

Land at Kingsway North and Second Avenue

Planning and Sustainability Statement

North East Property Partnership

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Planning and Sustainability Statement has been prepared by Lichfields on behalf of North East Property Partnership Ltd ('NEPP') ('the Applicant'). It accompanies a full planning application for the redevelopment of vacant land bounded by Kingsway North and Second Avenue, on Team Valley Trading Estate ('TVTE'), Gateshead. These proposals would deliver a Wickes DIY store, a drive-through coffee shop operated by Starbucks, and an Electric Vehicle ('EV') charging facility (the 'proposed development').
- 1.2 The description of development is as follows:
- "Erection of mixed-use warehouse (mixed commercial use within Class E and B8), a drive-through coffee shop (Use Class E) and an EV charging facility (Sui Generis), with associated landscaping, car parking, servicing and access".*
- 1.3 The purpose of this statement is to assess the application against the adopted Local Plan for Gateshead, as well as other material considerations, including national planning policy, which establishes a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In doing so, it includes an assessment of the proposed development in respect of the sequential and impact tests, as set out in both national and local planning policy.

Background

- 1.4 NEPP is keen to redevelop land for industrial use, in order to address the shortage of medium-sized high quality industrial units in the North-East region and, in doing so, generate business growth and new jobs. In this context, the Applicant secured hybrid planning permission (hereafter referred to as '2016 hybrid permission') in December 2016 (reference: DC/15/01137/OUT) for an industrial scheme on land immediately adjoining, and to the south of, the application site. However, despite extensive marketing, the prevailing economic conditions in the North-East have made the speculative development of the approved units extremely challenging and no prospective occupiers have yet come forward.
- 1.5 The Applicant is still invested in pursuing the redevelopment of the wider site and in doing so, wishes to secure planning permission for a new scheme on adjoining land at the application site. The intention is for the proposed development to help cross fund the consented scheme on the land to the south, including the works required to remediate the site and implement the necessary access infrastructure. This will, in turn, help to 'unlock' the land to the south and enable the delivery of the industrial scheme previously approved as part of the 2016 hybrid permission, thereby facilitating the regeneration of this key vacant site for new employment uses.

Application Submission

- 1.6 This Statement should be read in conjunction with the other documents which accompany the subject planning application. They include the:
- Application Forms and Ownerships Certificates;

- Community Infrastructure Levy – Form 1: CIL Additional Information, prepared by Lichfields;
- Covering Letter, prepared by Lichfields;
- Planning and Sustainability Statement (i.e. this document), prepared by Lichfields;
- Design and Access Statement, prepared by Faulkner Browns;
- Site Location Plan, prepared by Faulkner Browns;
- Existing Site Plan, prepared by Faulker Browns;
- Proposed Drawings, prepared by Faulker Browns;
- Landscape Drawings, prepared by DP Landscape Architecture;
- Flood Risk Assessment and Drainage Strategy, prepared by Portland;
- Geoenvironmental Appraisal (September 2015), prepared by Dunelm;
- Supplementary Geoenvironmental Appraisal (January 2022), prepared by Dunelm;
- Mining Risk Assessment (December 2022), prepared by Dunelm;
- Transport Statement, prepared by Arup;
- Framework Travel Plan, prepared by Arup;
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment, Elliot Consultancy;
- Ecological Appraisal, prepared by OS Ecology;
- Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment, prepared by OS Ecology;
- Biodiversity Net Gain Metric Calculation, prepared by OS Ecology; and
- Phase 1 Desk Study, prepared by Portland.

Structure of Statement

1.7 The remainder of this statement is structured as follows:

- Section 2.0 sets out the application site and surroundings, as well as its accessibility and planning history;
- Section 3.0 sets out the details of the proposed development;
- Section 4.0 summarises relevant planning policy context;
- Section 5.0 provides an assessment of sequentially preferable sites;
- Section 6.0 considers the likely impact of the proposed development;
- Section 7.0 addresses the principal of development and the proposal's conformity with the development plan;
- Section 8.0 summarises other material considerations raised by the application; and
- Section 9.0 provides conclusions.

2.0 Site and Surroundings

Application Site and Surroundings

- 2.1 The application site comprises approximately 1.77 Ha and is positioned at the north-western corner of the Team Valley Trading Estate (TVTE). The Site was cleared of former development in 2009 and has remained as vacant, brownfield land since then. It currently comprises areas of hardstanding, and trees dispersed along parts of the boundary.
- 2.2 The Site sits to the south of the roundabout junction between Lobley Hill Road (B1426) and the wider Kingsway North site is bounded by these two roads to the north and east respectively. The Site is located immediately adjacent to further vacant, previously developed to the south, which forms the wider Kingsway North site (referred to as 'No. 1 Team Valley' in planning permission: DC/15/01137/OUT). To the west, the Site is adjacent to a part two / three storey builders' merchant building currently occupied by Huws Gray, with associated hardstanding areas used for storage.
- 2.3 The wider Team Valley area comprises approximately 700 businesses, with a variety of commercial premises, including industrial units, storage and distribution depots, trade and wholesale warehouses, office accommodation and education facilities (including those for Gateshead College). As such, the majority of the existing built form within the area is industrial style buildings, with associated servicing and car parking, particularly to the south and east of the Site.
- 2.4 To the north of the Site, beyond Lobley Hill Road (B1426), is an existing residential development consisting of predominantly two storey dwellings. This residential development is separated from Lobley Hill Road by a landscaping buffer. The application site is located within Flood Zone 1 (area of lowest risk).

Accessibility

- 2.5 There are a number of bus stops within the local area, the closest ones being situated on Kingsway North and Lobley Hill Road, adjacent to the site. Buses from here provide access from other parts of Gateshead, including Low Fell, Whickham and Winlaton. In terms of cycle connectivity, there is an existing link that travels along the northern and eastern boundary of the site, as shown on the Council's Cycle Map. There are also a number of pathways within the immediate surrounding area providing pedestrian access to the wider TVTE.
- 2.6 With regard to access by the private car, the Site is located just to the south of Lobley Hill Road (B1426)/Kingsway North roundabout, which connects it with the A1 (to the west) with Gateshead Town Centre and Newcastle City Centre (to the east). The A1 helps to connect the Site to other parts of Gateshead and Newcastle, as well as Blaydon, the Metrocentre, Chester-le-Street and Durham, and large parts of the north-east.
- 2.7 There is an existing vehicular access point at the north-western corner of the site, via New Road, which is connected to Lobley Hill Road (B1426) to the north and Second Avenue to the south. This is currently closed and secured by a metal gate. The creation of a new road through the wider site, providing access from Second Avenue and Kingsway North was also granted planning permission by the Council on 9 December 2016 (ref. DC/15/01137/OUT).

As explained further below, applications have recently been submitted which propose changes to the approved access road.

Planning History

- 2.8 An application was submitted at the Site on 4 September 2012 seeking outline planning permission for development of land for business (use class B1), hotel (use class C1), car showroom (sui generis) and retail/service/food and drink (Use Classes A1, A2, A3 and A5) (ref. DC/12/00978/OUT). However, this application was withdrawn on 4 December 2012.
- 2.9 As explained earlier in this report, the Site forms part of a wider parcel of vacant land, the southern part of which has benefited from a number of previous planning permissions. These permissions include the following:
- DC/15/01137/OUT – a hybrid planning application seeking full planning permission for the erection of two Class B2/B8 units, with associated car parking, landscaping and access and outline planning permission (with all matters reserved except access) for B2/B8 Use Class development on land off Second Avenue, which was approved on 9 December 2016;
 - DC/19/01205/REM – a reserved matters application (relating to appearance, landscaping, layout and scale) pursuant to the above hybrid permission (ref. DC/15/01137/OUT) for Class B2/B8 development on land off Second Avenue, which was approved on 9 April 2020;
 - DC/19/01109/NMA - a Non-Material Amendment (NMA) to hybrid permission ref. DC/15/01137/OUT, to allow changes to the phasing of the development, which was approved on 25 November 2019; and
 - DC/22/01338/FUL – an application to vary Condition no. 1 to hybrid permission ref. DC/15/01137/OUT, relating to elevational changes, the access/egress, road layout and car parking, and relocation of the substation (and erection of an additional substation), recycling/refuse stores, bicycle stands and removal of Condition no. 6 (relating to coal mining). This application was submitted on 2 December 2022 and is yet to be determined but would effectively ‘tie in’ the approved layout to that currently proposed as part of the subject planning application.
- 2.10 Initial works to commence development in respect of the 2016 hybrid permission have taken place. It has since been confirmed by Gateshead Council that the approved development has lawfully commenced, and therefore the 2016 permission remains extant in perpetuity.
- 2.11 At the time the hybrid planning application was submitted on land to the south, a layout for the current application site was shown on the proposed plan, albeit for indicative purposes only (and outwith the site boundary). It was always the Applicant’s intention to deliver a single masterplanned scheme on the application site and land to the south, forming the wider No. 1 Team Valley site. However, since the approval of the 2016 hybrid permission on the southern part of the site, the Applicant has experienced significant issues in terms of viability, including the funding required for remediation and highway works. This has been exacerbated by challenging market and economic conditions in the north-east, and the difficulties in securing advance lettings, despite extensive marketing exercises.

- 2.12 The Applicant also previously sought grant funding from the North-East Local Enterprise Partnership's (LEP) Growth and Infrastructure Fund. This would have provided £2 million funding towards site infrastructure, including various highways works, thereby helping to overcome the viability gap which is currently preventing the site from coming forward. However, this funding bid was unsuccessful.
- 2.13 In order to both help address this funding shortfall, and facilitate the regeneration of the wider site, planning application proposals have been developed on the northern part of the site. The Applicant has entered into Heads of Terms with Wickes and Starbucks to occupy new units on the site, which will generate funding towards the above infrastructure works (i.e. site remediation and highways). This will, in turn, help to 'unlock' the delivery of the approved industrial scheme on the land to the south.
- 2.14 Whilst the wider No.1 Team Valley site benefited from a number of vehicular accesses, since the demolition works that were undertaken in 2009, none of these accesses have been operational. Furthermore, the Site is bounded by bus lanes on Lobley Hill Road and Kingsway North to the north and east respectively, and existing development to the immediate west, which, together, constrain the Site in terms of accessibility. As a result, a new main trunk road through the wider site was approved as part of the 2016 hybrid permission, in order to provide direct access from Second Avenue (to the south), linked to a further (east-west) road by a roundabout.
- 2.15 However, a number of alterations have recently proposed to the approved access road. As part of this, a Section 73 application (ref: DC/22/01338/FUL) was submitted on 2 December 2022, seeking the following amendments to the 2016 permission:
- the inclusion of an additional egress stemming south onto Second Avenue and the alteration of the original access / egress at Kingsway North to access only;
 - the removal of the approved roundabout on the site access road and its replacement by a T-Junction, to better accommodate HGV manoeuvring (which will be supported by the extension of the access road westwards from this roundabout – previously proposed within application ref. DC/23/00733/FUL but now included within the current application);
 - alterations to the access to the service yard for the approved industrial Units 1 and 2 (on the eastern part of the site), to suit amendments to unit servicing arrangements; and
 - the relocation of the access to the service yard for No.1 Second Avenue (on the western part of the site), again, supported by the provision of the extended access road.
- 2.16 Give funding issues and market conditions, the Applicant is currently unable to complete the development of the 2016 hybrid planning permission on land to the south (part of the wider site). The subject application proposals seek to deliver a scheme which generates funds to support the infrastructure works required to bring forward the wider site for previously approved uses. If these initial works don't take place – due to the current viability issues – then the wider development is unlikely to come forward. The subject application is a therefore a key component in the regeneration of the site.

3.0 The Proposed Development

- 3.1 The application seeks full planning permission for the following development:
- “Erection of mixed-use warehouse (mixed commercial use within Class E and B8), a drive-through coffee shop (Use Class E) and an EV charging facility (Sui Generis), with associated landscaping, car parking, servicing and access”*
- 3.2 The proposed mixed-use warehouse unit would comprise 2,490 sqm gross floorspace (with 1,914 sqm at ground floor level and 576 sqm at mezzanine level), be located on the western side of the site and be occupied Wickes Building Supplies. It would be accompanied by an outdoor project centre to the rear (comprising 450 sqm), along servicing areas, trolley bays, cycle parking, and 84 car parking spaces. The warehouse unit would be a mixed-use building, comprising elements of both Use Classes E and B8. A mixed-use building is deemed ‘sui generis’ if it is composed of two primary uses, which are operated together within a planning unit without physical distinction, as would be the case with the Wickes operation.
- 3.3 The proposals also include the erection of a single storey drive-through coffee-shop of 171 sqm gross floorspace, with associated car parking (with 22 spaces in total), to be occupied by Starbucks, which would be located on the north-eastern part of the site, in close proximity to the Lobley Hill Road/Kingsway North roundabout. A new Electric Vehicle (EV) charging facility, comprising 16 spaces, is included within the scheme (with the operator of this element yet to be confirmed), and would be located on the south-eastern part of the site, adjacent to Kingsway North.
- 3.4 Vehicular access to the proposed development will be obtained via a “T” shaped spine road within the wider site, which would also serve the industrial units approved as part of the 2016 hybrid permission on land immediately to the south. Two separate accesses will be provided from this new spine road, including one towards the western boundary of the application site, which will access the service yard for the new warehouse unit (to the west). The other access will be towards the eastern side of the site and provide access to customer car parking serving both this and the drive-through coffee shop, along with the EV charging facility.
- 3.5 The scheme will regenerate the northern part of the Kingsway North site, enhance the appearance of the wider site and the vitality of Team Valley more generally.

4.0 Planning Policy Context

- 4.1 This section summarises the relevant national and local planning policies to be taken into account in the determination of this planning application.

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.2 A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') was published on 30 December 2023. It sets out the Government's economic, environmental, and social planning policies for England. The policies contained within the NPPF provide information for how Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should treat and determine planning applications.
- 4.3 At the heart of the Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. The economic objective seeks to:
- ".....help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure."*
- 4.4 Chapter 6 of the NPPF focuses on building a strong and competitive economy and, in doing so, confirms that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt (paragraph 85). Paragraph 85 further states that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.
- 4.5 Paragraph 90 of the NPPF makes clear that planning policies should promote the long-term vitality and viability of centres, by allowing them to grow and diversify, in a way that responds to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses and reflects their distinctive characters. It also emphasises the importance of meeting needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses over a ten-year period and ensuring that this is not compromised by limited site availability.
- 4.6 Paragraph 91 of the NPPF states that, for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan, local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications. Such uses should be located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations, and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period), should out of centre sites be considered.
- 4.7 Paragraph 93 states that, when assessing proposals for retail and leisure uses outside of town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, local planning authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold (or if there is no locally set threshold, the default is 2,500 sqm of gross floorspace). The impact assessment should consider:

- the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in centres in the catchment area of the proposal; and
- the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and wider retail catchment (as applicable to the scale and nature of the scheme).

4.8 Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that, where the local planning authority considers there to be no reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the use allocated in a plan, and prior to updating the plan, applications for alternative uses on the land should be supported, where the proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area.

Planning Practice Guidance

4.9 Planning Practice Guidance (‘PPG’) supports the NPPF. It provides guidance on how to ensure the vitality of town centres and advocates a positive approach to meeting needs, making clear that local planning authorities should assess and plan to meet the needs of main town centre uses in full. It notes that:

“It may not be possible to accommodate all forecasted needs in a town centre: there may be physical or other constraints which make it inappropriate to do so. In those circumstances, planning authorities should plan positively to identify the most appropriate alternative strategy for meeting the need for these main town centre uses, having regard to the sequential and impact tests.”

4.10 In relation to the sequential approach, the PPG requires local authorities to consider whether the identified need for main town centre uses can be accommodated on town centre sites. This should consider the suitability, availability and viability of sites, with particular regard to the nature of the need that is to be addressed.

4.11 It confirms that the sequential test should be proportionately and appropriately applied to the subject proposal. It also states that the use of the sequential test should recognise that certain main town centre uses have particular market and locational requirements, which mean that they may only be accommodated in specific locations.

The Development Plan

4.12 The adopted Development Plan for Gateshead comprises the following:

- Core Strategy and Urban Core Plan for Gateshead and Newcastle (2010-2030) (‘CSUCP’) (adopted 2015); and
- Making Spaces for Growing Places (‘MSGP’) Development Plan Document (DPD) (adopted 2021).

Site Designations

4.13 The application site is located within the Team Valley Trading Estate (TVTE) which is allocated as a Key Employment Area (KEA) within the adopted Making Spaces for Growing Places (‘MSGP’) Development Plan Documents (DPD).

Economic Development

- 4.14 The CSUCP forms Parts 1 and 2 of Gateshead's Local Plan. It sets out the collective approach to spatial planning between Newcastle City Council and Gateshead Council to deliver "*economic prosperity and create lifetime neighbourhoods*" across the plan area.
- 4.15 Aligning with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework, Policy CS1 of the CSUCP identifies a presumption in favour of sustainable development. In doing so, there is the intention to deliver on the three core objectives, which relates to economic growth, and preservation and enhancement of the social and environmental wellbeing of the Core Strategy area.
- 4.16 Policy CS5 of the CSUCP sets out the role which Newcastle and Gateshead play in the economic growth of the North East. The policy explains that the Council will continue to develop a diverse economy with accessible employment and deliver significant increases in the number of businesses and jobs. It also states that this will be achieved by ensuring a range of high-quality economic development locations are available and attractive to the market.
- 4.17 Policy CS6 sets out that a sufficient supply of employment land will be provided across the plan area, which will be maintained for Use Classes B1, B2, and B8. Related to this, Policy MSGP1 states that the sites with capacity for 31.57 hectares of net developable employment land are allocated for B1, B2, and B8 uses.
- 4.18 MSGP2 confirms that Team Valley Trading Estate (TVTE) – which include the application site - is classed as a Key Employment Area (KEA), which makes a significant contribution to the local economy and the wider region. It supports the provision of land and premises to preserve and enhance the vitality of the Team Valley Trading Estate. Policy MSGP2.1 also states, in relation to such areas, that development and change of use proposals for Class B1 (now falling within Class E), B2, and B8 uses, and other business activities that complement industrial areas, will be permitted.
- 4.19 Part 1 of Policy MSGP4 states that, within KEAs, proposals for uses other than those set out in MSGP2 will not be permitted unless:
- a *The site is not currently occupied, and there is evidence of unsuccessful marketing for employment use at local market rental levels in accordance with the requirements set out in Appendix 2, over a continuous period of at least 30 months, and;*
 - b *The proposed use would not negatively affect the activities of other businesses within the Key Employment Area, and;*
 - c *The proposed use would not detract from the industrial character of the Key Employment Area, and;*
 - d *The proposed development would not prejudice the future development of employment uses in the area, and;*
 - e *The proposed development would not adversely affect the availability of a sufficient variety and quantity of employment land / premises necessary to accommodate short-term growth within the Key Employment Area.*

- 4.20 Part 3 of Policy MSGP4 states that exceptions may be made for development and change of use proposals that seek to provide complementary supporting retail/food and drunk and uses (A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5), creches, nurseries and gyms, with internal floor area of no more than 200sqm, where it can be demonstrated that there is a local need arising from workers at the Employment Area that cannot be satisfied by existing nearby facilities, and where the proposal would not negatively affect the activities of nearby businesses operating within B1, B2 or B8 uses.

Other Policies

- 4.21 The CSUCP Policy CS7 states that the vitality and viability of centres in the retail hierarchy will be maintained and enhanced, and that such centres will form the focal point of uses, services and facilities serving the surrounding population. It also states that, in addition to meeting local needs, the role of the retail sector in attracting visitors and contributing to the economy will be supported.
- 4.22 Part 3 of this policy require that, for retail and leisure proposals outside of the defined centres in the retail hierarchy, it should be demonstrated that there is not a sequentially preferable site in, or on the edge of, centres. It also requires an impact assessment in accordance with national planning guidance and that, regardless of development size, impacts are considered where there could be a significant adverse impact on a designated centre. Related to this, Policy 7 of the MSGP (which was adopted after the CSUCP) states that, for retail and leisure proposals consisting of 500 sqm net or more, which are located outside of designated centres in the retail hierarchy, an impact assessment is required.
- 4.23 CSUCP Policy CS13 seeks to enhance and deliver an integrated transport network to support sustainable development and economic growth. It states that this will be achieved by a range of measures, including improving equality of access to transport for everyone, and protecting and enhancing pedestrian routes, cycle networks and Rights of Way. In addition, the policy seeks to ensure that development:
- 1 which generates significant movement is located where the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised;
 - 2 minimises car trips, promotes and enhances public transport and for major development provides sustainable travel plans;
 - 3 connects safely to and mitigates the effects of development on the existing transport networks;
 - 4 includes charging infrastructure for electric vehicles within major developments;
 - 5 incorporates 20 miles per hour zones and homezone principles, where appropriate;
 - 6 provides cycle parking and supporting infrastructure; and
 - 7 provides for direct, safe, secure and continuous pedestrian and cycling links.
- 4.24 Policy CS15 of the Core Strategy requires that development contributes to good place-making through the delivery of high-quality and sustainable design. In particular, new development is required, amongst other things, to:
- respond positively to local distinctiveness and character;

- create safe and inclusive environments; and
- ensure connectivity, accessibility and legibility.

4.25 Finally, Policy CS17 states that development should avoid and manage flood risk from all fluvial sources and take into account the impact of climate change over its lifetime.

Summary

4.26 The proposed development seeks to redevelop brownfield land to deliver a new development comprising of a mixed use (Use Classes E/B8) warehouse and drive-through coffee shop. Both national and local planning policy and guidance support the provision of economic development and encourage the redevelopment of previously developed land to accommodate new development.

4.27 The Site is allocated in the adopted Development Plan as a Key Employment Area where development within Use Classes B1 (now Class E), B2 and B8, as well as other business activities that complement industrial areas, will be permitted. However, the plan also sets out a number of criteria required to be satisfied by proposals for other uses. These criteria is considered in more detail later in this Statement.

4.28 Proposals for retail and leisure uses which are not located in an existing centre are required by both national and local policy to be accompanied by a sequential assessment, and where above 500 sqm net, an impact assessment. The proposed Wickes will comprise a mixed-use building (including Classes E and B8) and the principle of B8 use on the site is already considered acceptable by policy in this location. Notwithstanding this, however, in order to assist in the determination of the application, sequential and impact assessment are provided at Chapters 5 and 6 of this statement.

5.0 Sequential Site Assessment

Policy Context

- 5.1 The NPPF requires that a sequential approach to site selection be applied to proposals for new main town centre uses (such as retail) which are not within an existing centre or allocated in an up-to-date development plan. Such uses should be located in town centres, followed by edge-of-centre locations and, only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period), should out-of-centre sites be considered (with preference given to accessible sites well connected to the town centre).
- 5.2 The closest defined centre to the application site is Saltwell Road Local Centre, which lies around 1.25 km walk away, and the Site is therefore out-of-centre in policy terms. On this basis, and in the context of the NPPF, it is necessary to consider potential sites both within and on the edge of existing centres, in terms of their suitability and availability to accommodate the proposed development.
- 5.3 The proposed new Wickes would serve a catchment which covers most, if not all, of the Borough. This reflects a number of factors, including the location of the Site, in close proximity to the A1 (M), which provides convenient vehicular access to other parts of the Gateshead, and the absence of any other Wickes stores elsewhere in the Borough. It also reflects the business model of large format DIY operators such as Wickes, which draw trade from a relatively wide area, and the scope for the new Starbucks to capture spin-off trade from people visiting both Wickes and other businesses at Team Valley.
- 5.4 On this basis, this assessment of sequentially preferable sites focuses upon Gateshead Town Centre. This is the largest defined centre in the Borough and acts a focal point for the provision of commercial and community uses. Existing district and local centres within the Borough, including those which are closest to the site, generally perform a more localised role and function. They have smaller catchment areas which are focused upon specific parts of the Borough and are not consistent with that of the proposed Wickes or Starbucks. They have therefore been excluded from this assessment.
- 5.5 The NPPF states that applicants and local authorities should demonstrate flexibility on issues such as format and scale. In this context, where alternative sites are to be considered, their suitability should be assessed in terms of their physical capability to accommodate the form of development proposed in the application, having demonstrated flexibility. This approach is consistent with recent High Court decisions.
- 5.6 In considering the suitability of individual sites, it is necessary to consider the various requirements of operators such as Wickes and Starbucks. In relation to the Kingsway North site, along with the buildings themselves, these include adequate directly accessible surface car parking, adequate space for delivery/servicing arrangements. They also include an Outdoor Project Centre ('OPC') in respect of Wickes, and (in relation to Starbucks in) the provision of a drive-through lane and space for an EV charging facility.
- 5.7 As explained in Section 2.0, the proposed development is essential to unlocking the delivery of the approved industrial scheme at the wider Kingsway North site. This is because it will help to generate the funding required for the Applicant to undertake the necessary site infrastructure works, including the provision of the new main trunk road. As set out above,

the Starbucks will benefit from spin-off trade linked to the new Wickes store and, together, they will help to bring the wider site back into, enhancing the appearance and vitality of both this site and the wider TVTE. There is an important function connection between the two uses which should be taken into account in the application of the sequential approach.

Methodology

Site Identification

5.8 The methodology adopted in identifying sites for assessment is as follows:

- 1 **Development plan search:** identification of development sites allocated in the adopted development plan for Gateshead;
- 2 **Existing permissions or proposals:** extant permissions or other applications for retail or commercial development; and
- 3 **Site Survey:** establishing the presence of any suitable vacant buildings / units, or other sites with potential for redevelopment, such as cleared sites, undeveloped sites or redundant buildings. This was undertaken by Lichfields in January 2024.

Site Assessment

5.9 The proposed development includes a new Wickes warehouse unit of around 2,490 sqm gross floorspace, with an adjoined outdoor project centre, along with a drive-through Starbucks coffee shop of around 171 sqm gross and an EV charging facility catering for around 22 vehicles. It also includes customer car parking, servicing areas and hard and soft landscaping.

5.10 As explained earlier in the statement, the development will help ensure the viability of new industrial development on adjoining land, by providing funding to support remediation and the new access road. The development has also been formulated taking into account the synergy between Wickes and the new Starbucks, as well as that between both of these uses and the EV charging facility, which will provide the opportunities to charge vehicles whilst visiting the other proposed uses. The application of the sequential test in this section takes into account this functional connection.

5.11 This assessment considers the suitability and availability of potential alternative sites to accommodate the proposed development. As part of this, taking into account the need for flexibility set out in the NPPF, any potential alternative site needs to be capable of accommodating a site area of approximately 1.2 Ha. In addition, and taking into account the above, sites have been assessed against a number of other criteria, which include:

- whether the site lies within, or on the edge of, existing centres;
- whether there are any development plan policies relevant to the sites identified;
- whether the sites allow safe access and manoeuvring by customer vehicles including, in respect of the coffee-shop, a drive-through lane;
- whether the sites can accommodate an appropriate level of surface level customer car parking;

- whether the sites can accommodate dedicated service areas, along with associated deliveries and manoeuvres, including from heavy goods vehicles;
- the need to accommodate a large floorplate retail unit, which is regular in shape and with open/unrestricted sales floor area;
- whether there are any extant permissions for development on the sites identified, and details of any other proposals;
- whether there are any land assembly issues (e.g. multiple ownership) which could constrain the potential for future development;
- what the current land uses are at each site, and whether there is a requirement for their relocation;
- whether the site is likely to be commercially attractive, including visual prominence; and
- other potential constraints to development, for example conservation area or listed building status, tree preservation orders, topography, etc.

Assessment of Alternative Sites

Gateshead Town Centre

High Street South Area

- 5.12 The site sits to the south of the A184 Charles Street, to either side of the High Street, and is bounded by the A167 Gateshead Flyover and High Street West to the east/south-east and west respectively. The site comprises around 4 ha in total and contains a range of uses, including several shop units and public houses along High Street itself (including number of vacant properties), surface car parking, small areas of open space, an office block and a cleared site to the north of Ann Street. It lies immediately to the south of the defined Primary Shopping Area (PSA) within Gateshead Town Centre and is therefore an edge of centre site in policy terms.
- 5.13 The site falls within a wider allocation identified in the adopted Local Plan as an Exemplar Neighbourhood. This allocation proposes a minimum of 1,000 homes, and mixed-use development, with active ground floor frontages to provide small-scale ancillary uses that support the needs of the new community, including small shops, cafes and community facilities. A Masterplan and SPD Document was adopted by the Council in March 2023 and states that the vision for the High Street South Area is to create a high-quality intergenerational neighbourhood, with a small amount of ground floor commercial space. Enabling works such as demolition of 332-354 High Street have already taken place, as outlined within the SPD.

Figure 1 High Street South Boundary



Source: Exemplar Neighbourhood Masterplan and SPD (April 2023) (Gateshead Council)

- 5.14 Whilst there are a number of vacant units situated along High Street, the majority of these comprise around (or less than) 100 sqm gross in floorspace. They are, therefore, too small to accommodate the floorspace required by either of the end operators – even before consideration is given to the need for customer parking, along with the outdoor project centre and servicing areas for the new Wickes store, or drive-through lane required by Starbucks.
- 5.15 Although there is a parcel of land to the north of Ann Street, this comprises around 0.3 ha, and is not of sufficient size to accommodate the proposed development. This location is also unlikely to be commercially attractive to the proposed end operators, given that it lacks visual prominence from a main road. Furthermore, even if it were to be possible to accommodate the proposed uses in this area, this would represent piecemeal development, which is in conflict with the Council's regeneration plan – which is focused on providing new housing, accompanied by only small-scale retail/commercial uses.
- 5.16 On the basis of the above, there are no vacant sites or buildings within the High Street South Area that are both suitable and available to accommodate the application proposals.

North of Jackson Street / West of High Street

- 5.17 This site comprises a block of retail units to the north-west of the junction between Jackson Street and High Street, along with areas of public realm and hardstanding, and comprises around 0.4 hectares in total. The site is allocated under Policy GC2 of the CSUCP as a Gateshead Central Development Opportunity Site – to include retail, leisure and residential uses over a number of floors, with active frontages onto Jackson Street and High Street, and either side of Bewick Way. It lies within the defined PSA and is therefore an in-centre site.

5.18 However, the site is constrained by its surrounding uses, has limited space available for servicing, no directly accessible surface car parking and no realistic potential to provide a drive-through lane. Even if the site became available for redevelopment, it is not of sufficient size to accommodate the development proposed on the application site.

5.19 The site is therefore not suitable to accommodate the proposed development.

Land and Buildings South of Jackson Street / North of Charles Street

5.20 This site comprises land and buildings in between Charles Street (to the south) and Jackson Street (to the north), including various shop units facing Jackson Street, as well as areas of car parking, landscaping and servicing. The site extends to approximately 0.7 hectares, and lies within the defined PSA, and is therefore an in-centre site. As with the above, it is allocated under Policy GC2 of the CSUCP as a Development Opportunity Site, to include retail, leisure and residential uses, along with the retention and refurbishment of the Metropole public house and a new north/south pedestrian link.

5.21 All units along Jackson Street are occupied, as confirmed by the recent survey conducted by Lichfields. These units perform an important role in meeting local shopping needs in Gateshead, in a location close to the Trinity Square development. The site also contains the Charles Street short stay car park, which appears well used by visitors, and helps to supports the vitality and viability of Gateshead Town Centre.

5.22 On this basis, and given its size, the site is neither suitable nor available for the proposed development at TVTE.

Southern Gateway Sub-Area, Half Moon Lane

5.23 This site comprises the former Windmill Hills nursing home which, whilst currently vacant and boarded up, is a Grade II listed building (listed entry: 1277865) and is around 0.3 hectares in size. The site is approx. 70 metres from the PSA, and separated from the latter by the A184 dual carriageway, situated to the east of the site.

5.24 The site is allocated for redevelopment to deliver hotel, residential and assembly and leisure uses, under Policy SG1 of the Local Plan. As such, it is likely that the site will come forward for alternative purposes than that proposed within this application. Given its scale and nature – with an irregular configuration and floorspace over a number of levels (reflecting its Victorian-era style) - the existing listed building is unlikely to be suitable for conversion to accommodate a new warehouse unit and/or drive-through coffee shop. Furthermore, and taking into account the size of the site, there would not be space to provide adequate car parking and servicing arrangements.

5.25 As such, and given the site's allocation for alternative uses, it is not considered suitable for the development proposed at the application site.

Former Town Hall Quarter, Swinburne Street

5.26 This former Town Hall Quarter area lies in between Askew Road (to the north) and Nelson Street/Lambton Street (to the south). The site comprises around 1.4 ha and includes former civic buildings such as the Old Town Hall itself (which is Grade II listed), as well as Swinburne House, and surrounding areas of open space and car parking. Although the town hall was originally the home of Gateshead Council, the building has been used more

recently by a number of social and cultural sector bodies, with Swinburne House being previously used as a bank, building society, public library and a post office.

- 5.27 The site is located immediately to the north of the Primary Shopping Area and is therefore edge of centre in policy terms. It is also allocated under Policy GC2 of the CSUCP as a Development Opportunity Site, to include a mix of principal uses, comprising retail, offices, hotels, leisure and residential, along with the restoration of the Old Town Hall, Swinburne House and Old Dispensary.
- 5.28 As these existing buildings would need to be retained and are unlikely to be suitable for conversion for the proposed uses, the remaining land available for redevelopment will clearly be much smaller than set out above. Furthermore, any new development which does come forward elsewhere on the site would need to preserve and enhance the setting of the listed structures on site. In this context, the site is not considered suitable for a new warehouse unit and drive-through coffee shops of a similar scale and nature to that proposed on the application site.

Askew Road (East)

- 5.29 The site is immediately bounded by Askew Road to the south and a railway line to the north. The site comprises approximately 0.6 hectares in size and is narrow in shape. The majority of the site comprises of trees, hedgerows and other vegetation, although there is an unused car wash/valeting building at the north-eastern end. The site is allocated as a Development Opportunity Site (SG3) within the CSUCP, to include uses such as hotels, residential and assembly and leisure.
- 5.30 A Permission in Principle was granted on 10 February 2020 for the delivery of 140 to 190 homes with one or more of following uses: a hotel of up to 1,600 sqm, assembly and leisure of up to 1600 sqm or offices of up to 1,600 square metres (ref. DC/19/01021/BPIP). Based on an online review, the Council has previously published a notice searching for a development partner for this site.
- 5.31 Whilst the site is located around 300 metres walking distance of the Primary Shopping Area's northern boundary. Although it could be considered an edge of centre site, the route between the two is convoluted, and requires crossing at least one dual carriageway, which represents a major barrier to movement – with no crossing facilities in the immediate vicinity of the site - and separates the site from other surrounding uses. Furthermore, size and shape of the site means that it would be difficult to accommodate a warehouse unit of a similar scale and nature to that proposed, along with the associated car parking and delivery / servicing requirements. In this context, the site is not suitable for the proposed development.
- 5.32 In addition, the Council's online planning register confirms that planning permission was granted on 27 October 2011 for the following:
- “Development of 2.22ha of land - hybrid application comprising full permission for erection of 2-storey office building (use class B1) and 2 single-storey storage buildings (use class B8) with associated car parking and outline permission for 6-storey hotel (use class C1), 2-storey office building (use class B1), bar/bistro/restaurant building (use class A3/A4) with associated car parking, public piazza and access to site (amended 26/05/11 and 26/05/11 and additional info VNG images received 21/06/11)”*

- 5.33 Whilst no works appear to have taken place on site to implement the permission, they confirm the Council's views on the most appropriate uses for the site.

The Point

- 5.34 The site lies between the railway line to the south and Fletcher Road to the north, and comprises approximately 1 hectare. The site is approximately 350m walking distance from the PSA and it is separated from the wider town centre by the railway, with no visual relationship and convoluted pedestrian routes between the two. It is therefore an out-of-centre site and is not sequentially preferable.
- 5.35 The site is allocated for a mix of uses, including office and residential, under CSUCP Policy QB3. In this context, the Council's online planning register confirms that the site was granted full planning permission (reference: DC/21/00184/FUL) for the demolition of existing structures on site and the construction of 98 no. 1/2 bed apartments, with access, parking and landscaping, on 19 May 2022. Based on a recent site visit, construction is currently underway, and indeed an application has been made for the discharge of pre-commencement conditions (reference: 21/00184/DOC2). On this basis, the site is also not available for the proposed development, as it is coming forward for alternative uses.

Land to South of Hudson Street / Half Moon Lane

- 5.36 The site is bounded by railway lines to the west and south, and by Hudson Street, Wellington Street and Half Moon Lane to the north and east. It comprises hardstanding used for car parking (to the west) and storage for vehicles and containers (to the east), is irregular in shape, and extends to a size of around 0.3 hectares. It is also allocated under Policy QB3 of the CSUCP as a Quays and Baltic Development Opportunity Site, to include a mix of principal uses, comprising residential and ancillary retail, also providing active frontages onto the above roads.
- 5.37 The site is roughly 250 metres walking distance from the PSA. Whilst it could be considered an edge of centre site, as with The Point, the route to the PSA is convoluted, involving a number of pedestrian crossings, and the site separated from the wider town centre by the railway. On this basis, it is considered that any new development here would function as out of centre and, as such, would not be sequentially preferable to the application site.
- 5.38 The small size of the site means that it would not be able to accommodate the proposed development. Furthermore, the site does not have any visual prominence to main roads, due its location, surrounded by railway lines and other buildings, and is unlikely to be commercially attractive to the types of operators proposed at Kingsway North. On this basis, and notwithstanding the existing uses on the site, it is also not suitable for the proposed development.

Vacant Units

- 5.39 Lichfield's site survey of Gateshead Town Centre (January 2024) confirms that there are a number of vacant units of varying sizes. Although there are a number of vacant units located to both the northern and southern ends of the High Street, these are small in size, with many being around or below 200 sqm gross floorspace. Furthermore, and as they are constrained by surrounding units and other developments, there would be no scope to

provide the drive-through lane required as part of the coffee-shop. As such, these units would not be of a sufficient size to accommodate the proposed scheme, along with the necessary servicing, car parking and drive-through lane.

- 5.40 Whilst the Wilko store in Gateshead Public Transport Interchange closed in September 2023, it was subsequently re-occupied by Poundland (in October 2023) and is therefore not available to other operators. On this basis, it is not considered that there are any vacant units within Gateshead Town Centre which are suitable and available to accommodate the proposed development.

Summary

- 5.41 Consideration has been given to potential alternative opportunities within and on the edge of Gateshead Town Centre, in terms of their potential to accommodate the proposed development. However, none of the sites or vacant units identified were both suitable and available for the development due to a range of constraints, including their size, location, existing occupiers, recently granted permissions and site allocations. As such, there are there are no sites which could accommodate the proposed development, and the subject application is therefore considered to be compliant with the sequential approach to site selection set out in the NPPF and adopted development plan.

6.0 **Assessment of Impact**

- 6.1 The NPPF requires that proposals for new retail uses in excess of 2,500 sqm, which are not located within an existing centre, and not in accordance with an up-to-date development plan, should include an assessment of:
- 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
 - the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and wider retail catchment (as applicable to the scale and nature of the scheme).
- 6.2 Given the significant proportion of turnover which would be derived from trade sales, and the fact that Wickes are seeking planning permission for a Sui Generis mixed (B8/E) use, the proposed new unit is not considered to be a normal main town centre use. Furthermore, at around 2,490 sqm gross (including mezzanine) and 171 sqm gross respectively, the new Wickes and Starbucks units would, individually, comprise less than the national threshold for impact assessments above.
- 6.3 Notwithstanding this, however, as the floorspace would be above the threshold set out in Policy 7 of the adopted MSGP (which is 500 sqm), and as discussed with Council Officers, a proportionate assessment of the subject application proposals against the above issues is set out below. This analysis takes into account an assessment of the likely trade diversion impacts arising from the proposed new Wickes.

Impact on Investment

- 6.4 Reflecting their specialist nature, the new Wickes would draw its trade from a wide catchment area – with the company’s next nearest stores being located in Newcastle-upon-Tyne (to the north-west), South Shields (to the east) and Sunderland (to the south-east). Wickes focuses its business on the “heavy end” of the building and Do It Yourself (DIY) industry, and therefore carry a limited product range, with the vast majority of their products being own brand lines.
- 6.5 They serve a customer base who are seeking to purchase relatively standardised goods, such as tradesmen, in contrast to stores such as B&Q and Homebase, which provide a wider range of goods (both own branded and branded). Trade sales are more important to Wickes than to other major DIY players and quantities of building supplies are key attractions. Such sales comprise non-retail turnover and, whilst Wickes still require a retail use to trade lawfully, the origin of this turnover is an important factor when considering the likely impact of the proposed new store.
- 6.6 Wickes offers a focused range of high quality, primarily own-brand and competitively priced home improvement products, such as timber, building materials, tools and decorative materials. They also offer a range of kitchens and bathrooms, which are sold through in-store showrooms. In contrast to retailers such as B&Q and Homebase, which provide a wider range of goods, with more emphasis on personal choice and comparison of product manufacturer, Wickes’ main competitor is Jewson, who are a builders’ merchant supplying to the trade.

- 6.7 Indeed, Wickes are similar in their customer base to many trade counter businesses. Such operators are not found within existing town or other defined centres, and are usually in similar locations to the proposed new outlet, for example, on industrial/trading estates, or on main roads, where they are easily accessible from their intended catchment areas.
- 6.8 Starbucks operate coffee shops in a range of locations across the north-east. The new facility proposed on the application site would compete with other drive-through facilities in the surrounding area, including the existing Starbucks at Metrocentre, the majority of which are generally located outside of existing centres.
- 6.9 On this basis, there is not considered to be any prospect that the proposed new Wickes would have any significant adverse impact upon investment in existing centres, either in Sunderland or elsewhere. This is particularly the case given the fact that:
- there are no more sequentially preferable sites, located either within or on the edge of Gateshead Town Centre, which are suitable and available to accommodate the proposed new Wickes store;
 - there are no schemes coming forward in Gateshead Town Centre, which are of a comparable scale and nature to that proposed on the Kingsway North site, and which could be affected by these proposals;
 - as set out above, the proposed Wickes would compete most directly with existing and committed/proposed outlets of a similar nature, including both large format DIY stores and other comparable outlets, such as builders merchants, the vast majority of which are located outwith existing centres. Similarly, the new Starbucks would compete with other drive-through facilities elsewhere, only a small number of which are found within such centre; and
 - any schemes which are coming forward or being promoted in other centres in the wider area, are more distant from the application site and/or serve different catchment areas, with a traditional retail offer, and will not be affected by the current proposals.
- 6.10 Those developments which are coming forward, or being planned for, within existing centres in Gateshead are different to the uses proposed in the current application on the Kingsway North site. Furthermore, and as set out in more detail below, there are only a very limited number of operators within such centres which would have any kind of overlap with the either proposed new Wickes, in terms of the goods on offer or their customer base, or the drive-through Starbucks coffee-shop.

Impact on Vitality and Viability

Trade and Turnover

Methodology

- 6.11 In order to undertake an assessment of the likely trade diversion impacts of the proposed new Wickes, a Study Area has been defined. This area takes into account the likely extent of the trade draw of the proposed new retail floorspace.
- 6.12 Taking into account existing provision in the area (including the absence of any existing Wickes stores in Gateshead), and the accessibility of the subject site (being in close

proximity to the A1(M)), the new trade DIY store would serve a catchment area comprising large parts of the Borough. On this basis, given the scale and nature of the proposals, the defined Study Area comprises Gateshead Borough.

- 6.13 It has been assumed that 80% of the turnover of the proposed Wickes would come from this area, with the remaining 20% originating from outside of Gateshead. The latter assumption, again, reflects the accessibility of the site from the wider area and, indeed, the extent to which people travel to work at Team Valley from across the north-east region, and are therefore likely to use the new outlet to meet some of their needs.
- 6.14 Forecasts of the population within Gateshead Borough over the period to 2029 (the Design Year of the proposals) and 2034 have been obtained from Experian. As set out in Table 1 of **Appendix 1**, the population within the Study Area as a whole is forecast to remain broadly static over the period from 2024 to 2034, at around 196,700 persons.
- 6.15 Estimates of comparison goods expenditure per capita in 2021 (in 2021 prices) within the Study Area have been sourced from Experian. Forecasts set out in their Briefing Note 20 (February 2023) have been used, in order to project expenditure forward over the period to 2034. A proportion of expenditure per capita has been deducted to reflect expenditure via non-store retail sales (primarily internet purchases), also using information within the above Briefing Note. This excludes purchases made online which go through actual retail stores (for example click and collect) and therefore still generate a demand for physical retail floorspace.
- 6.16 In the context of the above, Table 3 in **Appendix 1** illustrates forecast growth in total comparison goods expenditure across the Study Area. This table illustrates that comparison goods expenditure will increase by around £107.6m (around 24%) between 2024 and 2034 across the Study Area. This level of expenditure growth is almost 20 times the forecast comparison goods turnover of the proposed Wickes (as set out further below).
- 6.17 Table 4 at **Appendix 1** provides an estimation of comparison goods expenditure flows in the Gateshead local authority area in 2024. In order to do this, the comparison goods turnover of Gateshead Town Centre and Blaydon District Centre, as well as floorspace at the Metrocentre and other key destinations in the area, has been estimated. This has been based on the total comparison goods floorspace in these centres/destinations and uses benchmark turnover to floorspace ratios which, in turn, take into account the scale and nature of retailers in these locations. An allowance has been made for other smaller (unnamed) stores and centres in Gateshead. The table also makes an allowance for inflow of expenditure into the Gateshead local authority area from those further afield, again, taking into account the nature, scale and accessibility of the various destinations.
- 6.18 In order to forecast the turnover of the proposed Wickes in the Design Year of 2029, it has been assumed that:
- based on information from UKLE, the 2,490 sqm gross floorspace outlet would have a net sales area 2,239 sqm, all of which would be used for comparison goods sales; and
 - this floorspace will achieve a comparison goods turnover to floorspace ratio of £2,458 per sqm, which is based on the Wickes company average, as sourced from Global Data (in 2021 prices), and allowing for growth in turnover efficiency over the period to 2029.

6.19 It is therefore forecast that it could achieve a total comparison goods turnover of around £5.5m. Of this, as set out above, it is estimated that 80% (around £4.4m) would originate from the defined Study Area, with the remaining 20% (£1.1m) originating from beyond the Study Area.

6.20 The above is considered to be a cautious approach, given that a significant proportion of Wickes turnover is derived from trade sales. Should the retail turnover of the new warehouse unit be lower than that set out above, then the impacts forecast will also be lower.

6.21 An assessment of the impact of the proposed development has been undertaken. This has regard to a quantitative assessment of the levels of trade diversion forecast upon existing stores and centres as a result of the proposed new Wickes.

Comparison Goods Impact

6.22 There are a number of important factors which mean that the impact of the proposed new Wickes outlet at Kingsway North upon existing defined centres would be limited. These include the fact that:

- trade and commercial customers make up a significant proportion of Wickes customer base;
- any diversion of trade would be spread across a range of different stores in the surrounding area;
- Wickes' main competitor is Jewson, a builders' merchant, and are similar in their customer base to many trade counter businesses, which are not found within existing town or other defined centres;
- there are no directly comparable facilities located within existing centres in Gateshead, against which Wickes would compete; and
- the main existing competing facility in Gateshead (Homebase at Retail World, Team Valley), is already trading successfully alongside uses within existing centres.

6.23 As illustrated in Table 7, other stores/centres in the Study Area are forecast to experience an impact of around 2%. This reflects the existence of outlets in a range of locations across the Borough, including elsewhere at Team Valley and on other industrial estates (such as those at Chainbridge Road, in Blaydon), which sell goods similar to those which would be on offer from the new Wickes. Such outlets, which cater for both retail and trade customers, include Jewsons, Screwfix and Travis Perkins, as well as other, smaller traders. Whilst the impact upon these operators may be slightly higher than 2% in practice, it is unlikely to be of such a level that it would materially affect their viability and, in any event, they are unprotected in planning policy terms.

6.24 It is forecast that the impact upon comparison goods floorspace at Retail World, Team Valley would be around 0.9% of its current turnover (or £1.1m). This reflects the fact that Retail World contains the only large format DIY store which currently exists in Gateshead, as well as its relative proximity to the application site, being at the southern end of Team Valley. Again, however, whilst the impact upon Homebase itself may be slightly higher than 1%, it would not be of a level which would have any significant adverse impact upon its

overall viability – reflecting, in part, the extent to which the new Wickes would serve trade as well as retail customers.

- 6.25 The impact forecast to be upon Metro Retail Park/Metro Park West, which lies around 3.5 km to the west of the application site, would be 0.7% (or £1.2m). This reflects the fact that, whilst there are no DIY operators there, it does contain a large Ikea store, as well as other bulky-type operators, who may have a small overlap with some of the goods sold by Wickes. However, like Retail World, Metro Retail Park/Metro Park West, is not located within a defined centre, and therefore not protected in planning terms.
- 6.26 The forecast impacts upon Gateshead Town Centre, Blaydon District Centre and Metrocentre are all low (less than £0.1m or around 0.1% or below). This reflects the limited quantum of floorspace within these centres/destinations which is used for the sale of DIY/home improvement-type goods – and indeed Metrocentre is focused upon higher order goods, such as clothing, footwear, jewellery, gifts/cards and other similar items. At this level, the impacts forecast would not have any material impact upon the vitality and viability of either Gateshead or Blaydon Centre.
- 6.27 In any event, these centres contain a wide range of uses, the vast majority of which will be unaffected by the proposed development. Both Gateshead and Blaydon, in particular, perform an important role and function in meeting the retail and service needs of their respective catchment areas, and will continue to do so following development of a new Wickes outlet at Kingsway North. Furthermore, all centres and stores within the Study Area will benefit from continued growth in expenditure over the period to 2034 and beyond, which will more than offset this trade diversion, and to maintain their wider vitality and viability.
- 6.28 In this context, and taking into account all of the above, it is not considered that there would be any significant adverse impact upon the vitality and viability of any store or centre, as a result of the proposed new Wickes. This not least given that, in practice, a significant proportion of the turnover of the new Wickes would be drawn from trade sales, which is likely to reduce the actual impacts forecast upon retail businesses.

Consumer Choice

- 6.29 The Kingsway North site provides an opportunity to build a bespoke unit which fits Wickes' requirements and enhances consumer choice in the Gateshead area. This is not least given the absence of any directly comparable facilities in Gateshead, and the fact that the next nearest outlets are outside of the Borough, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, South Shields and Sunderland. Should Wickes not be able to secure planning permission to occupy suitable premises in Gateshead, the potential benefits of Wickes, in terms of providing convenient access to a range of building materials, timber, joinery, decorating, plumbing and associated products, for sale to existing businesses, tradesmen and other customers, would be lost to the area.
- 6.30 The new Starbucks Drive-through coffee-shops proposed at Kingsway North would help to meet the needs of employees of, and visitors to, businesses on Team Valley Trading Estate. It would compete with other facilities of a similar nature, the majority of which are situated in locations which are unrelated to existing centres.

- 6.31 The potential impact of the proposed development upon the vitality and viability of existing centres should be viewed in the context of a number of factors. These include:
- the specialist nature of Wickes offer – which is focused at the heavy end of the building supplies and DIY industry - and their customer base (a significant proportion of which comprises trade business);
 - the nature of existing comparison goods retail operators located within existing centres, the majority of which do not sell the products which would be on sale at the new Wickes;
 - the fact that these centres contain a wide range of uses, which also include convenience retailing, services, and other leisure and community uses, all of which would remain unaffected by the development; and
 - the fact that those facilities which do compete with the proposed Wickes – including Jewsons and, to a lesser extent, B&Q and Homebase - are located outwith existing defined centres, meaning that they are unprotected in planning policy terms.
- 6.32 In the context of the above, it is considered that the proposed development would not have any significant adverse impacts, in terms of consumer choice.

Summary

- 6.33 It has been demonstrated that the proposed new/replacement Wickes Building Supplies outlet would not result in any material adverse impact upon the vitality and viability of existing centres, or upon existing and future planned investment in such centres.
- 6.34 There are no schemes either planned or coming forward within in existing centres in the Study Area which could be affected by the new Wickes and/or Starbucks. Given the specialist nature of Wickes company's offer, its main competitors are DIY and trade-orientated businesses in locations unrelated to existing defined centres. Any trade diversion arising from this would be likely to be spread across a wide range of facilities, many of which are unrelated to existing centres. There is therefore no prospect that the proposed development could result in a significant adverse impact upon the vitality and viability of any existing centres in the local area.

7.0 **Assessment Against the Development Plan**

7.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compensation Act 2004 states that:

“If regard is to be had to the Development Plan for the purpose of any determination to be made under the Planning Acts, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.”

7.2 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF also states that local planning authorities should approve proposals that accord with the development plan without delay. The remainder of this section considers the conformity of the proposed development with the adopted development plan, having regard to paragraph 11.

Employment Land

7.3 Teams Valley Trading Estate is identified as a Key Employment Area (KEA) under Policy MSGP2. Policy CS6 seeks to ensure a sufficient supply, range and choice of employment land is maintained for Class B1 (now Class E), B2 and B8 uses. Related to this, Policy MSGP4 states that development for other uses will not be permitted unless:

- the site is not currently occupied, and there is evidence of unsuccessful marketing for employment use at local market rental levels in accordance with the requirements set out in Appendix 2, over a continuous period of at least 30 months, and;
- the proposed use would not negatively affect the activities of other businesses within the Key Employment Area, and;
- the proposed use would not detract from the industrial character of the Key Employment Area, and;
- the proposed development would not prejudice the future development of employment uses in the area, and;
- the proposed development would not adversely affect the availability of a sufficient variety and quantity of employment land / premises necessary to accommodate short-term growth within the Key Employment Area.

Background to Proposals

7.4 NEPP demolished the existing buildings on the wider site in 2009, following the departure of the previous occupiers and an elongated period of vacancy caused by uncertain market conditions. Following the financial crisis, NEPP secured a hybrid planning permission for industrial development on land immediately adjoining the application site, to the south, in December 2016 (reference: DC/15/01137/OUT). Despite extensive marketing, the prevailing economic conditions in the North-East have made speculative development of this nature extremely challenging and no prospective occupiers for the development have come forward. Notwithstanding this, NEPP has remained keen to bring the site forward for redevelopment and has undertaken works to keep the hybrid permission ‘live’, as detailed in Section 2.0 of this Statement.

7.5 New highways infrastructure is required in order to deliver the redevelopment of the wider site and a new internal access road was approved through the 2016 hybrid permission, which would connect to Second Avenue (to the south) to Kingsway North (to the east), with

a roundabout in the centre. A current Section 73 application proposes various amendments to the scheme, including alterations to the new road and including a “T” junction in the centre of the site, in place of the roundabout.

- 7.6 The absence of any confirmed occupier interest in the units already approved on the wider site has made it difficult to achieve the necessary funding to implement the previous approval, including the necessary site infrastructure works – such as the remediation of the site and construction of the new internal road. As such, the Applicant is seeking planning permission for new units occupied by Wickes and Starbucks, as well as EV charging spaces, which will help to generate this funding, and therefore ‘unlock’ the delivery of the approved industrial scheme. Without this scheme coming forward, there is a danger that the 2016 permission will not be completed.

Loss of Employment Land

- 7.7 As set out above, the Site falls within a KEA, as designated under Policy MSGP2. Where uses other than the former B1 (now Class E), B2 and B8 are proposed within a KEA – such as the new Wickes and Starbucks contained within the current application - they are required by Policy MSGP4 to satisfy a number of criteria, as outlined above. Each of these criteria is addressed in turn below.

a) *The site is not currently occupied, and there is evidence of unsuccessful marketing for employment use at local market rental levels in accordance with the requirements set out in Appendix 2, over a continuous period of at least 30 months.*

- 7.8 The Site has been vacant since all buildings were demolished in 2009. Furthermore, as explained above, a hybrid permission was secured by the Applicant in 2016 for the delivery of three industrial units at the wider No. 1 Team Valley site, to the immediate south of the subject application site. Despite the development having been marketed throughout the intervening period, the Applicant has received no firm interest from potential B-Class occupiers.

- 7.9 The development is still live on the Applicant’s website. From the marketing exercises undertaken, however, it is clear that there is no appetite in the market for industrial development on the site of a value which would offset the ‘viability gap’ required to overcome the site’s constraints in terms of infrastructure. A speculative development has therefore become unviable for the Applicant to build out and as such, they have had to consider alternative options. On this basis, it is considered that part a) of Policy MSGP4 is met.

b) *The proposed use would not negatively affect the activities of other businesses within the Key Employment Area.*

- 7.10 The proposed development includes the delivery of a warehouse unit which will be occupied by Wickes and comprise a mix of Use Class E and B8 floorspace – reflecting the fact that they supply building materials to both trades persons and the general public. As such, they are often found within industrial estates where uses of a similar nature or those that require these types of products are located within close proximity. There is, therefore, a synergy between uses such as Wickes and others which are typically located on industrial estate, and the proposed use would not negatively affect the existing activities of other businesses within the KEA.

- 7.11 The proposals also include a drive-through coffee shop to be occupied by Starbucks. This would provide a valuable amenity offer for employees of/visitors to the businesses at the northern end of Team Valley Trading Estate, enhancing the existing range and choice of food and beverage facilities - including those serving hot drinks and hot and cold snacks - available. The application site is an appropriate and sustainable location for such a facility, given its conveniently accessible location at the northern end of TVTE, and adjacent to the main north/south thoroughfare. Such a facility would benefit other uses on the estate – and, indeed, the principle of a new coffee-shop in this general area was previously accepted by the Council on granting permission for a new drive-through Costa in at Maingate in March 2018 (ref. DC/17/01212/FUL).
- 7.12 An EV charging facility is also proposed as part of the scheme. This will provide a valuable facility for customers to both the proposed Wickes and Starbucks, allowing customers to charge EV's whilst they visit these uses. It would also benefit from its location on TVTE, in close proximity to a significant number of employees on the estate, as well as accessibility to the wider the highway network, including the A1. There would again by synergy with both the other uses proposed on the site as well as those elsewhere in the surrounding area.
- 7.13 In the context of the above, it is clear that the proposed uses would not negatively affect the activities of other businesses within the Team Valley KEA.
- c) The proposed use would not detract from the industrial character of the Key Employment Area.*
- 7.14 As set out above, Wickes are often found on industrial estates, and the new Starbucks would enhance the existing choice of food and drink facilities within the estate. They would, therefore, be complementary to existing industrial uses at TVTE and would not detract from the industrial character of the area. Indeed, the regeneration of this site with these valuable new uses would improve the overall quality of the estate, providing a modern new development of a long-term vacant site, which currently detracts from the character of the surrounding area.
- d) The proposed development would not prejudice the future development of employment uses in the area.*
- 7.15 The development proposed at the application site would bring a long-term vacant site back into use for a new warehouse unit and coffee-shop. Whilst not traditionally considered to be an employment use, as explained above, Wickes are often located on industrial estates, and indeed, this application seeks permission for a mixed use, comprising both Class E and B8, the latter of which is supported by Policy MSGP2 within the Team Valley KEA. Although the new Starbucks would fall solely within Class E, it is of such a scale that it would be complementary – and indeed functionally ancillary - to existing employment development on the estate.
- 7.16 As explained earlier, the approval of the subject application would help to provide the funding to remediate the site and provide the new internal link road, therefore enabling the delivery of the previously approved employment development on the wider site. The development is also likely to increase the attractiveness of Team Valley to existing and future new uses on the estate, providing valuable amenities for these occupiers, and would generate permanent new employment opportunities, supporting the wider objectives of the

KEA. The proposed development would therefore not be likely to prejudice the future development of employment uses there.

e) The proposed development would not adversely affect the availability of a sufficient variety and quantity of employment land / premises necessary to accommodate short-term growth within the Key Employment Area.

7.17 As explained previously, a hybrid planning permission was granted in 2016 for the delivery of an industrial scheme on land immediately to the south of this site. However, the Applicant has not secured any firm interest from potential occupiers and speculative development is not currently viable. The development of new Wickes and Starbucks uses, as proposed through the subject application, would help to generate funds which would help to bring the wider site forward, including through remediation and highways infrastructure.

7.18 Without the approval of the subject application, there is limited prospect of the previously approved development coming forward. Whilst the proposed uses are not classed as employment development in a traditional sense – albeit the Wickes would include a B8 element – this means that, in practice, the approval of the application would have no adverse impact upon the supply of land for such development. Indeed, it would have a net positive impact, given that it would help to deliver new industrial/warehouse units on land to the south, unlocking approximately 4 Ha of land which would otherwise remain vacant.

Complementary Uses

7.19 Policy MSGP4 explains that exceptions may be made to the criteria set out above for complementary supporting retail/food and drink uses (within the former Use Classes A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 – now Class E/Sui Generis), with an internal floorspace of no more than 200 sqm. This is subject to demonstrating that there is a local need arising from workers at the Employment Area that cannot be satisfied by existing nearby facilities, and where the proposal would not negatively affect the activities of nearby Class B1 (now Class E), B2 or B8 uses.

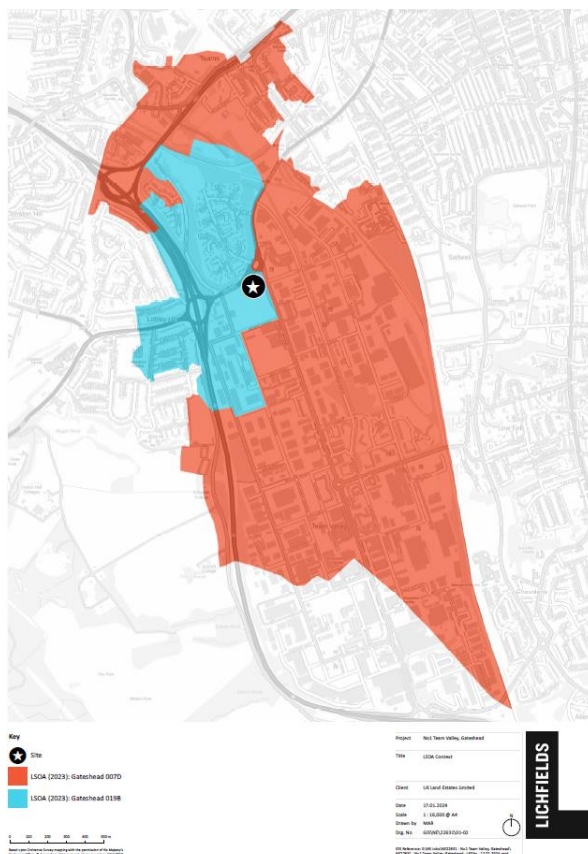
7.20 It has also been demonstrated above that the proposed uses would not adversely affect existing traditional employment uses on TVTE. Furthermore, and as also explained earlier, the new Wickes – whilst a mixed (Sui Generis) use - would have a Class B component, and is a facility which would typically be found in an industrial estate-type location, reflecting the synergy which a warehouse such as this would have with existing businesses. In addition, however, and separate to the analysis of impact provided at Section 5.0, an assessment of the local need and capacity for the proposed coffee-shop has been undertaken in order to assist in the determination of the application.

7.21 It is estimated that there are around 21,000 employees at Team Valley, as well as 330 residential households on the adjoining Festival Park Estate and additional hotel guests staying on or close to the estate. It is clear that there is a significant residential, working and visitor population in close proximity to the site, which generates a need for food and drink facilities. The proposed coffee shop would comprise less than 200 sqm floorspace, as required by the above policy, and would also:

- add to the choice and range of food and beverage uses easily accessible to the Team Valley population;

- generate linked trips with people's work places, homes and/or facilities that they are visiting elsewhere on Team Valley; and
- reduce the need for employees at, and visitors to, Team Valley to travel further afield for access to such facilities.

Figure 2 Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) Context Map



7.22 The plan above illustrates the two Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) which either contain or lie in close proximity to the application site. Between them, they contain the majority of TVTE itself (albeit excluding the southern end of the estate and Retail World) as well as some small additional areas to the north. Based on information from the Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES), the working population of this area (i.e. both LSOAs combined) is estimated to be around 19,900 persons.

7.23 Using base data from Experian, as well as the recommended growth rate set out in their Retail Planner Briefing Note 20 (February 2023), average spending on cafes/restaurants/takeaways per annum for the Gateshead local authority area was estimated to be £1,360 per capita in 2021, increasing to £1,647 in 2024, £1,731 in 2029 and £1,810 in 2034. On this basis, it is estimated that this working population will spend approximately £27.1m in such establishments in 2024, increasing to £32.8m in 2029 and £34.5m in 2034.

7.24 Clearly, not all of this money will be spent at facilities on TVTE, as these employees will also spend money in cafes/restaurants and takeaways in other locations, including close to their

homes and at other destinations (for example, in Newcastle City Centre, Gateshead Town Centre, Metrocentre and/or Retail World). However, it is reasonable to assume that a proportion of the spending will take place at Team Valley – and indeed it is desirable that employees are able to meet their eating and drinking needs in close proximity to their workplace, both for time reasons, and to reduce the need for them to travel elsewhere.

- 7.25 Indeed, even if just 20% of this spending was made at facilities at Team Valley, this would equate to £5.4m in 2024, £6.56 in 2029 and £6.9m in 2034. This is sufficient to support a range of food and drink facilities in order to serve workers at, and visitors to, TVTE. There is, therefore, a local need for the proposed drive-through coffee shop and, given its location just off Kingsway North, the application site is an appropriate site to meet this need. This need was accepted by the Council in approving a drive-through coffee shop at Maingate in 2018.

Summary

- 7.26 Overall, therefore, it is considered that the proposals satisfy the requirements of criteria (a) to (e) of Policy MSGP4. This takes into account a number of factors, including the synergy between the new Wickes and Starbucks uses and other existing employment development at TVTE, and the new jobs which these uses would generate. It also reflects the fact that the development would help to unlock the wider Kingsway North site, generating funding towards the remediation and site access road which are required to bring forward new industrial/warehouse units on land to the south – which would not otherwise come forward.
- 7.27 The proposed development would not have a negative upon existing businesses at TVTE and, indeed, would have a significant positive impact upon the estate, by redeveloping a long-term vacant site for beneficial new uses. The scheme would also contribute towards the wider economic objectives of the Council, by helping to develop a diverse economy, increasing the number of businesses and jobs, as part of a high-quality new development in an accessible location.
- 7.28 Paragraph 126 of the NPPF states that, where the local planning authority considers there to be no reasonable prospect of an application coming forward for the use allocated in a plan, and prior to updating the plan, applications for alternative uses on the land should be supported, where the proposed use would contribute to meeting an unmet need for development in the area. In this context, and as is clear from the above, there is currently no prospect of the wider site coming forward for redevelopment, without the funding required for its remediation and the provision of the new internal access road.
- 7.29 The current applications would help to generate this funding. Furthermore, there is a local need for the new coffee-shop, created by the significant working population at TVTE, and there are currently no Wickes outlets in Gateshead Borough. On this basis, in line with paragraph 126, and taking into account the conformity with Policy MSGP4, it is considered that the principle of the proposed uses – and the release of the site for non-traditional employment development - should be supported.

Retail Policy

- 7.30 Policy CS7 states that the vitality and viability of centres in the retail hierarchy will be maintained and enhanced, and that such centres will form the focal point of uses, services and facilities serving the surrounding population. It also states that, in addition to meeting local needs, the role of the retail sector in attracting visitors and contributing to the economy will be supported.
- 7.31 As explained within Section 5.0, the application site is unrelated to any existing centres. As such, Policy CS7 of the CSUCP requires that it be demonstrated that there are no sites within, or on the edge of, existing centres, which could accommodate the proposed development, and that a retail impact assessment be undertaken in line with national policy. Policy 7 of the MSGP also states that, for retail proposals of 500 sqm net or more, which are located outside of designated centres, an impact assessment is required.
- 7.32 In the context of the above, an assessment of sequentially preferable opportunities has been undertaken as part of this statement. This confirms that there are no such opportunities which are suitable and available to accommodate the proposed development, as a result of a range of constraints. An assessment of the impact of the development upon existing centres has also been undertaken, taking into account a quantitative assessment of the likely trade diversion impacts of the proposed new Wickes warehouse unit. This concludes that the proposals would not have any significant adverse impact, either upon the existing, committed and planned investment in centres, or upon the vitality and viability of centres, having regard both to trade and turnover and consumer choice.
- 7.33 In addition, in line with Part 3 of Policy MSGP4, it has been demonstrated that the proposed coffee shop would comprise a complementary supporting use at TVTE, for which there is a local need generated by employees on, and visitors to, the estate. More generally, both this and the Wickes would enhance the existing range and choice within their respective sectors reducing the need to travel further afield. This is not least given the absence of any directly comparable facilities to Wickes in Gateshead, and the fact that the next nearest outlets are outside of the Borough, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, South Shields and Sunderland.

Highways and Accessibility

- 7.34 A Transport Statement and Travel Plan have been prepared by Arup and accompanies this Application. This Transport Statement in particular demonstrates that there are excellent walking facilities throughout TVTE which connect to nearby residential areas of Lobley Hill, Dunston Hill, Saltwell and Low Teams via a series of crossings. Cycle infrastructure is also provided within TVTE and there are plans to install a new cycleway scheme on the east side of the Kingsway North carriageway (southbound) as part of the West Tyneside Cycle Route. National cycle networks serve areas across Newcastle, Gateshead, North Tyneside and South Tyneside and can be used for journeys to and from the proposed development.
- 7.35 The site is served by several frequent and ad hoc bus services, and staff will be encouraged where possible to commute using public transport through the travel plan process. There are five bus stops within 400m of the proposed development units and bus stops closest to the proposed all have shelters, seating and bus timetable information. Bus services also provide connections to the nearest Metro Station in Gateshead as well as Dunston Rail

Station. The existing Kingsway North bus stop will also be relocated within the site to enhance the footway/cycleway on Kingsway North.

- 7.36 The proposed development is introduced with a vision which outlines the key priorities for establishing sustainable travel where possible. This is supported further by the accompanying Framework Travel Plan which outlines measures to maximise the proposed development's potential to encourage sustainable modes of travel.
- 7.37 An appropriate quantum of car parking is outlined for the proposed development. The total parking provision for cars is within the Council's indicative standards for the proposed development. Additionally, the quantum of cycle parking for the proposed development exceeds the minimum required outlined in the MSGP guidance and allows for future increased modal shift for both staff and visitors. Supporting infrastructure at both units including changing facilities, showers and lockers will be provided to encourage employees to cycle.
- 7.38 The internal road network will provide access to a separate 9,900sqft service yard to cater for deliveries and accommodate articulated HGVs, 10T trucks and general van/couriers serving the proposed Wickes hardware store. A delivery/service bay will be provided on the north side of the proposed Starbucks Drive-Thru.
- 7.39 Development traffic levels were calculated for each element of the proposed development using historic information on trip generation for comparable units and comparing this with more recent TRICS surveys where available. Peak hours for development traffic fall outside of traditional AM and PM peak hours. The majority of trips to and from the proposed development are expected to be made by car and therefore impacts on other modes of transport will be negligible. The proposed development will however implement sustainable transport initiatives to encourage staff to travel by sustainable modes.
- 7.40 The distribution for new vehicle trips has been calculated based on previous analysis undertaken for Kingsway North Phase 1 and applied to trips associated with the proposed Wickes hardware store. The proportion of trips routing via the strategic road network including Lobley Hill Interchange and Coal House Roundabout is 40% while the remaining 60% route via local roads including Eastern Avenue and Lobley Hill Road.
- 7.41 Overall, the proposed development does not have an unacceptable impact on highway safety and the residual cumulative impacts on the local and strategic road network are not considered to be severe. Therefore, there is no reason whereby planning consent should not be granted in transport terms.

Design and Appearance

- 7.42 A Design and Access Statement (the DAS) and a full suite of architectural drawings has been prepared by Faulkner Browns and submitted as part of this Application. The DAS demonstrates that the proposed development would be appropriate, in terms of design, scale and layout, to its location within TVTE and surrounded by other existing industrial and commercial premises. It also demonstrates that the development would be modern in style, consistent with the commercial requirements of the two end operators, and would include a co-ordinated scheme of hard and soft landscaping – the latter of which includes a buffer between Lobley Hill Road and the proposed new units/car parking areas.

- 7.43 The proposals include six no. accessible car parking spaces, along with six no. EV charging spaces. Pedestrian linkages would be provided in between the two units, and linking the units with Lobley Hill Road, Kingsway North and the new access road through the wider site. On this basis, it is considered that the proposals would be in accordance with Policy CS15 of the Core Strategy.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.44 The accompanying Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment, prepared by Portland confirms that the Site falls within Flood Zone 1 (Low Probability), meaning there is less than 0.1% chance of flooding in any year. The Flood Risk Assessment also provides an analysis of areas where potential flooding could occur, and concludes that there is low probability of flooding from rivers, the sea, land, groundwater, reservoirs, canals and other artificial sources.
- 7.45 There are public sewers located within the carriageways that surround the Site which have been assessed in order to determine the potential overspill of water. Due to the Site's topography, in that existing levels are more elevated than the existing road network, the flooding from public sewers is not considered to be a risk. In addition, the site entrance will also be elevated to prevent potential waters entering the site. As a result, the site is not considered to be at risk.
- 7.46 In terms of drainage, the proposals would result in a reduction in water flow rates. The greenfield run off rates have been calculated based on the gross site area and equate to 13.84 l/s in a 100-year return period. The proposed drainage would result in a significant reduction of this to a maximum restricted flow of 6.7 l/s, based on a 100-year return period plus a 35% increase for climate change events.
- 7.47 Moreover, the proposed development includes sustainable urban drainage methods in the design. This includes permeable paving at all car parking areas, which will be connected to an attenuation tank to manage surface water runoff. Further, the roof will discharge into the subterranean attenuation system, and therefore a downstream defender will be provided to provide cleaning to the final discharge. The assessment concludes that the combination of sustainable drainage methods proposed would be sufficient to adequately manage water at the Site.
- 7.48 On the basis of the above, the proposed development is considered to be compliant with Policy CS17.

Ecology and Biodiversity

- 7.49 The application is accompanied by an Ecological Appraisal ('EA'), including an Impact Assessment, as well as a Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment and a Metric Calculation, prepared by OS Ecology. The EA provides the methodology and findings of ecological surveys that were undertaken by OS Ecology. Whilst the survey identified a range of habitats on the Site, it also details a range of appropriate mitigation measures which should be incorporated into the scheme.
- 7.50 In addition to the above, an Arboricultural Impact Assessment ('AIA') including an Arboricultural Survey and Method Statement has been prepared by Elliot Consultancy and

accompanies this application. The AIA certifies that appropriate measures will be put in place during the preparation works prior to construction in order to protect existing trees located at the western boundary of the Site. The EA confirms that no tree removal is required to enable the construction of the development.

Summary

7.51 This section of the report has considered the conformity of the proposals with the relevant policies of the adopted development plan covering the application site - including those relating to employment land, town centre, design, transport and accessibility, ecology and flooding. Having regard to the analysis of these policies, it is concluded that the proposals are in broad accordance with the development plan, when considered as a whole.

8.0 Sustainability

8.1 Given that the proposals would be in accordance with an up-to-date development plan, when considered as a whole, in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development set out in the National Planning Policy Framework ('the Framework' / 'NPPF'), the application should be approved without delay. Notwithstanding this, however, it is also helpful to consider the extent to which the proposed development would be in accordance with national policy, as contained within the NPPF, which is material consideration on the determination of the subject planning application.

8.2 At paragraph 8 of the Framework, it is explained that there are three dimensions to sustainability:

- an economic role;
- a social role; and
- an environmental role.

8.3 As such, this section outlines how the application proposals will contribute to the building of a strong, responsive and competitive economy that supports vibrant and healthy communities and contributes to the protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment.

Economic Contribution

8.4 The NPPF states that the Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. Planning should operate to encourage, and not as an impediment to, sustainable growth and significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system.

8.5 The proposed development is likely to create a number of new jobs both during construction and once operational. In particular, 8 (FTE) jobs will be created by Starbucks and 25 (gross) jobs will be created by Wickes.

8.6 The development could give rise to further, indirect jobs across the wider regional supply chain, including that generated through spending in the local economy by those employed at the development and through the use of local firms/suppliers by the new Wickes and drive-through coffee-shop. This is in addition to the employment created in the construction period.

8.7 More generally, the proposed development would complement other businesses within TVTE and the wider Teams Valley area and help to generate linked trips with these facilities. It would therefore contribute towards enhancing the overall attractiveness and wider estate, as well as its ongoing economic regeneration.

Social Contribution

8.8 The new jobs created as a result of the proposed development (both permanent and during the construction process) would contribute towards meeting local employment objectives. Employment in the retail and leisure industry can represent a good route into employment and represent a stepping stone towards other forms of employment and increasing skill levels. In this context, it is also relevant that:

- Wickes and Starbucks do not use zero hours contracts and are in full compliance with the European Working Time Directive;
- they operate flexible shifts and there is a bonus scheme for all employees;
- they have a high internal promotion rate and there is a Graduate Scheme in place; and
- all employees are paid at least the minimum wage for 25 + year olds regardless of age.

8.9 It is estimated that within the Team Valley area, there are some 21,000 employees who, along with visitors to businesses and those staying in hotels, generate a need for places to eat and drink. Though there are various facilities dispersed across Team Valley, including those in the existing Maingate and Valley shopping parades, there are just three nationally-operated coffee shops, comprising O'Briens at Maingate, Starbucks within the Next store at Retail World (at the southern end of Team Valley) and Costa at the south of Teams Valley Trading Estate. In addition, there are currently no existing Wickes outlets in Gateshead, with the nearest such facilities being at are outside of the Borough, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, South Shields and Sunderland.

8.10 The current proposals would enhance the existing range and choice of uses selling home improvement and other DIY goods, as well as coffee-shops, available to the local residential and working population – including those employed at or visiting TVTE. In doing so, the new uses will help to reduce the need for employees at, and visitors to, Team Valley to travel elsewhere to visit comparable retail and food and beverage facilities.

Environmental Contribution

8.11 There are bus stops located on Lobley Hill Road and Kingsway North Road, from which regular services run to surrounding parts of Gateshead, such as Low Fell, Wickham and Winlaton, as well as other locations in the surrounding area. A Framework Travel Plan has also been produced and accompanies the application. There is also a cycleway link which travels along the northern and eastern boundary of the Site as well as footways which facilitate access from other parts of the wider TVTE for pedestrians. Provision for cyclists and pedestrians has also been made as part of the proposed development itself.

8.12 As set out above, there are also currently no existing Wickes outlets in Gateshead Borough. By enhancing the range and choice of food and beverage provision available at Team Valley, the proposals would help to reduce the need for workers to travel further afield to meet their needs. The new uses would also generate linked trips, both between themselves, and with other existing uses on the wider TVTE. This will help to reduce carbon emissions through decreased vehicular mileage.

8.13 The application is accompanied by a Flood Risk and Drainage Impact Assessment. This confirms that the development will include various mitigation measures, including finished site and floor levels, and sustainable urban drainage methods, such as permeable paving, attenuation tanks and a downstream defender. As such, it concludes that the development will not give rise to increased flooding either on or off site.

8.14 The NPPF emphasises the importance of making effective use of previously developed land (Paragraph 123). Furthermore, part (b) of paragraph 124 explains that substantial weight should be given to the value of using suitable brownfield land within settlements for homes

and other identified needs and support appropriate opportunities to remediate despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated or unstable land.

- 8.15 As explained earlier in this statement, the currently proposed development would help to generate funding to support the remediation of the wider Kingsway North site and the provision of a new internal access road. This would, in turn, help to facilitate the delivery of the previously approved industrial/warehouse units on land immediately to the south, which is otherwise unlikely to take place. The scheme would therefore not only result in the redevelopment of previously developed land in a prominent location, but also help to unlock the wider site.

Summary

- 8.16 Overall, the proposed development will make a significant contribution to the economic, social and environmental well-being of the area. Taking all relevant considerations of the NPPF into account, it is considered that the proposal amounts to sustainable development.

9.0 Conclusions

- 9.1 This Planning Statement has been prepared by Lichfields on behalf of North East Property Partnership Ltd, in order to accompany a full planning application in relation to land at Kingsway North and Second Avenue. The proposed development includes a new Wickes warehouse unit, a Starbucks drive-through coffee shop and an EV charging facilities, as well as associated car parking, servicing, access and a co-ordinated scheme of hard and soft landscaping. This statement addresses relevant national and local planning policy in respect of the proposed development.
- 9.2 While the uses proposed in the application do not comprise traditional employment uses, it has been demonstrated that the proposals satisfy the criteria for non-traditional employment uses set out in the plan. This reflects a number of factors, including the synergy between the new Wickes and Starbucks uses and other existing employment development at TVTE, and the new jobs which these uses would generate. It also reflects the fact that the development would help to unlock the wider Kingsway North site, generating funding towards the remediation and site access road which are required to bring forward new industrial/warehouse units on land to the south – which would not otherwise come forward.
- 9.3 It has also been demonstrated that there are no sequentially preferable opportunities which are suitable and available to accommodate the proposed development, as a result of a range of constraints. The statement also concludes that the proposals would not have any significant adverse impact upon existing centres. This takes into account the absence of any schemes coming forward within in existing centres which could be affected by the new Wickes or Starbucks, and the fact that any trade diversion would be likely to be spread across a wide range of facilities – many of which are unrelated to existing defined centres.
- 9.4 The proposed development also complies with the requirements of other relevant policies within the development plan, including those in respect of matters such as design, transport and accessibility, ecology and flooding. On this basis, it is considered that the proposed development is broadly in accordance with policies within the adopted development plan when considered as a whole and, as such, taking into account paragraph 11 of the NPPF, should be approved without delay.
- 9.5 In addition, and, taking into account the three strands of sustainable development set out at paragraph 8 of the NPPF, it is clear that the proposals would also deliver a range of economic, social and environmental benefits which should be taken into account when determining the application. These include the creation of a significant number of new employment opportunities and the incorporation of a range of sustainability features. They also include enhancing the availability and accessibility of both outlets selling home improvement/DIY goods and coffee-shops, reducing the need to travel, and having a significant positive impact upon TVTE, by redeveloping a long-term vacant site for beneficial new uses.

Appendix 1 Impact Assessment

Proposed Wickes, No. 1 Team Valley

Comparison Goods Retail Impact Assessment

Table 1: Population within Study Area (Persons)

					Growth	Growth
Year	2021	2024	2029	2034	2024-2029	2024-2034
Study Area (Gateshead LA)	196,154	196,653	196,452	196,688	-0.1%	0.0%
Total Within Study Area	196154	196653	196452	196688	-0.1%	0.0%

1. Population within Study Area between 2021 and 2033 sourced from Experian

Table 2: Comparison Goods Expenditure per Capita within Study Area (2021 Prices)

Year	2021	2024	2029	2034
Study Area (Gateshead LA)	2,273	2,278	2,482	2,820

- 1. Base expenditure per capita estimates in 2021 sourced from Experian (in 2021 prices)
- 2. Base expenditure per capita estimates projected forwards using growth rates set out in Experian Retail Planner 20 (February 2023)
- 3. Makes allowance (deduction) for expenditure made via special forms of trading based on Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 20 (February 2023)

Table 3: Total Comparison Goods Expenditure within Study Area (2021 Prices)

Year	2021	2024	2029	2034	Growth 2024-2029		Growth 2024-2034	
					%	£m	%	£m
Study Area (Gateshead LA)	445.858	447.976	487.594	554.660	8.9%	39.618	23.8%	106.685
Total	445.858	447.976	487.594	554.660	8.9%	39.618	23.8%	106.685

1. Total comparison goods expenditure obtained by applying population to expenditure per capita forecasts (from Tables 1 and 2 respectively)

Table 4: Comparison Goods Market Shares and Expenditure Flows within the Study Area in 2024 (2021 prices)

Centre/Location	Floorspace (sqm)	Core Catchment Area		Inflow (£m)	Total Turnover	
		(%)	(£m)		(£m)	(£/sqm)
Gateshead Town Centre	10711	10.2%	45.790	5.088	50.877	4750
Blaydon District Centre	4626	3.9%	17.694	1.966	19.661	4250
Metrocentre	64037	17.2%	76.844	307.378	384.222	6000
Metro Retail Park/Metro Park West	49886	19.5%	87.301	87.301	174.601	3500
Retail World, Team Valley	29371	12.3%	55.071	55.071	110.141	3750
Other Stores, Core Catchment Area		10.0%	44.798	4.978	49.775	
Sub-Total (Study Area)	158,631	73.1%	327.497	461.780	789.277	
Outflow		26.9%	120.478			
Total		100.0%	447.976			

Notes:

1. Net comparison goods floorspace for Gateshed Town Centre, Blaydon District Centre and Metrocentre obtained from Goad
2. Net comparison goods floorspace for Metro Retail Park/Metro Park West and Retail World obtained from VOA website, supplemented by Lichfields estimations
3. Total comparison goods expenditure within the Study Area at 2024 sourced from Table 3
4. Total comparison goods turnover of existing centres/destinations based on net floorspace and benchmark turnover to floorspace ratios (taking into account scale/nature of floorspace and role /function of centre/destination)
5. Inflow takes into scale, nature and accessibiltiy of each centre/destination

Table 5: Comparison Goods Market Shares and Expenditure Flows within the Study Area in 2029 (2021 prices)

Centre/Location	Floorspace (sqm)	Core Catchment Area		Inflow	Total Turnover	
		(%)	(£m)		(£m)	(£/sqm)
Gateshead Town Centre	10711	10.2%	49.839	5.538	55.377	5170
Blaydon District Centre	4626	3.9%	19.259	2.140	21.399	4626
Metrocentre	64037	17.2%	83.640	334.562	418.202	6531
Metro Retail Park/Metro Park West	49886	19.5%	95.021	95.021	190.042	3810
Retail World, Team Valley	29371	12.3%	59.941	59.941	119.882	4082
Other Stores, Core Catchment Area		10.0%	48.759	5.418	54.177	
Sub-Total (Study Area)	158,631	73.1%	356.460	502.619	859.080	
Outflow		26.9%	131.133			
Total		100.0%	487.594			

Notes:

1. Net comparison goods floorspace for Gateshed Town Centre, Blaydon District Centre and Metrocentre obtained from Goad
2. Net comparison goods floorspace for Metro Retail Park/Metro Park West and Retail World obtained from VOA website, supplemented by Lichfields estimations
3. Total comparison goods expenditure within the Core Catchment Area at 2029 sourced from Table 3
4. Total comparison goods turnover of existing centres/destinations based on net floorspace and benchmark turnover to floorspace ratios (taking into account scale/nature of floorspace and role /function of centre/destination)
5. Inflow takes into scale, nature and accessibiltiy of each centre/destination

Table 6 (a): Forecast Turnover of Proposed Comparison Goods Retail Floorspace in 2029 (2021 Prices)

	Total
Gross Floorspace	2490
Net Floorspace (All Goods)	2239
Net Floorspace (Comparison Goods)	2239
Turnover to Floorspace Ratio (£ per sqm)	2458
Total Turnover (£m)	5.50

- 1. Gross and net floorspace sourced from UKLKE
- 2. Turnover to floorspace ratio based on Wickes company average, as sourced from Global Data, with allowance made for growth in turnover efficiency (based on Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 20.0, February 2023)

Table 6 (b): Origin of Turnover of Proposed Comparison Goods Retail Floorspace (2021 Prices)

	Total		
	Trade Drawn (%)	Trade Drawn (£m)	Penetration Rate (%)
Study Area (Gateshead LA)	80.0%	4.40	0.9%
Beyond Study Area	20.0%	1.10	
Total Turnover (£m)	100.00%	5.50	

- 1. Origin of turnover based on scale, nature and accessibility of existing, committed and proposed retail floorspace

Table 7: Summary of Comparison Goods Turnovers and Trade Diversions within Primary Catchment Area (2021 prices)

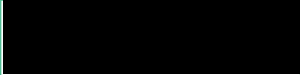
Centre/Location	Floorspace (sqm)	Turnover in 2029 - No New Development	Spread of Trade Diversions		Turnover in 2029 - With Proposed Development	Trade Diversions Impact
			%	(£m)	(£m)	%
		(£m)	%	(£m)	(£m)	%
Gateshead Town Centre	10711	55.377	1.0%	0.055	55.322	0.1%
Blaydon District Centre	4626	21.399	0.5%	0.028	21.372	0.1%
Metrocentre	64037	418.202	1.0%	0.055	418.147	0.0%
Metro Retail Park/Metro Park West	49886	190.042	22.5%	1.238	188.804	0.7%
Retail World, Team Valley	29371	119.882	20.0%	1.101	118.781	0.9%
Other Stores, Core Catchment Area		54.177	20.0%	1.101	53.076	2.0%
Sub-Total (Core Catchment Area)	158,631	859.080	65.0%	3.578	855.502	
Outflow			35.0%	1.926		
Total			100.0%	5.504		

- 1. Comparison goods turnover and floorspace of existing centres/desintations sourced from Table 4
- 2. Spread of trade diversion from existing centres/destinations takes into account scale, nature and accessibility of existing/proposed floorspace

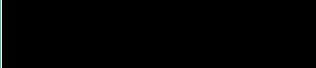
Birmingham



Bristol



Cardiff

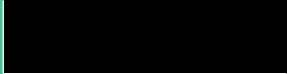


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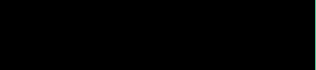
Edinburgh



Leeds



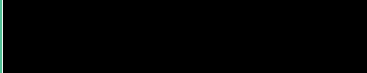
London



Manchester



Newcastle



Thames Valley

