

AJ Planning and Development

Office 14, 35 Stow Park Circle, Newport, NP20 4HF

E-Mail: andrew@ajplanninggroup.co.uk

PLANNING STATEMENT

IN SUPPORT OF AN APPLICATION FOR A PETROL FILLING STATION REDEVELOPMENT

AT

**WHITEHORSE SERVICE STATION, CLOTHALL ROAD,
BALDOCK, HERTFORDSHIRE, SG7 6PD**



AJ PLANNING REFERENCE: AJ/BD/APP-001

JUNE 2025

Director: A.J.Ayles BA (Hons) BTP MRTPI

AJ Planning and Development is the trading name of AJ Planning and Development Limited. Reg. No. 10318286

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Planning Statement is prepared on behalf of JP & S Servicess Ltd (the applicant), in support of an application proposal for the '*Demolition of existing buildings and for the erection of a new shop, forecourt canopy, car and jet wash, car and cycle parking, EV vehicle charging points, hard and soft landscaping, bin stores and associated development thereto*' at Whitehorse Service Station, Clothall Road and land to rear of 53 South Road, Baldock, Hertfordshire.
- 1.2 In preparing this application, regard has been had to the development plan, (the North Hertfordshire District Council Local Plan 2011-2031); the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF); associated/supplementary guidance; and to the planning history and site characteristics.
- 1.3 The application for commercial development is submitted following positive pre-application dialogue with the local planning authority (Council Reference: 25/00758/PRE, dated 13th May 2025), which confirmed that the principle of development is acceptable, in recognition of the long-established lawful use of the land as a petrol filling station.
- 1.4 Further to the Local Planning Authority's (LPAs) detailed pre-application advice the applicant has taken on board the guidance and design feedback in presenting an appropriate redevelopment option for the petrol filling station. Given the scale, siting, design and layout of the new built form it is considered that the scheme complements and reinforces existing character replacing dated buildings and structures with appropriate modern development. The new buildings will uplift the appearance of the land and will have no recognisable adverse impact in consideration of the natural, historic and built environment.

Planning History

- 1.5 Further to the recent pre-application enquiry, a planning search of the Council's historic planning records indicate that there are several commercial approvals associated with Whitehorse Service Station, including:
- On 13th January, 1990, conditional permission was granted by the Council for an '*Extension to existing canopy covering petrol pumps*'. (Planning Application 90/00030/1). The existing forecourt canopy housed on the subject land is observed

to be in very poor condition and its removal and replacement is to be welcomed under the application proposal representing a clear enhancement of serving infrastructure.

- On 13th November, 1986, conditional permission was granted for the '*Erection of detached workshop building*'. (Planning Application 86/01511/1).
- On 1st July 1986, conditional permission was granted for the '*Erection of single storey extension to sales building and installation of underground storage tank*'. (Planning Application 86/00001/1). As above, the sales building and outbuildings are also observed to be of a dated appearance, their replacement under the application proposal to be welcomed.

2.0 **APPRAISING THE CONTEXT**

Site Location

- 2.1 The subject site is a long-established petrol filling station and, from a planning policy perspective, represents 'previously developed land' within the urban settlement area. As shown on the aerial site photograph below, vehicular access is existing from Clothall Road.



- 2.2 To the north of Clothall Road lies countryside, leading to Tapps garden centre, accessed from Wallington Road; Lodge Farm lies to the north-east of the site. 'In Herts Motors',

a used car dealer, lies adjacent to the south of the petrol filling station with residential dwellings and roads at South Road and Roman Lane.

- 2.3 As above, reference planning history, the service station site is a long-established use within the street scene and the investment provided by the redevelopment option would enhance the appearance of the built form through an appropriate modernisation scheme.
- 2.4 The recent site photographs below confirm that the existing petrol filling station facility including shop and canopy (to be demolished) and workshop units are dated and of limited architectural merit; the redevelopment as proposed will provide an enhancement to the appearance of the site.

Whitehorse Service Station, Clothall Road, Baldock



- 2.5 As discussed with the planning case officer at pre-application stage the store outbuilding to the rear of No. 53 South Road (as shown below) will be demolished under the proposal and this facilitates parking spaces 1-8 (inclusive) as shown on the

proposed site plan. As shown, the store building is in a very poor structural condition and its removal was deemed appropriate in review of the positive pre-application enquiry response.

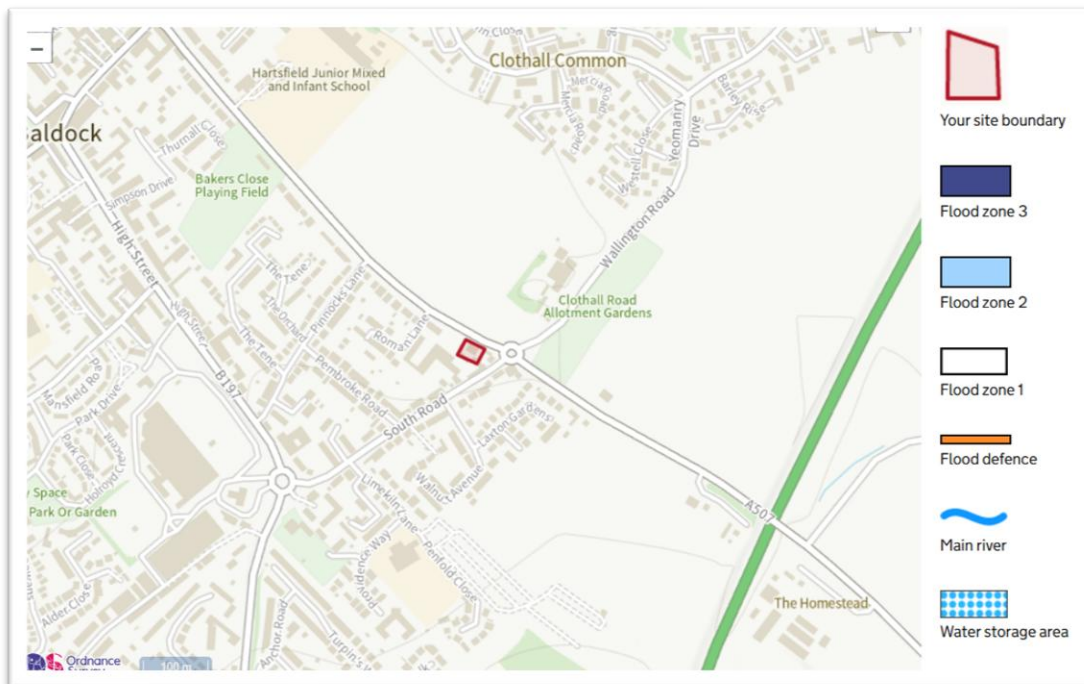
Views of single storey store unit located to the rear of No. 53 (to be demolished)



- 2.6 In terms of accessibility, Baldock train station lies approximately 0.6 miles to the north-west of the site. Bus stops are situated nearby within a short walk on Clothall Road on Pinnock's Lane; and Pembroke Road (covering Letchworth, Buntingford and Royston)..
- 2.7 As identified within the response to the applicant's pre-application enquiry, the site is identified as 'previously developed land', within the settlement boundary of Baldock and located in an Archaeological Area. The site forms part of housing allocation BA11 Dean's Yard, observing that in this context it is accepted by the LPA that the redevelopment option accords with the lawful planning use.

Environmental Agency Flood Maps Extract

- 2.8 The Environment Agency flood maps (as shown below) confirm that the site is within Flood Zone 1, classified as at a low probability of flooding from rivers and the sea. As such, no flood risk assessment is required.



Heritage

- 2.9 In review of heritage assets the applicant's heritage consultant Albion Archaeology inform that, based on a search of the Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER); search number 175.24, the local area is within an area of known archaeological and heritage potential. The most pertinent items include:
- Romano-British small town and late Iron Age settlement at Baldock (Scheduled Monument 1016305). This lies to the northeast of Dean's Yard.
 - Archaeological remains identified in the vicinity. E.g. MHT12754, MHT12859 and MHT9924: Iron Age and Romano-British remains, Clothall Road.
 - The site is within the defined Area of Archaeological Significance – policy HE6.
 - Built heritage assets. No. 53 has been recorded as a Building of Local Interest (locally listed), which identifies it as a heritage asset. The development will have no direct impact on and is unlikely to have a significant impact on the setting of any other listed buildings.

- 2.10 The North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 includes the following policy criteria relating to heritage with reference to development of this area as part of Policy BA11:
- Heritage impact assessment (including assessment of significance) and sensitive design to ensure appropriate protection of adjacent Scheduled Ancient Monument.
 - Archaeological survey to be completed prior to development.
 - Sensitive design to enhance the setting of Building of Local Interest (BLI).
- 2.11 Further to the above, the Council's pre-application enquiry response confirmed that the Conservation Officer would be consulted at application stage and that, in general terms, it was considered that the level of harm to the BLI is thought to be relatively low. The discussions held at pre-application stage acknowledging that the revised car parking area (Parking spaces 1-8 inclusive on the Proposed Site Plan) utilises land to the rear hardstand area of No. 53, following the demolition of an existing unattractive store building and shown within the application site boundary.
- 2.12 In review of the planning drawings for the petrol station redevelopment, it is considered that the development proposal will not have a significant impact in consideration of any heritage asset; the scheme delivering attractive built form modernising and upgrading the appearance of the land. In the context of No. 53 South Road, the removal of the open sided store to the rear of the residence is of positive benefit, the setting of the BLI respected in terms of the positioning of the new shop and associated PFS infrastructure. There are no recognisable adverse impacts on this neighbouring home in terms of setting.

Overall Design Aims and Objectives

- 2.13 This sub-section outlines and identifies the process that has been undertaken in development of the application scheme for a redevelopment of the petrol station site and leading up to a submission to the authority. It addresses the key design factors that have informed preparation of the application, having regard to advice given by the Council in their pre-application enquiry response and Chapter 12 of the NPPF, that any development proposal should have specific regard to its potential for improving the character and quality of the area and the way that it functions.

2.14 Paragraph 131 states that, “*The creation of high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, creates better places in which to live and work and helps make development acceptable to communities*”. In presenting the plans, it is considered that the new buildings and associated development will lift the appearance of the land to the benefit of the street scene. The commercial layout is functional, and respects neighbouring land uses to the site boundaries.

2.15 Key factors that have informed the design process are as follows:

- a) Character of the area including local distinctiveness such as the patterns and layout of buildings and land uses, noting that the petrol filling station is long-established.
- b) The development’s functional and operational connection with the long-established petrol station, noting that the scheme is for the modernisation and upgrade of the applicant’s business. The development will replace dated commercial buildings and structures for a superior, enhanced built form.
- c) Legibility, sense of place and a clear image or idea of the character of the area, observing that the application site is previously developed land for which the Council are supportive of the new facility, subject to due consideration of design matters.
- d) Adaptability of the development to social and economic conditions and changes including climate change, noting that the EV charging points and hard/soft landscaping scheme are central to the design ethos. As concluded in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, as prepared by Crossland Ecology, through incorporation of relevant recommendations, it is considered that the proposals can deliver positive residual impacts in line with current wildlife legislation, Chapter 15 of the NPPF; and local planning policies relevant to nature conservation.
- e) Scale, density, visual and other impacts in relation to neighbouring occupiers and the compatibility of the redevelopment scheme, noting that the modest increase in the new built form would have no recognisable adverse impact on any neighbouring land use. It is noted that further to proactive discussions at pre-application stage, the plans for the new shop unit have incorporated a reduction in building height.

- f) Neighbourliness in design, which includes visual impact and design quality, noting that the replacement shop and development would be enhanced through design, incorporating a contemporary modernisation, with a softening and assimilating effect with appropriate landscaping scheme. The redevelopment scheme is presented having carried out appropriate assessment of neighbour impact.
- g) Surveillance and visibility including measures to minimise the potential for crime.

2.16 Paragraph 135 advises that planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) Will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development; **The replacement buildings and enhancements will offer an enhanced commercial provision with new shop, forecourt canopy, car and jet wash provisions. The provision of electrical charging points and cycle storage is supportive of sustainable form of transport. A Transport Statement (DW Transportation, May 2025) is provided with the application, confirming the positive highway credentials, including the provision of an improved parking layout catering for staff and customers.**
- b) Are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping: **The design and appearance of the new building, car and a jet wash and associated petrol filling station infrastructure is in delivering a betterment when compared to the existing buildings located on the subject land; being wholly appropriate to the immediate urban and wider setting. The new building would be finished in unobtrusive materials which offer a softening effect to the building's appealing and sustainable aesthetic.**
- c) Are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change. **In consideration of the local environment, the officer's pre-application response informed the applicant that the Ecology Officer feedback was that, "Having looked at the submitted pre-app above there would be no ecological objection to the principle of development on this site."** The guidance further advised that *"North Herts Local Plan policy NE4 still requires a net gain to be demonstrated which is easily achieved through the proposed soft*

landscaping”. The redevelopment option is supportive of landscaping provisions (hard and soft), which would provide additional benefit, observing that the level of vegetation currently within the site boundary is ‘de minimis’. It is further observed that the setting of No. 53 South Road will be enhanced by the removal of the store unit located to its rear and by the more open aspect and landscape provision in this area of the site. Furthermore, the new shop unit is positioned at greater distance away from the residence than the existing main building.

- d) Establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit; **The petrol filling station shop, workshop units and hardstand are already established, and their replacement and enhancement will create a more attractive and appealing aesthetic to the subject site and the local environs.**
- e) Create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience. **There are no recognisable adverse impacts in consideration of crime and disorder presented by the petrol filling station redevelopment proposal. It is evident that the redevelopment option will enhance natural surveillance to the site boundaries to that of the current operations.**

Development Plan Policy

NPPF (December 2024)

- 2.17 Paragraph 8 informs 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 (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):*
- ***an economic objective – 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. The replacement and upgrade of the built form will deliver positive investment within the business and enhancement for customers. The redevelopment of the petrol filling station is supportive of economic growth to secure jobs and prosperity, with an estimated 5 full time and 7 part time jobs provided to the benefit of local employment.

- ***a social objective*** – *to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being.* The application proposal represents a significant investment in the service station site and will ensure the future of the business and local employment. The modernisation and upgrade are also supportive of the service offer to both customers and staff.
- ***an environmental objective*** – *to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.* There are no recognisable adverse impact upon the natural environment; and the EV charging points are supportive of modern and sustainable vehicle technology. Furthermore, as concluded in the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal, as prepared by Crossland Ecology, through incorporation of relevant recommendations, it is considered that the proposals can deliver positive residual impacts in line with current wildlife legislation, chapter 15 of the NPPF; and local planning policies relevant to nature conservation. Additionally, as confirmed in the PEA, no statutory or non-statutory designated sites or priority habitats will be affected by the proposed development (paragraph 1.3).

2.18 In addition to the policy assessment points above, the following chapters from the NPPF are also of relevance:

- a) Chapter 2 – Achieving Sustainable Development;
- b) Chapter 4 – Decision Making;

- c) Chapter 6 – Building a strong, competitive economy;
- d) Chapter 8 – Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities;
- e) Chapter 9 – Promoting Sustainable Transport;
- f) Chapter 11 – Making Effective Use of Land;
- g) Chapter 12 – Achieving Well-Designed Places;
- h) Chapter 14 – Meeting the Challenge of Climate Change, Flooding, and Coastal Change;
- i) Chapter 15 – Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment; and
- j) Chapter 16 – Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

Local Plan

- 2.19 The North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted on the 8th November 2022 and replaces the saved policies of the District Plan Second Review with Alterations. The Local Plan forms part of the statutory Development Plan for the District that is used to determine applications. The Development Plan for North Hertfordshire includes a Neighbourhood Plan covering key aims for Baldock. The local policies of relevance to the development proposal include, but are not limited, to the following considerations.
- 2.20 Policy SP1: Sustainable Development in North Hertfordshire informs that the purpose of planning in government policy is to help achieve “sustainable development”, supporting growth whilst protecting key elements of the natural and historic environment. Paragraph 4.2 states that, *“In implementing this Plan, we will take a positive approach that ensures we can continue to permit the significant majority of planning applications for new development”*.
- 2.21 Policy SP2: Settlement Hierarchy and Spatial Distribution aims to focus the majority of new development on the towns (including urban extensions to existing towns) in order to make maximum use of existing facilities, social networks and infrastructure, and maximise opportunities to deliver new infrastructure (paragraph 4.11). The development proposal seeking a high-quality modernisation of the existing petrol filling station site, located within settlement limits, to the benefit of the local area service provision.

- 2.22 Policy SP9: Design and Sustainability which seeks the achievement of high quality, sustainable design requirements, promoting high quality, inclusive design in layouts and buildings in terms of their function and impact.
- 2.23 Policy D1: Sustainable Design aims to ensure that developments consider the potential for minimising their impact on the environment through construction and the life of the development, ensuring that they respond to and enhance its surroundings. (Paragraph 9.1). The development proposal is an important scheme in securing the future and appropriate modernisation of the PFS business in its long established location at Clothall Road.
- 2.24 Policy D3: Protecting Living Conditions aims to ensure that living conditions are not adversely affected by the proposed use. As the pre-application response positively commented the following referring the closest neighbours residing at 53 South Road to the east of the site with shared boundary: *“In terms of No.53 South Road, the siting of the new shop building away from this boundary is considered positive. There are existing parking spaces in this location on the shared boundary and therefore no objections are raised..”*.
- 2.25 Additionally, with reference to the properties to the west on Clothall Road and Roman Lane, it is noted that the proposed shop building and car wash would be the closest elements of the development and *“subject to earlier comments about and whether this building can be reduced in height further, this would not be overbearing in my view.”* As shown on the plans, the shop building has been reduced in height, accordingly, taking on board the proactive feedback from officers. Furthermore, in due consideration of neighbouring land uses, the application submission is supported by a Noise Survey and Lighting Design.
- 2.26 Policy HE3: Non-designated Heritage Assets aims to secure that balanced judgement has been made that assesses the scale of harm to, or loss of significance of the non-designated asset. As above, with regard for the enquiry response from the planning case officer, the adjacent BLI will remain unaffected by the redevelopment proposal.

- 2.27 Policy NE12: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Development seeks to assist developers to choose the appropriate renewable technology, noting that the proposal includes EV charging points and cycle space to the benefit of customers and staff visiting the premises.
- 2.28 Policy T1: Assessment of Transport Matters and Policy: T2 Parking seek to ensure due consideration of highways safety, operation and appropriate parking standards in new development. The attached Transport Statement, as submitted with and forming part of the application, confirms that the PFS redevelopment presents no adverse impact on highway safety; the development provides adequate car and cycle parking; the layout delivers appropriate access for pedestrians and functionally the proposed layout is acceptable in terms of accommodating servicing, delivery and vehicle movements. Therefore, the development proposal fully accords with both local and national transport policy.
- 2.29 Policy SP4: Town Centres, Local Centres and Community Shops & ETC7: Local Community Shops and Services in Towns and Villages seek to ensure that the Council deliver the provision for an appropriate range of retail and service facilities across the district and are committed to protecting the vitality and viability of all centres. Policy SP4 states that the Council will “*Support the retention and provision of shops outside of identified centres where they serve a local day-to-day need.*” (criteria f).
- 2.30 Further to the above general consideration of policy SP4 and ETC7, the Council’s pre-application enquiry response confirms the site constitutes ‘Previously Developed Land’ and is a petrol filling station and shop. The scheme seeks to demolish and redevelop the site into a modern petrol station, which the LPA confirmed is acceptable in principle, commenting that: “*Whilst a petrol station is considered to be a main town centre use in the North Herts Local Plan and this site is outside of the town centre boundary, the existing petrol station does have an existing shop element, albeit not in use currently along with the whole of the site. Therefore, as there is an existing shop on site as part of the sites lawful use, I do not consider that the sequential test as set out under Policy ETC3 is required in this instance, given the relevant case law which sets out that LPAs should take a proportionate approach and only request such when relevant, necessary and material*”.

Baldock, Bygrave & Clothall Neighbourhood Plan

- 2.31 The Neighbourhood Plan aims to get the best outcome for Baldock, Bygrave and Clothall from whatever development takes place in and around the town in the future. The Neighbourhood Plan aims to ensure the improvement of the range of community services and job opportunities available and that new transport infrastructure and services will cater for growth that occurs.
- 2.32 As stated in Section 4 of the Plan, a key aim is to “*Ensure that Baldock grows in a way that builds strong connections between all parts of the town (and maintains good connections with neighbouring villages and countryside); and which provides homes, services and job opportunities that cater for both existing and new residents.*”
- 2.33 As above, the redevelopment option is supportive of a local business and service provision through the modernisation and upgrade to the Whitehorse Service Station site and through the creation of local employment opportunities.

3.0 EVALUATING THE INFORMATION

- 3.1 As set out above, the NPPF in Paragraph 8 sets out three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental.
- 3.2 Assessment of the merits of the application turns upon the acceptability of the principle of the development within this existing petrol pumping station and its likely impact on the amenities or character of the area (as confirmed in the pre-application response), having regard to the site’s characteristics, planning history and relevant policy considerations as outlined above.
- 3.3 The NPPF maintains the Statutory status of the development plan, but also states within Paragraph 10 that, “*At the heart of National Planning Policy Framework is a presumption in favour of sustainable development....*”.
- 3.4 The redevelopment option will enhance the competitiveness and future of the business, though appropriate modernisation and upgrade of the built form and operation of the petrol filling station site. The Council being supportive of the principle of development at pre-application enquiry stage.

Sustainable Development

The proposal assessed against Paragraph 8 of the NPPF and the three dimensions to sustainable development can be considered sustainable because it meets the requirements, as set out below.

Economic Role

It is Government policy in the NPPF to support economic growth in order to secure jobs and prosperity. Existing business sectors should be supported as should those prepared to invest in their businesses.

The application seeks to make best use of previously developed land through investment in the applicant's PFS site, bolstering its facilities for the future.

Social Role

The NPPF states that the planning system should support strong, vibrant and healthy communities.

The application meets these requirements as it will support strong, vibrant and healthy communities. The application meets these requirements as it will support an existing business, which has been and will continue to be an important employer in the area, helping to sustain jobs in the community.

Environmental Role

The planning system also plays an important role in contributing to protecting and enhancing the wider environment. The proposal makes the best use of previously developed land by investing in the modernisation of the built form and associated land.

The redevelopment plan does not constitute a 'major' application; the development is visually and contextually contained by the built development. In addition, the aesthetic of the site will be softened through hard and soft landscaping, as presented in the Landscape Strategy (Bradford Smith Landscape Architect); the application further supported by consultant surveys confirming that there are no physical constraints to development.

Summary

The NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development when determining development proposals and that where proposals accord with the development plan, they should be granted “*without delay*”.

4.0 DESIGN PRINCIPLES AND CREATING SOLUTIONS

- 4.1 The NPPF encourages the planning system to facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of development in line with the economic, social and environmental objectives to improve quality of life, ensuring high quality development and efficient use of resources and encouraging sustainable, mixed communities, with good accessibility.

Application Scheme

- 4.2 As above, as presented on the plans, the development proposal seeks the '*Demolition of existing buildings and for the erection of a new shop, forecourt canopy, car and jet wash, car and cycle parking, EV vehicle charging points, hard and soft landscaping, bin stores and associated development thereto*' at Whitehorse Service Station, Clothall Road and land to rear of 53 South Road, Baldock, Hertfordshire.



- 4.3 As shown on the proposed elevation plan extracts below the new shop represents a significant enhancement to the built form which will lift the appearance of the site as view within the street scene. The use of an appropriate palette of materials including glazed elements reflect the character of place and maximising daylight in the building.

Proposed Elevation Plans of new PFS shop



- 4.4 Following the demolition of existing buildings and structures on site, the proposal comprises a new shop building and car wash in the western part of the site, new petrol filling pumps and a forecourt canopy in the centre of the site, a new jet wash facility in the south of the site, and other associated development including EV charging points, car and cycle parking, and soft and hard landscaping.
- 4.5 The petrol station is long-established in this location and the redevelopment of the land will be wholly appropriate to its immediate and wider setting; being an established commercial site within the Baldock urban settlement area. As discussed with the LPA during the positive pre-application enquiry stage, the high-quality design of the replacement features, as presented, will enhance the dated built form at the established site.
- 4.6 As per the plan extracts above and reviewed in the project architects Design and Access Statement (Ms4 Architects Ltd), the new building would be finished in unobtrusive materials, making use of glazed elements and clad finish, which offer a softening effect to the building's appealing and sustainable aesthetic. Amenity is safeguarded and the improved shop layout improves the shop function, staff and customer experience.
- 4.7 The proposal has no adverse implications for crime and disorder and accords with national policy guidance. The proposed redevelopment of the site will not compromise the security of the site or expose it to unwarranted criminal activity.
- 4.8 The application is supported by a noise survey and lighting design detail confirming that operations are respectful of the local environment and neighbouring amenity. In terms of business opening hours, the applicant is willing to accept a reasonable condition on the grant of planning permission, to be agreed with the LPA during the currency of the application.

5.0 ACCESS PRINCIPLES AND CREATING SOLUTIONS

- 5.1 The proposal aims to comply with design and accessibility standards for disabled and able persons alike.
- 5.2 The proposal has no adverse or other impact on accessibility to the buildings. The proposal will make adequate provision in accordance with the relevant Building Regulations.
- 5.3 The application is supported by professional representation by a qualified transport consultant, namely in the attached Transport Statement, which confirms that:
- In accordance with Policy SP6 and T2, the parking for the proposed development is in accordance with the parking standards.
 - There would be no safety implications resulting from the proposed development.
 - The proposed development is first and foremost a facility for passing vehicles. However sustainable travel options are considered herein and cycle parking facilities are provided to encourage staff and visitors to the retail building to do so in a sustainable manner.
 - In accordance with Policy T1, the proposed development will not have a detrimental impact on the highway network.
 - As the proposed development is a replacement scheme, the proposed development is not considered to be major. However, sustainable travel options have been demonstrated.
- 5.4 In conclusion, the report, in assessing the proposed development's potential impact on the local transport infrastructure and highway safety, confirms that no significant transport issues have been identified to prevent the proposed development from being recommended for planning permission.

6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The application seeks full planning permission for “*Demolition of existing buildings and for the erection of a new shop, forecourt canopy, car and jet wash, car and cycle parking, EV vehicle charging points, hard and soft landscaping, bin stores and associated development thereto*”, at Whitehorse Service Station, Clothall Road and land to rear of 53 South Road, Baldock, Hertfordshire.
- 6.2 It is considered that the scale, size and unobtrusive siting, design and appearance of the proposed buildings, to be erected following demolition of existing service station units, is consistent with and sympathetic to local character and does not give rise to any detrimental impact on any adjoining land use.
- 6.3 Preparation of this application has been informed by the aims and objectives of design considerations of the site and locality; those contained in national policy guidance and the Development Plan; and the Council’s guidance and advice, as provided in the helpful pre-application enquiry response.
- 6.4 The NPPF sets out three dimensions to sustainable development: an economic role, a social role and an environmental role. The scheme can be considered because it meets these dimensions in the following ways:
- **Economic role** – The redevelopment will deliver positive investment within the business and enhancements for customers and staff; and will enhance the competitiveness of the business during these uncertain economic times. It is estimated that the PFS site will employ 5 full time staff and 7 part time staff, thus supportive of local employment.
 - **Social role** – The development application represents a significant investment in the applicant’s business and will ensure the future of the business and local employment. The modernisation and upgrade are also supportive of the service offer to customers and staff.
 - **Environmental role** – The redevelopment option, as presented, makes the best use of previously developed land in a sustainable location. With reference to surveys undertaken, it is established that the scheme would have a negligible impact upon the local and historic environment.

- 6.5 The NPPF states that there is a '*presumption in favour of sustainable development*', which supports the granting of permission for this application, the proposal accords with local and national planning policy and therefore permission should be granted without delay, as there are no adverse impacts which outweigh the benefit of investing in the established PFS site as located within this accessible location at Clothall Road in Baldock.
- 6.6 Taking all these factors into account, it is considered that permission can be granted for this development on its merits and having regard to all relevant material considerations.