

**Issued on behalf of Onward Holdings Ltd****Date: May 21st 2014****Ref: PR33a Spar****ONYX RETAIL PARK SO NEAR SO SPAR**

Leading convenience retail chain SPAR is the latest blue chip brand to open an outlet at the Onyx Retail Park in South Yorkshire following the completion of Phase Two construction at the site, which has seen a disused colliery turned into a thriving retail development and dining experience.

Blakemore Retail, part of SPAR Wholesale group, A F Blakemore & Son Ltd, has taken 4,000sqft of new space to launch a flagship convenience store for the region selling a whole range of fresh food, food to go, off licence, grocery, confectionary and cigarettes. Opened for customers in February 2014, Blakemore Retail expects to employ a total of 25 people to meet growing demand over the next 12 months.

The company's Yorkshire regional manager, John Brooks, said: "The Onyx Retail Park is an ideal site for our brand because of the huge potential for growth in the area. Footfall since opening in February is about what we expected and we believe this will increase significantly as the surrounding area develops."

SPAR follows in the footsteps of other blue-chip names on the retail park, based at Wath-Upon-Deerne, which include an award-winning Greggs the Baker, Domino's Pizza and Subway, as well as Motor World, the UK's largest independent car parts and car accessories retailer.

In addition three restaurants/takeaways enhance the culinary range on offer to visitors - Thai Garden Café, Bistro 63 and Yo Yo Noodle - while those wishing to relax, indulge and rejuvenate will be able to enjoy being pampered at Beauty at Heart salon.

Despite owners Onward Holdings Ltd more than doubling the retail space available at the Onyx Retail Park from 7,500sqft to 17,500sqft, demand is as great as ever and only three of the seven newly-built units in Phase Two are still available, a testament to the success of the area's regeneration into a popular shopping and eating destination, that has already led to the creation of around 100 new jobs.

Onward Holdings Ltd PR33a Spar continued:

Adjacent to 1,100 homes the Onyx Retail Park is also surrounded by industrial development and outdoor leisure facilities, giving rise to an impressive 18,000 passing vehicle movements per day on the A633, according to figures provided by Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council.

Onyx Retail Park's proximity to the 250 acres Old Moor RSPB Nature Reserve and Wetlands which attracts around 90,000 visitors per year, the Manvers Lake and Parkland, the award-winning Waterfront Golf Course and not forgetting the popular Trans Pennine trail make it an ideal place to shop and eat.

Unlike many new opportunities that come onto the market, it is of little doubt that the high volume of passing trade and the subsequent footfall it creates provides an initial strong customer base from which to build, making it an ideal location for a wide range of prospective businesses.

In full the Onyx Retail Park comprises 17,500sqft of retail space and holds a cross-section of planning consent including A1 (retail), A2 (financial), A3 (food) and A5 (hot food to take away). The whole site is CCTV covered and monitored for security purposes.

Site promoter, Andrew Miller, said: "We're delighted to welcome such a well-known high street brand to the Onyx Retail Park. The new SPAR store, with its range of goods and services, will further enhance the shopping experience on the site."

END

Background

Onward Holdings has been involved in warehousing and industrial estates owned and run by the company since 1930. Today, this family-run business is primarily involved in development and construction, including the provision of multi-sized warehouse facilities in the M62/M1/A1 corridor of West Yorkshire, and residential and mixed-use developments.

In addition to ONYX the business has an exciting development at Green Lane Industrial Estate at Featherstone and a large industrial estate in Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire. The Scunthorpe estate is currently being developed and offers commercial and industrial land and buildings suitable for a variety of users on either a freehold or leasehold basis.

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