

RDC response to Inspector’s Pre Hearing Matters for the Council 27 August 2013

Using the original numbering:

9. c) There may have been some misunderstanding here as this question was originally directed to other housing sites “within and adjoining” the AAP area. This is covered by a proposed minor amendment and I confirm that I do not consider it desirable for the HAAP to be a document that is wholly separate from wider planning strategies.

9.c) Noted.

11. a) However the percentages are calculated it is difficult to see how the amount of retail frontage will be increased from its current level without specific measures to achieve this. A new food retailer would increase the retail presence but would not necessarily increase “frontage” and would be outside the secondary area. Furthermore, any proposal for a non-retail use would be likely to be contrary to criterion a. of Policy 7.

11.a) RDC proposes that the Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages within the Hockley Area Action Plan should retain their current positions.

Hockley Centre does not perform as well as the other centres in the District in terms of retail expenditure and offer, losing a significant amount to other areas. Because Hockley’s central retail area is underperforming there has been an increase in the number of none A1 uses in the area. While some none A1 uses are to be expected even in the central retail area, RDC envisages that by addressing the leakage of retail expenditure from the AAP area the HAAP will precipitate a further an increase in A1 uses as demand grows.

Whilst a food retailer of the type suggested would not necessarily increase the percentage of A1 frontage in the AAP area RDC expects that a food retailer of the range and scale proposed in the HAAP would go a significant way towards increasing the footfall in the AAP area leading to a greater demand for A1 uses.

11. b) The Council indicates a willingness to remove the word “appropriate” and in my view it should.

11.b) Noted. The word ‘appropriate’ will be removed from Policy 7.

11. e) By amending criterion c. to refer to developments that did not comply with criteria a. or b. but which made a positive contribution and attracted people into the centre the Council’s expressed objectives would be more fully reflected. If the Council has concerns about character and amenity of potential town centre uses then this could be addressed by a further criterion.

11.e) We agree that Policy 7 is in need of clarification. Firstly it should be noted that the Criteria set out in Policy 7 should be considered in conjunction with one another and not on an individual basis. This is the case for all of the Policies within the HAAP in which criteria are included. Policy 7 will be updated to reflect this fact more clearly. Based on the Inspector’s recommendations we have included an additional criterion. Criterion d. will deal with the potential impact of development on Hockley’s amenity and character.