



Retail Impact Assessment
101 Pickwick Road, Corsham, SN13 9DA

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Crossman Planning Consultancy (CPC) has been instructed by Cliffe Property Investments Limited to submit a planning application for the redevelopment of the existing petrol filling station (PFS). Full planning permission is sought for the:

'Demolition of existing petrol filling station shop and car wash and construction of replacement retail building, together with relocation of vac and air facilities, introduction of EV charging points and replacement of underground fuel storage tanks, pipework, forecourt drainage, interceptor, utilities infrastructure and associated works.'

- 1.2 The purpose of this retail impact assessment (RIA) is to provide a standalone, evidence-led assessment of the proposal against the prevailing retail planning policy framework, focusing on the tests that are typically engaged by new or expanded retail floorspace outside defined centres.

- 1.3 In particular, the RIA:

- Describes the proposed convenience retail element and the relationship to the wider forecourt operation;
- Sets out the appropriate study area and baseline for Corsham town centre and relevant competing provision;
- Applies the sequential approach proportionately to the nature of a PFS-linked convenience offer; and
- Assesses the likelihood of significant adverse retail impacts on Corsham town centre, including sensitivity testing.

2 Proposed and Existing Development

- 2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the redevelopment and modernisation of the existing petrol filling station (PFS) and associated convenience shop at 101 Pickwick Road, Corsham.

- 2.2 The application proposals comprise the demolition of the existing PFS shop and car wash and the construction of a replacement retail building, together with associated operational upgrades including the relocation of vac and air facilities, introduction of EV charging points, and the replacement of underground fuel storage tanks, pipework, forecourt drainage, interceptor and utilities infrastructure.

- 2.3 The scheme also includes forecourt and servicing enhancements such as a reconfigured pump arrangement and canopy works, upgraded drainage/utilities, and ancillary forecourt/servicing measures (including defined servicing arrangements and related operational improvements).

- 2.4 The existing retail unit at the site has:

- Gross internal floorspace: 94m²;
- Net sales area: 57m²;

2.5 The proposed replacement retail building would provide:

- Gross internal floorspace: circa 339m²;
- Net sales area: 232m²;
- Back of house (BoH) / storage: 106m².

Component	Existing	Proposed	Uplift
Gross internal floorspace (GIA)	94	339	+245
Net sales area (NSA)	57	232	+175
Back of house / storage (BoH)	37	106	+69

Table 1: Retail floorspace schedule and uplift (m²)

3 Planning History

- 3.1 The principal retail-relevant planning history for the Site is full planning permission ref: 20/03036/FUL, which was granted on 13 August 2020. Whilst lapsed, that 2020 decision is important because it records the Council's assessment of a materially similar form of redevelopment of PFS and its ancillary convenience offer, including the Council's conclusions on sequential and impact considerations, and the imposition of a specific retail floorspace control.
- 3.2 In the delegated officer assessment of 20/03036/FUL, the Council recorded that the proposal would enlarge the retail element of the PFS, with the net retail floorspace increasing from 57 m² to 232 m², and a back-of-house / storage area of 106m². The same officer report also recorded the existing gross internal area of 94m² and a proposed gross floorspace of circa 339m² for the replacement store building.
- 3.3 These figures establish the 2020 permission's approved retail quantum for the purposes of understanding what the Council previously accepted.

4 Policy Framework

Development Plan

- 4.1 In accordance with the statutory plan-led system, the application should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 4.2 For Corsham, the development plan includes the Wiltshire Core Strategy (adopted January 2015) and the made Corsham Neighbourhood Plan (alongside saved policies of the former North Wiltshire District Local Plan).

National Planning Policy Framework

- 4.3 The prevailing NPPF sets out the "town centre first" approach through:
- A sequential test for planning applications for main town centre uses which are neither in an existing centre nor in accordance with an up-to-date plan, directing such uses to town

centres first, then edge-of-centre, and only then out-of-centre locations, with a requirement to demonstrate flexibility on matters such as format and scale.

- An impact test for retail and leisure development outside town centres which is not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, where the development is above a locally set floorspace threshold (or 2,500m² gross where no local threshold is set). The impact assessment should address (i) impacts on existing/committed/planned investment and (ii) impacts on town centre vitality and viability.
- A clear decision rule that proposals should be refused where they fail the sequential test or are likely to have a significant adverse impact on the impact considerations.

Planning Practice Guidance (Town Centres and Retail)

4.4 The PPG provides practical direction on applying the sequential and impact tests, including that:

- The sequential test is intended to guide main town centre uses to the most central locations and should be applied proportionately, with flexibility in scale/format; and
- The impact test is concerned with the effects of certain edge/out-of-centre retail/leisure proposals on vitality/viability and investment, typically focusing on impacts in the first five years, and using plausible scenarios with clearly stated assumptions.

Development Plan Retail Policy

4.5 For proposals of this nature, the key Development Plan policy is Core Policy 38 (Retail and Leisure). In the Council's previous delegated assessment, it is recorded that where a site is outside the town centre, CP38 requires that proposals for retail/leisure uses in excess of 200m² gross floorspace (including extensions) are accompanied by an impact assessment and must also comply with the sequential approach, demonstrating no harm to the vitality/viability of nearby centres.

4.6 This local 200m² gross threshold is materially more stringent than the NPPF default (2,500m² gross where no local threshold is set), reinforcing the expectation that an appropriately proportionate retail assessment is required for out-of-centre proposals above the local threshold.

Neighbourhood Plan Policy

4.7 The Corsham Neighbourhood Plan contains policies aimed at supporting and safeguarding the vitality of Corsham, including specific town-centre revitalisation objectives.

4.8 In particular, Policy BE4 supports employment-related development that contributes to the revitalisation of Corsham Town Centre in accordance with the Corsham Framework Masterplan, including (where applicable) opportunities to enhance/remodel the Martingate Centre, integrate coach parking, facilitate a new supermarket-led mixed-use redevelopment concept, protect town-centre parking through no net loss of spaces, and improve linkages between key commercial locations.

4.9 While BE4 is not a "retail impact" policy in the same way as CP38, it is directly relevant to the decision-maker's consideration of town centre vitality/viability and investment confidence,

because it expresses local priorities for strengthening the town centre and protecting the supporting infrastructure (including parking provision).

5 Policy Requirements

- 5.1 On the basis that the Site is outside the town centre, and the proposal comprises the redevelopment/expansion of the convenience retail element of a petrol filling station, the policy framework engages two related tests set out below.

Sequential Test

- 5.2 As a matter of national policy, the sequential test applies to applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre or in accordance with an up-to-date plan, with flexibility required on format/scale.
- 5.3 The Council's previous delegated assessment also recognises the practical need to apply the sequential approach in a way that has regard to the sui generis and PFS-linked nature of the proposal, including the locational requirements associated with fuel sales and an on-site redevelopment.

Impact Assessment

- 5.4 CP38 requires an impact assessment for out-of-centre retail/leisure proposals over 200m² gross, demonstrating no harm to vitality/viability, and compliance with the sequential approach.
- 5.5 National policy confirms the same structure: where the proposal is outside a town centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, an impact assessment should address impacts on investment and on vitality/viability, with refusal where significant adverse impact would arise.
- 5.6 Accordingly, the remainder of this RIA is structured to address the sequential and impact tests in a transparent, auditable manner, and with explicit regard to Corsham town centre's vitality/viability and regeneration priorities (including those expressed through Policy BE4).

6 Baseline Study Area

- 6.1 For the purposes of the sequential and impact tests, the principal relevant centre is Corsham town centre, reflecting (i) the modest scale and convenience nature of the proposal and (ii) the Site's relationship with Corsham as its immediate day-to-day catchment.
- 6.2 The local plan and its associated evidence base describe Corsham town centre as comprising High Street and the Martingate Centre, located on the eastern side of the settlement. Moreover, the development plan policies map defines separate retail frontages. The primary frontage is confined to the Martingate Centre, while the secondary frontage extends along High Street (from Pickwick Road to Priory Street) and also includes Post Office Lane, the southern part of Newlands Road and a small part of Pickwick Road.
- 6.3 Given the proposal's nature (a petrol filling station with convenience retail), the relevant network of centres is therefore:
- Corsham town centre (primary focus for sequential/impact considerations); and

- Competing destinations that currently attract Corsham residents' convenience spend, particularly for main food shopping.

Catchment Definitions Used for the RIA

- 6.4 A proportionate, two-layer catchment approach is adopted, reflecting the Site's function and customer profile:
1. Walk-in / local linked-trip catchment (Corsham town) which is intended to capture:
 - Residents undertaking short "top-up" convenience trips; and
 - Linked trips associated with journeys to and from the town centre.
- 6.5 Also, this catchment is aligned to Corsham and its immediate urban area, reflecting that the Site lies on a busy main road into the town centre:
2. Drive-by / wider passing-trade catchment (A4 corridor movements):
 - As a petrol filling station, a component of trade will necessarily derive from motorists passing the Site in the course of wider journeys. The Site's position on a principal approach into Corsham is relevant to this element of trade.
- 6.6 These catchments are carried forward into the turnover and trade draw assumptions (and tested through sensitivities) so that impacts are not overstated on Corsham town centre's convenience sector.

Corsham Town Centre Baseline Health Check

- 6.7 The adopted town centre evidence base (Wiltshire Retail and Town Centres Study 2020) provides the principal baseline on the town centre's role and performance. Corsham is described as a town centre focused on High Street and the Martingate Centre, with defined primary and secondary retail frontages.

Town Centre Strategy / Regeneration Sensitivity

- 6.8 Corsham is subject to a made neighbourhood plan. Policy BE4 supports development that contributes to revitalisation of Corsham town centre, including opportunities to enhance/remodel the Martingate Centre, develop a new supermarket (with mixed-use opportunities), and remodel/enhance town centre car parks, alongside improved linkages.
- 6.9 This is an important local context: the town centre is recognised as an asset requiring continued support and investment, and retail change needs to be assessed with regard to effects on vitality and viability.

Vacancy

- 6.10 The Retail Study had 9 vacant units at the time of the 2020 survey, compared with 7 in 2012, indicating a worsening vacancy position over that period.
- 6.11 In floorspace terms, vacant floorspace is recorded at 1,600m², equating to 15.6% of town centre floorspace (noted as above the national average cited in the Study).

Accessibility and “Functioning” of the Centre

- 6.12 Corsham town centre benefits from a range of public/off-street parking options and bus connectivity. The Retail Study identifies four main off-street car parks (Springfield Leisure Centre, High Street, Martingate, and Newlands Road) and also notes on-street parking (with a maximum stay).
- 6.13 Bus services also connect Corsham to surrounding settlements including Chippenham and Bath, supporting the town centre’s day-to-day accessibility.

Role and Retail Function (Convenience Emphasis)

- 6.14 The Retail Study identifies that the town centre includes a principal convenience foodstore alongside a broader “top-up” convenience offer. It also explains that the centre increasingly performs an important role in top-up food shopping, in the context of competing larger foodstore provision outside the centre (and beyond Corsham).
- 6.15 A core component of the baseline is the adopted evidence on where Corsham residents currently shop for convenience goods, particularly main food shopping, as this frames the realistic competitive environment.
- 6.16 The Retail Study reports that, for the relevant household survey geography (Zone 21), Corsham accounts for 6% of main food shopping trips, whereas Chippenham accounts for 57%, indicating that a substantial proportion of main food spend leaks to a larger nearby centre and its foodstores.
- 6.17 For top-up food shopping, Corsham’s role strengthens, with Corsham accounting for 38% and Chippenham 29% of top-up trips in the same survey geography.
- 6.18 This pattern is important for the impact assessment. Corsham town centre performs a meaningful local role in top-up convenience provision, but competes in a wider market where main food shopping is strongly influenced by the larger provision in/around Chippenham.

7 Assessment Methodology

Overview and Guiding Principles

- 7.1 This RIA applies a proportionate, auditable methodology focused on the incremental convenience retail uplift associated with the replacement store, recognising the operational context of a petrol filling station (PFS) where a material element of shop expenditure is linked to forecourt activity and linked trips.
- 7.2 The assessment has been structured to address:
- The sequential approach for main town centre uses in out-of-centre locations; and
 - The retail impact test requirements, having regard to Wiltshire’s locally set threshold under Core Policy 38 (CP38), which requires an impact assessment for out-of-centre retail proposals exceeding 200m² gross floorspace (including extensions).

Data Sources

- 7.3 The assessment draws on the evidence base in the hierarchy set out in the project instructions, namely:
- 7.4 Application documents (current) - used to describe the proposal, quantify floorspace and identify proposed controls (including any floorspace cap).
- 7.5 Wiltshire Council officer report / decision notice for 20/03036/FUL - used to confirm the established retail “benchmark” quantum previously accepted and the form of control imposed (including the 232m² retail floorspace cap), and to understand the Council’s previous retail reasoning in the same locational context.
- 7.6 Wiltshire Retail and Town Centres Study 2020 (Retail Study) - used to define and evidence: Corsham town centre role/function, health check indicators, the household survey-based shopping patterns (Zone 21), and the competing convenience context. The Study also provides guidance on the typical components that need to be agreed and evidenced in proportionate retail impact work (scenarios, catchment, affected centres, trade draw/diversion and any restrictions).
- 7.7 Corsham Neighbourhood Plan (made) - used to understand local town centre revitalisation priorities and sensitivities relevant to vitality/viability and investment confidence.
- 7.8 Available online marketing evidence .
- 7.9 In addition, the assessment is informed by professional judgement and on-the-ground observation of the current retail hierarchy and convenience offer (used qualitatively, with all quantitative conclusions derived transparently from stated inputs).

Sequential Test Methodology

- 7.10 The sequential assessment (Section 8) will:
- Define a proportionate search area reflecting the role of the proposal and Corsham’s network of centres;
 - Set out the operational requirements of a PFS-linked convenience offer, and consider flexibility in scale and format in that context; and
 - Assess whether there are sequentially preferable sites (town centre, then edge-of-centre) that are suitable, available and viable to accommodate the relevant development requirements.
- 7.11 Given the proposal is a redevelopment of an established PFS and convenience offer in an out-of-centre location, the sequential exercise will focus on whether any sequentially preferable location could realistically meet the functional objectives of the scheme in a way that would deliver an equivalent development.

Retail Impact Methodology

- 7.12 The impact assessment (Section 9) will address the two core impact considerations:

- Impact on existing, committed and planned investment in Corsham town centre (and any other materially affected centres); and
- Impact on vitality and viability, including convenience sector trading and consumer choice.

7.13 The quantitative work will be constructed in a way that is auditable and reconcilable, by:

- Estimating the proposal turnover on the basis of the net sales area and a clearly stated sales density assumption (with sensitivity testing);
- Focusing on incremental turnover uplift attributable to the expanded sales area (rather than treating the proposal as wholly “new” retail turnover);
- apportioning the uplift between (i) a local walk-in / top-up component and (ii) a wider drive-by / linked-forecourt component, reflecting the customer profile evidenced in the baseline; and
- Applying transparent trade draw / diversion assumptions to estimate impacts on Corsham town centre convenience provision and any other key competing stores.

Assumptions and Limitations

7.14 A proportionate assessment for Corsham necessarily has to manage limitations in locally specific turnover data and the precision of survey-based modelling at fine geographic scales. The methodology responds by:

- Using adopted evidence for town centre health and shopping patterns as the baseline (including Zone 21 main and top-up patterns);
- Making explicit, testable assumptions for sales density and trade diversion, presented as inputs (not hidden); and
- Running at least two sensitivity scenarios in Sections 11 and 12:
 - a realistic scenario reflecting the expected trading role of a PFS-linked convenience offer; and
 - a robust worst-case scenario designed to ensure the conclusions are not dependent on optimistic assumptions.

Reduced Trading Sensitivity – Methodology and Justification

7.15 In determining the previous, materially similar redevelopment scheme at this Site (ref: 20/03036/FUL), the Council accepted retail evidence and conclusions that explicitly recognised the trading characteristics of a PFS-linked convenience offer. In that context, the use of a reduced trading sensitivity by applying a 0.75 factor to the modelled uplift was accepted as a proportionate way of reflecting the realistic trading performance of the additional sales area. This RIA adopts the same approach so that the current assessment is directly comparable to what the Council previously found acceptable for the same site and retail quantum.

7.16 The reduced trading sensitivity is applied because convenience trading performance can vary materially depending on operator, store format and critically in this case, the operational context of a petrol filling station (PFS)-linked convenience offer, where a proportion of expenditure is driven by linked refuelling trips, pass-by movements and smaller “top-up” basket purchases rather than planned, main-food shopping behaviour. Even where a replacement store provides an improved layout and enlarged sales area, a forecourt convenience unit typically remains constrained in range and format when compared with free-standing food stores. As a result, the incremental trading attributable to the uplift in sales area may reasonably be lower than that implied by a headline benchmark sales density.

7.17 Methodologically, the reduced trading sensitivity is applied as a simple scalar to the benchmark incremental uplift. First, the benchmark incremental turnover uplift is derived from the uplift in net sales area (Δ NSA) using the adopted sales density:

- $\Delta T = \Delta \text{NSA} \times \text{Sales Density}.$

7.18 Second, the reduced trading uplift is calculated by applying the 0.75 factor to that benchmark uplift:

- $\Delta T(\text{reduced}) = \Delta T \times 0.75.$

7.19 In the local market context, this sensitivity is also justified by the adopted evidence on shopping patterns, which indicates that convenience shopping is materially influenced by larger competing destinations beyond Corsham for main food trips, with Corsham and its town centre performing a stronger role for top-up shopping. Against that baseline, the reduced trading sensitivity provides a realistic “lower trading intensity” outcome for the incremental sales area and demonstrates that the conclusions on retail impact remain sound even where the uplift turnover is below the benchmark position.

8 Sequential Test

8.1 The sequential approach applies to planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in an existing centre and not in accordance with an up-to-date plan. Retail development is a main town centre use.

8.2 In this case, the Site is outside Corsham town centre, and the proposal includes a materially enlarged convenience retail offer. The Development Plan also applies a locally set trigger: Core Policy 38 expects proposals for retail/leisure uses in excess of 200m² gross floorspace outside town centres to comply with the sequential approach.

- 8.3 Accordingly, the sequential approach is engaged and is addressed below in a proportionate manner, reflecting the proposal's function as a PFS-linked convenience offer.

Defining the Development

- 8.4 The development is not a free-standing food store proposal. It is the redevelopment and modernisation of an established petrol filling station with an associated convenience shop, including replacement fuel infrastructure and forecourt improvements.
- 8.5 The retail element is therefore intrinsically related to:
- An operational forecourt requiring roadside access and safe vehicle circulation; and
 - A convenience offer that is, in large part, linked to forecourt patronage and short local trips.
- 8.6 This functional context is material to the sequential exercise, because the key question becomes whether any sequentially preferable location could realistically accommodate a development that is PFS-led (rather than whether a convenience shop of 232m² net could theoretically be placed in centre as a stand-alone unit).
- 8.7 The Council's previous delegated assessment for the same site and retail quantum treated the proposal as sui generis (as a PFS) with the enlarged shop remaining ancillary to that operation, and applied the sequential approach on that basis.

Proportionate Search Area

- 8.8 The sequential test search area is defined to be proportionate to:
- The scale and nature of the proposal (a modest convenience offer linked to a PFS); and
 - The area within which there is a realistic prospect of identifying sequentially preferable sites capable of meeting the operational requirements.
- 8.9 Given the role of Corsham town centre as the relevant centre (as defined in the adopted evidence base and Development Plan frontage mapping), the search area is focused on:
- Corsham town centre (High Street and the Martingate Centre); and
 - edge-of-centre locations with reasonable proximity to Corsham town centre and capable of accommodating vehicular access and circulation requirements.
- 8.10 Beyond Corsham, larger centres (e.g. Chippenham) serve a different role in the hierarchy and are not an appropriate sequential focus for a Corsham-based PFS redevelopment that is intended to serve Corsham and passing trade on the main approach route.

Flexibility: Scale and Format

- 8.11 National policy requires applicants to demonstrate flexibility on scale and format.
- 8.12 In this case, flexibility is inherently constrained by the development's purpose:
- The primary use is a PFS requiring roadside location and forecourt layout;

- The shop is intended to provide a modern convenience offer consistent with current operator requirements, including materially increased back-of-house space for stock handling and servicing efficiency; and

8.13 Notwithstanding this, the sequential assessment has regard to whether:

- A materially smaller format could deliver the same operational and customer service objectives, and
- A PFS-led redevelopment could be relocated to an in-centre/edge-of-centre location without undermining deliverability.

9 Assessment of Sequentially Preferable Sites

Town Centre Options (Corsham Town Centre)

9.1 Corsham town centre is focused on High Street and the Martingate Centre, with the primary frontage confined to the Martingate Centre and secondary frontage extending along High Street and connecting streets.

Suitability

9.2 A town centre site would need to be capable of accommodating:

- Fuel pumps / forecourt layout;
- Fuel storage and associated hazardous zones and access requirements;
- Safe vehicular access/egress and circulation;
- And a retail unit of the scale proposed (subject to control), together with servicing.

9.3 Corsham town centre's built form and land use pattern, as described and mapped, is characterised by tight urban grain, established frontages and town centre parking arrangements. These characteristics typically make the provision of a modern forecourt layout and safe vehicular circulation impracticable without substantial demolition and reconfiguration, which would conflict with the objective of supporting and revitalising the town centre environment.

Availability

9.4 There is no evidence of any specific, available town centre site capable of accommodating a relocated PFS-led development. This has been informed by an assessment of market available evidence and also pipeline planning permissions. Moreover, town centre opportunity sites are actively framed in local strategy around different forms of development (including potential supermarket-led mixed-use regeneration concepts) rather than the introduction of new PFS infrastructure.

Viability

9.5 Even if a theoretical town centre site could be identified, the costs and constraints associated with assembling and clearing a suitably-sized, accessible plot capable of accommodating

forecourt circulation and underground fuel infrastructure would be likely to render such an option commercially unrealistic relative to an on-site redevelopment of an established PFS.

Conclusion on Town Centre Options

- 9.6 On the evidence, there are no realistic town centre sites that are suitable, available and viable to accommodate the development as defined (a PFS-led redevelopment with ancillary convenience retail). This has been informed by an assessment of market available evidence and also pipeline planning permissions. This aligns with the Council's previous conclusion that the proposal's sui generis / PFS nature and operational requirements meant there were no sequentially preferable options.

Edge-of-Centre Options

- 9.7 Edge-of-centre sites would still need to satisfy the fundamental operational requirements of a PFS and forecourt, including:
- Safe vehicular access and circulation;
 - Space for pumps/canopy, tanker deliveries and turning; and
 - Associated infrastructure and controls.
- 9.8 No specific edge-of-centre sites have been identified in the evidence base as capable of delivering a relocated PFS-led redevelopment. In practical terms, edge-of-centre locations around Corsham town centre are constrained by established development patterns, and the strategy direction in the neighbourhood plan is towards town centre enhancement and parking/connection improvements rather than introducing new PFS uses.

Out-of-Centre / Existing-Site (the Proposal)

- 9.9 In sequential terms, the proposal is a redevelopment of an existing, established PFS in an out-of-centre location. The existing site already performs that function and benefits from:
- Established vehicular access arrangements on the main approach road; and
 - An existing customer base for fuel and convenience top-up shopping.
- 9.10 Given the above, the redevelopment on the existing site is the only option that demonstrably meets the development's operational requirements in a deliverable manner.

Sequential Test Conclusion

- 9.11 Having applied a proportionate sequential approach:
- No town centre or edge-of-centre sites have been identified that are suitable, available and viable for a PFS-led redevelopment with an ancillary convenience store of the type proposed; and
 - The proposal is therefore sequentially acceptable.
- 9.12 This conclusion is consistent with the Council's previous sequential reasoning for the same site and broadly the same retail quantum, which recognised the development's sui generis / PFS nature and associated locational requirements.

10 Retail Impact Assessment

- 10.1 This Retail Impact Assessment is concerned with the incremental convenience goods turnover arising from the proposed redevelopment of the existing PFS-linked convenience store, and the extent to which that incremental turnover would be drawn from (i) Corsham town centre convenience provision and/or (ii) other stores and destinations (principally larger food stores serving the wider catchment).
- 10.2 The Retail Study identifies that Corsham's convenience sector draws c. £12m of study-area expenditure. This provides important context for a proportionate, sensitivity-based impact assessment: any uplift in turnover needs to be tested carefully (including a robust "worst case"), while recognising that Corsham's catchment is materially influenced by nearby larger centres and stores.

Floorspace Parameters for the Impact calculations

- 10.3 For retail impact purposes, net sales area (NSA) is the principal input, because convenience turnover is typically derived on a £/m² net basis and impacts are driven by the sales area available to display and sell goods.
- 10.4 The floorspace position (existing and proposed) is set out in the application evidence and was also recorded in the Council's 2020 delegated assessment for application 20/03036/FUL, namely:
- Existing NSA: 57m²;
 - Proposed NSA: 232m²;
 - Net sales uplift (Δ NSA): 175 m² (232 – 57).

Turnover of the Existing and Proposed Convenience Offer

Approach: focus on incremental turnover (uplift)

- 10.5 The key impact question is what level of additional turnover (uplift) would be generated by the additional net sales area, and from where that uplift would be drawn?
- 10.6 Accordingly, this RIA adopts an incremental turnover approach, applying an appropriate sales density to the uplift in net sales area (Δ NSA). This is both proportionate and conservative in the context of a PFS-linked store, because it avoids over-claiming that the existing store's turnover would necessarily translate directly onto the new layout, while still testing the additional retail capacity that the redevelopment could introduce.

Sales Density Assumption

- 10.7 Convenience trading performance can vary materially by operator, store size, layout efficiency, and the extent of linked trips / pass-by trade. In this case, the assessment is anchored to an adopted benchmark sales density, with sensitivity provided through (i) a reduced trading factor applied to the uplift and (ii) alternative trade draw / diversion profiles.
- 10.8 A single benchmark convenience sales density of £12,000 per m² net is applied to the uplift in net sales area (Δ NSA) to derive the incremental turnover uplift (Δ T), with this figure being

derived from the Retail Study. The two scenarios then test alternative trade draw assumptions (including the treatment of inflow/pass-by expenditure and the distribution of diversion between receptors), rather than alternative sales densities.

Incremental Turnover Calculation

10.9 Incremental turnover (ΔT) = $175 \text{ m}^2 \times \text{£}12,000/\text{m}^2 = \text{£}2.1\text{m}$ per annum. After taking account of reduced trading sensitivity this drops to $\text{£}1.575\text{m}$ per annum ($\text{£}2.1\text{m} \times 0.75$)

10.10 This incremental turnover uplift of $\text{£}1.575\text{m}$ is then used in the next steps of the assessment to establish (a) the split between inflow/new expenditure and diversion (where applicable) and (b) the proportion of diversion attributed to Corsham town centre, other Corsham convenience stores and destinations outside Corsham, before translating those amounts into percentage impacts.

Trade Draw Principles and Receptors for Testing

10.11 The Retail Study focuses on the incremental uplift in convenience turnover associated with the uplift in net sales area, and then tests where that incremental turnover is likely to be drawn from (i.e. diversion/re-distribution), with regard to Corsham town centre and its convenience sector.

10.12 Corsham town centre's convenience role is evidenced as follows:

- The household survey evidence for the relevant geography (Zone 21) indicates the town centre attracts only a modest share of main food trips (6% first choice; 5% second choice), but plays a much stronger role for top-up shopping (38% first choice; 29% second choice).
- The town centre convenience offer also includes a higher-than-average representation of bakery, butcher and greengrocer uses (i.e. a wider "top-up plus" convenience mix beyond a single supermarket).

10.13 These indicators are important because they suggest the town centre is not the primary destination for main food shopping, but it does perform an important top-up function, which is the part of the market most comparable to a PFS-linked convenience offer.

10.14 Accordingly, the receptors tested quantitatively in the subsequent tables are:

- Corsham town centre convenience sector.
- Other convenience provision in Corsham (non-town centre), recognising that some diverted expenditure will be drawn from local "non-centre" convenience options rather than the town centre.
- Out-of-town / larger-centre stores (notably those drawing main food spend away from Corsham), recognising the evidenced wider competitive context for Corsham residents.

Diversion Scenarios and Rationale

10.15 As the Retail Study does not provide a single definitive diversion profile for a redevelopment/extension of a PFS-linked convenience store, the assessment is structured as two scenarios.

10.16 Both scenarios are designed to be consistent with the local evidence that Corsham town centre's draw for top-up shopping is relatively strong, while its share of main food trips is modest. The scenarios differ only in: (i) the allowance (or not) for an inflow / pass-by component and (ii) the distribution of diversion between receptors.

Scenario 1 — Realistic Diversion Profile (With Modest Pass-by / Linked-trip Component)

10.17 Scenario 1 applies an incremental turnover uplift (ΔT) of £1.575m per annum which is then distributed across Corsham's convenience sector. It should be noted that assumption on turnover share have been applied, although these are considered realistic having regard to evidence contained in the Retail Study. That uplift is then distributed as set out in Table 2, giving the following diversion / inflow amounts:

10.18 This scenario reflects the Retail Study that Corsham town centre's share of main food shopping is modest, and that the town's overall shopping patterns are influenced strongly by larger nearby destinations, while still recognising Corsham's importance for top-up shopping.

Receptor	Assumed Share of ΔT (%)	Diversion / Inflow (£m)
Corsham town centre convenience sector	30	0.473
Other convenience in Corsham (non-TC)	10	0.158
Outside Corsham (larger centres / stores)	50	0.788
Inflow / pass-by / "new-to-store"	10	0.158
Total	100 %	1.575

Table 2: Scenario 1 (Realistic): diversion shares and monetary diversion

10.19 This profile is intentionally not "town-centre heavy", reflecting that the Retail Study shows Corsham town centre has a limited main-food role (6% first choice) and operates primarily as a top-up destination in a wider competitive market. It should be seen that this scenario assumes the majority of the uplift is clawback from outside Corsham rather than diversion from the town centre. Town centre diversion is present but is not of a scale that would typically indicate significant adverse impact.

Scenario 2 — Robust Worst-Case Diversion Profile (No Inflow; Pro-rata Redistribution)

10.20 Scenario 2 adopts the reduced trading sensitivity basis and provides a robust worst-case diversion profile. On this basis, the incremental uplift to be reallocated (ΔT) is £1.575m per annum, with an inflow / pass-by element of 0% (worst case). Accordingly, the 10% inflow / pass-by assumption used in Scenario 1 is redistributed on a pro-rata basis across the remaining diversion receptors (Corsham town centre convenience sector, other convenience in Corsham (non-TC) and destinations outside Corsham). As a consequence, 100% of the uplift is treated as diversion, distributed between receptors as set out in Table 3.

Receptor	Assumed share of ΔT (%)	Diversion (£m)
Corsham town centre convenience sector	33.3	0.525
Other convenience in Corsham (non-TC)	11.1	0.175
Outside Corsham (larger centres / stores)	55.56	0.875
Inflow / pass-by / “new-to-store”	0	0
Total	100.00%	1.575

Table 3: Scenario 2 (Worst case): diversion shares and monetary diversion

This is a deliberately conservative stress test because it assumes no inflow/pass-by element at all, and a meaningful share of the uplift is diverted from Corsham town centre, despite the adopted evidence that the town centre’s market share for main food trips is modest.

11 Retail Impact Assessment – Scenario 1 (Reasonable Case)

Corsham (Wider Settlement) Impacts

11.1 Scenario 1 adopts the reduced trading sensitivity basis and an incremental turnover uplift (ΔT) of £1.575m per annum (as set out above). That uplift is then distributed as set out in Table 2, giving the following diversion / inflow amounts:

- Corsham town centre convenience sector: £0.473m p.a.
- Other Corsham convenience (non-town centre): £0.158m p.a.
- Outside Corsham (larger centres/stores): £0.788m p.a.
- Inflow / pass-by / “new-to-store”: £0.158m p.a.

11.2 This scenario reflects the Retail Study that Corsham town centre’s share of main food shopping is modest, and that the town’s overall shopping patterns are influenced strongly by larger nearby destinations, while still recognising Corsham’s importance for top-up shopping.

11.3 The Retail Study identifies that convenience goods stores in Corsham attract around £12.0m of expenditure/turnover (study-area derived). For a wider Corsham check, the diversion from Corsham stores (town centre + other Corsham) in Scenario 1 is: total diversion from Corsham

stores: £0.473m + £0.158m = £0.631m p.a. The implications of the development on Corsham's wider convenience turnover is shown in the table below.

Metric	Reduced Trading
Corsham convenience turnover (Corsham-wide, adopted)	£12.0m p.a.
Diversion from Corsham stores (TC + other Corsham)	£0.631m p.a.
Impact on Corsham convenience turnover	5.3%

Table 4: Scenario 1: Corsham settlement-wide impact check

- 11.4 This 5.3% settlement-wide diversion effect is low in the context of Corsham's wider competitive market and the fact that the proposal relates to an existing PFS-linked convenience offer rather than a new freestanding supermarket.

Corsham (Town Centre) Impacts

- 11.5 For the purposes of presenting auditable impacts on the "town centre convenience sector", the assessment tests effects at the level required by policy (i.e. the town centre convenience sector as a whole). The adopted evidence provides a Corsham-wide convenience turnover context but does not publish a single definitive town-centre/non-centre turnover split, and it does not provide a basis to attribute diversion reliably between individual town centre retailers. Accordingly, the assessment applies a town-centre turnover range test.
- 11.6 The Retail Study provides the Corsham-wide convenience turnover context (£12m) but does not publish a single definitive split between town centre convenience turnover and non-centre turnover. A transparent range test is therefore applied, by expressing the town centre diversion against a range of plausible town centre shares of Corsham's convenience turnover.

Assumed town centre share of Corsham convenience turnover	Implied TC turnover (£m p.a.)	TC diversion (£m p.a.)	TC impact (%)
35%	4.20	0.473	11.3%
50%	6.00	0.473	7.9%
65%	7.80	0.473	6.1%

Table 6: Scenario 1: Town centre impact range test

12 Retail Impact Assessment – Scenario 2 (Robust Worst Case)

Corsham (Wider Settlement) Impacts

- 12.1 Scenario 2 applies the £12,000/ m² net benchmark sales density to the incremental net sales area uplift, producing an incremental turnover uplift (ΔT) of £1.575m per annum. This uplift is then distributed as set out in Table 3, giving the following diversion amounts:
- Corsham town centre convenience sector: £0.525m p.a.
 - Other Corsham convenience (non-town centre): £0.175m p.a.

- Outside Corsham (larger centres/stores): £0.875m p.a.
- Inflow / pass-by: £0.000m p.a. (assumed nil).

12.2 This is intentionally conservative because it assumes no inflow/pass-by at all, and reallocates that component pro-rata across the diversion receptors, thereby treating the entire uplift as diversion.

12.3 For a settlement-wide check, the diversion from Corsham stores (town centre + other Corsham) in Scenario 2 is: total diversion from Corsham stores: **£0.525m + £0.175m = £0.700m p.a.** The implications of the development on Corsham's wider convenience turnover is shown in the table below.

Metric	Reduced Trading
Corsham convenience turnover (Corsham-wide, adopted)	£12.0m p.a.
Diversion from Corsham stores (TC + other Corsham)	£0.700m p.a.
Impact on Corsham convenience turnover	5.8%

Table 7: Scenario 2: Corsham settlement-wide impact check

12.4 The table shows that, under the robust worst-case sensitivity, diversion from Corsham stores (town centre plus other Corsham convenience provision) is modelled at £0.700m per annum, equating to an impact of 5.8% when expressed against the adopted Corsham-wide convenience turnover context of c. £12.0m per annum. This slightly higher percentage impact arises because the worst-case scenario deliberately applies more conservative trade draw assumptions than Scenario 1: it removes any inflow/pass-by component and loads a materially higher proportion of diversion onto Corsham stores (including the town centre), providing a cautious stress test of the potential pathway to impact. However, this scenario is very unlikely to occur.

Corsham (Town Centre) Impacts

12.5 As in Scenario 1, a range test is applied because the adopted evidence relied upon provides a Corsham-wide convenience turnover context but not a single definitive town-centre/non-centre split. Applying the same percentage parameters as Scenario 1:

Assumed town centre share of Corsham convenience turnover	Implied TC turnover (£m p.a.)	TC diversion (£m p.a.)	TC Impact (%)
35%	4.20	0.525	12.5%
50%	6.00	0.525	8.8%
65%	7.80	0.525	6.7%

Table 9: Scenario 2: Town centre impact range test

12.6 The table applies the modelled town centre diversion in the robust scenario (£0.525m p.a.) against three plausible assumptions for the town centre's share of Corsham's overall convenience turnover (35%, 50% and 65%), producing implied town centre turnovers of £4.20m, £6.00m and £7.80m respectively. On that basis, the £0.525m diversion equates to a town centre impact range of c. 6.7% to 12.5%, with the higher percentage arising where the town centre is assumed to account for a smaller share of Corsham's convenience turnover.

Again, this range is presented to avoid false precision and to show how sensitive the percentage impact is to the underlying (unpublished) town centre turnover denominator.

13 Retail Impact Assessment Summary

- 13.1 The table below provides a side-by-side summary of the two scenarios tested in this retail impact assessment, drawing together the key outputs from the turnover uplift and diversion modelling. The turnover uplift is derived from the uplift in net sales area using the adopted benchmark sales density and is then expressed on the reduced trading sensitivity basis (0.75×). The scenarios differ through the treatment of inflow/pass-by expenditure and the distribution of diversion between receptors. The summary allows comparison of: (i) the incremental turnover uplift generated, (ii) how that uplift is distributed between the town centre, other Corsham stores and destinations outside Corsham, and (iii) the resulting settlement-wide percentage impact on Corsham's adopted convenience turnover context.

Item	Scenario 1 (Realistic)	Scenario 2 (Robust worst case)
Incremental uplift (ΔT)	£1.575m	£1.575m
Town centre diversion (£m)	0.473	0.525
Other Corsham diversion (£m)	0.158	0.175
Outside Corsham diversion (£m)	0.788	0.875
Inflow / pass-by (£m)	0.158	0.000
Diversion from Corsham stores (£m)	0.631	0.700
Settlement-wide impact on Corsham turnover (£12m)	5.3%	5.8%

Table 10: Scenario comparison summary

- 13.2 Corsham's wider shopping pattern context (low main food retention; stronger but still contested top-up role) underpins why Scenario 1 includes an inflow/pass-by element and a substantial diversion share from outside Corsham (i.e. clawback from existing leakage), whereas Scenario 2 removes inflow and increases the share diverted from Corsham stores (including the town centre) as a deliberate stress test.
- 13.3 The Scenario 1 and Scenario 2 results should be interpreted in the context of Corsham's established role and shopping patterns as evidenced in the adopted baseline. Corsham town centre performs an important top-up function, alongside a wider convenience offer in the settlement, within a market strongly influenced by larger nearby destinations for main food shopping. The town centre health check evidence indicates an established centre performing an important local function but also identifies a degree of vacancy and a service-led mix. The policy question is therefore whether the scale of diversion identified would be likely to undermine the centre's vitality and viability, increase vacancy materially, or prejudice existing and planned investment.
- 13.4 On a settlement-wide basis, the model indicates diversion attributable to Corsham stores (town centre plus other Corsham convenience) of £0.631m per annum in Scenario 1 and £0.700m per

annum in Scenario 2. Expressed against the adopted Corsham-wide convenience turnover context of c. £12.0m, these equate to impacts of approximately 5.3% and 5.8% respectively. This provides an important scale check: Scenario 1 represents a modest diversion effect in aggregate, while Scenario 2 operates as a deliberately more stringent upper-bound stress test.

- 13.5 Within that settlement-wide position, the model assumes town centre diversion of £0.473m per annum (Scenario 1) and £0.525m per annum (Scenario 2). The assessment is presented at the level required by policy (i.e. the town centre convenience sector as a whole) and does not seek to attribute diversion between individual operators. It is also important to recognise the nature of the proposal: this is a PFS-linked convenience uplift rather than a freestanding competing supermarket. As such, the uplift is expected to be driven largely by top-up and linked trips associated with refuelling and pass-by movements, and the adopted shopping pattern evidence indicates that Corsham's convenience catchment is materially influenced by larger nearby centres/stores. In practice, this supports the expectation that a material component of uplift would be drawn from expenditure currently leaking to destinations outside Corsham (i.e. clawback), rather than being concentrated solely on Corsham town centre.
- 13.6 Scenario 1 therefore provides the more representative indicator of likely effects, moderated by the PFS-linked characteristics of the offer and the presence of an inflow/pass-by component. Scenario 2 is intentionally conservative: it removes inflow entirely and redistributes that allowance pro-rata across the diversion receptors, resulting in a slightly higher diversion from Corsham stores (including the town centre) as a stress test.
- 13.7 Read in the round, the two-scenario testing demonstrates that the conclusions are not dependent on a single favourable assumption and that the quantified impacts remain within a range that would not be expected to undermine town centre vitality and viability.
- 13.8 In these circumstances, the assessment indicates that the proposal would not be expected to give rise to significant adverse impact on Corsham town centre vitality and viability or on investment. On the basis of the quantitative testing, the likely level of impact is assessed to be low, with Scenario 1 indicating diversion from Corsham stores (town centre plus other Corsham convenience) of c. £0.631m per annum, equivalent to c. 5.3% of the adopted Corsham-wide convenience turnover context (c. £12.0m per annum). The robust sensitivity indicates a slightly higher, upper-bound diversion of c. £0.700m per annum (equivalent to c. 5.8%), which is presented as a deliberately conservative stress test. Overall, the impacts identified are considered manageable and would not undermine Corsham town centre vitality and viability.

14 Conclusion

- 14.1 This Retail Impact Assessment has tested the proposed redevelopment of the existing petrol filling station (PFS) and ancillary convenience store at 101 Pickwick Road, Corsham against the sequential and impact requirements of the prevailing retail policy framework and the Development Plan (including Core Policy 38).

- 14.2 The assessment has been undertaken on an incremental (uplift) basis and reflects the typical customer behaviour associated with PFS convenience retailing. The additional turnover is expected to arise predominantly from top-up shopping and linked trips, including forecourt-related expenditure and local journeys, rather than from any material diversion of main food shopping. This is reflected in the scenario structure, which first considers a reasonable case (including a modest allowance for pass-by / inflow expenditure) and then stress-tests the position through a robust worst-case sensitivity which removes inflow/pass-by entirely and redistributes that expenditure to diversion.
- 14.3 On that basis, the quantified impacts are not significant. Even under the deliberately conservative assumptions applied within the robust worst-case scenario, the proposal would not give rise to a significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of Corsham town centre or on investment, and the level of diversion is of a scale that can be absorbed through normal market adjustment.
- 14.4 Importantly, the findings are also directly comparable to those previously found acceptable by Wiltshire Council when granting permission for the earlier scheme (ref: 20/03036/FUL). The retail impact assessment approved as part of that previous permission identified town-centre diversion equivalent to around 5% of the principal town-centre food store's turnover, alongside approximately £0.1m diversion from other town-centre stores. When expressed on a consistent monetary basis using the benchmark turnover stated in that approved assessment, this equates to an implied town-centre diversion of approximately £0.41m per annum. By comparison, the current assessment (on the reduced trading basis) identifies town-centre diversion of £0.473m per annum in the reasonable case and £0.525m per annum in the robust worst case. The current findings are therefore closely aligned with the previously accepted position and confirm that the proposal sits comfortably within the range of effects that Wiltshire Council has already found acceptable for a PFS-linked convenience offer at this location.
- 14.5 Accordingly, the proposal is acceptable in retail policy terms. It is directly comparable to the previously approved scheme, its incremental trade draw is likely to be driven by top-up and linked-trip expenditure characteristic of PFS retailing, and the assessed impacts including under a robust sensitivity are not significant.