

The Bishop Centre Taplow

LS Taplow Ltd

Planning Support Statement – Executive Summary



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document is an Executive Summary of the documents that form part of the planning application to redevelop the Bishop Centre, Taplow. The planning application is made by LS Taplow Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Land Securities. Land Securities is a FTSE 100 company and the largest Real Estate Investment Trust in the UK owning over 20 million sq ft of retail floorspace and 10 million sq ft of commercial floorspace, including 25 shopping centres and 20 retail parks.

1.2 Given the number of documents in the application submission, this Executive Summary is intended to assist the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and all interested parties in understanding the case for planning permission and why the application should be approved.

1.3 The remainder of this Summary is structured as follows:

Section 2.0: The Application Site

Section 3.0: The Proposed Development

Section 4.0: National Planning Framework

Section 5.0: Planning Matters to Consider

Section 6.0: Summary of the Case for Planning Permission

2 THE APPLICATION SITE

- 2.1** The application site (measuring 3.44 hectares) is the Bishop Centre, off the Bath Road, Taplow.
- 2.2** The Bishop Centre is the generic title for the land previously owned and developed (**Appendix 2** of Volume 1 of the Planning Statement) by the Bishop family, which is contained within the distinct boundaries of the railway line and the three roads being the A4, Hitcham Road, and Station Road. The various elements of the Bishop Centre comprise Bishop House, Bishops Gate, and the Shopping Village. The Bishop Centre land also includes the former PFS site and so the four parcels of land together comprise the Bishop Centre. Further details of each parcel are set out below and identified on the plan attached at **Appendix 3** of Volume 1 of the Planning Statement.
- 2.3** The principal land use of the application site is retail (Class A1). The Shopping Village comprises 8,849 sq. m (GIA) of retail floorspace (configured within 36 units) and surface level car park providing 397 car parking spaces.
- 2.4** The commercial and other employment floorspace of the Bishop Centre is principally made up from Bishop House and Bishops Gate. Bishop House comprises some retail floorspace at ground floor level, which in turn are units 31 and 32 of the Shopping Village. The remainder of the floorspace at Bishop House is offices, over three storeys. The total office floorspace at Bishop House is 760 sq. m (GIA).
- 2.5** Bishops Gate comprises offices and light industrial uses. The industrial floorspace is occupied by Fix and Auto Ltd, Clearway CJS Ltd, and Philip Humphries Car Repair; the offices are occupied by Creative Computing Solutions and Surefoot Communications Ltd. Bishops Gate provides 375 sq. m (GIA) of office floorspace and 389 sq. m of industrial floorspace. 526 sq. m (GIA) the offices at the Bishop Centre are currently vacant, representing 35% of the total office floorspace.
- 2.6** All uses within the Bishop Centre including the police station and other buildings are shown on the Plan included at **Appendix 3** of Volume 1 of the Planning Statement.
- 2.7** The Bishop Centre's piecemeal development basis is reflected in the extensive and complicated planning history for the site. South Bucks District Council (SBDC) was only established in the 1970's and accordingly its planning records are relatively limited in respect of this historic site. As such, the details required for a comprehensive planning history are unavailable. In essence however, The Bishop Centre in its current

form has been developed incrementally from a series of separate planning permissions.

2.8 The various uses and elements of the Bishop Centre are separated from each other by informal boundaries, principally made of wooden fences and gates. Vehicular access to the different parts of the site is from the A4, Hitcham Road, and Station Road. These are all identified on the Plan included at **Appendix 3** of Volume 1 of the Planning Statement.

2.9 A full schedule of the existing floorspace at the site is included at **Appendix 4** of Volume 1 of the Planning Statement.

3 THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

The Proposal

3.1 The application seeks permission for demolition of all buildings at the Bishop Centre and the development of commercial floorspace for use in Classes A1/A3/A5. The total amount of retail floorspace will be 12,182 sq. m (GIA) comprised as follows:

- A foodstore measuring 5,075 sq. m (GIA);
- Non-food units measuring 7,107 sq. m (GIA) configured as:
 - 4,320 sq. m at ground floor; and
 - 2,787 sq. m at mezzanine level.

3.2 The development will also include a series of associated works which include the creation of a new vehicular access from Bath Road; new car parking provision for 449 vehicles; a new service only access and service yard with access only from Hitcham Road and an exit only from Station Road; a comprehensive scheme of hard and soft landscaping and public art installations.

3.3 A full description of the proposed development is included in Volume 1 of the Planning Statement prepared by Savills, with more technical detail set out in the Design & Access Statement prepared by 3D Reid.

Rationale for the Proposed Development

3.4 All retail, commercial and industrial buildings at the application site are no longer fit for purpose. The existing offices do not meet modern needs and due to their physical characteristics are not suitable for adaptation (e.g. the buildings do not comply with the requirements of the Equality Act (2010) and Disability Discrimination Act (1995)). A detailed appraisal of their suitability to continue to provide for market needs concludes that they cannot continue to do so. The detailed appraisal is contained in Volume 2 of the Planning Statement, and the Deriaz Slater Report at **Appendix 3** of Volume 2.

3.5 The retail floorspace is well beyond its suitability to meet modern shopping needs. It is widely agreed and specifically supported by SBDC that the shopping floorspace is out-dated and is showing signs of age. Therefore redevelopment is required of all buildings. A comprehensive scheme is the only viable way to secure a high quality

redevelopment of the Bishop Centre. Any refurbishment of the existing premises would only be a short term solution and would not provide a basis for the long term use of the site in accordance with the Strategic Vision and CP11 of the SBCS. A comprehensive scheme to include as much land as is possible in the Bishop Centre creates opportunities for a sustainable use of resources in a way not possible by incremental redevelopment and refurbishment.

3.6 A comprehensive scheme accords with the objectives of promoting economic investment and growth and will provide an opportunity to re-establish an appropriate anchor tenant to help support the retail function of the wider site. The proposed scheme of works will also significantly improve all aspects of the site including:

- The appearance and configuration of the floorspace at the site;
- Introducing measures to reduce the environmental impact of building by using renewable energy technologies and design solutions which reduce energy consumption by improving efficiency relating to heating, lighting, cooling, and waste disposal;
- Enhanced accessibility (both within the site and in terms of the local highway network);
- Improving the quality and quantum of landscaping and habitats; and
- Introducing high quality materials and design into all elements of the site including public art.

3.7 The proposed new floorspace will be used almost exclusively for use within Class A1. All of the floorspace will have benefit for use within Class A1, however 418 sq. m is sought to be used flexibly within Use Classes A1/A3/A5. The existing office and industrial floorspace is not being re-provided. Existing occupiers are being assisted by Land Securities to relocate into new premises in more appropriate locations (e.g. Burnham High Street). Taken as a whole, the effect of the proposal is to provide new retail floorspace to meet market needs, and to make use of existing vacant employment floorspace elsewhere in the locality for use by existing businesses.

3.8 Although the proposal is for retail uses, the new retail units will be supported by administrative and managerial functions, generating employment opportunities in these business areas. The total new additional employment opportunities will be in conventional retail jobs, as well as the office support functions.

The Retail Floorspace

3.9 The total existing and proposed areas of commercial floorspace are set out in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Existing and Proposed Retail Floorspace

	GIA (sq. m)	Net Sales (sq. m)
Existing Retail Units	8,849	8,073
Existing Total	8,849	8,073
Proposed Foodstore	5,075	3,631
Proposed Non Food Units	7,107	5,686
Proposed Total	12,182	9,317
Net Additional	3,333	1,244

3.10 The total amount of existing retail floorspace at the Bishop Centre is 8,849 sq. m (GIA). This figure is derived from an independent survey¹ and has been agreed by SBDC in advance of the submission (see correspondence dated 23 March 2011 and 24 March 2011 at **Appendix 5** of Volume 1 of the Planning Statement). It is important to note that the planning permissions pursuant to which the existing floorspace has been created do not restrict or limit the net retail sales area within the existing buildings.

3.11 As part of this submission, we have estimated the existing net sales area of the retail floorspace at the Bishop Centre to be 8,073 sq. m. This figure has been calculated by assuming the net sales area of the large units (occupied by national multiple retailers) as 80% of the GIA and the smaller units as 95% (see Volume 3 of the Planning Statement). These industry standard ratios reflect the current layout of the units at the application site and are considered to be robust.

3.12 The proposed development includes a total of 12,182 sq. m of commercial floorspace, an increase on the existing total by 3,333 sq. m. The net sales area of the proposed development will be 9,317 sq. m, an increase of just 1,244 sq. m. The retail composition of the net sales floorspace will be as follows:

- Up to 6,530 sq. m to be used for comparison goods; and
- Up to 2,787 sq. m to be used for convenience goods.

¹ Undertaken by Plowman and Craven.

3.13 Table 3.2 contains the floorspace that is currently available for use in either of the principal retail classes (convenience and comparison goods).

Table 3.2: Floorspace Comparison

		Total Sq m
Total Retail (GIA)	Existing	8,849
	Proposed	12,182
	Difference	3,333
Convenience (Net Sales)	Existing	2,787
	Proposed	2,787
	Difference	0
Comparison (Net Sales)	Existing	8,073
	Proposed	6,530
	Difference	-1,543

3.14 As set out above, the existing retail floorspace at the Bishop Centre measures 8,849 sq. m (GIA) and can be used for the sale of all comparison goods. The net sales of the proposed comparison goods floorspace will be 6,530 sq. m, resulting in a net reduction of 1,543 sq. m.

3.15 The proposed development will also utilise the existing provision for convenience floorspace that exists at the application site. In 2009, the Council granted provision for up to 2,787 sq. m of floorspace to be used for the sale of convenience goods² to meet an identified consumer need. The application process associated with the Deed of Variation demonstrated a need and demand for convenience floorspace, in addition to rather than instead of the existing comparison goods floorspace.

3.16 Understanding the specific details of the existing and proposed floorspace is critical to accurately assess the 'retail' impact of the proposed development. The proposed development will not result in more comparison or convenience goods floorspace than that which already exists or is permitted at the application site. As set out above, conversely, the proposal will result in a net reduction in the total comparison goods floorspace at the site of 1,543 sq. m (net sales).

² Deed of Variation, dated 29 October 2009.

4 POLICY FRAMEWORK

- 4.1** The current policy framework is that planning applications should be decided in accordance with a development plan, where that plan is up-to-date. In this case, the relevant development plan is the South Bucks Core Strategy (SBCS), which was adopted on 22 February 2011. Therefore, and with regard to the current wider national policy framework, the Core Strategy is up-to-date.
- 4.2** The proposal fully accords with the Core Strategy. It complies entirely with the Strategic Vision and the principal policy: CP11. It is also in accordance with the objectives of other key policies, including CP10 (employment). There is no material conflict with the Core Strategy when read as a whole.
- 4.3** The wider national policy framework is being reviewed, and there is a strong likelihood that significant parts of it will be replaced by a new framework document. In the event that the current Draft National Planning Policy Framework (DNPPF) is published as a final policy document, and becomes national policy, the Core Strategy will need to be read in the light of the then newly published national framework. However, it remains the case that as at this point in time, the Core Strategy is up-to-date, and so the extent to which the proposal accords with the Core Strategy carries significant weight.
- 4.4** The content of the likely final version of the DNPPF is widely anticipated to reflect the existing draft. This is because the draft version arises from Treasury policy set out in the Treasury document, The Plan for Growth, and forms part of a wider nexus of policy initiatives designed to stimulate private sector investment, job creation and development. In that context, the proposal accords with the direction of travel of emerging national policy, in that it promotes investment, creates jobs and accords with the objectives of securing sustainable forms of development.
- 4.5** The Government has made it clear that its top priority in reforming the planning system is to deliver sustainable economic growth and jobs. To achieve this, the Government's expectation is that development proposals that promote economic growth and create jobs will be supported. As set out in the letter from the Chief Planner³, the default answer to the question as to whether development should be permitted is "yes". To support this, the Government proposes that the planning decision-making process is underpinned by a new strong presumption in favour of sustainable development.

³ Letter from Steve Quartermain, Chief Planner, dated 31 March 2011

- 4.6** The Government perceives that the new presumption applies now, and that the planning system should adopt the new approach so that the UK economy moves radically from a planning system that appears to frustrate development, to one that embraces development.
- 4.7** It is for the decision maker to decide the weight to be attached to the Government's intentions, and to balance the need to support economic development with the role of planning to protect interests of acknowledged importance. The relevant interest in this case are the preference for retail uses to be located in town centres and maintaining local economic prosperity.
- 4.8** In striking the correct balance, significant regard must be given to the obvious economic benefits that flow from the proposal, and the extent to which those benefits accord with the Plan for Growth. Those benefits carry significant weight⁴.
- 4.9** As set out above, the redevelopment of the Bishop Centre accords with both the Strategic Vision and CP11 (subject to analysis need, impact, and sequential approach) of the SBCS. As such the proposal does not conflict with the preference for new retail uses to be located within town centres.
- 4.10** The proposal also helps maintain local economic prosperity by creating new jobs in a wide range of business areas. The loss of existing floorspace accords with the limited circumstances anticipated in CP10 and so there is no conflict with the Core Strategy in this respect. Therefore the proposal does not harm either of the relevant interests of acknowledged importance.
- 4.11** It follows that the weight to be given to the proposal to support the Plan for Growth aligns itself with both the local policy framework, PPS4⁵ and the emerging DNPPF. On balance, the proposal benefits from the presumption in accordance with the development plan, as well as from the emerging strong presumption in favour of creating sustainable economic development.

⁴ See Ministerial Statements on 'Planning for Growth' and 'A Presumption in Favour of Development'.

⁵ See Policy EC10.1.

5 PLANNING MATTERS TO CONSIDER

- 5.1** The planning matters to consider are set out in detail in the separate Volumes of the Planning Statement. The considerations fall into two conventional categories: policy and material considerations.
- 5.2** Material considerations include recent Ministerial Statements and the emerging DNPPF which encourages economic growth, creating employment opportunities and supporting development that leads to prosperity. Detailed comment on the Ministerial Statements is set out in Section 4.0 of Volume 1 of the Planning Statement. It is important to have regard to the Statements that requires Local Planning Authorities to support planning applications for economic growth, and to give weight to the comment that the default position is that such proposals should be granted planning permission unless there is material harm to interests of acknowledged importance.
- 5.3** Therefore, the approach to adopt in deciding planning applications for economic development is to assess whether it accords with policy, and if so, to grant planning permission. If the proposal does not accord with policy, the approach is to identify the harm that is caused by such conflict, and to weigh in the balance the harm to policy and therefore the harm caused to interests of acknowledged importance, against the economic benefits that would be created by the proposal.
- 5.4** The proposal accords with the SBCS and complies with relevant national policy in PPS 4 as well as being in accordance with the expectations of the emerging National Planning Policy Framework. The policy considerations are set out at Section 4.0 of Volume 1 of the Planning Statement. A comprehensive review of all the relevant planning policies in the various different planning documents is included at **Appendix 7** of Volume 1 of the Planning Statement.
- 5.5** Given the application site and the nature of the proposed development, the principal planning considerations are:
- 1 Employment.** The relevant consideration is whether the proposal accords with the employment strategy for South Bucks which is to maintain local economic prosperity and to meet local employment needs through the more efficient use of employment land in town centres and on established employment sites. The relevant question with regard to this issue is whether the loss of the existing employment floorspace accords with the requirements

of CP10 to retain sites in employment use other than in limited circumstances.

- 2 Retail.** The relevant consideration is whether the proposal accords with the spatial strategy for new retail floorspace within the District and if there will be any unacceptable impacts on any defined retail centres (with particular reference to Burnham⁶).
- 3 Sustainability.** The relevant consideration is whether the proposal accords with the requirements to ensure that development is sustainable, and meets wider objectives to reduce the impact of development on the environment. This includes the requirement to limit CO₂ emissions and increase the use of renewable energy.
- 4 Landscaping and Green Belt.** The relevant consideration is whether the proposal will adversely impact on the setting of the green belt and whether the landscaping proposals accord with the policy objectives relating to design and habitat creation.
- 5 Design.** The relevant consideration is whether the design of the new buildings accords with the policy requirement for the inclusion of high quality design and materials in all new developments.
- 6 Transport and Accessibility.** The relevant consideration is whether the proposal would have an adverse impact on the safe and convenient use of the site and the wider local highway network. The accessibility issues are closely related to sustainability concerns and address whether the site is or could be accessible by modes of transport other than the car.
- 7 Residential Amenity.** The relevant consideration is whether the proposed development would have an adverse impact on the living conditions of residents in the nearby residential areas.

5.6 The effect on the proposed development on all relevant policy considerations is described in detail within the separate Volumes of the Planning Statements and other technical statements. The main conclusions in respect of the key policy issues are summarised below.

⁶ See the Strategic Vision and CP11.

1 Employment

- 5.7** A detailed review of the employment considerations in relation to the proposed development is set out in Volume 2 of the Planning Statement and outlined below.
- 5.8** The proposed redevelopment will result in a net increase in the overall employment positions, including high skill level or positions of seniority, at the application site. It is estimated that the proposed development will generate 87 - 117 direct / on-site **net additional** Full Time Equivalent (FTE) employment positions (See Tables 3.3 and 3.4 of Volume 2 of the Planning Statement). In addition to the direct / on-site positions, the development will support 47-65 **net additional** FTE employment positions in the local and regional level through economic multiplier effects. In total, the proposed development will create between 134 and 182 **net additional** FTE employment positions (see Tables 3.3 and 3.4 of Volume 2 of the Planning Statement). The employment generation of the proposed development is based on information provide by Tesco for the foodstore and guidance from English Partnerships⁷ in relation to the new non food units.
- 5.9** The proposed foodstore alone will create approximately 24 skilled or managerial positions, which compares favourably to the 32 FTE positions supported by the existing office/industrial floorspace (Class B) at the site.
- 5.10** Furthermore, the retail floorspace will create a number of jobs with low barriers to entry and flexible working hours (e.g. shift or weekend only positions) which will help to meet the demand for employment for all sections of the community. This is particularly important in the locality of the application site given the Burnham Lark Rise Ward (directly adjacent the site) suffers from an unemployment rate of 3.6% (0.6% above the average for the South Bucks District).
- 5.11** In light of the above, the proposed development accords with the requirement to maintain local economic prosperity despite not including any Class B floorspace.
- 5.12** The loss of the existing employment floorspace accords with the 'limited circumstances' set out in CP10 to the general presumption that employment sites will be retained in employment use. The support for the redevelopment of the Bishop Centre in the Core Strategy (CP11) creates a unique circumstance (there are no other employment sites allocated for retail land uses in the SBCS) and is therefore one of those anticipated by CP10 that allows for the loss of existing employment floorspace. Despite the difficulty in marketing the existing B Class employment

⁷ English Partnerships Employments Density Guide 2010 and Additionality Guide Third Edition (October 2008)

floorspace in light of the support for the redevelopment of the site, the applicant has undertaken extensive marketing of the vacant floorspace. As set out in Section 3 of Volume 2 of the Planning Statement, interest in the premises has been limited even at concessionary levels. 36% of the employment floorspace remains vacant.

5.13 Where there is a requirement by existing businesses for them to continue, Land Securities is helping to relocate those businesses into appropriate, alternative locations. This accords with the objectives of the Spatial Strategy to promote employment uses in the Principal Settlements and so remains in accordance with the SBCS. Additionally the loss of employment land must be considered in light of the comment in the Core Strategy that there is an imbalance in the relationship between the number of local job opportunities and the size of the resident workforce.

5.14 Although the Bishop Centre contains employment land, the site is not an appropriate location for development of new employment uses as it is not part of a defined centre nor does it benefit from business support infrastructure. Re-providing employment land would not accord with the spatial strategy as set out in the SBCS and is not considered to be a viable option in light of the existing vacant supply in the wider local area (estimated to meet up to 12 years in advance). The SBCS states:

‘With a few notable exceptions, the office accommodation available in South Bucks is unable to compete directly with the prime floorspace available in the nearby larger employment centres.’

2 Retail

5.15 A detailed review of the retail considerations in relation to the proposed development is set out in Volume 3 of the Planning Statement and outlined below.

5.16 The starting point to assess the merits of the planning application is CP11 of the Core Strategy. Detailed commentary on the Policy is set out in Volume 3 of the Planning Statement, but CP11 states that redevelopment of the Bishop Centre will be supported. The support for the redevelopment of the Bishop Centre is also included within the Strategic Vision and it follows that the proposal accords with the spatial and land use framework for the District set out in the development plan.

5.17 The Strategic Vision and CP11 explicitly state that any redevelopment must not have an adverse impact on Burnham. Accordingly, as part of this application, a formal assessment of the proposed development has been undertaken in accordance with the main retail policy tests contained within local and national planning policy. The assessment concludes that:

- 1 The proposal accords with the sequential approach to site selection; and
- 2 The proposal will not result in any ‘significant’ adverse impacts.

Sequential Approach

- 5.18** A sequential approach to site selection is required for all retail proposals that are not in an existing centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan. As the proposed redevelopment of the Bishop Centre is a specific policy objective of the Core Strategy, an up-to-date local plan document, a formal sequential assessment is not required in this instance. The redevelopment of this site is the only site that can meet the policy objective.
- 5.19** The overt support for the retention and improvement of the Bishop Centre in the Core Strategy is a clear indication that the LPA supports the retail function of the application site. The retail use of the site therefore accords with the spatial framework for South Bucks and therefore the sequential approach.
- 5.20** Irrespective of the policy position, we have undertaken an assessment of alternative sites to ensure this assessment is robust. The assessment has demonstrated that there are no sites in or on the edge of any defined centres within South Bucks or neighbouring authority areas (i.e. Slough and Maidenhead) which are suitable and viable to accommodate all or part of the proposed development. There are no alternative sites that can meet the same consumer need and operator demand and perform the same function as the floorspace proposed at the application site.
- 5.21** As the proposed redevelopment of the Bishop Centre is supported by the Core Strategy the proposal accords with the spatial framework for development within South Bucks. It follows the application site is considered to be a sustainable location and therefore entirely appropriate for the proposed development.

Impact

- 5.22** As set out above, although the Core Strategy supports the redevelopment of the Bishop Centre, it states that any redevelopment proposal must not have an adverse impact on defined centres, and in particular Burnham. CP11 also confirms that as part of a redevelopment proposal, the floorspace of the site can be increased (by 600 sq. m by 2016).

- 5.23** PPS4 is explicit in that when considering the impact of a proposal, the test is whether the development will result in a 'significant adverse impact' and CP11 should be considered in this regard.
- 5.24** Due to the configuration and format of the proposed floorspace (large format units) and the nature of the retail uses at the site (a food superstore and higher order comparison goods), the development will not compete directly with Burnham. Given the nature of the land uses within Burnham (mainly 'top-up' shopping and services) the proposed development will perform a qualitatively different retail function. The two locations will therefore complement each other ensuring South Bucks has a holistic range of retail facilities to meet the different needs of the resident population and reducing the requirement to travel outside the District.
- 5.25** The current configuration of the Bishop Centre, which includes 16 units of less than 100 sq. m (GEA), competes directly with the retail accommodation in Burnham and other District and Local centres within South Bucks and neighbouring authorities. By reconfiguring the floorspace at the site to create larger floorplates which focus on higher order comparison goods, the role of the Centre will change and any impact will be redirected towards other out of centre facilities (e.g. Bath Road and Slough Retail Parks) or larger defined centres which are more resilient to competition. The SBCS acknowledges at 3.4.16 that the existing defined centres within the District only cater for 'day to day' needs and therefore there will be no impact on these centres.
- 5.26** As set out at Table 3.1 above, the proposed development will have a sales area of 9,317 sq. m, which is 1,244 sq. m above the existing net sales area. However, it is important to fully analyse the composition of the proposed floorspace, particularly in the context of what is existing and permitted at the application site. The proposed development will make use of the extant provision for up to 2,787 sq. m of convenience goods floorspace⁸ and as a result, the level of comparison goods floorspace at the site will be reduced by 1,543 sq. m (see Table 3.2).
- 5.27** CP11 anticipates an increase in the amount of convenience and comparison floorspace at the Bishop Centre in the period 2007-2016, and 2016-2026. The application proposes the same amount of convenience sales as that permitted in the Deed of Variation and so does not breach the expectations of policy with regard to convenience floorspace. With regard to comparison floorspace the proposal will decrease the net sales area used for the sale of comparison goods by 1,543 sq. m and therefore, it does not breach the indicative floorspace requirements at the site as set out in CP11 in the period 2007-2016.

⁸ Permitted as part of a Deed of Review, dated 29 October 2009.

5.28 In summary, the amount of floorspace proposed by the application accord with the indicative requirements contained within Table 8 of CP11.

5.29 A comprehensive assessment of the economic impact of the proposed development is included Volume 3 of the Planning Statement. Table 5.1 provides a summary of the anticipated impact of the proposal on the key retail centres.

Table 5.1: Impact on Key Centres

Centre	Estimated Turnover at 2016 (£m)	Trade Diversion (% of Proposal)	Trade Diversion (£m)	Impact on Centre (%)
Burnham	5.85	0.5%	0.17	2.9%
Maidenhead	111.04	12.0%	4.06	3.7%
Slough	222.28	17.5%	5.93	2.7%

5.30 Table 5.1 demonstrates that the proposed development will not have a significant adverse economic impact on Burnham or any of the other key centres listed in CP11.

5.31 Although we have assessed the total turnover of the proposed development, it is important to acknowledge the impact of the existing development. The existing floorspace already has an economic impact on other centres (the turnover is estimated to be £19.89m 2016) and this would increase (£27.80m at 2016) if the Bishop Centre was pro-actively marketed⁹ (see Volume 3 of the Planning Statement). As set out above, due to the nature of the floorspace and type of operations, although the turnover of the Bishop Centre in its current form is less than that of the proposed scheme, much of this trade will be drawn from smaller centres (such as Burnham). It follows that the assessment of the economic impact of the proposed development is a 'worst case scenario'.

5.32 The issue here is that local policy encourages the Bishop Centre to be redeveloped, and improved upon by increased amounts of new floorspace. It follows that redevelopment will have an impact on the existing nearby and surrounding centres, and so an appraisal of the impact of the proposal in this case has to have regard to both the existing impact and the impact arising from redevelopment.

5.33 The proposed redevelopment of the site and the reconfiguration of the floorspace will have a number of positive impacts on existing defined centres. By creating larger format units, the proposal will ensure the Bishop Centre accords with established

⁹ Land Securities has not refurbished the floorspace or sought to market the floorspace formally due to the redevelopment proposals.

principle within national policy of allowing out of centre retail destinations (i.e. to accommodate business models that cannot trade effectively from in centre locations). Furthermore, by providing a facility for higher order goods within the District, the proposal will improve choice in South Bucks and reduce the level of leakage (in terms of shoppers and expenditure).

5.34 In addition, the applicant is working closely with the existing operators of the floorspace to secure their relocation to defined centres. A key example of this relocation program is Jean-Marc Hall Picture Framing, which has now reopened on the High Street in Burnham, and Innovations Hair Design, which has relocated to Windsor with the assistance of the applicant. Further discussions are ongoing with existing operators in respect of their relocation to defined centres.

5.35 We conclude that the proposal will not result in a ‘significant adverse impact’ on the overall vitality and viability on any centre. The redevelopment of the site is supported in the Core Strategy which is a clear indication that the physical and economic regeneration of the site will have a series of positive impacts. These positive retail and economic impacts form part of a wider balanced assessment under Policy EC17.2 of PPS4.

3 Sustainability

5.36 A detailed review of the sustainability considerations in relation to the proposed development is contained in Section 2 of Volume 4 of the Planning Statement and within the Sustainability and Renewable Energy Statement, produced by the MG Partnership. As the proposed foodstore will account for 42% of the floorspace at the site a specific Environmental Sustainability Statement, produced by Scott Wilson, has been prepared in support of the application. An overview of the principal sustainability considerations is set out below.

5.37 National policy in respect of sustainable development is current set out in PPS1 and the supporting Practice Guide. The ethos of sustainable development contained within PPS1 (and in PPS4 in respect of main town centre uses) is strengthened in Draft National Planning Policy Framework. The Draft National Planning Policy Framework makes it clear that securing sustainable economic development is the key objective for the planning system.

- 5.38** The aims and objectives of the relevant local and national planning policies are set out in **Appendix 7** of Volume 1 of the Planning Statement and formally assessed in detail in the Sustainability Statements.
- 5.39** As the Sustainability Statements conclude, the proposed development accords with the overall objective to secure sustainable development.
- 5.40** As set out above, the established nature of the Bishop Centre and the support for its redevelopment in CP11 confirms its suitability for retail land uses within the spatial framework of the Core Strategy. The Local Planning Authority supports the Bishop Centre as being an appropriate location for retail land uses and in coming to this conclusion, considered it sustainable.
- 5.41** Both local and national planning policies set out the need for new development to reduce the need to travel, reduce energy consumption and increase the use of renewable energy. In that regard, the proposal accords with the development plan and material considerations.
- 5.42** The proposed development will help reduce the need to travel in association with retail land uses by helping to meet requirements locally. The proposed foodstore will meet the requirements of local residents (reducing the need to travel to Slough and Maidenhead) and the comparison floorspace will help to reduce the requirement for people to travel for higher order goods to centres such as Reading and High Wycombe. An assessment of travel patterns is included in the Transport Assessment, prepared by Colin Buchanan.
- 5.43** The proposed development will also have a series of positive impacts in respect of energy consumption. The energy efficiency of the proposed floorspace will be significantly better than the existing reducing energy consumption and limiting carbon dioxide emissions. The proposal will also include the installation of Photovoltaic cells to generate power from renewable sources and the foodstore will include a CHP unit (a low carbon source). Accordingly the development will as a minimum meet the 10% requirement for renewable and low carbon sources as set out in CP12 of the SBCS.
- 5.44** The proposed development is being designed to meet BREEAM standard 'Very Good'.

4 Landscaping and Green Belt

- 5.45** A detailed description of the proposed landscaping works are included in Section 5 Volume 4 of the Planning Statement and in the Landscape Design Statement,

prepared by Gillespies. An overview of the principal landscaping considerations is set out below.

- 5.46** The proposed development includes a comprehensive scheme of landscaping to replace the existing provision on Bath Road as well as extensive new provision on Hitcham Road, to provide further screening to residential properties.
- 5.47** Although the existing landscaping provision fronting Bath Road is established, it is considered to be of low quality. The proposed scheme incorporates appropriate native species which will link more consistently with the wider area and adjacent green belt land. The scheme of planting will also be deeper and create more potential for natural habitats for flora and fauna.
- 5.48** The proposed scheme will also include a Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDS) which is a water management facility that will drain surface water in a manner that will provide a more sustainable approach than what has been the conventional practice of routing run-off through a pipe to a watercourse.
- 5.49** The landscaping will incorporate mature species to ensure that the landscaping buffer that currently exists will be reinstated at the same level to ensure the visual and acoustic screening is maintained at all times.
- 5.50** The replacement landscaping will ensure that the proposed floorspace at the application site does not have an adverse visual impact on the adjacent green belt in accordance with GB1 of the South Bucks Local Plan. Further more, the proposed scheme will enhance the appearance of the site as well as improving the habitats for flora and fauna and contributing to the objectives of creating sustainable development.

5 Design

- 5.51** A detailed review of the scheme's design is contained within Section 3 of Volume 4 of the Planning Statement and in the Design and Access statement, prepared by 3D Reid architects. A review of the principal design elements of the scheme is set out below.
- 5.52** The proposal has been designed to accord with local and national planning policies which seek to secure high quality design in all new development. The design of the proposed buildings will bring the floorspace at the site up to date and will significantly improve the overall appearance of the wider site and shopping environment. The

design theme for the Park uses high quality natural materials to ensure it merges with the hard and soft landscaping scheme.

5.53 As set out above, the development has been designed to accord with the objectives of sustainability, in particular orientating the buildings to maximise potential for harvesting solar power. The proposed development will also incorporate public art installations, which will be agreed with the Local Planning Authority at a later stage. The applicant has proposed a public art theme and it is anticipated that local schools will be included in the design and public art installations.

5.54 The proposed redevelopment will significantly enhance the appearance of the site and accords with Policies EP3, EP4, and EP6 of the South Bucks Local Plan and CP11 and CP12 of the Core Strategy.

6 Transport and Accessibility

5.55 A detailed review of the Transport and Accessibility considerations in relation to the proposed development is set out in Section 4 of Volume 4 of the Planning Statement, and in the Transport Assessment and Framework Travel Plan, prepared by Colin Buchanan. An overview of these considerations is set out below.

5.56 As set above, the redevelopment of the application site is supported in the Strategic Vision and CP11 of the Core Strategy and accordingly is considered to be an appropriate, and therefore sustainable, location for retail development.

5.57 The application site is an existing retail destination and therefore is established in respect of trips associated with retail activities within South Bucks and the wider area. The location of the site, accessible via the Bath Road (A4) means that the application site benefits from significant opportunities for linked trips. The application proposes 449 car parking spaces, representing an increase of 52 spaces compared to the existing provision.

5.58 The Transport Assessment (TA) assesses the trip generation of the proposed development. It concludes that the additional trips generated by the proposal will not have a significant adverse impact on the safe and convenient use of the existing local highway network.

5.59 The application site is also accessible by sustainable modes of transport. The proposed scheme includes preferential provision for cycle parking to promote the use of this mode and improved pedestrian access to the site and train station. The site is

also accessible by bus. The application proposes to relocate the existing bus stop on the north of Bath Road (immediately south of the Bishop Centre) and build a new bus stop south of the Bath Road to directly serve the application site. It is anticipated that the design of the new bus shelters will form part of the public art theme for the site. The TA concludes that the application site and proposed development is accessible.

- 5.60** The application site and proposed development accord with the objectives of sustainable development contained within the Core Strategy.

7 Residential Amenity

- 5.61** A detailed review of matters relating to residential amenity is set out in Section 6 of Volume 4 of the Planning Statement, the Design and Access Statement (prepared by 3D Reid), the Landscape Design Statement (prepared by Gillespies), and Acoustic Survey (prepared by Hann Tucker Associates). An overview of the principal considerations is set out below.

- 5.62** As the site is an established commercial destination, and the provision to sell convenience goods has already been established at the site, the proposed redevelopment will not have a material impact on residential amenity.

- 5.63** Although the proposal retains the existing access points on Hitcham Road, the new access point to be created on Bath Road (A4) will become the principal customer access point. This will help to reduce the level of customer traffic which uses Hitcham Road.

- 5.64** The development includes a comprehensive series of treatment works to the boundaries to ensure the existing level of amenity afforded to residential properties close to the application site is maintained. The proposed landscaping works will act as a physical and acoustic barrier to mitigate noise omissions from the commercial operations out of the confines of the site. In particular, the landscaping zone fronting Hitcham Road (which is the elevation of the site closest to residential land uses) will also incorporate a formal acoustic screen which will significantly reduce any noise emissions. Full details of the acoustic installations are set out in the Design and Access Statement.

- 5.65** The plant equipment of the proposed foodstore (the commercial unit closest to the residential properties to the east of the site), will be sunk into the ground to ensure any noise and vibrations are mitigated and again reduce any impact to neighbouring properties is avoided. The operator will also enter into a Delivery Management

Framework to ensure that the management of servicing is controlled. The proposed development will ensure that delivery vehicles enter the site from Hitcham Road but exit the site onto Station Road. This compares with the existing servicing arrangements of the Shopping Village whereby delivery vehicles enter and exit the site from Hitcham Road.

- 5.66** In light of the established commercial use of the proposed site and the direct and indirect acoustic and visual mitigation measures will ensure there is no adverse impact on residential amenity.

Conclusions on Policy Considerations

- 5.67** The Planning Statement and separate technical reports demonstrate that the proposed development accords with the Strategic Vision and the specific policies of the Core Strategy. Furthermore, the proposal accords with all other relevant local policies and material considerations, which are primarily the adopted and emerging national policies and Ministerial Statements.

6 SUMMARY OF THE CASE FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

- 6.1** The planning case is that the proposal accords with the SBCS and in particular the Strategic Vision and CP11. The proposed development will have a series of positive impacts and no significant adverse impacts on the underlying thread of achieving sustainable development.
- 6.2** Given that the current presumption is that development should be supported when it is in accordance with the development plan, under the current policy framework, the application should be approved and planning permission should be granted in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 6.3** In the event that the current presumption is replaced with a new presumption in favour of sustainable development, following the adoption of the DNPPF, the presumption that planning permission should be granted will continue to apply. The proposed development will continue to accord with the development plan but in addition it accords with the current draft requirement for all proposals to secure sustainable economic development. The proposed development accords with the principal objective of the DNPPF and the preceding Ministerial Statements.