

AGENDA ITEM 5

APPENDIX 3

SUPPORTING STATEMENT

PROPOSED NEW RETAIL STORES
GRAMPIAN ROAD, AVIEMORE
**SUPPORTING PLANNING
AND RETAIL INFORMATION**

ON BEHALF OF SC AVIEMORE LIMITED

Pritchett Planning Consultancy Ltd
PO Box 8052
Edinburgh
EH16 5ZF
Tel: 0131 225 6255
Email: phil@pritchettplanning.co.uk

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1.0 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 SC Aviemore Limited has purchased the site of the previously proposed Tesco store at Grampian Road, Aviemore. The Tesco store will not now proceed and in its place SC Aviemore is applying for the relevant permissions necessary to instead allow the site to be developed out as three retail stores. The overall approach to the site's development is not altering with the proposed footprint, scale, height and massing of the previously proposed Tesco store remaining the same. The store therefore remains as consented and the overall approach to the layout of the car park and position of the site access also remain the same.

1.2 Two applications have been lodged to allow the alterations to take place. The first application is a variation to condition application relating to condition 22 of the Tesco permission. The description of the application is as follows:

Application for planning permission under Section 42 to vary condition 22 of permission 2011/0177/DET to allow subdivision of the unit, allow a minimum of 60% trading floor area to be exclusively for the sale of convenience goods and allow up to 40% of the trading floor to include a range of comparison goods with no single comparison good occupying more than 40% of that area.

1.3 The above application has been called in by the Cairngorms National Park Authority with the following reason given: *This Section 42 application represents a significant diversion from the granted permission and is considered to raise issues of significance to the collective aims of the National Park, in relation to: sustainable and economic development in terms of retail development.*

1.4 The CNPA has also requested supporting retail information to explain the changes required to the condition as the condition presently requires 75% of the floorspace to be for convenience goods. The changes therefore require to be justified given the terms of the existing Tesco permission and the reason for the condition which is noted as: *In order to retain an element of control over the non-food goods on sale, and therefore the impact of the supermarket on the vitality and viability of the retail offer in Aviemore and nearby settlements.*

1.5 The second application lodged provides the physical details of the external changes to the Tesco building that are required in order to alter the Tesco building from one to three stores. The description of this planning application is as follows:

Amendment to planning permission 2011/0177/DET to form three shop units, incorporating mezzanine floorspace, and associated infrastructure including servicing and parking arrangements.

- 1.6 The two applications when considered together will allow the development to proceed without revisiting the principle of retail development on the site which has been established since the initial planning permissions were granted back in 2003. This application was subject to extensive public consultation and a Proposal of Application Notice and PAC report. This report and the notice is issued again in support of this application. The community council and stakeholders have all been informed of the proposals by SC Aviemore.

Site History

- 1.7 The application site has a long history of planning permissions for retail development in the form of a supermarket both as part of the wider development of the Aviemore Highland Resort and also as a stand-alone development following the purchase of the site by Tesco. The site has held an outline planning permission from Highland Council in 2003 for a 2,787sqm gross supermarket. In 2008 the CNPA granted planning permissions for both a detailed application for a 2,787sqm supermarket and outline approval for an increase in the 2,787sqm supermarket to 4,181sqm, approved in April 2008. This outline planning permission was renewed by Tesco and remained a live consent when the current detailed permission was granted January 2014. The final Tesco store consent to which these current applications relate (consent 2011/0177/DET) assumed that the existing Tesco store would be vacated and relet to alternative retailers. These current applications will essentially achieve the same end in that the existing Tesco store will remain in operation on its current site trading as a supermarket and the Grampian Road site will accommodate three new retailers. In overall terms Aviemore centre will gain economically as a result in the same way as the previous proposals.
- 1.8 In the assessment of the Tesco proposal the officer's report concluded the following:

Overall the proposal is considered to positively comply with Policy 25 Business Development and Policy 26 Retail Development of the Local Plan in that the siting and design of the store as set out will result in a much anticipated, new and larger supermarket for Aviemore. In total 90 staff would be transferred from the existing store and an additional 150 jobs created. A number of environmental and technical issues have been considered with regard to biodiversity, landscape, flooding and roads. The

applicant will continue to work on the potential flooding issue. Subject to the withdrawal of SEPA's objection the proposal provides significant benefits. In summary the benefits of the proposal are:

- significant investment in the village resulting in approximately 150 additional jobs being created;*
- a new much needed larger supermarket for Aviemore;*
- bringing a largely brownfield site back into use;*

- 1.9 This assessment was therefore very clear in supporting the Tesco planning application as it resulted in significant investment in the village and was policy compliant. The only reason given for the imposition of the condition was to impose an element of control on the sale of comparison goods.
- 1.10 In support of the section 42 planning application CNPA has requested supporting retail information given the planning history of the site and the reasons given for the condition imposed on the planning permission for the Tesco store.

2.0 RETAIL ISSUES

- 2.1 This section concentrates on providing information to CNPA to support and justify the development of this varied form of class 1 retailing at Grampian Road, Aviemore. As the development will now not be a single supermarket SC Aviemore Ltd is seeking flexibility in the form of retail that can be accommodated. The overall gross floorspace would not be significantly greater than that approved in the Tesco consent which extended to 4,456sqm gross. The proposed mezzanine area extends to 622sqm but none of this floorspace would be sales area and would only be used for bulk storage of goods and offices. As the development will no longer be a supermarket it is proposed that the development will be split into other forms of retailing in three separate stores. There is also some floorspace originally proposed by Tesco that is deleted from this proposal such as the loading dock area and the front lobby. The overall size of the proposed three store scheme is therefore 4,599sqm gross which is 143sqm larger than the consented store.
- 2.2 The three stores are designed to accommodate discount food, general merchandising and a high quality food retailer. The overall turnover of the stores will be similar to that of the proposed Tesco store and with the capability of employing similar numbers of staff. The car parking and store frontage is to be altered to allow the three stores to be accommodated.
- 2.3 Table 1 below indicates the difference in floorspace and turnover between the proposed Tesco store and the subdivision proposal. This indicates the slight increase in gross floorspace which is as a result of the proposed bulk store mezzanine floor in unit 1.

	Total Gross F'space sqm	Sales F'space sqm	Convenience Floorspace			Comparison Floorspace		
			F'space sqm	t'over /sqm	t'over £m	Sales F'space sqm	t'over /sqm	t'over £m
Supermarket	4456	3000	2250	10496	23.62	750	6822	5.12
Alternative Stores*	4599	4139	2483	9500	23.59	1656	3000	4.97

Note: * Assumes average turnovers of discount and high quality foodstores and household goods store such as B&M, Poundland and Home Bargains.

- 2.4 It should be noted that in the appraisal of the Tesco store proposal in the committee report it was stated that the size of store was not an issue in the determination of the planning application. As this proposal only increases the size of the building by 143sqm or 3% this slight increase

- should not be a material determining factor in the determination of the two planning applications.
- 2.5 As the above table also indicates, the change from a retail floorspace split from 75/25 to 60/40 relating to convenience and comparison goods also makes no discernible difference to the overall turnover of the floorspace. This is largely because the type of floorspace that is envisaged in the three stores is similar to that which would have been included in the Tesco store. The amount of sales floorspace given over to convenience sales would be similar to the Tesco store with a similar turnover as it is envisaged that the floorspace would be occupied by discount and high quality food retailers which mirrors the type of convenience sales in a Tesco store. By contrast the sales area devoted to comparison goods would be around 906sqm more than in the Tesco store, but the anticipated turnover of the floorspace is likely to be less than the Tesco store as the floorspace is likely to be operated by a discount general merchandise store. The footfall and turnovers of such stores is significantly less than that associated with supermarket floorspace. Any impact from such floorspace will therefore be less than the consented scheme.
- 2.6 In overall terms this planning application will not result in any significant difference in trading patterns from that envisaged in the Tesco store. The condition which is to be varied did not specify the actual amount of retail sales area in the store only the percentages of floorspace to be devoted to goods categories, such that increase in actual sales floorspace is not a material planning issue in the determination of these planning applications. The assessment of the changes to the floorspace ratios indicates that this proposal will not have any materially different effects from that proposed by Tesco. There was also no debate regarding the size of the Tesco store or relationship of the consented store to the future of the existing Tesco store which could have been reused for any retail purpose with or without subdivision and without the requirement for any further planning permission. This had to be the case as the first planning permissions on the site did not have Tesco as a named operator and as such had no relationship with the existing Tesco store. As a result there are no material planning issues which would justify a refusal of permission to vary condition 22 of permission 2011/0177/DET to allow for subdivision and additional comparison floorspace. Both of these adjustments would help to ensure that the site is actually developed out for the purpose that has been accepted and would then create jobs and prosperity for the village centre in which the site is located. The sooner the site is developed the sooner the economic benefits can flow from this proposal.
- 2.7 The second aspect of this proposal is a planning application for adjustments to the existing Tesco permitted development. The plans that

were submitted and approved for Tesco require slight adjustment to enable the three stores to be constructed with three shop fronts instead of one and the removal of the Tesco entrance lobby. As a result there are also some adjustments to the location of disabled parking bays as well as adjustments to the servicing arrangements. None of the adjustments proposed alter the overall approach to the development of the site as the development remains essentially the same with all component parts of the scheme remaining in the same place as previously consented. The additional mezzanine floorspace in unit 1 is also applied for which replaces some of the floorspace approved for Tesco which included loading areas and the front entrance lobby. There has also been some adjustment to the store design to accommodate the three proposed retail units.

- 2.8 With the adjustments required to condition 22 and the alterations to the design of the building this will allow SC Aviemore to begin construction of the development in early course. There has been a substantial amount of background work undertaken on this site over many years and SC Aviemore are fully committed to building out this site to bring the much needed jobs, investment and new retailers to Aviemore. The village centre needs more investment to ensure that the centre keeps pace with the house building that continues and to also maintain spending locally. These required alterations to the consented scheme will allow the development to take place.

3.0 CONCLUSIONS

- 3.1 The site at Grampian Road, Aviemore has long been supported as a suitable retail site within the centre of Aviemore. The most up to date Local Development Plan includes the site within the village centre and as such its development for retail purposes will strengthen the retail function of Aviemore bringing much needed investment and jobs as well as new retail fascias. Previous assessments of the planning applications on the site have welcomed the investment as being policy compliant. Long established planning policies at all levels do not require retail impact assessment to be undertaken where proposals are situated within defined town centres as the effect of such proposals on such centres will be entirely positive.
- 3.2 This submission justifies the adjustments required to allow the consented Tesco store to be split into three separate units which are to be occupied by three new retailers for Aviemore. There will be no material change to the amount of floorspace on site and whilst the sales area of the stores will increase from that proposed by Tesco, the turnover overall is likely to decrease given the nature of the retailers proposed. No significant planning issues are therefore raised by this proposal and there are no policy breaches.
- 3.3 The second application seeks permission to allow the physical adjustments to the consented Tesco scheme to be undertaken to create three stores. The alterations do not raise significant planning issues.
- 3.4 SC Aviemore have a window of opportunity to develop out the site for the same form of development which has been supported on this site for over a decade. The applications do not raise any issues that were not considered in the original Tesco planning application process. No neighbouring land uses will be affected and as the same footprint of building and car parking will remain there are no impacts from the application that were not considered acceptable when the Tesco application was determined. There have also been no material changes in circumstances that would lead to a different conclusion and as such we would commend these planning applications to CNPA.