# Sequential Report and Planning Statement

# NOVO COSMETICS, Church Street, Holbeach PE127LL

# July 2024

## Report

This sequential report has been requested by South Holland District Council Planning Department, This Sequential Report has been prepared in support of the planning application in assessing application REF H09-0423-24 for the change of use to a Shop planning Class E(a) at the mentioned location and associated works.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying plans, the heritage and planning statement and planning application.

The application is supported by the town council in principal, but the planners have requested a sequential report to support the proposal sequential test in line with Section 7 of the National Planning policy Framework.

## 1.0 Sequential Approach

1.1 The proposal seeks change of use to a Shop planning Class E(a) from the current beauty clinic. The defined town centre of Holbeach is located just to the to the north and is in close proximity to the application site. However, the site is outside the defined town centre and therefore a sequential approach is required to justify the proposals at this location.

1.2 This Sequential Report will assess the town centre, then edge of centre locations, it will assess the nature of the proposal and provide further justification to be considered in the planning balance.

1.3 The defined town centre of Holbeach is focused on the area along West End and High Street and the areas just to the south and to the north of this. A walkover of the town centre has been carried out and did not identify any suitable commercial vacant premises. The only vacant ground floor premises in the town centre Identified was No 1 West End on the corner between West End Road and B1168 this location would not be suitable because parking and access would not be feasible for a food retail shop of this size.
A First-floor office space is advertised above Nationwide building society at 3a West End. This location would not be suitable for a retail shop.

1.4 The sequential approach then assessed local agents and websites to ascertain if any town centre premises were available for retail. Companies including Right Move, Property Link, Zoopla, Prime Location and Boxpod and were used showing the same spaces for rent in the town centre as mentioned above under 1.3 and any other spaces advertised where either outside of the town centre or for small office spaces

1.5 It can therefore be concluded that there are no suitable retail premises of any size available within the town centre. Some upper floors may be available for alternative uses; however, retail requires a ground floor presence, and such premises are not available within the town centre.

1.6 Furthermore, the town centre has a tightly drawn boundary with no development opportunities for new build new retail premises within the designation. There are existing buildings which would have conversion potential; however, these are currently either in commercial use in a town centre of low vacancy rates and high occupation or in residential use. It is unlikely from a viability perspective that the

conversion from residential to retail would be forthcoming. In any case, residential properties do not easily lend themselves to conversion to retail.

1.7 Therefore, as no premises exist within the town centre.

1.8 Part (2) of Policy Ec8 states that with new retail uses development should be of a scale appropriate to the role, function and character of the settlement and not undermine the balance of the hierarchy.

1.9 The public floor area of the store comprises 122 square metres with a further 57 square metres of ancillary/storage floor area. As such, the store is a relatively small convenience shop offering convenience items akin to a corner shop. It is a top-up store rather than a store for a weekly shop and does not provide specialist items that can be found in other retail stores within the town centre. The store sells a small number of items per visitor and operates longer opening hours to reflect the retail offer.

2.0 As such, the store does not seek to compete with town centre uses but to provide an additional retail offer for convenience and top-up shoppers. It is not considered that such a provision is overly provided for within the town centre and there is a market for such an operation. The town centre operates at near full occupancy and trades successfully at close to capacity. It is therefore considered that the proposed retail premises is an appropriate provision, function and character and does not undermine the balance of the hierarchy. The proposal would not undermine the vitality or viability of the town centre.

2.1 Policy Ec8 also requires proposals to conserve and enhance the character and distinctiveness of each centre in terms of design and protect and enhance the built and historical assets of the centre, and their wider setting.

2.2 The site occupies a location within the conservation area.

2.3 Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 states in respect to any buildings or other land in a conservation area special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area.

2.5 It is concluded that the change of use of the building itself would not have a harmful impact on the character or appearance of the conservation area. The building is existing and has been converted with little physical alteration and the impact within the site, street scene and wider area is unchanged by the use itself.

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## 4.0 Conclusion

4.1 This sequential test demonstrates that there are no sequentially preferable premises within the town centre. The application site occupies the next sequentially preferable site being edge of centre. The site is adjacent to the town centre boundary, there are other commercial properties within the vicinity of the site, The location on Church Street offers good accessibility for both pedestrians and motorists, with existing parking facilities on church street.