

RICHARD HOLMES

PROPERTY CONSULTANTS

Mr D McCallum
DPDS
Old Bank House
5 Devizes Road
Old Town
Swindon, SN1 4BJ

25th November 2016

Dear Mr McCallum

Requirement/Viability of an Additional Convenience Store at Charfield, South Gloucester

Instructions

I have been instructed by DPDS to provide an assessment of the viability of an additional convenience store at Charfield in the event that the village is expanded by the construction of an additional 1000 homes.

I am a chartered surveyor with over 20 years experience in retail property primarily in Oxfordshire, Gloucestershire and the West Midlands with particular experience in the food sector. I have been responsible for the acquisition and development of numerous sites for convenience stores and small supermarkets for a major retailer who trades throughout this area. In recent years this has, in line with market trends, tended to be more the acquisition of convenience stores.

The Food Retailing Market

After many years of domination by the four main food retailers based on the development of large out of town supermarkets there has been a well publicised shift as shopping patterns have changed away from the large superstores with all the main retailers putting a hold on their development programmes and switching to small local stores. While few other retailers could compete in the superstore sector, there are several more players competing in the local store sector and there is considerable market interest for the right sites, but retailers will be selective and will look for suitable catchment populations and prominent locations with good potential for pass-by trade.

Location

The village of Charfield is located in South Gloucestershire 2 miles east of junction 14 of the M5 on the B4058. The village is 6 miles north of Yate/Chipping Sodbury, 2.5 miles west of Wotton-under-Edge and 6 miles north east of Thornbury.

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Population

The population at 2011 was 2264. This is likely to increase by up to 30% on the basis of emerging and current planning applications. Crest are currently developing 3, 4 and 5 bedroomed houses on the eastern side of the village.

Competition

There is a small Costcutter store (retail area 1000 sq.ft approx.) located in a neighbourhood development off Manor Lane. This comprises three shops with 9 dedicated parking spaces. The Costcutter now incorporates a one desk Post Office facility. The other two units in the parade are used by a hairdresser and plumber.

There is also a garage with frontage onto the B4058 which has a small shop annexed to it.

Other village stores are located at:

Falfield has a Post Office and is just over 3 miles away.

Cromhall has a Post Office and store approx. 2 miles away

Wickwar has a Post Office and store approx. 3.5 miles away.

None of the above form serious competition to the facilities in Charfield.

Main supermarket shopping is available at Tesco at Thornbury and at Yate and the Co-op at Wotton-under-Edge. There has been talk of the development of a new store at Wotton-under-Edge for several years but there are few suitable sites and nothing has come forward yet in the food sector

Potential

My research suggests that there is scope for a new convenience store (4000 to 4500 sq.ft. gross) based on the current size of the village and its immediate catchment and having regard to the limited facilities available now. I am aware that a major retailer agreed terms for a site fronting the B4058 and had Board approval to proceed but unfortunately the transaction fell through. They still remain actively interested in the village.

I would consider that 1000 homes would be the normal threshold for a new modern convenience store of gross size 4000 to 4500 sq.ft. In a village location like this, with a busy secondary route running through, an operator would normally be looking for main road frontage.

Future Proposals

I understand that Charfield is being considered as the possible location for 1000 new homes in the emerging Joint Spatial Plan.

Referring to my comments above, 1000 homes would require further facilities. This could be provided by a convenience store of approx. 4000 sq.ft. (370 sq.mt.) but a store would not be viable until the bulk of the new homes had been constructed which would no doubt take many years to achieve. The location of a new store would also be dependent on how the new sites were allocated. If all the homes were built together then a store could be planned to service the new development. If they were built on scattered sites, this would become more difficult.

Another way of dealing with capacity in the future would be to provide a good central site on the main road which had the possibility of expansion to cater for future growth. I would envisage that ultimately, this might be a store of say 5000 sq.ft. (465 sq.mt.) net retail with a gross size of say 6500 sq.ft. (600 sq.mt.).

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Conclusions

Provided the site within the village has sufficient roadside presence and is centrally located, I consider that there would be every chance of commercial interest in a convenience store in the village. There is known retail interest at present and the prospect of additional housing on the proposed scale could only increase this.

Yours sincerely



Richard A Holmes FRICS