated by Tesco and Sainsburys. WP argue that there is evidence of consumer discomfort resulting from overtrading.

38. HV have analysed the evidence which does not indicate any significant levels of discomfort or congestion resulting from current trading levels. HV consider that

the fact that the some stores trade at densities above their respective company averages is not a good indicator of qualitative need for a further large foodstore in an Out-of-Centre location in Broadheath.

39. The submitted surveys indicate:

- The Aldi store at Broadheath is extremely popular and demonstrates the consumer demand for a discount operator in this location.
- The Waitrose store at Sinderland Road Local Centre is also popular and draws trade from a wide area, in addition to meeting local need
- There is some level of dissatisfaction with the large foodstores in Sale Town Centre.
- The large and medium sized foodstores in Altrincham and Broadheath are all trading well.

40. The overall conclusion, therefore, is that there is no pressing qualitative need for an out of centre food superstore in the Broadheath area, and that the residents of this area already have a wide choice of convenience goods outlets, ranging from local stores, such as Nisa, to the discount offer provided by Aldi, the medium sized Waitrose supermarket, and the large superstores and market facilities offered in Altrincham Town Centre. Indeed, the NEMS Survey suggests that the most pressing qualitative need is to improve the large foodstore offer in Sale Town Centre.

41. The analysis of the latest GOAD Plan for Altrincham Town Centre (August 2012) (an independently produced survey) suggests that there is also a need to improve the representation of small independent convenience traders in the Town Centre. Indeed, these smaller convenience goods operators account for only 4% of all retail and service units in Altrincham and there is plenty of opportunity for such retailers afforded by the vacant units which existed at the time of the last GOAD survey on 15th August 2012.

42. The above conclusion on absence of quantitative and qualitative need is relevant to the Hangar 14 application as it then fails the criteria in Policy W1.12 which requires demonstration that there is a clear need for the proposed land use(s) in this locality. Even if a need is considered to have been demonstrated, it is not locationally specific to the Broadheath area, but relates to the whole catchment area identified in the surveys, including Sale.

#### THE SEQUENTIAL TEST

43. The NPPF (Para 24) sets out the sequential test that applies to planning applications that are not in an existing centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan. Policy W2.12 requires such proposals to satisfy the tests set out in Government guidance.

44. Para's 6.36-6.50 of the Planning for Town Centres Practice Guidance (PTCPG) provides advice in relation to the three key components of the sequential test which must be addressed to establish whether there is a site in a sequentially

preferable location which is “*available, suitable and viable*”, with these terms defined as follows:

- Availability – whether sites are available now, or are likely to become available for development within a reasonable period of time (determined on the merits of a particular case, having regard to, inter alia, the urgency of the need).
- Suitability – whether sites are suitable to accommodate the need or demand which the proposal is intended to meet.
- Viability – whether there is a reasonable prospect that development will occur on the site at a particular point in time, which will depend in part on the nature of the need, and the timescale over which the need is to be met.

45. Taking into consideration the quantitative and qualitative need which has been identified above, it is considered that for a site to be considered sequentially preferable, it must be within the relevant area of search, must serve a similar function and achieve similar objectives to the proposal, and be capable of trading within a reasonable timescale.

#### Area of Search

46. This has been the subject of considerable debate between the parties. The applicants contend that the area of search for a sequentially preferable site should not include Sale Town Centre on the basis that:

- Altrincham and Sale have separate catchment areas, evidenced by the fact that Tesco, Sainsbury, Aldi and M&S all have stores at both centres
- The evidence that Waitrose at Sinderland Road draws trade from both Sale and Altrincham is not applicable to other supermarket operators as the trade draw in the case of Waitrose arises specifically as a result of the type of offer available at Waitrose which distinguishes it from other supermarket operators.

The Council’s retail consultant agrees that Sale and Altrincham have distinct catchment areas.

47. Of significant importance, however, is the fact that the Waitrose store at the Sinderland Road Local Centre draws convenience trade from throughout the catchment area of the application proposal. Therefore, although Sale and Altrincham have reasonably distinct PCA’s, because most of the large and medium sized foodstores are present in both centres, it is clear that the introduction of a new operator, in the form of Waitrose, has led to trade being drawn into the Broadheath area from residents of Sale. Thus, it seems likely that the introduction of another new operator in Broadheath would draw trade from the residents of both the Altrincham and Sale PCA’s.

48. In considering whether, or not, Sale Town Centre should be included in the Area of Search for the purposes of the Sequential Test, HV have taken account of the advice given in Para’s 6.21 – 6.26 of the Practice Guidance. They note that:



- the Core Strategy envisages new retail floorspace of 4000sq.m. in Sale, and the emerging proposals at Sale Square can accommodate all the development of the sales area sought at these sites
  - both applicants define the catchment area as being approximately a 15 minute drive time, whereas Sale is less than 10 minutes drive from the application sites
  - the scale and size of the proposals will serve a materially wider catchment area than small local foodstores
  - there is no quantitative or qualitative need for a further large foodstore in the Broadheath area
  - there is no gap or deficiency in the range and choice of supermarket facilities available to residents in the Broadheath area.
49. HV are of the opinion that a new operator on the Hangar 14 site would draw trade from residents of Sale, Broadheath, Timperley, and Altrincham areas. This is due to the location of the site within a 10 minute off-peak drive time from Sale, and is confirmed by the applicant's Transport Analysis showing a substantial proportion of traffic distribution from the north. The same analysis would apply equally to this application.
50. The representations from the owners of the Sale Square site draw attention to the likely draw of the proposal from Sale and Altrincham, pointing out the new right hand turn lane from Manchester Road, heading South onto George Richards Way provided for in the development proposal for Hangar 14, which in their view confirms this. They estimate as much as 40% of the trade could be drawn from Sale, compared to the HV estimate of 21% and WP estimate of 15%. Again, this is relevant to consideration of this issue in relation to this application too.
51. Furthermore, if the applicant is relying on its overall 15 minute study area for assessing quantitative need, then it must search for sequentially preferable opportunities in all town centres within that catchment area in seeking to meet that need. It would not be possible for an operator such as ASDA or Morrisons to attract its required turnover from residents of Altrincham alone and the expenditure capacity identified by Walsingham Planning derives from all of the 244,000 population that are projected to live within the study area in 2017.
52. PS have suggested that Morrisons would seek to locate in both Broadheath and Sale, but HV are not persuaded that there is sufficient evidence to support this statement. Therefore HV conclude that Sale Town Centre should be included within the area of search for "Sequentially Preferable Sites" in terms of the tests set out in the NPPF.

#### Sequential Site Search

53. The applicant examined 19 sites (including the site of the Lyon's Industrial Estate) in seeking to apply the sequential approach. Having examined this material, HV considers that there is only one site which requires further

examination, and this is the emerging opportunity to redevelop The Square in Sale Town Centre. It is agreed that each of the other 17 sites fail one, or more, of the 'available', 'suitable' or 'viable' components of the sequential test. One of these was the Altair site, in Altrincham. This has been discounted as not meeting the tests because the proposal would neither fit with the extant planning permission nor the development agreement.

#### Availability

54. The recent submission of a formal Pre-application Consultation request by consultants acting on behalf of the owners of the Sale Town Centre site is an indication that the scheme is currently progressing and is expected to be the subject of a planning application in the near future.
55. Para 6.38 of the Practice Guidance emphasises that a site can be considered to be "available" for development "... when, on the best information available, there is confidence that there are no insurmountable legal or ownership problems...."
56. Both applicants have questioned the availability of the Sale Town Centre site, citing the need for various land and property acquisitions, the need to relocate both retailers and residential occupiers, and the availability of funding.
57. The owners responded to these points, setting out in detail the progress which had been made in land and property acquisitions. The funding availability was confirmed by the National Asset Management Agency, if a foodstore operator is secured. The plan to relocate existing occupiers was supplied.
58. HV conclude that, given the conclusion that there is no pressing quantitative and qualitative need for a further Out-of-Centre supermarket at Broadheath, the owners of the Sale Town Centre site should be given a reasonable period of time, to bring this sequentially preferable scheme forward. This is consistent with Practice Guidance advice that major town centre sites can take 10-15 years to deliver.
59. A very late submission has been received from Tesco Stores which suggests that there may be some outstanding issues in relation to a right of way from the existing Tesco store in Sale and which would impact on the deliverability of the scheme and hence on the 'availability' of the site for the purposes of the sequential test. This is being followed up by officers and there will be a further report on this issue to Members.

#### Suitability

60. There is recent case law ('The Dundee Case') on the interpretation of this requirement, which HV summarise as being a need for all parties to demonstrate flexibility and realism and that the sequentially preferable location must be able to provide for a retail development that will serve a similar function and achieve

similar objectives to the application proposal. The words in the Judgement are “*suitable for the development proposed by the applicant*”.

61. HV conclude that the Sale Town Centre site can accommodate a food store of a similar size to that proposed in either scheme. The applicants suggest the main objectives are to meet an asserted localised need for a further large supermarket in the Broadheath area and enhance consumer choice and to provide more competition for the existing stores. HV dispute the evidence of need and consider that the objective of providing competition with existing stores could be achieved with the Sale Town Centre site, and that this is a more sustainable location and in accordance with planning objectives of the Core Strategy DPD.

#### Viability

62. Paragraph 6.37 of the Practice Guidance states that the ‘viability’ component of the sequential test is judging “...*whether there is a reasonable prospect that development will occur on the site...*” and paragraph 6.47 states that: “*this will be influenced by a range of market, cost and delivery factors*”.
63. Walsingham Planning’s representations raise a number of points in relation to viability, the most important being:
- questioning whether Maloneview has the financial capabilities to expend the substantial monies that will be required to promote the scheme (which is a matter that is dealt with in NAMA’s letter of 24<sup>th</sup> May 2013)
  - the range of abnormal development costs, including site acquisition from the Council, Trafford Housing Trust and the Institute of Civil Engineers and Surveyors
  - the financial payment it envisages to Tesco in lieu of its ‘easement’ over part of the site (which is specifically refuted by Maloneview)
  - demolition costs
  - compensation and relocation costs for existing retailers and residents; and
  - the costs involved in pursuing a compulsory purchase order if this proved to be necessary.
64. However, the Practice Guidance states at paragraph 6.49 that ‘*Where alternative sites are being actively promoted for new development by a developer/retailer, this is a reasonable indicator that the location is viable*’. Furthermore, the Practice Guidance states at paragraph 6.50 that ‘*It will rarely be necessary to undertake detailed development appraisals to test the viability of alternative sites*’. Maloneview’s representations indicate that it is confident that a viable scheme can be delivered, and it is noted that expenditure is already being incurred in promoting the pre-application request.
65. HV consider that there is nothing in the representations submitted by WP or PS that seriously questions the viability of the emerging scheme in Sale and HV is satisfied that Maloneview has provided the necessary level of evidence required by the Practice Guidance to suggest that its scheme is viable.

### Overall Conclusion on the Sequential Test

66. Given the conclusions that Sale Town Centre should be included in the 'area of search' for sequentially preferable opportunities and that the opportunity in Sale Town Centre is considered to be available, suitable and viable for the development proposed by PAG, both the Hangar 14 and B&Q application proposals therefore fail the sequential test. In these circumstances Paragraph 27 of the NPPF states that where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test it should be refused. However it should be noted that material considerations may exist to which such weight should be given as to indicate otherwise. In this regard there are representations received from both applicants which question the ability of the Sale site to satisfy all three elements of the sequential test. It should also be noted as indicated above that correspondence has now been received from Tesco which may have a bearing over the "availability" test for the Sale site. This matter is being investigated further and any necessary update will be provided by way of an additional information report.

### THE IMPACT TESTS

67. Para 26 of the NPPF sets out the impact tests for applications for retail, leisure and office development that is located outside town centres and which is not in accordance with an up-to-date Local Plan. Where the development exceeds the national or a locally set threshold (200sq.m. as set out in the Core Strategy), the application must face the impact tests set out in paragraph 26 of the NPPF.

68. The impact tests require an assessment of:

- a) the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and
- b) the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and wider area, up to five years from the time the application is made. For major schemes where the full impact will not be realised in five years, the impact should also be assessed up to ten years from the time the application is made.

69. Planning for Town Centres Practice Guidance states that *"it will be for the decision maker to determine what constitutes an 'acceptable', 'adverse' or 'significant adverse' impact based on the circumstances of each case, having regard to national and local policy objectives"*. The Practice Guidance then goes on to state that *"...there are no meaningful benchmarks of what constitutes an 'acceptable' level of trade diversion... the relevant factors will depend on the circumstances of each case"*

70. In forming a judgment as to whether the effects of a proposal are likely to reach the 'significant adverse' threshold, it is for the decision maker to take account of:

- the vulnerability of the town centres likely to be affected by the application proposal and their state of health
- the impact on the market share of the town centres

- the effect on planned investment in the town centres
- the impact on vacancies and quality of the retail offer in the centres affected
- the impact on investor confidence.

#### Impact on Existing, Committed and Planned Investment

71. HV have agreed with both applicants that there is unlikely to be a 'significant adverse' impact on the planned investments in Partington and Hale Barns, or on the emerging Altair scheme in Altrincham Town Centre. However, the concerns expressed by the owners of the Sale Town Centre site are given significant weight. Quite simply, they state that *"If the Broadheath scheme (Hangar 14) goes ahead then the Sale Town Centre scheme will not"* and they express similar concerns regarding the B&Q proposal. The likely operators, Asda or Morrisons have not satisfactorily demonstrated any intention to operate in both Broadheath and Sale, and both schemes are competing for the same market opportunity.

#### Overall Conclusion on the Impact on Planned Investment

72. The overall conclusion is that the Hangar 14 application, which is speculative to the extent that it currently has no named food retail occupier or the B&Q application with Morrisons as the named occupier, are each likely to cause a significant adverse impact on planned investment in Sale Town Centre, which would undermine an important aspect of Policy W2.5 of the Council's Core Strategy

73. Thus, in relation to the checklist set out under paragraph 7.21 of the Practice Guidance, which gives advice on how to measure the effects on planned investment in nearby town centres, it is concluded that:

- Maloneview appears to have secured funding support, has entered into formal pre-application discussion process, and is in detailed discussion regarding the necessary land and property acquisitions
- significant policy weight should be attached to the proposal to redevelop the Square Shopping Centre in Sale, since this would assist the objectives set out in Policy W2.5 of the recently adopted Core Strategy DPD
- there is not sufficient need for a large foodstore in an out of centre location in Broadheath, as well as a large foodstore in Sale Town Centre
- Sale Town Centre is in direct competition with the out of centre promoters for the same market opportunity i.e. ASDA or Morrisons
- there is evidence of investor concern, through the representations from Maloneview and NAMA
- neither of the out of centre schemes has positive retail benefits that would outweigh the failure to deliver investment in Sale Town Centre.

74. On that basis it is concluded that there is a real likelihood of a *"significant adverse"* impact on planned investment in Sale Town Centre, and this risk is exacerbated by the fact that an operator could be trading from either of these sites sometime before the scheme in Sale Town Centre becomes operational.

75. Both proposals are therefore considered to fail the test relating to 'Impact on Existing, Committed and Planned Investment' in a town centre in the catchment area of the proposal and a Reason for Refusal referring to Policy W2.12 and the NPPF Para 26 and 27 is therefore recommended.

## **IMPACT ON TOWN CENTRE VITALITY AND VIABILITY, AND TURNOVER OF THE TOWN CENTRES**

### **B&Q**

76. In respect of the B&Q proposals, the figures are proportionately less than those in relation to the Hangar 14 proposal reflecting the smaller size of the store. When factoring in the emerging Altair scheme, the overall impact on Altrincham's Retail trade would be 5.6% - 6.4% as a result of a cumulative diversion of £15.4m, depending on which Expenditure Data is input. The impact on Altrincham's convenience sector rises to 13.7% of their convenience trade.

77. The impact on Sinderland Road Local Centre is 9.2% rising to 10.3% in the convenience sector. Although these impacts are slightly lower than the original estimates because of the reduced convenience goods turnovers of commitments, they still appear comparatively high. HV consider that such an impact would be unfortunate given that the local centre has only recently been established, however they conclude that it is likely to be below the "*significant adverse*" threshold incorporated in Paragraph 27 of the NPPF, given that much of the impact will fall on the Waitrose store which is acknowledged by the operator to be '*...overtrading to a degree*'.

78. The impact on Sale's overall turnover is 5.5% rising to 8.3% in the convenience goods sector; and on Timperley 5.5% with 8.3% in the convenience sector.

79. HV's overall conclusion, therefore, is that the B&Q application will not cause a '*significant adverse*' impact on the overall vitality and viability of any of the Borough's Town, District or Local Centres, assuming successful implementation of Nikal's emerging proposal for the Altair site. Thus, there is no conflict with the second of the impact tests set out in Para 26 of the NPPF.

### **Hangar 14**

80. The original HV Report of May 2013 has been updated following further correspondence referred to above. Originally, there was an assessment that, depending on the final composition of the Altair scheme in Altrincham town Centre, then the impact on trading levels in Altrincham Town Centre would be likely to cause a "*significant adverse*" impact on its overall vitality and viability and a reduction in consumer choice. The impact on Sale, Stretford, the District and Local Centres is not considered to be significant.

81. The revised assessment of June 2013 summarises the cumulative impact of the Hangar 14 proposal, together with the revised commitments (relating to Tesco

Chester Road; Partington and the emerging Altair scheme). This results in a cumulative impact on Altrincham's overall retail turnover of 7.8% as a result of a cumulative diversion of £21.5m. The impact on Altrincham's convenience sector rises to 14.9%, but much of this impact falls on the Tesco and Sainsbury's stores which are projected to lose 18% of their convenience trade.

82. HV considered that the overall impact on Altrincham's retail trade of 7.8% is at the margins of acceptability, given the relatively fragile state of the town centre, but the estimate of the direct quantitative impact does not reflect the benefits of the uplift in footfall associated with a well integrated development at the Altair site, which is not quantifiable. Thus, the overall conclusion is that the impact on Altrincham Town Centre as a result of the Hangar 14 application is below the 'significant adverse' threshold referred to in Para 27 of the NPPF assuming that Altair is developed out thus creating an uplift in expenditure in Altrincham Town Centre.
83. The impact on Sinderland Road Local Centre is 12.2%, rising to 13.7% in the convenience goods sector. Although these impacts are slightly lower than the original estimates because of the reduced convenience goods turnovers of commitments, they still appear comparatively high. HV consider that such an impact would be unfortunate given that the local centre has only recently been established, however they conclude that it is likely to be below the "*significant adverse*" threshold incorporated in Paragraph 27 of the NPPF, given that much of the impact will fall on the Waitrose store which is acknowledged by the operator to be '*...overtrading to a degree*'.
84. The impact on Sale's overall turnover is 6.4%, rising to 6.9% in the convenience goods sector. These levels of impact are lower than those identified in the original report, because of the reduction in convenience turnover of the commitments, and the opinion remains that the impact on Sale's Town Centre overall vitality and viability will remain below the '*significant adverse*' threshold. Similarly, the impact on Timperley District Centre is marginally lower than in the original report and again the impact is considered to be below the '*significant adverse*' threshold.
85. HV's overall conclusion, therefore, is that the Hangar 14 application will not cause a '*significant adverse*' impact on the overall vitality and viability of any of the Borough's Town, District or Local Centres, assuming successful implementation of Nikal's emerging proposal for the Altair site. Thus, there is no conflict with the second of the impact tests set out in Para 26 of the NPPF.

#### Overall conclusion on Impact on Vitality and Viability

86. HV conclude that both proposals will remain below the '*significant adverse*' threshold of government guidance. However there is a real concern that the B&Q proposal could prove more harmful in terms of its actual impact on Altrincham Town Centre. This is due to concerns that introducing a foodstore of the size of the Morrisons proposal into the existing retail park with its current

mix of retail operators produces a very real likelihood of reinforcing a local centre effect at the Altrincham Retail Park. This effect could not be quantified by a retail impact assessment. Although there is the possibility that this effect could also be produced by the Hangar 14 proposal, it is likely that it would be more marked with the B&Q/Morrisons proposal given its relative proximity to other retail uses and the higher likelihood of pedestrian movements and other linked trips. Additionally it is noted that concerns have also been raised about the format of Morrison's "market place" which could further impact on the vitality and viability of Altrincham's market. However whilst any additional impact arising from these issues is unlikely to result in either proposal causing a significant adverse impact on Altrincham Town Centre it is appropriate to weigh these issues in the balance when considering the proposals.

#### Overall Conclusion on Retail Policy

87. The overall conclusion reached by HV on retail policy is that both proposals should be refused planning permission on the following grounds:
- a) failure of the sequential test, given the emerging opportunity to redevelop the Square shopping centre in Sale Town Centre; and
  - b) a "significant adverse" impact on planned investment in Sale Town Centre.
88. NPPF states at paragraph 27 that *"Where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact on one or more of the above factors, it should be refused"* (Acting Chief Planning Officer emphasis).
89. Core Strategy Policy W2.12 Out of Centre Development has a presumption against development which fails the tests in current Government Guidance (i.e. the NPPF); therefore, both applications should therefore also be refused as a result of their failure to comply with this policy.

#### **CONSIDERATION OF POLICY W2.14 RETAIL WAREHOUSE PARKS**

90. The B&Q site is located within Altrincham Retail Park and is subject to Core Strategy Policy W2.14 which states:
- "Proposals to expand any of the three existing retail warehouse parks (White City, Trafford and Altrincham) should be justified against the tests set out in national guidance. Further development within the retail warehouse parks should be limited to the sale of bulky comparison goods only"*.
91. This forms part of Policy W2.12-14 which relates to Out-of-Centre Development for retail, leisure and other town centre type uses. These are governed by Policies W2.12, W2.13 (only relevant to the Trafford Centre) and W2.14 (only relevant to the three existing retail warehouse parks, which include the Broadheath Retail Park in which the Morrisons/B&Q application is located).
92. Policy W2.12 states that there will be a presumption against such proposals '...except where it can be demonstrated that they satisfy the tests outlined in current Government guidance'. Part of the explanation to Policy W2.12 is set out



in paragraph 19.9 of the Core Strategy DPD, which cross refers to the findings of the Trafford Retail and Leisure Study, published in 2007, and states that the policy ‘...does not propose or identify any new sites for large scale growth in the retail sector...Instead it makes proposals to consolidate and enhance the retail offer available within Trafford’s Town, District and Local Centres...’.

93. In light of the provisions of Policy W2.12, and its cross reference to the National Policy tests, there has been some debate as to the weight that should be given to Policy W2.14 of the Core Strategy, in light of the conclusions reached by the Trafford Retail Park Inspector to the effect that:

- a) ‘...what W2.14 seeks can be overridden by a proposal which satisfies W2.12, which leads directly to the National Planning Policy Framework’ (Inspectors Report Para 38); and that
- b) if there is no objection the proposal in terms of NPPF ‘...it follows [that there will be] no objection in terms of Core Strategy Policy W2’ (Inspectors Report Para 40).

94. However, given the subsequent conclusion that the Morrisons/B&Q application fails at least two of the national policy tests, there is a clear conflict in relation to Policy W2.12 of the Core Strategy. In addition, it follows that the Morrisons/B&Q application is in conflict with Policy W2.14 of the Core Strategy, which states that ‘further development within the retail warehouse parks should be limited to the sale of bulky comparison goods only’. Thus, the Morrisons/B&Q application conflicts with Policies W2.12 and W2.14.

This is therefore included as a Reason for Refusal of the application

## **LOCATION OF THE SITE: ACCESSIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY**

95. The site is in an Out-of-Centre location in relation to the nearest Town Centres of Altrincham and Sale.

96. The applicant for B&Q submitted the following table to demonstrate the Comparison of Accessibility of the Hangar 14 and B&Q sites:

Accessibilty Criteria		Site 5 (PAG)	Application Site (Morrisons)
Distance to Altrincham town centre boundary by car, foot and cycle	Car	2km	1.2/1.5km
	Foot	2km	1.2/1.5km
	Cycle	2km	1.2/1.5km
Journey time to Altrincham town centre by bus (if available)		10mins from Craven Road (+6min walk and only 1-2 buses per hr)	5mins from A56 (+3min walk and 5-17 buses per hr)
Distance to nearest bus stop on foot		500m to Craven Road 800m to A56	250m from A56

Distance to nearest housing on foot	450m to Craven Road and Dairyhouse Lane	250m to Beaconsfield Road
Distance to railway/train station	1.5km to Navigation Road	800m to Navigation Road
Distance to nearest shops located on Altrincham Retail Park (excluding Aldi)	500m Toys r us	50m TKMax

97. The applicants also argued that the B&Q site is more accessible by non-car modes; there is scope for pedestrian linkage to nearby housing and other retail uses located at Altrincham Retail Park (thus allowing for walk-in trade and multi-purpose shopping trips) and it is located much closer to Altrincham town centre, albeit too far to establish pedestrian linked trips.
98. WP dispute these claimed comparative advantages regarding the location of the site. They consider that locating the foodstore on the Retail Park will change its role, function and status to the detriment of Altrincham Town Centre; although it is closer to Altrincham Town Centre, it is still too far away to create pedestrian linkage between the two destinations and the Hangar 14 site will be closer to a bus stop when the 247 bus route is diverted.
99. TfGM agree with the B&Q Transport Assessment which highlights that the location adjacent to the A56 Quality Bus Corridor ensures that the site has good transport accessibility and the Bridgewater Canal provides further opportunity to increase sustainable travel to the site. In response to this request, the applicants have indicated a link from the site through to the Bridgewater canal towpath. A Negotiated Element S106 Contribution towards funding is also offered as described below. This would be an important benefit arising from these proposals.
100. It is concluded that the proposal complies with Policy L4 and L7 and the NPPF in regards to the accessibility of the site.

## **HIGHWAYS**

101. The application was accompanied by a detailed Site Layout indicating the proposed access, car parking arrangements, and highway and junction improvement works in the vicinity of the site; together with a Transport Assessment and Interim Travel Plan. These were assessed by the LHA, who requested further information and amendments to the proposals which were submitted by the applicants and are subject to the following comments:

#### **A. Parking provision and layout**

102. The proposals indicate 276 car parking spaces, including 18 accessible spaces, motorcycle parking spaces in a designated area and 34 cycle spaces for use by the Morrisons store. The total requirement for the whole site, which includes the retained adjoining retail warehouse units, would be 407 car parking spaces, 22 disabled parking spaces, 17 motorcycle spaces and 43 cycle spaces to meet the Council's Car Parking Standards (making allowance for the proposed split of 80:20 convenience:comparison sales area). This is 67% of the Standard, or 77% if the retained units were restricted to retail warehouse use only. This causes concern regarding disamenity issues for neighbouring retail units due to overspill car parking; congestion on the highway due to drivers circulating to find a parking space and safety in the site due to substandard islands in the car park limiting visibility.
103. The applicants have submitted a further TRICS analysis which indicates that 268 spaces would be the maximum required at the peak time on a Saturday.
104. The car parking layout requires amending in a number of respects, which could be dealt with by further details and subject to conditions.

#### **B. Access arrangements**

105. The main access areas will be from Atlantic Street with a priority junction and right turning facilities. An existing access to the retained units also links to the car park. There is some concern about the design of the access and car parking arrangement and the highway improvements which are proposed. These amendments should be the subject of a condition if approval is granted and be provided at the applicants' expense. The link to the canal requested by TfGM should be provided at the applicants' expense, and S106 funds spent on upgrading the Bridgewater Way.

#### **C. Servicing**

106. The requested narrowing of the service access has been indicated; the service gates are set back from the road to prevent HGV's blocking the highway; swept path analysis indicates satisfactory service access; a footway to the front of the retained units must be provided.

#### **D. Travel plan**

107. This is generally acceptable, subject to improving staff cycling facilities and access; annual monitoring for 10 years and measurable targets included as conditions.

#### **E. Modelling / Off-site highway improvements**

108. Atlantic Street highway improvements include widening to create turning lanes to improve safety and reduce congestion. A pedestrian refuge island is not ideally positioned and the adjoining carriageway width is narrow for HGV's. Improvements to the junction of Davenport Lane allow large vehicles to make

satisfactory manoeuvres. A dropped kerb close to the above junction is not acceptable on safety grounds.

#### Bridgewater Way pedestrian / cycle link

109. This is a matter of importance, the proposed design is acceptable and it should be provided at the applicant's expense.

#### Modelling

110. All the network in the vicinity of the site has been modelled. The summary of this exercise is:

111. The modelling provided indicates that during the Friday PM peak hour the network is operating within practical capacity with the proposed development added, despite slight increases in queuing on some links as a result of the increased trips.

112. During the Saturday peak hour the network is operating over its practical capacity in the base situation and the proposed development traffic reduces the capacity yet further. However it is considered that the queues do not worsen significantly, a maximum increase of 4 passenger car units is recorded.

113. The results indicate that an additional 2 PCU's or less will queue back on the Davenport Road junction with George Richards Way and the applicant states that the junction will not queue back and block Atlantic Street according to the modelling provided. However, the LHA would state that this has not been clearly demonstrated within the assessment.

114. The applicant states that furthermore, the proposed right turn lane on Atlantic Street should ensure that any short term queuing into Davenport Road does not block the flow of traffic on Atlantic Street. The LHA would request that a thorough assessment and redesign of this junction is necessary in order to address the concerns and issues raised by the LHA. In addition, consideration should be given to the impact of the Aldi access at this point also.

115. The applicant notes that's whilst the signal network within the vicinity of the site is operating slightly over its practical capacity in the Saturday Peak hour, development traffic has a minimum impact on its operation and would not be perceivable over day to day fluctuations in traffic flow and therefore no capacity improvements are considered to be necessary to accommodate the development.

#### **F. Conclusions**

116. While there is no objection in principle to the proposed development it is acknowledged that it will generate an increase in traffic onto an already busy local highway network, and the applicant's traffic modelling work submitted in support of the application shows that the junction of Davenport Lane / George Richards Way will be approaching capacity which will result in a lengthening of

the queues experienced at the junction which could block back across the junction of Davenport Lane and Atlantic Street from the LHA's calculations. It is the LHA's view that this issue has not been adequately demonstrated within the assessment. If a queue did block the junction it would quickly cause queues for vehicles travelling southbound on Davenport Lane and for vehicles on Atlantic Street and would cause congestion and highway safety issues.

117. It is the LHA's view that the proposals fall short of the required parking needed to support a site of this type at just 67% of the Council's car parking standard. Whilst the LHA is aware that this is a maximum standard, the site is located in the least sustainable element of the parking standards as it is envisaged that more visitors will be in a vehicle than on foot or on bicycle due to the nature of the surrounding areas. It is the LHA's view that on balance, considering the restricted visibility afforded within the site (due to narrow islands) and the dual access points available, that this lack of parking could cause disamenity issues for neighbouring retail locations with car parks and could increase congestion within the proposed car park and on the surrounding public highway as vehicles re-circulate in an attempt to find a parking space.
118. It is the LHA's view, that the 1m depth islands should be increased in width to afford acceptable visibility within the site at give way lines, to be acceptable on safety grounds. This could be conditioned but would lead to a further reduction in parking spaces within the site.
119. The give way marking alongside the final island along the main access way needs to be amended to be acceptable on safety grounds. This is deliverable and can be conditioned.
120. Despite issues being raised with the applicant over pedestrian accessibility within the site, the proposals fall short of the safe and acceptable standards as there is no footway proposed in front of the existing retail units. This is essential for the proposals to be deemed acceptable and the LHA believe this is deliverable within the site and therefore could be conditioned.
121. The proposed disabled bays outside the existing retail units should be amended to relocate the circulation aisle to within the aisle behind the parking space and the disabled marking show the correct way. It is the LHA's view that this is deliverable and can be conditioned. The Bridgewater Way link should be conditioned and delivered at the applicant's cost as part of the development.
122. The applicant should provide the required motorcycle and cycle parking for the existing units in a location in close proximity to the units. It is the LHA's view that this is deliverable and can be conditioned but would potentially lead to a reduction in car parking spaces within the site. The applicant should provide the required motorcycle for the foodstore with secure lockable points. It is the LHA's view that this is deliverable and can be conditioned but would potentially lead to a reduction in car parking spaces within the site.

123. The applicant should provide the required secure cycle parking, lockers, showers and changing facilities for staff at the foodstore. It is the LHA's view that this is deliverable and can be conditioned.
124. The hackney carriage rank proposed is acceptable but should have appropriate signing and lining to enforce its use. The design of which should be agreed with the LHA. It is the LHA's view that this is deliverable and can be conditioned.
125. The LHA is concerned regarding the proposed highway arrangements. Just 3.2m width is provided for the eastbound lane at the point where the applicant has proposed a pedestrian refuge island. It is felt that this falls below highway standards on a road that caters for a large number of HGV movements. In addition to this the proposals included drops and tactile part way between the above pedestrian refuge island and the junction of Davenport Lane/ Atlantic Street. This arrangement is not safe, offers no benefit to pedestrians and should be removed from the proposals. The proposed public highway works should be delivered by the LHA either at the applicants cost or by the applicant under the supervision of the LHA and detailed design should be agreed with the LHA prior to commencement on site.
126. The travel plan submitted is not acceptable and therefore a travel plan condition should be added to any approval.
127. In its current form the proposals are not acceptable on highways grounds.
128. The Representations received from Walsingham Planning on behalf of the Hangar 14 site include detailed comments on the car parking provision and layout, and also on the problems with queuing, lengthy stays due to linked trips to the other retail units and concludes that the proposal is unacceptable on parking and highways grounds.
129. Whilst the applicants have responded to concerns of the LHA through the provision of further supporting information and revised plans, these have not been able to fully resolve these concerns. The LHA is of the opinion that the proposals are not acceptable on highways grounds, and a recommendation is made of a Reason for Refusal for failure to satisfy Policies L4 and L7 and failure to meet the Council's adopted Car Parking Standards. Should Members be minded to approve this application further consideration could be given as to whether the concerns of the LHA could addressed satisfactorily through the use of a Grampian condition.

### **DESIGN/HERITAGE IMPACT**

130. This proposal is adjacent to the Bridgewater Canal (identified to be a non-designated heritage asset) and also in close proximity to three designated heritage assets; 139-141 Manchester Road, former Canal Warehouse (adjacent

to Coal Wharf, Manchester Road) and the Railway Inn Public House (Manchester Road), all individually listed Grade II. The designated heritage assets form a relationship through the industrial context commenced by the Canal and continue through to the Broadheath Industrial Estate. The design of the scheme is therefore sensitive in this location, due to its visual prominence from the A56 and the siting in relation to heritage assets.

131. The Heritage Statement draws attention to the proximity of the Roman road, on that basis the GMAAS have been consulted and their response is awaited. Whilst it is considered they are unlikely to object in principle, given the existing and previous development on the site, they may wish to recommend appropriate conditions in the event of Member being Minded to Approve the application.
132. Using the relevant English Heritage Guidance, the designated heritage assets have been assessed to establish the effect of the proposal.
133. It is acknowledged that the existing B&Q building does little to enhance the setting of the heritage assets. In principle, there is no objection to the replacement building in terms of use and footprint. However, there is concern about the proposed positioning of the store closer to Atlantic Street, which will be significantly deeper than the existing B&Q store. This effect is exacerbated by the lack of architectural treatment, with the east and northern elevations having little or no active frontage. The horizontal emphasis of the building is emphasised by the reflectiveness of the uniform cladding. There is also concern about the paucity of landscaping and boundary treatment, particularly around the prominent service yard on the A56 frontage. The use of strong corporate colours on the building draws attention to the building rather than to the positive contribution to the street scene of the nearby heritage assets.
134. It is considered that the applicant has not adequately assessed the effect of the proposed development on the significance (as per EH guidance) of the adjacent heritage assets; the proposed siting, design (form, architectural treatment), and the materials for the proposed development will directly cause harm to the setting of two designated heritage assets and the Bridgewater Canal which is identified as a non-designated heritage asset.
135. Whilst it is acknowledged that the amended scheme has resulted in some improvements in the elevations; the elevations to Atlantic Street and the Bridgewater Canal, in particular, remain poor and would detract from the street scene, visual amenities of the area (in particular as the building comes so much closer to Atlantic Street than the existing), and the heritage assets previously identified. There is an opportunity to seek a significant improvement to the existing unattractive B&Q building on the site; this current scheme, even as amended, misses that opportunity.

136. It is recommended that a Reason for Refusal relating to the failure to comply with Trafford Core Strategy Policies L7 - Design, and R1 – Historic Environment and the guidance in the NPPF on design and heritage assets is given.

### **RESIDENTIAL AMENITY**

137. Core Strategy Policy L7 – Design identifies that high quality design is a key element to making places better and delivering environmentally sustainable developments. It seeks to ensure a high standard of design and layout and compatibility with the character of the surrounding area and the amenity of the occupiers of adjoining property.
138. The site lies within a reasonable distance of residential properties for the purposes of journeys on foot. However, given the existing use of the site and the nature of the surrounding area, it is not considered that there will be undue impact on residential amenity. Any recommendations from Pollution and Licensing regarding hours of operation, noise etc could be the subject of appropriate conditions.

### **NOISE**

139. A Noise Report was submitted with the application which has yet to be assessed by Pollution and Licensing, as indicated in Consultations above. The Report assesses the likely effect of noise from the equipment and activities associated with the development on nearby residential properties. It recommends measures which could be the subject of conditions, subject to the comments of Pollution and Licensing.

### **LIGHTING**

140. There is no lighting scheme with the proposals, and GMEU have requested further information on how this might impact on the Bridgewater Canal Corridor. This could be dealt with by an appropriate condition.

### **ECOLOGY**

141. An Extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey is submitted which demonstrates that the proposal would not give rise to negative impacts on ecology. The GMEU



recommend conditions relating to further information required prior to development, if approved. This complies with Policy R2 and the NPPF.

### **FLOOD RISK**

142. The site triggers the requirement for a Flood Risk Analysis. United Utilities and the Environment Agency have no objection in principle, subject to compliance with conditions which have been referred to the applicant for consideration. Subject to these, the proposal complies with Policy L5 and the NPPF.

### **CONTAMINATED LAND**

143. A Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessment was submitted which the Environment Agency indicates requires a Phase 2 Assessment to identify the presence, character, extent and significance of potential contamination sources. This could be the subject of a condition to require implementation of any required remediation measures. This complies with Policy L5.

### **AIR QUALITY**

144. The applicants have submitted an Air Quality Assessment which has not yet been assessed by Pollution and Licensing.

### **DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS**

145. Policy L8 sets out that planning obligations are an established and valuable mechanism for bringing development in line with policies and proposals contained in relevant national and local planning policies (Policy L8). L8.1 sets out that in relation to proposed development that would, if implemented, generate specific adverse impacts that cannot be provided for or mitigated against through the use of planning conditions, the Council will seek to negotiate appropriate planning obligation(s) to make the development acceptable and sustainable. Such an obligation can only be applied if it meets the three statutory tests of being necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms; directly related to the development; and, be fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

146. The Council's approach to contributions is based on two elements:- the Trafford Developer Contribution (TDC), which is the 'Required Element' and is

set out above; and a 'Negotiated Element', which will only be applied on a case by case basis where there is a need to address a specific impact not covered by the TDC.

**SPD1: PLANNING OBLIGATIONS CONTRIBUTION – THE REQUIRED ELEMENT**

147. The proposed development is of a scale and use that requires consideration of developer contributions under Core Strategy Policy L8 and the Council's SPD1: Planning Obligations. The Trafford Developer Contributions (TDC) required by SPD1 Planning Obligations are set out in the table below. The calculations are based on a floorspace figure of 4655sq.metres, with an 80:20 split between food, non-food and an existing non-food retail unit of some 6937sq.metres. It has been assessed on the basis of the site being in a Most Accessible area.

<b>TDC category.</b>	<b>Gross TDC required for proposed development.</b>	<b>Contribution to be offset for existing building/use or extant planning permission (where relevant).</b>	<b>Gross TDC required for proposed development.</b>
Affordable Housing	N/A		
Highways and Active Travel infrastructure (including highway, pedestrian and cycle schemes)	£151,895	£78,936	£72,959
Public transport schemes (including bus, tram and rail, schemes)	£320,550	£68,793	£251,757
Specific Green Infrastructure (including tree planting)	£28,830	£43,090	£0
Spatial Green Infrastructure, Sports and Recreation (including local open space, equipped play areas; indoor and outdoor sports facilities).	N/A		
Education facilities.	N/A		
<b>Total contribution required.</b>			<b>£324,716</b>

## **OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS – THE NEGOTIATED ELEMENT**

148. The applicants have agreed to enter into a Section 106 Agreement to make the following contributions:

1. The TDC of £324,716
2. A negotiated Element of £350,239 which is to be directed to the following:
  - Securing improvements to the canal towpath, in order to improve the site's accessibility for cyclists and pedestrians.
  - Contribute to planned public realm improvements to Altrincham town centre as proposed by Altrincham Forward in order to mitigate any retail impact.
  - Target new jobs at the foodstore to local people through the local labour agreement.

149. The total of £675,000 would also have to pay for any additional off-site highway works required by the LHA which are not already shown on the latest site plan, and the cost of the connection to the towpath, depending on who is responsible for its construction.

### Comment

150. These contributions would be partly used to enhance the accessibility of the site, particularly to walkers and cyclists using the Bridgewater Canal towpath route. There is already funding to improve this route up to the A56 and this would be a welcome extension to that facility.

151. The contribution to planned public realm improvements in Altrincham would be assessed on the same basis as the application for Hangar 14. It would mitigate to an unknown extent against the harm caused by the proposal but it is disproportionately less relative to the different levels of impact on vitality and viability.

## **THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS**

152. Members are advised that the decision on these applications should be approached as follows:

1. The advice of HV is that both applications fail the Sequential Test and the Investment Impact Test and should be refused planning permission.
2. There are other recommended Reasons for Refusal, which are different in the case of each application.
3. If the advice on the Sequential Test and the Investment Impact Test, and all other Reasons for Refusal in relation to both applications were rejected, then the scenario of two stores being developed would have to be considered. HV have conducted such an analysis, as set out below in Cumulative Impact of 2 Supermarket Proposals in Broadheath.

4. The result of this is that the two store scenario would result in unacceptable “*significant adverse*” impacts on the vitality and viability of Altrincham Town Centre, Timperley District Centre and Sinderland Road Local Centre. In this case, a choice would have to be made between the 2 proposals.
5. The choice between the 2 proposals would have to be made based on an overall planning balance of a number of considerations. These would include the economic, social and environmental aspects of the national and local sustainability agenda. These considerations are set out below in Comparison of Competing Applications.
6. The Section 106 Contributions to mitigate the impacts of the proposal could be considered in the balance at this stage.
7. If Members are Minded to Approve one of the applications, the other application should be refused planning permission as it would fail the Impact Test on the vitality and viability of nearby centres.
8. If Members are Minded to Approve either application, the application(s) would have to be referred to the Secretary of State as a Departure from the Development Plan.

## **CUMULATIVE IMPACT OF 2 SUPERMARKET PROPOSALS IN BROADHEATH**

153. HV have carried out a Cumulative Impact Assessment of proposals, taking account of existing commitments and assuming the emerging scheme at Altair. The results for the impact on the affected centres, is shown in the Table below:

Summary of Two Store Cumulative Impacts with Commitments and Emerging scheme at Altair

Destination	CUMULATIVE DIVERSIONS (£m)			PERCENTAGE IMPACTS (%)		
	COMPARISON	CONVENIENCE	TOTAL	COMPARISON	CONVENIENCE	COMBINED
Broadheath Local Centre	-0.1	-3.0	-3.1	-2.2	-19.4	-17.2
Altrincham Town Centre	-3.2	-27.1	-30.3	-2.2	-21.4	-11.0
Sale Town Centre	-2.3	-10.7	-13.0	-3.1	-12.0	-7.9
Stretford Town Centre	-0.9	-2.1	-3.0	NA	NA	NA
Timperley District Centre	-0.2	-2.6	-2.8	-2.0	-15.8	-10.8
Partington Local Centre	2.2	1.6	3.8	1,353.0	63.7	144.8
Hale Barns Local Centre	-	5.4	5.4	-	174.3	240.6

154. In respect of the centres, it is concluded:

Altrincham Town Centre (-11%)	“ <i>Significant adverse</i> ” impact on overall vitality and viability
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Timperley  
(-10.8%)                      “Significant adverse” impact  
on overall vitality and viability

Sinderland Road Local Centre  
(-17.2%)                      “Significant adverse” impact  
on overall vitality and viability

Sale  
(-7.9%)                      “Significant adverse” impact  
on overall investment

155. Overall, it is concluded that both current proposals fail the Impact Test on Vitality and Viability in the NPPF, and Policy W2.12. The strong advice of HV is that both applications cannot be approved because of the “*significant adverse impact which they would both have on the overall vitality and viability of a number of centres*”.

#### NOTE ON HIGHWAYS

156. In considering the Cumulative Retail Impact of the 2 proposals, there would also be a requirement to consider the cumulative impact on the highway network, as both proposals are accessed from the A56 which is operating at near capacity. Whilst the cumulative impact exercise has not been undertaken by either applicant, it has not been requested by the LHA, in view of the overall recommendation to refuse both individual applications in any event. Should members choose to be Minded to Approve either application, then a further Reason for Refusal should be attached to the other application. This would be on the basis that a Transport Assessment had not been carried out taking account of the cumulative impact of the 2 proposals.

### COMPARISON OF COMPETING APPLICATIONS

157. This section provides the comparison between the 2 proposals, which is required if Members are minded not to follow the Recommendations for Refusal.

#### Retail Reasons for Refusal

158. HV’s advice is confined to retail policy matters. As a result, the only contribution they make in this overall planning balance is to state that the Morrisons/B&Q application will have lower levels of trade diversion on all of the Borough’s town, district and local centres than the Hangar 14 proposals, because it has a substantially smaller sales area, and a substantially smaller retail turnover. Thus, despite the Morrisons store incorporating its ‘Market Street’ concept (with potential to compete with some market traders) they consider that the Morrisons/B&Q application will also have a lower level of impact on Altrincham Town Centre’s overall level of trade than the Hangar 14 proposal.

159. The above analysis takes account of only Retail Policy in the scenario of choosing between 2 competing schemes. This concludes that neither scheme is sequentially preferable, both being Out-of-Centre and failing to meet the requirements of Policy W2.12 and the Sequential and Impact Tests of the NPPF.

#### Other Reasons for Refusal

160. Both schemes are recommended for Refusal for additional Reasons, and Members would also have to reject the advice on those matters in order to approve either scheme.

161. In respect of the Hangar 14 application, this has been found to be in an unsuitable location for the proposed use as a food supermarket, due to the basic land use considerations and physical constraints to pedestrian linkages. It is not well placed to serve the population in the catchment area and is not accessible by a choice of means of transport. Whilst some measures may be proposed to create a bus connection (those for diverting the 247 bus route having been found to be unacceptable by TfGM), these cannot address more fundamental issues of accessibility. The proposal will inevitably generate additional car journeys and will not encourage linked trips on foot.

162. The site is located in a Main Employment Area and the proposal fails to comply with the criteria set out in Policy W1.12 for a number of reasons which include failure to demonstrate that the site is redundant for employment use; that there is a need for the proposed use; or that there is no suitable alternative site in the locality to meet the identified need (there being no proven need and Sale Square being a suitable alternative site in the catchment area of the proposed store, or the B&Q site if an amended acceptable scheme came forward).

163. There are outstanding issues relating to junction improvements on the A56, required to mitigate the acknowledged impact of the development which is otherwise unacceptable. However, these issues appear capable of resolution with an agreed design, which could be the subject of a Grampian Condition.

164. As far as the B&Q scheme is concerned, there are Policy conflicts with W2.14 in respect of Retail Warehouse Parks, although it is accepted that, in the event of Policy W2.12 being satisfied, a previous Inspector in the case of Trafford Retail Park found W2.14 to be thereby satisfied also. It is not accepted that the proposal satisfies Policy W2.12, as the above analysis has demonstrated that the proposal fails to meet the Sequential and Impact Tests in the NPPF, however, each case is judged on its own merits. It is considered important to protect Altrincham Retail Park for retail warehouse park development to protect town centres as set out in the retail study and also to minimise the effect of linked trips within the retail park, thus creating a "centre" effect.

165. The current B&Q scheme has been found to be unacceptable by reason of its design, on a prominent principal route and impacting on the setting of heritage

assets in the vicinity. Similarly, the access and parking arrangements are unsatisfactory. However, there is no objection in principle to a well designed building which respects its setting and provides adequate access and parking arrangements, which is sustainable and is otherwise in accordance with the Development Plan, but such a scheme is not before Members.

#### Measures for comparing schemes

166. PPS4 provided a format on how competing Out-of-Centre retail proposals should be assessed, but this is not taken forward in the NPPF. The only reference to this is at Para 24, which says that *“When considering edge of centre and out of centre proposals, preference should be given to accessible sites that are well connected to the town centre”*.

167. Whilst WP argue that the proposed bus stops associated with the diversion of the 247 bus route make the Hangar 14 site more accessible, this is not agreed by TfGM, the LHA, HV or The Chief Planning Officer although consideration should be given to whether this matter can be addressed through the imposition of appropriately worded conditions . The location of the B&Q site, closer to the town centre, on the A56 Quality Bus Route Corridor with up to 17 bus services passing the site; in walking distance of residential properties and with potential connections to the Bridgewater Canal towpath/cycle link, is undeniably in a more accessible location for any use.

168. Policy EC10.2 of the withdrawn PPS4 provided a useful set of criteria for assessing economic development which can also be used to assess competing retail schemes. These are stated in “i to v” below.

- i Whether the proposal has been planned over the lifetime of the development to limit carbon dioxide emissions and minimise vulnerability and provide resilience to climate change

Neither applicant has submitted any detailed appraisal of this aspect of their proposals in the form of specialised reports. Both applicants’ Design and Access Statements set out how a number of sustainability measures will be introduced, to comply with objectives of Policy L5 and to achieve BREEAM Very Good Assessment. In this respect, there is little to choose between them although the location and larger size of the Hangar 14 site is likely to result in a more car journeys and hence increased CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

- ii The accessibility of the proposal by a choice of means of transport including walking, cycling, public transport and the car, the effect on local traffic levels and congestion (especially on the trunk road network) after public transport and traffic management measures have been secured See above.

- iii Whether the proposal secures a high quality and inclusive design which takes the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of the area and the way it functions

The Hangar 14 scheme is acceptable as presented and complies with Policy L7 - Design; the B&Q scheme currently fails to comply with Policy L7.

- iv The impact on economic and physical regeneration in the area including the impact on deprived areas and social inclusion objectives

The Hangar 14 scheme achieves regeneration benefits of redevelopment of a vacant site, as set out in the applicants' submission however it would not be in conformity with land use planning policy objectives. However, its accessibility constraints do not foster social inclusion objectives, disadvantaging those reliant on walking or public transport. The B&Q site is not currently vacant, but if the current use was to cease, as has been stated, then a vacant site would detract from the general amenity of the area, in a very prominent gateway location with heritage assets in the vicinity. The existing building does not make a positive impact in the street scene and its replacement with a building which did this would be welcome. The economic benefits in terms of job creation are detailed below.

- v The Impact on Local Employment

The Hangar 14 site would generate on-site employment for around 350 people and the B&Q site around 220.

Whilst these figures are considered to be a realistic estimate for on-site employment, they do not reflect the actual net increased number of jobs but in any event, the Hangar 14 scheme would create more jobs.

169. Both schemes come with an offer of a local labour agreement. Therefore, should a decision be made to approve either proposal a local labour agreement should form part of a Section 106 Agreement.

170. In overall terms, there are aspects of both proposals which make them unacceptable in their current form, and in these circumstances it is difficult to draw a conclusion that either could be supported in preference to the other. However from the above analysis one could draw the conclusion that the Hangar 14 site performs better in terms of regeneration, design, and employment but worse in terms of sustainability, accessibility and has more impact on existing centres. The B&Q site performs better on sustainability, accessibility and has less quantifiable impact on existing centres; It has also attracted significantly less objection at the planning application stage.

#### Implications of s106 contributions

171. The relative total S106 Contributions offered are £2.15m (£1.4 for mitigation measures) for Hangar 14 and £675,000 (£350,000 for mitigation measures) for



B&Q. It is considered entirely appropriate that the contributions offered are different, reflecting the respective size and impact of each proposal.

172. Whilst the total diversion from Altrincham Town Centre associated with the Hangar 14 proposal is around 28 per cent more than the diversion associated with the Morrisons proposal, the Hangar 14 applicant is also offering a Section 106 contribution that is around 75 per cent more than that offered by the Morrisons applicant.
173. However, it is not possible to quantify the mitigation effects that the respective contributions will have in relation to the impact on Altrincham Town Centre, and for this reason is not possible to determine whether or not the larger contribution offered by PAG will offset the higher diversions associated with its Hangar 14 proposal. In a scenario in which Members wish to permit one of the stores, the choice as to which one to permit will require a comprehensive planning balance appraisal in relation to each of the economic, social and environmental aspects of the national and local sustainability agenda.
174. HV advise that it is also important to record that in a 'one store' scenario, the impacts on Altrincham Town Centre, of whichever store is chosen, would be below the '*significant adverse*' threshold, but that even in these circumstances it is proper that financial contributions are being offered in order to mitigate the impacts, given the current concerns as to the health of the town centre. The priority for spending the contributions offered, from a retail impact perspective, is to improve the linkages between the Tesco and Altair sites, as major generators of footfall, with the town centre. Thus the priority for public realm improvements should be the linkages across Moss Lane, Cross Street and Shaws Road, so as to link the Altair and Tesco sites to the heart of the Primary Shopping Area in George Street and onto the Market Quarter.

## **CONCLUSION**

175. The proposal for an Out-of-Centre supermarket has been assessed against relevant adopted development plan policies and other material considerations, which include the NPPF, Section 106 Contributions offered by the applicant and the acknowledged benefits of the scheme.
176. The above analysis has concluded that the proposal fails to comply with development plan policies in respect of retail, design, heritage and fails to meet the tests for retail development and the impact on heritage assets set out in the NPPF.
177. The site is located in a Retail Warehouse Park and subject to Policy W2.14. This states that development should be limited to sale of bulky goods only. The proposal does not comply with the requirements of that policy.

178. The respective evidence of the various retail consultants advising in respect of this application, the Hangar 14 application and also the Sale Square site has been subject to review by the Councils independent retail consultant. The applicants have submitted various rebuttals to the HV report which has been circulated for consultation and subsequently reviewed. HV remain of the opinion that the proposals fail to meet relevant development plan policies and the tests set out in the NPPF. Specifically, there is no quantitative or qualitative need for a further supermarket in Broadheath; there is a sequentially preferable site at Sale Square and the proposal will have a significant adverse impact on the likely investment in that site.
179. The applicants have produced amended proposals to address the concerns of the LHA in respect of aspects of the site layout; and access and parking arrangements, but have failed to satisfactorily address these concerns in full, and the proposal remains unsatisfactory in that regard.
180. The applicants have similarly produced revised details of the design and elevations of the building to address concerns regarding its appearance on this prominent gateway site, close to a number of heritage assets. Whilst it is acknowledged that these have resulted in an improvement overall, it is considered that these do not go far enough to address those concerns.
181. It is acknowledged that the proposal brings a number of benefits which include job creation; redevelopment of a brownfield site (albeit still in use) and increased choice for shoppers in Broadheath. There is also support for the proposal as set out in the Representations section above. It is also acknowledged that mitigation measures will go some way to addressing the concerns in respect of the acknowledged harm to Altrincham town centre which has been agreed not to be “*significant*”. However, it is concluded that these benefits and mitigation measures are not of sufficient weight to outweigh the harm resulting from these proposals. Accordingly, the recommendation is to REFUSE the application for the Reasons set out below:

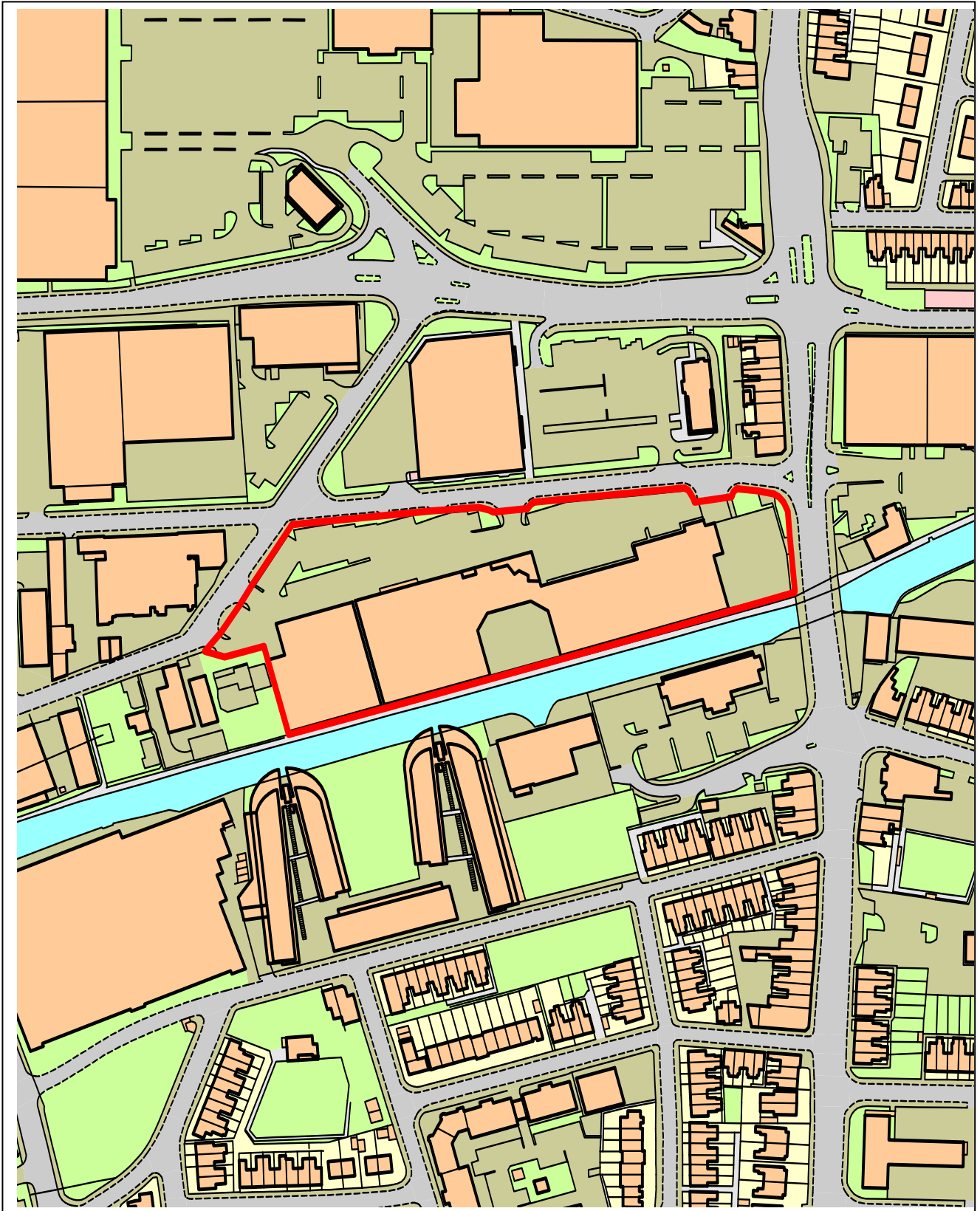
**RECOMMENDATION: REFUSE, for the reasons set out below**

1. The proposal would result in an unsustainable form of development that fails to meet the Sequential Test in NPPF given the emerging opportunity to redevelop The Square Shopping Centre in Sale Town Centre.  
As such the proposal is contrary to the Trafford Core Strategy Policy W2 and NPPF.
2. The proposal fails to meet the Investment Impact Test as set out in NPPF as there is a “*significant adverse*” impact on the planned investment in The Square Shopping Centre in Sale Town Centre.  
As such the proposal is contrary to the Trafford Core Strategy Policy W2 and NPPF.

3. The proposal is sited within an Existing Retail Park where further development should be limited to the sale of bulky comparison goods only in order to protect Trafford's town centres.  
As such the proposal is contrary to the Trafford Core Strategy Policy W2.
4. The proposal fails to provide satisfactory access and parking provision which would result in congestion, inconvenience to road users to the detriment of highway safety and loss of amenity to neighbouring businesses .  
As such, the proposal is contrary to the Trafford Core Strategy Policies L4 and L7 and the Adopted Car and Cycle Parking Standards.
5. The proposal fails to make the best use of opportunities to improve the character and quality of the area, particularly given its prominent location, and will cause harm to the setting of designated heritage assets and the Bridgewater Canal identified as a non-designated asset.  
As such the proposal is contrary to the Trafford Core Strategy Policy L7 and Policy R1, and NPPF.

IN THE EVENT OF MEMBERS BEING MINDED TO APPROVE APPLICATION 79984/FULL/2013 FOR HANGER 14, THE FOLLOWING REASONS SHOULD BE ADDED TO THIS DECISION:

- A) The proposal fails to meet the Impact Test on Town Centre Vitality and Viability of Altrincham Town Centre, Timperley District Centre and Sinderland Road Local Centre.  
The proposal is contrary to Adopted Core Strategy Policy W2.12 and the NPPF Para 26.
- B) The applicant has failed to assess the effect on the local highway network resulting from the cumulative impact of the proposal together with the development at Hangar 14, Lyon Industrial Estate (79984/FULL/2013).  
The proposal is contrary to the Trafford Core Strategy Policy L4.



**LOCATION PLAN FOR APPLICATION No: - 80577/FULL/2013**

Scale 1:2500 for identification purposes only.

Acting Chief Planning Officer

PO Box 96, Waterside House, Sale Waterside, Tatton Road, Sale M33 7ZF

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