ROK PLANNING

RETAIL STATEMENT

In respect of

THE BELL INN, 33 CHURCH STREET, PINCHBECK, SPALDING, PE11 3UB

On behalf of

VENTURE BUSINESS SPACE LTD

Prepared by:	**AA/DB**
Authorised by:	**MR**
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CONTENTS

APPENDICES 1
1. INTRODUCTION 2
2. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT 3
3. CONTEXT AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT 6
4. RETAIL SEQUENTIAL TEST 9
5. RETAIL IMPACT ASSESSMENT 15
6. CONCLUSION 24

Appendices

Appendix A	Sequential Assessment Site Search Table

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This Retail Statement has been prepared by ROK Planning, on the instruction of Venture Business Space Ltd, to support a planning application relating to the Site at The Bell Inn, 33 Church Street, Pinchbeck, Spalding, PE11 3UB.

1.2 The application seeks planning permission for the following proposal:

''Proposed change of use of ex-Bell public house to fall within Use Class E including part demolition, single storey rear extension and external works including hard and soft landscaping, external lighting and plant compound.''

1.3 The application seeks the change of use of a vacant former public house in order to create a new convenience store.

1.4 The Site is located within Pinchbeck which, whilst falling outside of the identified retail hierarchy, is classed as a 'Main Service Centre'. Policy 24 of the South East Lincolnshire Local Plan promotes the development of individual local shops within a settlement boundary which meet the day-to-day needs of nearby residents.

1.5 Whilst the proposed convenience store, by way of its location and small scale, is clearly intended to meet the day-to-day needs of nearby residents in line with policy 24, this Retail Statement provides a full assessment of the proposed development against relevant retail policies.

1.6 The application of this assessment follows the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2024) and its accompanying Planning Practice Guidance.

1.7 The subsequent sections of this assessment are structured as follows:

- **Section 2** sets out the relevant planning policy context;
- **Section 3** explores the proposed development against the relevant planning policy context;
- **Section 4** details the application of the Sequential Assessment;
- **Section 5** details the application of the Retail Impact Assessment; and
- **Section 6** provides an analysis and conclusion.

2. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 This section sets out the relevant policy that forms the basis of the assessment contained within this Statement.

2.2 The following planning policy and guidance is relevant the context of the application site:

- The National Planning Policy Framework (2024) (NPPF);
- South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 (adopted March 2019);
- South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 (2019) Policies Maps; and
- Planning Practice Guidance.

2.3 These are addressed where relevant below.

National Planning Policy Framework (2024)

2.4 The Retail Sequential Test is a vital part of national planning policy and is used to support the vitality of existing retail centres.

2.5 Chapter 7 of the NPPF (2024), 'Ensuring the vitality of town centres', paragraph 91 states:

"Local planning authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Main town centre 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."

2.6 In this case, the proposal Site is defined as an 'out-of-centre' location due to its location further than 300m from the Spalding Town Centre boundary.

2.7 In terms of retail impact, paragraph 94 of the NPPF states that:

"When assessing applications for retail and leisure development outside 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 (if there is no locally set threshold, the default threshold is 2,500m2 of gross floorspace). This should include assessment of:

a) 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

b) the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and the wider retail catchment (as applicable to the scale and nature of the scheme).''

2.8 Finally, paragraph 95 of the NPPF states:

"Where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact on one or more of the considerations in paragraph 94, it should be refused."

2.9 The requirement for a Retail Sequential Assessment and Retail Impact Assessment is also set out within local planning policy. This is detailed further below.

South East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 (2019)

2.10 As noted above, policy 24 of the Local Plan (2019) identifies a 'town centres first' approach. The policy states:

"The vitality and viability of centres in the retail hierarchy will be maintained and enhanced. Proposals for retail use outside the Primary Shopping Areas as identified on the Policies Map, or for other main town centre uses, outside the town centre boundaries and where not provided for under Policy 27, will be required to demonstrate their suitability through a sequential test in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.''

2.11 The policy also outlines the requirement for applications to assess the impact of proposals on nearby retail provision:

"In addition, and other than for provision under Policy 27, a robust assessment of impact on nearby town centres will be required for any retail proposal that:

1. provides a retail floor space of 500sqm (net) or more outside Boston town centre boundary (but within Boston Borough); and

2. provides a retail floor space of 250sqm (net) or more outside Spalding town centre boundary and the District and Local Centres (for Kirton within Boston Borough and for all other town centres within South Holland District).''

2.12 Policy 24 further states:

"Outside of the retail hierarchy, individual local shops and small neighbourhood clusters of them within a settlement boundary, which meet the day-to-day needs of nearby residents, will be promoted. Wherever possible such new uses should be located in close proximity to each other, unless serving very local catchments e.g. corner shops.''

Planning Practice Guidance

2.13 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides information on the application of the Retail Sequential and Impact Test in decision making.

2.14 Regarding the sequential test, the guidance notes that the suitability of more central sites must be considered, and that due regard must be given to a degree of flexibility in considering this. The guidance continues to set out that when identifying sites, the suitability, accessibility, availability and viability of the site should be considered.

2.15 Ultimately, the guidance explains that where there are no suitable sequentially preferable locations, the sequential test is passed.

2.16 Regarding the impact test, the guidance notes that the test should be undertaken in a proportionate and locally appropriate way, drawing on existing information where possible.

2.17 The guidance continues to set out a number of steps to undertaking the test, and notes that in terms of trade draw the assessment should relate to a certain geographic area (i.e. the distance people are likely to travel) and a particular market segment (e.g. convenience retail).

3. CONTEXT AND PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

3.4 The Site is a vacant former public house known as 'The Bell Inn' fronting Church Street.

3.5 The Site is located at 33 Church Street towards the centre of Pinchbeck village on the eastern edge, opposite a public green space and a few doors down from the local St Mary CofE church.

3.6 Pinchbeck itself is mainly residential but benefits from a small collection of shops and facilities such as Knight Street Pharmacy, Pinchbeck Village Hall, and Pinchbeck East CofE Primary School. There is also a small convenience store (SPAR) located a 3-minute walk away from the Site.

3.7 The Site falls within the settlement boundary of Pinchbeck under policies 19, 22 and 23 of the South-East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 (2019). It is also located within the Main Service Centre of Pinchbeck under policy 1 of the Local Plan (2019), which states that development will be permitted within such centres where it supports their role as a service centre for the settlement itself.

3.8 Beyond the Site's location within a 'Main Service Centre', policy 24 of the South-East Lincolnshire Local Plan also promotes the development of individual local shops within a settlement boundary which meet the day-to-day needs of nearby residents.

3.9 Given the broad policy support for the delivery of new facilities, and indeed for new shops, in locations such as the Site, a planning application was made under ref. H14-0583-25 which sought the following:

"Proposed change of use of ex-Bell public house to fall within Use Class E including part demolition, single storey rear extension and external works including hard and soft landscaping, external lighting and plant compound."

3.10 The existing public house building structure was to be retained alongside partial demolition, a single storey extension and external works. The ground floor of the building was proposed to become a new Use Class E (a) retail unit.

3.11 The proposed store was to have a gross internal area of 355sqm. When factoring in storage, staff areas and ancillary back-of-house requirements, it was anticipated that the store would provide an approximate net sales area of 225sqm.

Notably, this falls well below the 280sqm limit contained within the Sunday Trading Act.

3.12 Indeed, given the scale of the proposed store, the proposed development was clearly intended to function as a local convenience food store serving those in the immediate locality, primarily as a day-to-day 'top-up' convenience shopping destination. The store was expected to sell a range of everyday goods including bread, milk, eggs, fruit and vegetables, fresh meat, ready meals, and snacks, along with daily newspapers, tobacco and magazines.

3.13 However, following Council feedback including a request that further retail justification be provided, the application was withdrawn.

3.14 This Retail Statement supports a revised submission for the same development as described above, providing a full assessment of the proposed development against relevant retail policies.

3.15 In the first instance, whilst the Site is within a 'Main Service Centre', it is relevant to establish that such Centres are considered to fall outside of the retail hierarchy set out within the South-East Lincolnshire Local Plan.

3.16 The nearest designated retail centre to the Site is Spalding Town Centre, which is located 3.05km from the Site. Given that the Site is over 300m from the boundary of the Town Centre, the Site is by default 'out-of-centre' in retail terms.

3.17 Mindful of the above, it is necessary to acknowledge that the support for individual shops in out-of-centre locations within settlement boundaries as contained within policy 24 is contingent on the following:

- A demonstration of their suitability via the satisfaction of the sequential test; and

- A robust impact assessment of impact on nearby town centres for any retail proposal that provides a retail floor space of 250sqm (net) or more outside Spalding Town Centre boundary.

3.18 With the above in mind, the next section of this Statement contains the application of the sequential test.

3.19 In addition, whilst the net retail floorspace proposed falls below the threshold of 250sqm contained within policy 24, a retail impact assessment is contained within the penultimate section of this assessment for robustness.

3.20 The final section of this Statement provides a conclusion.

4. RETAIL SEQUENTIAL TEST

Introduction

4.1 This section details the methodology and application of the Sequential Test including how the search area has been defined, how sites have been assessed, and how sites have been identified. The methodology for discounting potential sites is fully explained in accordance with the requirements of the development plan and the NPPF.

Defining the Search Area

Store Catchment Area

4.2 The proposed convenience store will total 355sqm GIA with a shop floor area of only 225sqm, being below the 280sqm limit contained within the Sunday Trading Act.

4.3 Based on market experience, a convenience store of this size would normally only sell approximately 2,500 product lines. In comparison to the range of lines generally sold in larger supermarkets (between 8,000 to 30,000), this is far fewer.

4.4 In line with its proposed use and size the store is expected to sell a range of everyday goods including bread, milk, eggs, fruit and vegetables, fresh meat, ready meals, and snacks along with newspapers, tobacco and magazines.

4.5 Mindful of the above, it is clear that the development is proposed to serve as a day-to-day top up convenience store, serving people in the immediate locality. This includes those that do not or cannot drive to larger centres.

4.6 On that basis, it is clear that the proposed development will serve a local catchment only. Indeed, it is generally accepted in various locations across the Country that a store of such a size operates with a catchment area of circa 1.5km (radius).

Site Location and Centres

4.7 The nearest Centre and Primary Shopping Area is Spalding Town Centre, as identified by policy 24 of the Local Plan (2019) and located 3km away from the application Site (a 5-minute drive or a 42-minute walk).

4.8 The second nearest designated Centre is Holbeach, as identified by policy 24 of the Local Plan (2019) and located 14.7km away from the application Site (a 20-minute drive or 3-hour and 18-minute walk).

4.9 Given the fact that the proposed store is intended to serve a local-catchment only, it is not considered appropriate to consider alternative sites within Holbeach Town Centre.

4.10 Indeed, even the defined boundary of Spalding Town Centre and Primary Shopping Area is located at a greater distance from the Site than the generally accepted catchment area for a store of the proposed scale (1.5km). The Centre is considered in further detail below.

Spalding Town Centre and Primary Shopping Area

4.11 The defined boundary of Spalding Town Centre and Primary Shopping Area are both identified on the Council's Local Plan (2019) Policies Maps, Inset map 2 – Spalding and Pinchbeck.

4.12 The Spalding Town Centre boundary stretches from The Crescent in the south up towards Spalding Railway Station and Kings Rd to the north-west, and stretches eastwards towards Spalding Police Station at Westlode St, circling back around along the River Welland and High St.

4.13 The defined Spalding Primary Shopping Area covers Hall Pl, Market Pl, Vine St, Gore Ln and Sheep Market within Spalding Town Centre and is approximately 245 metres wide.

4.14 Existing retail provision within Spalding Town Centre consists of a number of convenience outlets and supermarkets, including the Sainsburys, Iceland, Lidl and Aldi. It also hosts further small-scale convenience provision (off-licenses, green grocers), some small-scale comparison shops, restaurants, cafes, hotels, galleries and a few public houses.

Search Area

4.15 Notwithstanding that Spalding Town Centre is located at a greater distance from the Site than the generally accepted catchment area for a store of the proposed scale (1.5km), to ensure robustness and to comply with relevant policy, a search for alternative sites has been undertaken within the defined Spalding Town Centre boundary plus 300m 'edge-of-centre' boundary.

Defining the criteria used to assess sites

Size

4.16 The primary criteria used to determine whether an alternative site would be suitable for the development is the necessary size, incorporating a degree of flexibility.

4.17 The Site area for the proposed development is approximately 640sqm.

4.18 At 355sqm gross, with a net shop floor area of only circa 225sqm, the proposed store will be in any case of a small scale.

4.19 Notwithstanding this, the proposed development will also include the provision of an external refuse, recycling and plant area, 15 no. car parking spaces including 1 no. disabled bay, 1 no. EV charging bay, 4 no. cycle parking spaces, 1 no. motorcycle parking space and a dedicated off-street service vehicle unloading area.

4.20 Plant is essential to the operation of the store. In addition, the proposed car parking provision complies with the requirements set out within the parking standards at Appendix 6 of the Local Plan (2019).

4.21 On this basis, it is not considered that the level of car parking or the size of the external refuse, plant and recycling area can be reduced in order to accommodate the proposed development onto a smaller site, should this be available.

4.22 Similarly, it is not considered appropriate to consider far larger sites as suitable for the proposed development, as a development of the proposed scale on these sites would constitute an inefficient use of the land. Furthermore, increasing the scale of the proposed development in order to fit a larger site would negate the purpose of the store as a top-up convenience shop only.

4.23 When considering the suitability of existing units only (which already have consent for use as a retail convenience store) as opposed to re-development opportunities, only the GIA of the unit itself will be taken into consideration (given car-parking would not be a policy requirement).

4.24 Therefore, in order to be considered suitable for the development, alternative sites must be able to accommodate the following requirements with regards to size:

- Sites requiring re-development must provide the ability to accommodate:
  - An internal floorspace area of 355sqm gross and 225sqm of net sales floorspace;
  - At least 15 no. car-parking spaces;
  - A suitably sized refuse, plant and recycling enclosure; and
  - A total Site area between 544sqm and 736sqm (+/- 15% of the 640sqm total Site area proposed as part of the application).

- Existing retail sites must provide the ability to accommodate:
  - An internal floorspace area of between 320sqm and 390sqm (+/- 10% of the 355sqm floorspace proposed as part of the application); and
  - Suitable space to accommodate a refuse, plant and recycling enclosure.

4.25 Similarly, sites which are approximately 20% larger than the overall site area will not be considered appropriate for the reasons given in paragraph 5.24.

4.26 This methodology aligns with a March 2012 Supreme Court judgement (Tesco Stores Limited v Dundee City Council). The Judgement, at paragraph 45 (onwards), ruled that when undertaking a sequential exercise the word 'suitable' means the proposal for which the applicant is seeking permission, and not whether the proposed development could be altered or reduced to fit an alternative site.

Other Considerations

4.27 For those sites which are considered suitable to accommodate the requirements of the proposed development in terms of size, further considerations are taken into account. This includes:

- Where the site is not already in retail use, whether the existing use of the site is protected by planning policy and thus not suitable for retail development;
- Whether any other development constraints would prevent retail development of the scale proposed; and
- Whether the site is currently available.

4.28 The methodology for identifying sites is detailed below.

Identification of Sites

4.29 The following paragraphs set out how potential sites have been identified and their application within the Sequential Assessment relative to the above methodology. The assessment of the sites is split into two parts:

- Sites identified via independent online property searches;
- Sites identified through liaison with local property agents; and
- Independent search of online planning records.

4.30 For each of the above, a detailed assessment of each site has been undertaken including an assessment of size, availability, and any further potential constraints prohibiting the site from accommodating the proposed development.

Sites identified via independent online property searches

4.31 The following national and local property agent online listings have been reviewed to source alternative sites:

- Savills;
- Property Link;
- On The Market;
- Knight Frank;
- Prime Location;
- LoopNet;
- Carter Jonas; and
- Zoopla.

4.32 Searches were undertaken in August and September 2025.

4.33 The sites identified via search of the above property listings are assessed in the table attached at **Appendix A**.

Liaison with Local Property Agents

4.34 The following local property agents were contacted regarding the availability of sites:

- Ark Property;
- William H Brown;
- Sedge Homes;
- Pygott & Crone Spalding;
- Longstaff; and
- Nominal Land.

4.35 No sequentially preferable sites were identified within Spalding Town Centre by local property agents.

Independent Search of Online Planning Records

4.36 An independent search of the online planning records published by South Holland District Council also been undertaken.

4.37 There is no permitted retail floorspace approved within Spalding Town Centre or the 300m 'edge-of-centre' boundary yet to be constructed.

4.38 There are no current planning applications for the development of additional retail floorspace within Spalding Town Centre or the 300m 'edge-of-centre' boundary.

4.39 There is a large allocation to the south of Pinchbeck intended to provide local shopping facilities. A desktop-based review and search via the South Holland District Council public access planning register reveals that, to date, no planning application has been submitted for this purpose. Additionally, a site masterplan for Phase 1 of allocation Pin024/045 (Vernatts Urban Extension) (H14-1218-21) comprising up to 400 new homes has been approved, and there is no inclusion of retail space within the proposals.

4.40 The location of the proposed development will therefore adequately serve the needs of Phase 1 of allocation Pin024/045 (and the need for additional retail to serve the new urban extension as highlighted within policies 24 and 27), serve the local catchment within Pinchbeck, and is potentially more accessible, and in a more sustainable location than any future retail provision within the Local Plan (2019) site allocations.

4.41 On this basis, no sequentially preferable sites located in Spalding Town Centre or the 300m 'edge-of-centre' boundary have been identified via search of online planning records, or within the South-East Lincolnshire Local Plan 2011-2036 (2019) site allocations for Pinchbeck and Spalding.

Summary of Sequential Assessment

4.42 4 properties were identified as being available within Spalding Town Centre or the 300m 'edge-of-centre' boundary as a result of extensive site research.

4.43 The Sites are assessed within the table enclosed at **Appendix A.**

4.44 The Sites are not suitable to accommodate the requirements of the proposed development.

4.45 The sequential test has therefore been passed and there are no sequentially preferable sites available to accommodate the proposed development.

4.46 The retail impact assessment is set out in the following section.

5. RETAIL IMPACT ASSESSMENT

5.1 This section details the methodology and application of the impact test including how the study area has been arrived at and an assessment of how existing retail within the study area will be impacted.

Defining the Study Area

5.2 As detailed within the preceding section of this report, the development is proposed to operate as a convenience store operating on a top-up basis to serve a local catchment.

5.3 The following aspects of the development demonstrate that the proposed store will serve a local catchment only:

- The store will be only 355sqm gross in size. Convenience stores of this size usually only sell approximately 2,500 product lines, far fewer than the range of lines generally sold in larger supermarkets (between 8,000 to 30,000);
- The actual shop floor will be even smaller at circa 225sqm when factoring in back-of-house requirements, which is below the Sunday Trading Act threshold of 280sqm;
- The shopping trips undertaken at convenience stores are of a small size, usually providing essential goods on a top-up basis;
- The proposed store is well below the national threshold of 2500sqm in terms of the requirement for the impact test; and
- The proposed store is additionally below the 250sqm threshold set out at within policy 24 of the Local Plan (2019).

5.4 As noted earlier, the Site is located within Pinchbeck Main Service Centre and Pinchbeck Settlement Boundary under policies 1, 19, 22 and 23 of the Local Plan (2019).

5.5 The development is therefore proposed to serve the local catchment of Pinchbeck village only, within a 1.5km radius.

5.6 The application Site is located 3km away from Spalding Town Centre, the nearest designated retail centre.

5.7 Furthermore, the Site is located a considerable distance from the second nearest designated retail centre, Holbeach, which is 14.7km away from the Site.

5.8 The NPPG states that the impact test should be *"undertaken in a proportionate and locally appropriate way".*

5.9 With the above in mind, particularly the fact that the nearest town centre is located a greater distance than the general catchment area for such a store, it is considered reasonable to limit any assessment of impact to Spalding Town Centre only.

Convenience Expenditure within Catchment Area

5.10 The retail evidence base for the South Holland District Council area is the South East Lincolnshire (SEL) Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (April 2020)[1] prepared by Reeves Retail Planning Consultancy and Williams Gallagher. The report's retail analysis is based on a household survey undertaken by NEMS Market Research in November / December 2019.

5.11 Importantly, the sample includes a total of 1,208 interviews undertaken across a series of 11 zones that reflect the settlement distribution within South East Lincolnshire[2]. Zone 5 forms the Spalding area, which includes Pinchbeck village and Spalding Town Centre (and is therefore the 'zone' relevant to this assessment).

5.12 The SEL Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (2020) estimates convenience expenditure by zone over the period of 2018-2036. As part of this, the study forecasts the expenditure per capita for each zone in 5-year intervals exc SFT which allows for SFT at 3.8% (Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 17, Figure 5).

5.13 The forecast convenience expenditure per capita figures for zone 5 are set out within Table A11.2 of the SEL Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (2020)[3].

5.14 The figures for the exact years of 2025, 2026, 2027 and 2028 have been calculated for the purposes of this impact assessment, using a 0.1% annual growth rate (Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 19, January 2022). These are outlined in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Expenditure per capita forecasts for zone 5 (SELTCRCS 2020)[4]

[1] South East Lincolnshire Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (April 2020)
[2] South East Lincolnshire Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (April 2020), Executive Summary
[3] South East Lincolnshire Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (April 2020), Appendix 11, Table A11.2
[4] South East Lincolnshire Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (April 2020), Appendix 11, Table A11.2

	2025	2026	2027	2028
Zone 5 (SELTCRCS)	£2,153	£2,155	£2,157	£2,160
Growth Rate	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%

5.15 The SEL Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (2020) uses 2018 population estimates and 2020-2036 projections from Experian. However, since the publication of the SEL Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (2020), the Office for National Statistics (ONS) has published population data from the 2021 Census. These figures are considered more appropriate and will provide a more accurate understanding of present-day available retail expenditure.

5.16 The ONS provides 2021 population data for the area of Pinchbeck and Surfleet specifically. The population of Pinchbeck and Surfleet in 2021 was 7,375 persons[5] (ONS Nomis).

5.17 The estimated total convenience expenditure for Pinchbeck and Surfleet can be calculated using the overall zone 5 expenditure per capita forecasts from the SEL Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (2020), and population data from the ONS.

5.18 However, this calculation provides the estimated total available convenience expenditure. Given the proposed store is a local top-up convenience store only, it is necessary to estimate the total available expenditure for top-up convenience alone.

5.19 Taking into account the distance between the application Site and identified retail centres, and factoring in general shopping trends, it is considered that shoppers are likely to undertake one bulk shop per week with essential top-up shops undertaken more frequently. On this basis, the total available convenience expenditure figures are halved in order to calculate the available top-up convenience expenditure within Pinchbeck village. This is presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Available 'Total' and 'Top-Up' Convenience Expenditure within Pinchbeck (50% of total convenience expenditure)

Population (7,375)	2025	2026	2027	2028

[5] Office for National Statistics Nomis, 2021 Census Area Profile for Pinchbeck and Surfleet Ward (as of 2022), South Holland Local Authority and England Country

Total convenience expenditure	£15,878,375	£15,893,125	£15,907,875	£15,930,000
Top-up convenience expenditure	£7,939,188	£7,946,563	£7,953,938	£7,965,000

5.20 It should be noted that these projections assume no further population growth within Pinchbeck and Surfleet from 2021 to 2028, and thus are extremely conservative estimates.

Existing Retail Provision within Pinchbeck

5.21 In terms of existing retail convenience of comparison to the proposal, the following falls within Pinchbeck Main Service Centre:

- Spar at 32-34 Knight St, Pinchbeck, PE11 3RB; and
- SPAR Pinchbeck at 47,49 Knight St, Pinchbeck, PE11 3RA.

5.22 There are no available permissions to view on the South Holland District Council planning register which provide floorspace figures for either of the aforementioned retail convenience stores.

5.23 Instead, from a satellite imagery review, the Spar at 32-34 Knight St is estimated to be 200sqm GIA. Adopting a 70:30 gross:net floorspace ratio (as generally accepted and utilised within the SEL Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (2020)) would therefore equate to 140sqm shop floor area. In addition, the SPAR Pinchbeck at 47,49 Knight St is estimated to be 286sqm GIA, and adopting the same 70:30 gross:net floorspace ratio would therefore equate to a 200sqm shop floor area.

5.24 The SEL Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (2020) includes a 2025 Benchmark Sales density figure for Convenience Floorspace (£ per sqm) of £9,535 per sqm[6].

5.25 The sales density figures are provided in Table 3 below, factoring in yearly growth as per the estimations provided within the Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 21 (February 2024):

- No forecast increase in sales densities during 2025;

[6] South East Lincolnshire Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (April 2020), Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 17, Figure 3a

- Small average increase of +0.2% per annum during 2026 to 2030; and
- Even smaller average increase of +0.1% per annum thereafter.

Table 3: Forecast sales density figures for convenience floorspace (Spar and SPAR Pinchbeck)

	2025	2026	2027	2028
Estimated Sales Density	£9,535 per sqm	£9,554 per sqm	£9,573 per sqm	£9,592 per sqm

5.26 Taking the assumed sales floorspace of both the Spar and SPAR Pinchbeck on Knight St, and multiplying by the estimated sales density for convenience floorspace provided by the SEL Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study, it is possible to calculate the estimated turnover of existing convenience retail provision within Pinchbeck village. This is presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Estimated turnover of existing retail provision in Pinchbeck village

Existing retail convenience provision	2025	2026	2027	2028
Spar and SPAR Pinchbeck (total 240sqm sales floor space)	£2,288,400	£2,292,960	£2,297,520	£2,302,080

5.27 The above figures illustrate the total estimated turnover of existing top-up retail provision, of a comparable type and scale to the proposal, within Pinchbeck Main Service Centre.

Proposed Retail Provision

5.28 The application seeks to provide a local convenience store of 355sqm gross, translating to a shop floor area 225sqm.

5.29 For the purposes of assessing the potential turnover of the proposed store, the forecasted sales density figures for 2025-2028 (as presented in Table 3), calculated by using the 2025 figure from the SEL Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (2020), are adopted.

5.30 As per the approach in Table 4, it is possible to apply the estimated sales densities and the proposed sales area of the development (shop floor area 225sqm) in order to estimate the projected turnover of the proposed store. This is presented below in Table 5.

Table 5: Estimated turnover of proposed store

Premises	2025	2026	2027	2028
Application Site (225sqm)	£2,145,375	£2,149,650	£2,153,925	£2,158,200

5.31 The estimated turnovers of both existing and proposed convenience retail provision in Pinchbeck Main Service Centre can be used to assess retail impact. This is conducted in the next section.

Assessment of Impact of Proposed Store

5.32 The total available expenditure for convenience goods within Pinchbeck village has been calculated using the forecast expenditure per head provided within the SEL Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (2020) for zone 5 and the population of Pinchbeck and Surfleet. This figure equates to £15,878,375 in 2025.

5.33 This has been halved in order to estimate the total available expenditure for top-up convenience goods. This figure equates to £7,939,188 in 2025.

5.34 This can be compared to the sum of estimated turnover of existing stores and the estimated turnover of the proposed store in order to review whether sufficient capacity remains. This is set out in Table 6 below.

Table 6: Comparison table

Premises	Estimated Turnover (£m)			
	2025	2026	2027	2028
(a) Existing retail convenience provision (Spar and SPAR Pinchbeck)	£2,288,400	£2,292,960	£2,297,520	£2,302,080

(b) Application Site	£2,145,375	£2,149,650	£2,153,925	£2,158,200
(c) Total top-up convenience turnover (a) + (b)	£4,433,775	£4,442,610	£4,451,445	£4,460,280
(d) Forecast available top-up convenience expenditure	£7,939,188	£7,946,563	£7,953,938	£7,965,000
(e) Surplus available top-up convenience expenditure (d) – (c)	£3,505,413	£3,503,953	£3,502,493	£3,504,720
(f) Forecast total available retail convenience expenditure	£15,878,375	£15,893,125	£15,907,875	£15,930,000
(g) (f) – (c) Surplus available total retail convenience expenditure	£11,444,600	£11,450,515	£11,456,430	£11,469,720

5.35 The table demonstrates that the following can be concluded:

- Taking into account the proposed store alongside the existing comparable provision in Pinchbeck, there would remain a surplus of circa £11.5million pounds available for other convenience expenditure outside of Pinchbeck Main Service Centre as a whole; and

- Taking into account the proposed store alongside the existing comparable provision in Pinchbeck, there would remain a surplus of circa £8million pounds available for other top-up convenience expenditure outside of Pinchbeck Main Service Centre as a whole.

5.36 Significant available convenience expenditure will remain. Indeed, total turnover in Pinchbeck from convenience spending (including the proposed store) will remain less than 70% of total available retail convenience expenditure. Mindful of Pinchbeck's identified role as a Main Service Centre, this is considered entirely acceptable.

5.37 Significant retail expenditure availability remains so as to ensure no adverse impact on Spalding Town Centre.

Additional Considerations

5.38 The points below highlight the robustness of the approach and should be noted.

5.39 The population figure for Pinchbeck and Surfleet is taken from the ONS Nomis data website and for the purposes of this assessment, is has been assumed that population will not increase over the projection period (2021-2028).

5.40 South Holland District Council has a housing need (assessed under the standard method as per the NPPF published in December 2024) of 542 (up from 467 under the previous standard method)[7]. It can be assumed that at least some of this will be delivered within the Pinchbeck area, and therefore it can be concluded that the local population is likely to increase.

5.41 Zone 6 of the SEL Town Centre and Retail Capacity Study (2020) forms the Spalding Fringe area, and it can therefore be assumed that this extra population allows for additional retail capacity within the area.

5.42 A 2025 Benchmark Sales density figure for Convenience Floorspace (£ per sqm) of £9,535 per sqm has been used for the purposes of calculating estimated turnover for all existing and proposed stores within Pinchbeck. This figure can be considered highly robust mindful of the scale of these stores.

5.43 On the above basis, the identified surplus within the preceding section of this Assessment is likely to be an under-estimation.

Summary

5.44 Whilst, as detailed earlier in this Statement, the net floorspace of the proposed unit falls below the threshold at which a Retail Impact Assessment is required, a high-level assessment has been undertaken for robustness.

[7] South Holland District Council 5-year Housing Land Supply Assessment (as of 31st March 2025) Section 1.0

5.45 The Assessment demonstrates that significant available convenience expenditure will remain when taking into account the proposed store. Indeed, total turnover in Pinchbeck from convenience spending (including the proposed store) will remain less than 70% of total available retail convenience expenditure. Mindful of Pinchbeck's identified role as a Main Service Centre, this is considered entirely acceptable.

5.46 Significant retail expenditure availability remains so as to ensure no adverse impact on Spalding Town Centre.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 This retail sequential and impact assessment has been produced in order to support a planning application for the creation of a new convenience store on the existing application Site.

6.2 The assessment has been undertaken in order to comply with policy 24 of the Local Plan (2019), planning practice guidance and the NPPF.

6.3 The sequential assessment is set out in full at Section 4 of this report. Only 4 sites were identified as available through extensive research and these sites are assessed at **Appendix A.**

6.4 The sites are not suitable to accommodate the requirements of the proposed development. Therefore, the application Site has passed the sequential test as there are no available sequentially preferable sites that could accommodate the propose development.

6.5 Whilst the net floorspace of the proposed store falls below the threshold where a retail impact assessment is required, one has been undertaken for robustness. The retail impact assessment is set out in full at Section 5 of this report. It is concluded that the proposed store will have no adverse impact on Spalding Town Centre

6.6 The application will similarly provide a number of retail benefits, such as improved access to convenience retail goods and the creation of additional employment opportunities.

6.7 The proposed development is therefore considered acceptable in retail terms.

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APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A:
Sequential Assessment – Sites identified through online property listings & property agents (September 2025)

ROK PLANNING

Site	Size (approx.)	Lawful / Existing Use	Distance from site	Planning policy / Heritage designations	Availability
Retail Unit, Red Lion Street, Spalding, PE11	650sqm	Retail (Use Class E)	3.4km	Spalding Town Centre Spalding Conservation Area	Actively marketed for sale
	Assessment: Although the site/property is located within the search area of Spalding Town Centre and 300m boundary, the Site is arranged as commercial units at ground floor, with upper floor offices and escape rooms above. It is understood that the Site is available for sale with tenants in situ and would thus not be available for the proposed development. Moreover, taking the floorspace as a whole, the Site would be above the upper threshold deemed suitable to fit the requirements of the Site. The site is therefore discounted.				
24-25 Bridge St, Spalding, PE11 1XG	238sqm	Retail (Use Class E)	3.5km	Spalding Town Centre Spalding Conservation Area Spalding Primary Shopping Area Cycle Route Policy 33	Actively marketed for sale
	Assessment: Although the site/property is located within the search area of Spalding Town Centre, 300m boundary and Spalding Primary Shopping Area, the site is too small to accommodate the requirements of the proposed development. The site is therefore discounted.				
10-11 Hall Pl, Spalding, PE11 1SR	482sqm	Retail (Use Class E)	3.4km	Spalding Town Centre Spalding Conservation Area Spalding Primary Shopping Area Spalding Primary Shopping Frontage	Actively marketed for sale
	Assessment: The site/property is located within the search area of Spalding Town Centre, 300m boundary, Spalding Primary Shopping area and Primary Shopping Frontage. However, taking the floorspace as a whole, the Site would be above the upper threshold deemed suitable to fit the requirements of the Site. Mindful that the property is split over three floors, an investigation would be needed to determine whether sub-division would be physically feasible in order to accommodate a smaller unit. Moreover, the Site is not currently available in part only. The site is therefore discounted.				

APPENDIX A:

Sequential Assessment – Sites identified through online property listings & property agents (September 2025)

7 Market Pl, Spalding, PE11 1SL	1,633sqm	Retail (Use Class E)	3.4km	Spalding Town Centre Spalding Conservation Area Spalding Primary Shopping Area Spalding Primary Shopping Frontage	Actively marketed for sale
	Assessment: Although the site/property is located within the search area of Spalding Town Centre, 300m boundary, Spalding Primary Shopping area and Primary Shopping Frontage, the site is clearly too large to accommodate the requirements of the proposed development. The site is therefore discounted.				