

INTRODUCTION

- 11.1 PPG6 emphasises that it is the Government's objective to secure healthy town centres and that town centres should remain the main focus for new shopping development.
- 11.2 The pattern of shopping in the District is based on traditional high street shopping in the market towns. The Council will seek to maintain the existing town centres as the dominant elements in the shopping hierarchy by providing for development which maintains and enhances their vitality and viability. Development will be supported where it adds to their variety and activity and makes the town centres more attractive to residents, shoppers and visitors. The aim will be to build on their distinctive identities and traditional qualities, for example, their independent and specialist shops, easy access and pleasant environments.
- 11.3 At the top of the shopping hierarchy is Northallerton followed by Thirsk. These are the largest market towns and provide the best range of convenience goods and a reasonable range of comparison goods. Both centres attract shoppers from many parts of the District and could be termed 'District Shopping Centres'. Northallerton with its range of specialist shops also attracts shoppers from beyond the District boundary. The Plan will maintain the predominance of Northallerton and Thirsk.
- 11.4 To assist in the preparation of policies a Shopping Study was commissioned to advise on future requirements in Northallerton and Thirsk.
- 11.5 Below this level are the smaller market towns of Bedale, Easingwold and Stokesley which act as 'Local Shopping Centres' mainly providing basic convenience shopping for the local population. The Plan will maintain and enhance the attractiveness of these centres but as purely 'Local Shopping Centres' and there will be resistance to large scale development.
- 11.6 The present dependence on shops outside the District, particularly for comparison goods, in the sub-regional centres of York, Harrogate, Middlesbrough and Darlington and the regional centres of Leeds and Newcastle will remain.
- 11.7 The Plan places considerable emphasis on retaining and enhancing the visual and architectural character of the market towns. Shopping is, however, the essence of market towns and a viable economic base is essential to the conservation of their physical fabric. So whilst encouraging shopping development, the Plan will ensure that this does not damage the architectural and visual integrity of the market towns and builds on, rather than seeks to change, their distinctive character. Where large scale expansion of retail uses or large new units threaten the visual and architectural integrity of the market towns, they will be resisted.
- 11.8 Each market town has a market, these not only supplement the number and range of shops and act as attractions in their own right, but are also an essential part of the character of the towns. Care will be taken to ensure that the policies of the Plan do not adversely affect the vitality and viability of the markets.
- 11.9 The maintenance and enhancement of shopping facilities cannot be achieved solely through the control of new retail development and the policies of the Plan on traffic, transportation, car parking, townscape and conservation will also help secure its shopping objectives.

OBJECTIVES

11.10 The Shopping Policies of the Plan have the following main objectives:

1. To maintain and strengthen the attractiveness of the market towns as places to shop in and visit.
2. To provide for retail development in town centres which extends the number and range of shops, enables a better service and choice to be given to the public and enhances their diversity.
3. To encourage retailing which builds on the distinctive historic and visual character of the market towns.
4. To encourage other uses in town centres which add to their variety and activity.
5. To secure the full use of town centre buildings.
6. To provide for local shopping needs in villages and residential areas.

SHOPPING IN TOWN CENTRES

POLICY S1

GENERAL POLICY ON RETAILING IN NORTHALLERTON AND THIRSK

In Northallerton and Thirsk, within the constraints of the environmental and conservation policies of the Plan, provision will be made for developments which meet their retail requirements and maintain and enhance their role as District Shopping Centres.

Proposals for new retail development which would be likely to adversely affect the vitality and viability of these shopping centres will not be permitted.

JUSTIFICATION

- 11.11 With over 130 shops and a twice weekly market, Northallerton is the most important shopping centre of the District. It is a buoyant and successful centre with a good range of high quality shops. Northallerton is characterised by a large number and wide variety of comparison goods shops including a department store and several national multiples.
- 11.12 Northallerton attracts shoppers from over a wide area and draws in a net inflow of trade particularly for convenience goods shopping.
- 11.13 Thirsk has about 90 shops but its floorspace is only a quarter of that of Northallerton and indications are that it is performing less well. Whilst the town is relatively self contained for convenience goods, comparison goods shopping is weak. It lacks the level and quality of comparison goods shops needed to make it more attractive.
- 11.14 The Shopping Study showed only a modest potential for additional retail development in Northallerton and Thirsk. The requirement for additional convenience floorspace is very small, particularly in Northallerton. Whilst there is more capacity in each centre for comparison floorspace this too is relatively small.
- 11.15 It is the intention of the Plan to ensure that the Town Centre Commercial Areas gain the maximum benefit from the predicted growth in retail turnover. The majority of the new retail development will therefore be directed to the Town Centre Commercial Areas (Policy S3). Surveys have shown that there are opportunities in these areas to meet much of the turnover potential through small scale developments and infill schemes.
- 11.16 However, continuing and emerging trends show there is likely to be a demand for out-of-centre food and non-food retailing. Where this accords with the shopping policies it will be directed to the Secondary Commercial Areas (Policy S5).

POLICY S2**GENERAL POLICY ON RETAILING IN BEDALE, EASINGWOLD AND STOKESLEY**

In Bedale, Easingwold and Stokesley provision will be made for developments which meet their retail requirements and maintain and enhance their role as Local Shopping Centres. Particular weight will be given to protecting their historic character and appearance and normally only retail development which is small scale or involves refurbishment and improvement will be permitted. Large scale retail proposals likely to have an adverse impact on their visual and architectural character will not be permitted.

Proposals for new retail development which would be likely to adversely affect the vitality and viability of these shopping centres will not be permitted.

JUSTIFICATION

- 11.17 The centres of Bedale, Easingwold and Stokesley have fine 18th and 19th Century townscapes and conservation must have a high priority. Proposals for new retail developments will be supported, provided they are in keeping with the scale and character of the centres. By conserving and enhancing these town centres their very attractiveness as places to visit and shop in will be improved.
- 11.18 There is scope for the creation of additional retail floorspace within these centres without harming their historic buildings or form, through using vacant or underused buildings and, where appropriate to the historic layout, by extension along the length of plots and possibly the development of arcades. These opportunities should be sufficient to allow the centres to adjust their retailing role to changes in demand and market conditions. Policy HH14 identifies areas in each centre in need of improvement. Where these are located within the Town Centre Commercial Areas they may offer scope for retail development.
- 11.19 With their small populations and close proximity to district and sub-regional shopping centres offering a much greater number and wider range of shops, there is little pressure or need for large scale developments in Bedale, Easingwold and Stokesley. Large scale developments would be likely to require demolition and plot amalgamation and so would have an unacceptable impact on the visual and architectural integrity of these towns.

POLICY S3**NEW RETAIL DEVELOPMENT IN TOWN CENTRE COMMERCIAL AREAS**

Retail development (Class A1* uses) within the Town Centre Commercial Areas, shown on the Inset Maps, will be permitted provided all of the following criteria are met:

1. The traffic generated can be satisfactorily accommodated on the local highway network;
2. Suitable parking and servicing can be provided;
3. The proposal will not have a serious adverse effect on townscape quality or local amenity;
4. The proposal will not result in the loss of or unacceptable alteration to a building or feature of historic, architectural, archaeological or townscape interest;
5. The proposal will not result in an unacceptable loss of residential accommodation (see Policy H17);
6. The proposal will not prejudice the use of upper floors (see Policy S8).

* *Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.*

JUSTIFICATION

11.20 In the market towns, retail development has traditionally been concentrated around a market place. Today this continues to provide a central and convenient location for shopping. Usually one trip can serve several purposes and they are often easily accessible on foot. The compact nature of the market town shopping areas is a major attraction and by defining Town Centre Commercial Areas it is intended that this characteristic should be maintained and reinforced. Restricting retail development to these well defined areas will help reduce car journeys, thus reducing the emission of greenhouse gases and air pollutants.

11.21 New shopping development, particularly that which enhances the variety and diversity of shops, enables a better service to be given to the public and meets changing retailing needs, is essential if existing centres are to retain their vitality and remain attractive to shoppers.

11.22 The Town Centre Commercial Areas lie at the heart of conservation areas of exceptional townscape quality containing high concentrations of listed buildings. New shopping development can meet conservation objectives by providing viable uses for older buildings, improving derelict or undeveloped land and bringing about environmental improvements. Some shopping developments, however, might prove a threat to environmental quality because of their scale or design. It is imperative that shopping development within these areas ensures that the historic and architectural character of the areas and individual buildings is protected. This includes the maintenance of the market places, traditional plot sizes and the protection of lanes and alleyways which make up the 'grain' of historic towns.

11.23 Residential uses contribute to the vitality of town centres, particularly outside shopping hours. Commercial pressures will, therefore, not be allowed to drive out residential uses (see Policies H17 and H18).

POLICY S4**NORTHALLERTON TOWN CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT SITE**

The Northallerton Auction Mart site, as shown on the Inset Map, is allocated as a Town Centre Redevelopment Site. Proposals appropriate to a town centre will be permitted, provided that all the following criteria are met:

1. They will not result in a serious adverse effect on townscape quality or the character and appearance of the conservation area;
2. They will not have a significant adverse effect on residential amenity;
3. They will not create unacceptable highway problems.

JUSTIFICATION

11.24 The Northallerton Auction Mart may wish to move from its present central location to the outskirts of Northallerton during the Plan period. This important site has potential for town centre uses which could maintain and enhance the role of Northallerton as a District Shopping Centre. A study will be undertaken to determine the most appropriate use for the site.

11.25 Any new development on the site must not cause serious disturbance to nearby

residents and should sympathetically relate to the Applegarth open space. A Traffic Impact Assessment will be required before any of the site is developed to determine any necessary highway improvements.

11.26 The Council will seek to secure the removal of the Auction Mart as soon as suitable alternative provision for its relocation has been made.

POLICY S5

NORTHALLERTON AND THIRSK SECONDARY COMMERCIAL AREAS

Retail development and non-retail commercial development appropriate to a shopping area (Class A1, A2 and A3* uses), will be permitted in the Northallerton and Thirsk Secondary Commercial Areas, as shown on the Inset Maps, provided all of the following criteria are met:

1. The proposal cannot be located within the Town Centre Commercial Areas;
2. The proposal, either by itself or together with other recent or proposed retail developments, will not seriously affect the vitality and viability of the Town Centre Commercial Areas;
3. The traffic generated can be satisfactorily accommodated on the local highway network;
4. Suitable parking and servicing can be provided;
5. The proposal will not have a serious adverse effect on townscape quality or local amenity;
6. The proposal will not result in the loss of or unacceptable alteration to a building or feature of historic, architectural, archaeological or townscape interest;
7. The proposal will not result in an unacceptable loss of residential accommodation (see Policy H17);
8. The proposal will not prejudice the use of upper floors (see Policy S8).

* *Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.*

JUSTIFICATION

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| <p>11.27 In Northallerton, a commercial area has developed extending northwards from the Town Centre Commercial Area. This area is characterised by mixed uses, including retail, office, commercial and industrial development. In recent years there has been an increase in retailing activity particularly DIY/bulky goods shopping development for which good access to the road network, extensive car parking and large sites are the main requirements.</p> | <p>in demand for new forms of shopping such as small scale discount food stores and smaller non-food retail warehouses.</p> |
| <p>11.28 In Thirsk, a smaller commercial area has developed to the west of the Town Centre Commercial Area. Its principal element is a supermarket but it also contains offices, garages and industrial development.</p> | <p>11.30 These continuing and emerging trends are catered for in Northallerton and Thirsk by the definition of Secondary Commercial Areas. Care will be taken to ensure that developments in these areas do not detract from the pre-eminence of the Town Centre Commercial Areas.</p> |
| <p>11.29 The demand for out-of-centre retail development is likely to continue with both food and non-food retailers looking to out-of-town and edge-of-centre locations. This trend could be reinforced by a growth</p> | <p>11.31 It could be difficult to accommodate the retail of DIY/bulky goods in the Town Centre Commercial Areas without an adverse effect on their character and appearance. Channelling such development into Secondary Commercial Areas will relieve pressure for redevelopment, plot amalgamation and loss of historic and architectural character in the town centres.</p> |

POLICY S6**NON-RETAIL COMMERCIAL USES IN SHOPPING CORE AREAS**

Proposals for the introduction or extension of non-retail commercial uses appropriate to a shopping area (Class A2 and A3* uses) at ground floor level within the Shopping Core Areas, as shown on the Inset Maps, will be permitted provided they would not result in:

1. More than two non-retail commercial units operating side by side; or
2. More than one third of the frontage** being given over to non-retail commercial uses; or
3. The unacceptable loss of residential accommodation (see Policy H17); or
4. Significant difficulties for the use of upper floors (see Policy S8).

In the Shopping Core Areas, subject to Policy S3, support will be given to retail developments (Class A1* uses) which improve the range of shops and extend the choice and service to the public.

* *Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.*

** *The term frontage is a linear measurement applying to all frontages in the Shopping Core Area.*

JUSTIFICATION

11.32 In a central position in each market town there is a Shopping Core Area that is the primary shopping area where retailing is the predominant use. It is the number and range of shops in these Shopping Core Areas which is mainly responsible for the attraction of the towns as shopping centres and so it is important that their retail function is not undermined.

11.33 Non-retail uses such as banks, cafes, estate agents and building societies have a rightful place in shopping centres. They can, however, reduce the space available for shops and unless carefully controlled can impair the attractiveness of the Shopping Core Areas as a place to shop. PPG6 advises that policies can recognise and support the shopping function of primary shopping areas and that primary

frontages may be restricted to a high proportion of retail uses, particularly those uses in Class A1 of the Use Classes Order. At the same time it urges local authorities to encourage the diversification of uses in town centres because this adds to their variety and activity and makes them more attractive to local residents, shoppers and visitors.

11.34 Policy S6 strikes a balance between retail and non-retail uses which will maintain the variety and vitality of the Shopping Core Areas. It aims to retain a predominantly retail frontage and to ensure that non-retail uses are dispersed throughout the Shopping Core Areas rather than being concentrated in groups. The proportion of retail and non-retail uses will be kept under continuous review.

POLICY S7**NON-RETAIL COMMERCIAL USES IN TOWN CENTRE COMMERCIAL AREAS**

Non-retail commercial uses appropriate to a shopping area (Class A2 and A3* uses) will be permitted in the Town Centre Commercial Areas outside the Shopping Core Areas and on first and upper floors within the Shopping Core Areas provided all of the following criteria are met:

1. The traffic generated can be satisfactorily accommodated on the local highway network;
2. Suitable parking and servicing can be provided;
3. The proposal will not have a serious adverse effect on townscape quality or local amenity;
4. The proposal will not result in the loss of or unacceptable alteration to a building or feature of historic, architectural, archaeological or townscape interest;
5. The proposal will not result in an unacceptable loss of residential accommodation (see Policy H17);
6. The proposal will not prejudice the use of the upper floors (see Policy S8).

* *Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.*

JUSTIFICATION

11.35 In the Town Centre Commercial Areas, outside the Shopping Core Areas, retailing does not predominate on these secondary frontages to the same degree and it is less important to control non-retail uses. The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 recognises that uses such as banks, building societies, estate agents, cafes and restaurants contribute to commercial attractiveness and vitality. They provide a direct service to the general public and so have a rightful place in shopping centres.

11.36 Pressure for the non-retail use of shops at ground floor level in the Shopping Core Areas can be lessened by encouraging, where appropriate, the use of the upper floors of properties. Such premises can provide suitable opportunities for small scale offices.

11.37 The loss of residential accommodation in town centres will not normally be

permitted. Exceptions may be made to allow business development where the benefits of the new use outweigh the loss of residential accommodation.

POLICY S8**UPPER FLOORS IN TOWN CENTRES**

In the Town Centre Commercial Areas the refurbishment and re-use of vacant or under-used upper floors, particularly for residential use, will be encouraged (see Policy H17) and will be permitted where the proposal:

1. Does not have an adverse effect on the viability of ground floor uses; and
2. Will not result in the unacceptable alteration of a building or feature of historic, architectural, archaeological or townscape interest.

In appropriate cases a flexible approach to the application of car parking and other standards will be adopted when proposals would lead to the better utilisation and maintenance of upper floors (see Policies T6 and T14).

Proposals which would prejudice the beneficial use of upper floors will be resisted.

JUSTIFICATION

- 11.38 Many upper floors above shops in the Town Centre Commercial Areas are vacant or under-used. This can have a damaging effect on their appearance and cause deterioration and decay of buildings which may be of historic and architectural interest and of townscape value. The beneficial use of upper floors will help improve their appearance, ensure their future maintenance and contribute to the diversity and activity of the town centres.
- 11.39 The re-use of upper floors for housing is preferable because it can provide accommodation suited to small households which is urgently required; a residential population increases activity and ensures that town centres are not deserted outside shopping hours; and it helps relieve the pressure on greenfield sites whilst reducing the need for transport into the central areas.
- 11.40 Normal car parking requirements and other standards may be waived where this would enable the appropriate re-use of upper floors.

POLICY S9**THE ENHANCEMENT OF SHOPPING CENTRES**

The environment of the shopping streets in Town Centre Commercial Areas will be enhanced by such measures as:

1. The introduction of appropriate street furniture;
2. Improving and extending paved areas;
3. Giving greater priority to pedestrians and cyclists over vehicles where practicable;
4. Landscaping and public art;
5. Removing eyesores;
6. Conserving and enhancing townscape quality and historic buildings;
7. Encouraging high quality design in all developments.

JUSTIFICATION

- 11.41 Environmental improvements to create attractive and pleasant surroundings for shoppers, investors and residents will contribute to the Plan's aim of improving the attractiveness of the market towns as places to shop in and to visit. Measures might include the provision of seating and landscaping, the extension of paved areas and improved paving design.
- 11.42 Pedestrians and cyclists would benefit if they could move around in greater comfort and safety by being given greater priority over vehicles. Measures to improve accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists will be made, as far as possible, without reducing vehicular access to the town centres.
- 11.43 Measures in other policies such as traffic calming, parking, facilities for cyclists, building and shopfront design and the protection and enhancement of historic buildings and areas will also contribute to improving the environment of market town shopping centres.

OUT-OF-CENTRE SHOPPING

POLICY S10

LARGE 'OUT-OF-CENTRE' RETAIL DEVELOPMENTS

Outside the Town Centre Commercial Areas large retail developments* will be permitted only when all of the following criteria are met:

1. It can be demonstrated that there are no suitable sites for the proposal in Town Centre Commercial Areas. If there are no suitable sites within these areas, developers should next look at the edge of town centres, including the Secondary Commercial Areas in Northallerton and Thirsk, and in 'out-of-centre' locations last of all;
2. The proposal, either by itself or together with other recent or proposed retail developments, will not seriously affect the vitality and viability of the centres of the market towns;
3. The proposal is of an acceptable scale, materials and design and does not have a significant adverse effect on the urban or rural environment or residential amenity;
4. The traffic generated by the proposal can be satisfactorily accommodated on the local highway network and the site can provide adequate car parking and servicing;
5. The proposal is sited so as to reduce the number and length of car journeys and can serve not only car borne shoppers but is also accessible to those on foot or who rely on public transport;
6. The proposal is within the Development Limits.

A shopping impact assessment will be required to be submitted with any planning application for large 'out-of-centre' retail developments.

* *Developments of about 557m² (6,000 sq. ft) or more (gross).*

JUSTIFICATION

11.44 There has been a marked trend in some forms of retailing to larger shops in 'out-of-centre' locations. Government advice is that town centres should be safeguarded and strengthened and that they should, therefore, be the preferred location for new retail developments.

11.45 PPG6 advises that a sequential approach be adopted in selecting sites for new retail developments. All potential town centre options should be thoroughly assessed before 'edge-of-centre' sites are considered. 'Out-of-centre' sites should be considered only when it has been shown that no more central sites are available. It also acknowledges the importance of

foodstores in maintaining the quality and range of shopping in smaller towns, but recognises that 'edge-of-centre' locations may be the best solution in historic towns to provide an accessible location and the opportunity for linked trips.

11.46 The Council will weigh the benefits to the public of large scale 'out-of-centre' developments against their possible economic, environmental and social impact. The impact on the less mobile District residents, the quality, attractiveness and physical condition of existing town centres and their role as centres for food shopping will be important considerations.

- 11.47 With the exception of the Northallerton and Thirsk Secondary Commercial Areas all the shopping centres are located wholly within conservation areas and many shops occupy listed buildings. It is vitally important that these areas remain commercially buoyant to maintain investment in property and prevent physical deterioration of buildings.
- 11.48 Not every household has a car, many depend on public transport or walking; the needs of such shoppers should be met by having shops which are easily accessible.
- 11.49 Where a large 'out-of-centre' retail development is proposed, the Council will require an assessment of the economic and other impacts of the proposal on other retail centres to be submitted as part of the planning application.
- 11.50 A threshold of 557m² (6,000 sq. ft) has been chosen to ensure that discount stores are covered by the Policy. Such stores can have a significant impact on the vitality and viability of town centres.

POLICY S11

LOCAL SHOPPING AREAS

In the Great Ayton and Ashlands (Northallerton) Local Shopping Areas, as defined on the Inset Maps, new retail development (Class A1* uses) will be permitted provided proposals are satisfactory in terms of their scale and form, the provision of customer and delivery parking and there is no adverse impact on residential amenity or their surroundings generally. Within Local Shopping Areas proposals resulting in a loss of retail uses (Class A1* uses) will be resisted.

* *Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.*

JUSTIFICATION

- 11.51 Local shopping facilities at High Green, Great Ayton and Ashlands, Northallerton serve an important function providing a convenient retail service, particularly food and other day to day goods, for the local population. The Council wishes this function to be maintained and if possible enhanced. Such facilities can also help reduce the use of cars for shopping and so reduce congestion and the emission of greenhouse gases.
- 11.52 Local Shopping Areas can easily lose their shopping value if too many of the shops are changed to service uses. For this reason the Council will encourage the maintenance of a high proportion of retail uses. Proposals for uses other than shopping will be resisted when the number of retail outlets has reached a level at which further losses would reduce the value of the area to the local community.

POLICY S12**LOCAL DAILY SHOPPING NEEDS**

Outside the Town Centre Commercial Areas, Secondary Commercial Areas and Local Shopping Areas but within Development Limits, proposals for small scale individual shops or small groups** of shops (Class A1* uses) providing for the daily shopping needs for local communities will be permitted provided all of the following criteria are met:

1. Suitable parking and servicing is available;
2. The proposal will not have an unacceptable effect on the free flow of traffic on the local highway network or highway safety;
3. The proposal will not have a serious adverse effect on residential amenity;
4. The proposal is satisfactory in terms of design and will not have an adverse impact on its surroundings.
5. The proposal, either by itself or together with other recent or proposed retail developments, will not seriously affect the vitality and viability of the centres of the market towns.

* *Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.*

** *Developments which do not exceed about 557m² (6,000 sq. ft) (gross)*

JUSTIFICATION

11.53 Small local shops within or close to residential areas can provide an important and convenient retail service for nearby residents for essential day to day items. Local shops also have an important social function offering a service to those who are less mobile, such as the elderly, those with disabilities and families with small

children. They can also help reduce the use of the car for shopping.

11.54 Local shops will be encouraged provided they are intended to serve the local community and are not of such a scale as to draw trade away from other areas, or are harmful to local amenity.

POLICY S13**NON-RETAIL COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE TOWN CENTRE COMMERCIAL AREAS**

Within the market towns, non-retail commercial development (Class A2 and A3* uses) will be permitted outside the Town Centre Commercial Areas and Secondary Commercial Areas when all of the following criteria are met:

1. The proposed satisfies a need which cannot be met within the Town Centre Commercial Areas or Secondary Commercial Areas;
2. The traffic generated can be satisfactorily accommodated on the local highway network;
3. Suitable parking and servicing can be provided;
4. The proposal will not have a serious adverse effect on the character or appearance of the area;
5. The proposal will not have a serious adverse effect on residential amenity.

Where such development will secure a new use for a building of architectural or historic merit which would otherwise fall into dereliction, subject to Policy HH17, proposals will be supported provided that the criteria concerning parking, highway and amenity considerations are satisfied.

* *Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.*

JUSTIFICATION

11.55 Whilst non-retail commercial uses such as cafes, restaurants and public houses will normally be expected to locate within the Town Centre Commercial Areas it is recognised that this may not be practical in all instances. Such uses can often secure the future of unoccupied and neglected buildings of historic and architectural interest.

POLICY S14**RETAIL USES IN EMPLOYMENT AREAS**

Retail development (Class A1* uses) will not be permitted on land committed or allocated for industrial/business development (Policies EM2 and EM3) or in Safeguarded Employment Areas (Policy EM5) as shown on the Inset Maps.

However, exceptionally, where the loss of land or premises is unlikely to prejudice the employment objectives of the Plan and the proposal is unlikely to seriously affect the vitality and viability of a town centre, subject to there being no serious highway or amenity problems and the site being located within Development Limits the following types of retailing will be permitted:

1. The sale of large items which cannot be sold by normal retail methods in a town centre; or
2. Retailing ancillary to and inextricably linked to a business or industrial use where the main use would be inappropriate in a town centre.

* *Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.*

JUSTIFICATION

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| <p>11.56 Sufficient land has been allocated for industry/business development to meet the calculated requirements but the identification of sites adjacent to the market towns has been difficult. The loss of industrial land for uses such as retailing could affect the Council's ability to achieve its employment objectives.</p> | <p>storage or distribution uses where the main use could not be located in a town centre because of the scale or nature of the building or the need for outdoor storage.</p> |
| <p>11.57 Goods such as cars, caravans, plant, building materials and bulky household and DIY goods because of their bulk and methods of sale from large single storey buildings on open sites are unlikely to be appropriate in town centres. Also, there can be the possibility of ancillary retailing to some forms of business, industrial and</p> | <p>11.58 Industrial areas may be suitable locations for such retail uses. The Council will ensure that such development does not prejudice its policies to meet the employment needs of the area or its policies to maintain the vitality and viability of town centres.</p> |
| | <p>11.59 Developments retailing products normally sold in a town centre do not come within the terms of this policy.</p> |

SHOPS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

POLICY S15**VILLAGE SHOPS**

The establishment and extension of shops within the Development Limits of villages serving the daily shopping needs of residents or selling locally manufactured goods will be permitted except where such development would seriously threaten residential amenity, environmental character or highway safety and the free flow of traffic.

The change of use of village shops and sub-post offices into dwellings will not be permitted unless they are no longer viable.

JUSTIFICATION

- 11.60 There has been a steady decline in the number of village shops. This is of concern since village shops and sub-post offices have important economic and social functions providing a valued service for rural inhabitants particularly those without access to a car or in villages poorly served by public transport. The maintenance of existing village shops and the provision of new shops will be encouraged. PPG6 advises that the contribution of village shops to the rural economy should be taken into account in proposals that would result in their loss.
- 11.62 There may also be a need for shops selling locally manufactured goods which could provide local employment.

POLICY S16**RETAIL DEVELOPMENT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE**

Subject to Policy S17, retail development (Class A1* uses) outside Development Limits will not be permitted. However, exceptionally, permission may be granted for farm shops or where it can be demonstrated that there are local retail requirements associated with established land uses which cannot be satisfied in nearby settlements and when the proposal meets all of the following criteria:

1. It will not adversely affect the character or appearance of the countryside;
2. It is small scale;
3. It will not result in a detrimental impact on road safety and the free flow of traffic on the adjacent highway network;
4. Any new buildings are of a high standard of design and satisfactorily blend into their surroundings in terms of their design, siting and materials;
5. In the case of a farm shop, the goods sold are mainly limited to those produced on the farm or locally;
6. It will not have an adverse impact on sites of nature conservation value or archaeological importance, or buildings of architectural or historic interest.

Where there is sufficient justification to warrant a grant of permission, the use of existing buildings will be preferred.

* *Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.*

JUSTIFICATION

11.62 Generally, proposals for retail developments outside Development Limits will be unlikely to benefit local residents and will be detrimental to rural amenities due to visual appearance and traffic generation. However, some retail uses outside Development Limits may be beneficial to the local economy and local employment, including proposals associated with tourist attractions and farm

shops which may act as an outlet for fresh produce, speciality regional foods and local crafts.

11.63 In such cases the use of existing buildings is preferred. This will limit the visual impact of the proposal and enable new uses to be found for such buildings some of which may be of historic or architectural interest or form attractive features in the landscape.

POLICY S17**GARDEN CENTRES**

Garden centres will be permitted on sites within or adjacent to the Development Limits of the market towns and larger villages provided that the proposal would not adversely affect residential amenity, the character and appearance of the locality, landscape or nature conservation interests, road safety or conflict with other policies of the Plan.

Garden centres will not be permitted in the AONBs, Special Landscape Areas, Parks and Gardens of Historic or Landscape Interest, the Green Belt, Green Wedges or in the open countryside.

JUSTIFICATION

11.64 Garden centres, because they frequently involve large areas of greenhouses, signage, outdoor display areas and car parking, can be very intrusive. They can also attract high volumes of traffic. For these reasons garden centres in the open countryside and other sensitive areas will be resisted.

11.65 Garden centres will only be permitted on suitable sites within or adjacent to the built-up areas of the market towns and larger villages. The goods and services sold or provided from a garden centre will be limited to items closely associated with gardening.

POLICY S18**NON-RETAIL COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS**

Within the Development Limits of villages, proposals for non-retail commercial development (Class A2 and A3* uses) will be permitted unless such proposals would seriously prejudice local amenity or highway safety. Outside Development Limits, subject to Policy T16, such development will only be permitted where it involves:

1. Development ancillary to existing uses; or
2. The moderate expansion of an existing use; or
3. The conversion of buildings of architectural or historic interest, subject to Policy HH17; or
4. The conversion of suitable rural buildings.

In such circumstances the scale and type of use must be appropriate to the locality and not give rise to serious amenity problems or create unacceptable highway problems.

* *Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987.*

JUSTIFICATION

11.66 Within villages proposals for the establishment of non-retail commercial developments such as restaurants, tea rooms, and public houses may arise. Such uses can make a contribution to the rural economy and provide employment.

11.67 Proposals outside Development Limits could have a detrimental effect on rural amenities because of their appearance and traffic generation and will, therefore, normally be resisted.