

Design & Access Statement



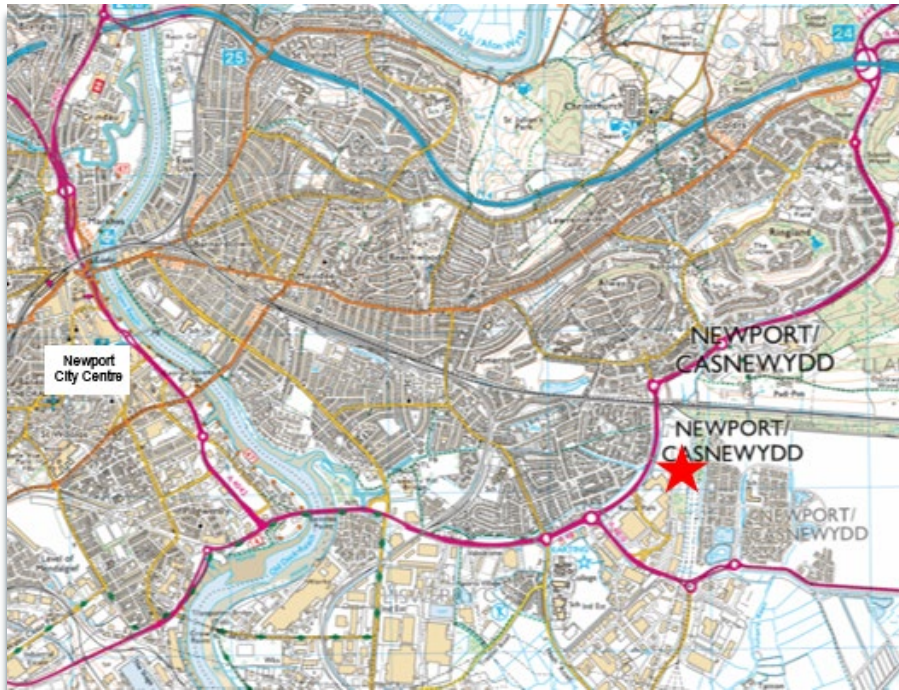
Matalan
Seven Stiles Avenue, Newport

September 2024

1. Introduction

This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared on behalf of Glenbrook CP Limited to accompany a change of use planning application for the Matalan store at Seven Stiles Avenue, Newport.

The Matalan store forms part of the Newport Retail Park District Centre located approximately 3.8km to the south east of Newport City Centre and just under 3.6 km from Junction 24 of the M4 motorway.



Site Location

The application seeks consent for a ‘Change of Use from Class A1 (Non-Food Retail) to Class B1 (Business) and/or Class B2 (General Industrial) and/or B8 (Storage or Distribution) and/or Class A1 (Non-Food Retail).’

This DAS has been prepared in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (Wales) Order 2012 (as amended), Planning Policy Wales (February 2024), and Welsh Government Guidance on Pre-Application Community Consultation: Best Practice Guidance for Developers (December 2021).

The guidance indicates that the purpose of a DAS is to illustrate the process that has led to the development proposal and advises that the level of detail required depends on the nature, scale and complexity of the application.

In this regard, the proposed application seeks consent for a change of use only. There are no physical alterations proposed to the store itself or any external areas as part of this application. As such there is no opportunity to influence the ‘design’ of the overall proposal.

2. Site Context

The Site

The site comprises a rectangular parcel of land, measuring approximately 1.25 hectares, with an existing Matalan retail unit occupying the northern part of the site with associated car parking to the south.



View looking north towards site



View looking north towards site



View of store from within the car park

The Surrounding Context

The character of the surrounding area is predominantly retail and commercial uses in nature. To the west, the site abuts Seven Stiles Avenue beyond which is the primary complex of the Newport Retail Park. To the south of the site is a vacant parcel of land, and beyond that a car showroom and its outdoor display and parking areas. To the east of the site is a small reën, and mature vegetation. Beyond this to the east is the major housing regeneration site forming the Eastern Expansion Area upon the former Llanwern steelworks site.

The composition of the Newport Retail Park is approximately triangular in shape and falls into distinct sections. The main retail part is formed by Tesco and 21 other retail units arranged around a central car park, with Central Avenue separating Tesco from the other units. To the east, across Seven Stiles Avenue, the pattern is different, with Cineworld cinema, JD Gym, the Peugeot car showroom, Home Bargains and Matalan as the only retailers in this section of the Retail Park.

At the southern end of this section, close to the access to the retail park off Queensway Meadows and distinct from the retail core, there are 4 food outlets. Between these units and Tesco, there are two further car showrooms.

There are no listed buildings within the context of the application site and the site is not set within any conservation area. There are no known environmental or ecological constraints to the site.



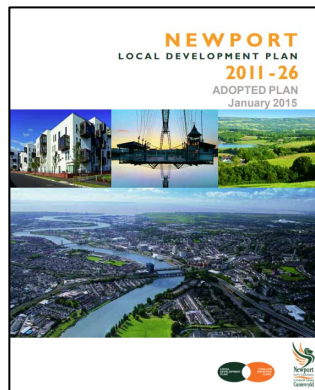
Aerial Image of Application Site

3. Planning Policy Context

The Newport Local Development Plan (LDP) 2011-2016

The Newport LDP was adopted in January 2015 and sets out the Council's planning framework for the development and use of land in Newport between 2011 – 2026.

The application site forms part of the Newport Retail Park District Centre. Policies of relevance to the development proposals include:



Policy R6 Retail Proposals in District Centres confirms that within the Newport Retail Park improved shopping facilities will be favoured, provided that the proposals are of an appropriate scale and would not have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the City Centre. The policy goes to advise that proposals to vary/remove conditions, change the range of goods sold and change the size of units would be supported provided it does not adversely affect the vitality and viability of the City Centre or change the Centre's role as a District Centre.

Policy R7 Non-Retail Uses in District Centres advises that within District Centres activities in Use Classes A2, A3 and various leisure and community uses will be permitted where this would not prejudice the viability of the Centre's retailing role; satisfactory parking and access is provided and there would be no unacceptable effect on the local residential amenities or general character of the area in terms of noise and disturbance or extra traffic generated.

Policy SP1 Sustainability advises that proposals will be required to make a positive contribution to sustainable development by concentrating development in sustainable locations on brownfield land within the settlement boundary.

Policy SP18 Urban Regeneration outlines that proposals will be favoured which assist the regeneration of the urban area, particularly where they contribute to:

- i) the vitality, viability and quality of the environment of the city centre;
- ii) the provision of residential and business opportunities within the urban area;
- iii) reuse of vacant, underused or derelict land;
- iv) encourage the development of community uses where appropriate.

Policy SP19 Assessment of Retail Need directs retail and associated uses according to the retail hierarchy of centres as follows 1. Newport City Centre 2. District Centres (this includes Newport Retail Park) 3. Local Centre and 4. Out of Centre Retail Sites.

Policy GP2 General Development – General Amenity states that development will be permitted where there will not be a significant adverse effect on local amenity (environmental) or detrimental to visual amenity.

Policy T4 Parking advises that development will be required to provide appropriate levels of parking in accordance with adopted parking standards.

Policy GP4 General Development Principles-Highways and Accessibility explains that development proposals should *inter alia*:

- i) provide appropriate access for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport in accordance with national guidance;
- ii) be accessible by a choice of means of transport;
- iii) be designed to avoid or reduce transport severance, noise and air pollution;
- iv) make adequate provision for car parking and cycle storage;
- v) provide suitable and safe access arrangements;
- vi) ensure that development would not be detrimental to highway or pedestrian safety or result in traffic generation exceeding the capacity of the highway network.

Planning Policy Wales Edition 12 (February 2024)

PPW12 advises on the role of retail centres and appropriate uses within them. Paragraph 4.3.30 states that although retailing (Class A1) uses should underpin retail and commercial centres, it is only one of the factors which contribute towards their vibrancy. Paragraph 4.3.31 goes on to advise that primary areas are typically characterised by a high proportion of A1 retail uses, and their designation requires an understanding of the existing distribution of uses in a centre together with careful consideration of a centre's role and how it relates to the retail strategy for the area. Secondary areas typically contain mixed uses, for example shops, cafes and restaurants, financial establishments and other services and community facilities.

PPW12 places value on the economic development which generates economic prosperity and regeneration. Paragraph 5.4.2 defines economic development as the development of land and buildings for activities that generate sustainable long-term prosperity, jobs and incomes. It goes on to state that the growth of output and employment in Wales as a whole is not constrained by a shortage of land for economic uses. Economic land uses include the traditional employment land uses (offices, research and development, industry and warehousing), as well as uses such as retail, tourism, and public services.

Paragraph 5.4.4 confirms that wherever possible, planning authorities should encourage and support developments which generate economic prosperity and regeneration.

4. Application Proposal

Rationale for the Proposed Change of Use

Matalan are the current occupiers of the retail unit, however, when their lease expires in March 2026 there is the possibility that Matalan will choose to relocate to another unit in the locality.

In anticipation of Matalan potentially surrendering their lease on the property and it is left vacant, Knight Frank have been tasked with presenting the property to prospective retailers. Knight Frank have advised that there hasn't been any interest shown from the retail market due to the siting of the property.

As can be seen from the aerial image below the Matalan unit is sited at the very rear of the Retail Park and away from the main concentration of retail units. It sits on its own facing onto the rear service yards of several retail units. As such it doesn't benefit from any passing traffic or pedestrian footfall. This means that visitors to the Retail Park will often be unaware of Matalan's presence at the Retail Park as they are unlikely to stumble across it.

The separation and distance from the main Retail Park together with the lack of visibility and prominence clearly impacts the store's ability to attract customers.



Use

In order to try and improve the marketability of this unit and attract a wider range of tenants this application seeks permission for the change of use of the existing Matalan retail unit (Class A1 non-food retail) to Class B1 (Business) and/or Class B2 (General Industrial) and/or B8 (Storage) and/or Class A1 (non-food retail). Knight Frank advise that there has been quite a lot of interest shown by potential B1, B2 and B8 occupiers for which the market in Newport is very strong.

Amount and Layout

The site comprises a rectangular parcel of land, measuring approximately 1.25 hectares. The Matalan unit, which occupies the northern part of the site, has a gross internal area (GIA) measuring approximately 4,451 sqm.

The proposals do not seek an increase in the floorspace of the premises and there are no changes proposed as part of this application to the external elevations of the retail unit, layout or any external areas including customer car park.

Accessibility

Newport Retail Park is located approximately 3.8 km to the south-east of Newport City Centre. The Matalan unit sits behind the Retail Park. The A48 is located to the north west of the Retail Park and provides the main access to Retail Park with Seven Stiles Avenue providing access to the Matalan unit. Access to the retail park can also be gained via the A4810. Given its standalone nature, the unit has dedicated servicing facilities.

The existing car park provides a total of 177 spaces, including 15 disabled bays. The proposals do not involve any changes to the car parking layout or access. It is considered that the retail park as a whole can be served by the existing road network without detriment to the wider highway network.

The site is within a sustainable location. Bus stops are located in close proximity to the site at the A48 adjacent to the Retail Park. A range of services (20A/C, 43, 74, 74A, 74C and SJ2) provide regular services to a variety of locations within the City.

Landscaping and Green Infrastructure

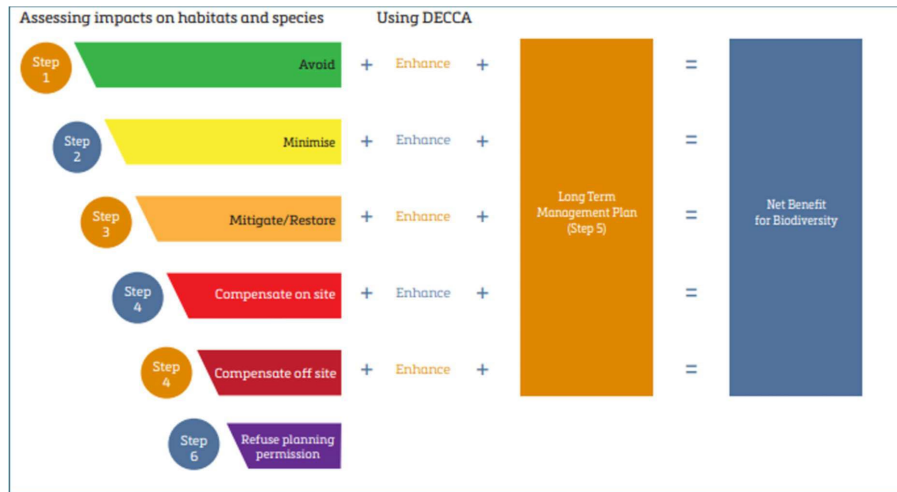
The majority of the site is currently laid to hardstanding as an existing customer car parking space. The Matalan unit provides limited Green Infrastructure which includes typical 'end of row' landscaping, low level shrubs and trees and perimeter landscaping. There is no proposed landscaping works associated with this application.

The multi-functionality of the green infrastructure comprise:

- Contribution to Placemaking
- Cooling and Shade
- Health and Wellbeing
- Calming and Inspiring
- Nutrient Cycling
- Wildlife Habitat
- Cleaning Water and Air

No loss of this Green Infrastructure would result from the proposed change of use.

Stepwise Approach



The first step on the Stepwise Approach set out within PPW version 12 is to avoid impacts on habitats and species. Given the nature of the application total avoidance of impact is achieved.

The proposed green infrastructure strategy has considered the existing green infrastructure features within the site, as recommended by the Stepwise approach. The proposed green infrastructure would have no impact on the multi-functionality of the green infrastructure elements on or around the site and would result in no impact on habitats or species

Community Safety

The nature of the proposals will not impact on community safety.

Environmental Sustainability

No alterations to the external elevation of the retail unit is proposed.

Conclusions

The development proposals have been shown to accord with national and local policy requirements relating to the principle of the proposed development and other material considerations.

Taking into account all the above matters, the proposal is regarded as a sustainable development located in an appropriate location and considered to be in accordance with the relevant policies of the statutory Development Plan and other material considerations.