

**Mr D Smith**  
**c/o Kerry Freeman (Programme Officer)**  
**By email**

Ask for: Sam Hollingworth  
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My Ref: SH-HAAP20092013  
Your Ref:

Date: 20 September 2013

Dear Mr Smith,

**Re: Hockley Area Action Plan – Policy 6**

I write following the afternoon examination hearing session of 18 September 2013, and in response to your request that the Council confirms its position in respect of Policy 6 of the proposed Hockley Area Action Plan.

Following discussions with the Council's Portfolio Holder for Planning and Transportation on the evidence that was presented at the morning hearing session of 18 September 2013, the Council remains of the view that Policy 6 as currently proposed is sound and would aid the delivery of the Council's objectives for Hockley centre.

To confirm, as set out in Core Strategy Policy RTC6, the Council's objectives for Hockley centre include an enhanced retail offer; and the redevelopment of industrial units for a variety of alternative uses, including retail.

We are mindful of the need for the Hockley Area Action Plan to be realistic and deliverable; and in this respect we note the advice from GL Hearn which informed the production of the Hockley Area Action Plan, which stated market research clearly indicated food retailing and residential use will be the main value driver for the redevelopment of Eldon Way<sup>1</sup>. GL Hearn also note that, whilst there may be some interest in developing a larger store in the area, based on a high level examination of local provision, there is expected to be demand for a relatively modest store in the 2,000 - 3,000 square metre range<sup>2</sup>. We are also mindful of the findings of the Employment Land Study, which identified the lack of suitable larger retail premises for prospective traders as one of Hockley centre's weaknesses<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Page 1 of Hockley Area Action Plan Submission Document Viability Note (Evidence base document 82.EB33)

<sup>2</sup> Paragraph 2.12 of Hockley Property Market Overview (Evidence base document 85.EB36)

<sup>3</sup> Table 6.3 of Retail and Leisure Study (2008) (Evidence base document 61.EB12)

At the same time, the Council are of the view that it is important to ensure that too large a food store – one which would overly dominate the centre to the detriment of its vitality and character – is not developed in Hockley. The Council would wish to see any food store developed in Hockley centre act as an anchor store, increasing footfall in the centre, whilst complementing existing uses.

The Council is of the view that Policy 6, in placing restrictions on the size of any food store and requiring future development in Eldon Way to integrate with Spa Road, balances the aforementioned issues and will lead to development that meets the Council's vision and objectives for Hockley.

Whilst the Council are of the view that the policy as currently worded is sound, if you were to disagree we would of course welcome any recommendations you may have as to how the policy could be made sound whilst still meeting the aforementioned objectives for Hockley.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. Hollingworth', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**Samuel Hollingworth**  
**Planning Policy Team Leader**