DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2019/0327 **Valid 31/05/2019**	**UNIT 1 MOORLANDS SHOPPING CENTRE BROOK STREET LEEK**	**FORM NEW OPENING TO FRONT ELEVATION AND INSTALL SECTION OF SHOPFRONT, EXISTING SHOPFRONTS TO BE RECOLOURED** **(FULL - MINOR)**

MAIN ISSUES

- The impact on the character and appearance of the town centre

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site forms part of a large modern red-brick retail building on the southern edge of the town centre which currently contains a large "Wilko" and Peacocks below it. There is a car park on top of the building. The unit is next to Peacocks and is currently vacant but was a former "Argos" store. The building is on the corner of Brook Street/A53 to the south and Pickwood Road to the east and the unit shopfront faces this road.

PROPOSAL

This is a full planning application for alterations to the shop-front in preparation for the opening of a branch of "Iceland". The alterations include the glazing of the end wall panel which would result in the overall shopfront being widened. There are currently five panels separated by white block columns, the middle three of which currently contain glazing with panels above with the middle one of the three forming the store entrance. A fourth panel would be glazed and the design would replicate the other three shop-fronts. The entrance will not change position. The glazing bars and upper panels of the existing and proposed shop-fronts will change to a dark grey colour.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES
Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Adopted 2014)

S01 Spatial Objectives
SS1 Development Principles
SS1a Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
SS5a Leek Strategy
TCR1 – Development in the Town Centres
DC1 Design Considerations

National Planning Policy Framework (February 2019)

Sections 5 (Town Centres) and 12 (Design)

Emerging Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan

National Policy Guidance

Paragraph 48 of the newly adopted NPPF states that:

> *"…decision-takers may also give weight to relevant policies in emerging plans according to:*
> - *the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced the preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);*
> - *the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and*
> - *the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to the policies in this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).*

Local Plan process

The Council agreed to publish the Local Plan Submission Version for representations in February 2018. At this point, the Council agreed that the Local Plan was "sound". Formal representations were then invited from residents, businesses and other stakeholders to provide them with the opportunity to support or challenge the soundness or legal compliance of the Local Plan. This stage in the process followed three previous public consultations since 2015 which had informed the preparation of the Local Plan alongside a comprehensive evidence base.

In June 2018, the Council subsequently agreed to submit the Local Plan Submission Version to the Secretary of State for examination. An examination in public is ongoing in order to determine whether the Local Plan is sound and legally compliant. Hearing sessions were conducted in October 2018 and the Inspector issued his initial post-hearing advice in January 2019 which set out some actions for the Council and a range of modifications that would be necessary to make the plan sound. The full schedule of modifications is to be determined and will be subject to consultation in due course. The Inspector will then be in position to write his final report. Subject to the findings of the appointed Inspector, the Local Plan can then be adopted by the Council. This will be towards the end of 2019 at the earliest. Upon adoption, the Local Plan will supersede the adopted Core Strategy and become part of the statutory development plan for the District.

In this context, the Council's position on the weight to be given to the policies contained in the Local Plan Submission Version in terms of the three criteria set out in Paragraph 48 of the NPPF is as follows:

- The stage of preparation – the Local Plan is now at an advanced stage of preparation as the Council has submitted it to the SoS for examination

- The extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies – this varies depending on the policy in question. The Officer Comments section of this report identifies the level of outstanding objections to each policy and recommends the amount of weight to be given to them at this stage in the process
- The degree of consistency of policies with the NPPF – given that the Council has submitted a Local Plan that it considers to be sound, all policies are deemed to be consistent with the NPPF.

Emerging Policies

The following policies are considered to be relevant to this application:

SS5 Leek Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
TCR1 – Development in the Town Centres

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

There are two other concurrent applications for the proposed Iceland store which include a full planning application for plant and machinery on the roof-top car park directly above the unit (SMD/2019/0326) and an advertisement consent application for Iceland signage (SMD/2019/0325), both of which are undetermined. Before these applications, there have been no recent applications.

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: 25.7.19
Neighbour consultation period ends: 25.7.19
Press Advert: N/A

Public Comments

None.

Town / Parish Comments

No objection.

OFFICER COMMENTS

The shop-front would be widened but this would not be out of keeping in a part of the town centre where other large shop-front exist. It does not form part of the main shopping streets in the town centre and is part of a large modern functional retail building that does not contribute to the appearance of the more historic shopping areas of the town centre, sitting in an area to the rear of Derby Street. The new glazing makes good use of a rendered panel and would replicate the design of the

existing shop-front. The appearance of the front of the building would change insofar as the colour of the shopfront would radically change from white to contrasting dark grey which would increase the prominence of the unit but would not harm the overall appearance of the large modern building or the overall character and appearance of this part of the town centre.

Conclusion

The proposal would not harm the character and appearance of the area, indeed it would improve its appearance in the street scene and would comply with both the Council's Core Strategy policies and the government planning guidance contained in the NPPF.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE

Case Officer: Chris Johnston
Recommendation Date: 26.7.19

X

Signed by: JaneC

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council