

Gravesham Borough Council
Planning Department
Civic Centre
Gravesend
DA12 1AU

17 October 2023

Dear Sir / Madam,

**IMPERIAL RETAIL PARK, GRAVESEND, GRAVESHAM, DA11 0DQ
APPLICATION UNDER SECTION 62 OF THE TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 (AS AMENDED)
USE OF UNIT C AS FOODSTORE AND INSTALLATION OF PLANT**

On behalf of Box+III Gravesend Limited ('the Applicant'), the owners of Imperial Retail Park ('the Site'), we submit an application under Section 62 to allow the use of the ground floor of Unit C at the Site ('the Unit') to be used as a foodstore in addition to its current non-food use, in order to secure its re-occupation by Farmfoods. The application also seeks permission for the principle for the installation of associated plant machinery.

The application has been submitted via the Planning Portal, under reference PP-12544704, and comprises the following documents:

- Completed Application Forms and Certificates signed and dated 17 October 2023
- Completed CIL Form signed and dated 17 October 2023;
- Application Covering Letter (this Letter);
- Plan Ref: IRP-UC-SLP-001 "Unit C Site Location Plan"
- Plan Ref: IRP-UC-BP-001 "Unit C Block Plan"
- J&E Hall International Condensing Unit Specification Sheet
- Mitsubishi Electric PUZ-PM R32 Power Inverter Heat Pump Product Specifications Sheet;
- Planning and Retail Statement, prepared by Montagu Evans;
- Transport Statement prepared by TTP Consulting; and
- Flood Risk Assessment prepared by Montagu Evans.

The requisite planning application fee of £532 (inclusive of administration fee) has been paid via the Planning Portal.

The Application Site and Proposed Development

The application site comprises Unit C at the Imperial Retail Park in Gravesend, which has approximately 928 sq. m of floorspace at ground floor, with a trading mezzanine floor of 449.2 sq. m. This application relates to the use of the ground floor only, with the use of the mezzanine unaffected by the proposal. The Unit is currently vacant, having previously been occupied by Bensons for Beds, prior to their closure in 2021.

The Site is a well-established out-of-centre retail destination, which is well served by the highway network and public transport. The Site is very well connected to Gravesend Town Centre, being just a 10 minute walk away.

This application seeks to allow the ground floor of Unit C (928 sq. m) to be used as a foodstore, in addition to its existing non-food retail use. It also seeks to approve the principle of installing plant machinery to support the foodstore use. The description of development is as follows:

"Use of ground floor of Unit C as foodstore in addition to existing non-food retail use, and installation of plant"

The purpose of this application is to allow the reoccupation of the Unit by Farmfoods, a specialist food retail operator, specialising in frozen goods, including some bulky offers.

The application is supported by a Planning and Retail Statement prepared by Montagu Evans, which considers the acceptability of the proposal against the relevant policies contained in the NPPF and in local Development Plan policy, and concludes the following:

- The Site is an established designated out-of-town retail destination in Gravesend, recognised as being suitable for large format retail as identified in Local Plan Policy CS08;
- The proposed development will deliver significant investment into the local economy by way of new employment opportunities;
- The sequential assessment concludes that there are no sequentially preferable sites within Gravesend Town Centre capable of accommodating the development;
- The development presents sustainable development, resulting in the enhancement and re-occupation of an existing retail unit, in an accessible location;
- The development is acceptable in terms of residential amenity, will not give rise to any significant adverse impact on the health and quality of life of nearby residents; and
- The proposed development is acceptable in all other respects.

Accordingly, we conclude that the application fully accords with both national and local planning policy and should therefore be considered favourably by the Council.

Summary and Conclusions

The planning application seeks to facilitate the re-occupation of a vacant unit by Farmfoods. The supporting information submitted with this application confirms that the development presents sustainable development in an accessible location, will deliver material socio-economic benefits for the area, and is acceptable in all other respects. We therefore conclude that the development is acceptable in planning terms.

We trust that you have sufficient information to validate and consider the application, and we look forward to hearing confirmation of this in due course. However, if you do have any queries or require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact either Lucy Turner or [REDACTED] at [REDACTED] offices.

Yours faithfully,



Montagu Evans LLP

Enc.