

## **SHOPPING**

### **INTRODUCTION**

- 9.1 Retailing in the towns and villages of the Plan area must be seen within the context of the sub-regional shopping hierarchy since a considerable number of shopping trips are made to larger centres such as York, Leeds and Doncaster.
- 9.2 The rural nature of the Plan area means that shopping facilities are very dispersed. Selby functions as the principal shopping centre and has a relatively large sphere of influence for convenience shopping, although it has a more limited attraction for comparison goods shoppers. Tadcaster and Sherburn in Elmet have a mainly local function. Smaller groups of shops are available in the larger service villages mainly serving the everyday needs of the local population, and below this level smaller local and village shops provide an essential service for local residents.
- 9.3 The retail policies of the Plan are intended to at least maintain existing shopping facilities and to strengthen the vitality and viability of town centres, whilst allowing for new development elsewhere in appropriate circumstances.

### **STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK**

- 9.4 National planning policy guidance on retailing is set out in PPG6 (Town Centres and Retail Developments, 1996) which emphasises the need to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres, and to ensure the availability of a wide range of shopping opportunities to which people have easy access. This complements the long-standing policies in the North Yorkshire County Structure Plan which seek to encourage new shopping developments to locate in or close to existing shopping centres.
- 9.5 The Regional Planning Guidance for Yorkshire and the Humber (now Regional Spatial Strategy) echoes the provisions of PPG6 and also recognises the importance of supporting shopping centres in smaller market towns.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- 9.6 The shopping policies of the Plan have the following main objectives:
- 1) To enhance the vitality and viability of the existing town centres of Selby, Tadcaster and Sherburn in Elmet.
  - 2) To encourage the retention, establishment or extension of local shopping facilities appropriate to the rural economy.
  - 3) To resist the establishment of retail uses outside Development Limits.

## **POLICIES AND PROPOSALS**

### **Retail Development in Existing Centres**

- 9.7 A principal objective of the Local Plan is to enhance the viability and vitality of existing shopping centres in the market towns of Selby, Tadcaster and Sherburn in Elmet. These centres are a vital part of the economic and social life of the Plan area, providing a range of shopping and other facilities which are accessible to a large number of people.
- 9.8 A shopping study undertaken on behalf of the District Council in 1994 revealed that, whilst there is unlikely to be a need for significant additional retail floorspace provision in Selby town in the period up to 2006, there is scope for additional comparison goods provision in order to improve the quality of shopping available. In Tadcaster, the need for both qualitative and quantitative improvements were identified in order to claw back expenditure lost to other shopping centres. Sherburn in Elmet is regarded as being vital and viable in its local centre context, but has scope for only limited additional convenience floorspace in the Plan period. There is a need to regain some expenditure which is currently being diverted to other centres.
- 9.9 The District Council will seek to enhance the attractiveness of the town centres by encouraging new developments within the existing commercial centres. New development should strengthen their commercial buoyancy and encourage investment in the historic fabric and townscape. Specific policies for promoting and controlling development within the town centres are incorporated in Part Two of the Local Plan. These policies will be supported by other measures aimed at overcoming traffic congestion, enhancing the environment, tackling crime and increasing the attractiveness of the town centre as a place to live, work and visit. The District Council recently undertook improvements to the Finkle Street and Micklegate area of Selby town and will consider schemes for excluding non-essential traffic and introducing pedestrianisation in other areas.
- 9.10 The 1994 Shopping Study undertaken on behalf of the District Council suggests that the implementation of existing planning consents within Selby, Sherburn in Elmet and Tadcaster would satisfy projected shopping floorspace requirements. In view of the limited scale of future floorspace requirements, and the established overriding need to support existing centres, it is concluded that there is unlikely to be scope for significant additional retail development outside existing centres other than on sites already identified immediately adjacent to those centres.

**S1 Shopping provision will be concentrated in the commercial and shopping centres of Selby, Tadcaster and Sherburn in Elmet, as defined on the proposals map.**

### **Edge-of-Centre and Out-of-Centre Retail Development**

- 9.11 PPG6 (Town Centres and Retail Developments, June 1996) advises that, whilst new retail development will usually be located in or next to existing town centres, there may be scope for out-of-centre retail development

provided this does not undermine the vitality and viability of existing town centres.

- 9.12 The PPG emphasises the plan-led approach to promoting development in town centres, and the sequential approach to selecting sites for development. Adopting a sequential approach means that first preference should be for town centre sites, followed by edge-of-centre sites, district and local centres and only then out-of-centre sites.
- 9.13 For the purposes of this policy `edge-of-centre' is a location within easy walking distance (i.e. 200m-300m) of the defined shopping and commercial centre; `out-of-centre' is a location which is clearly separate from the town centre, but not necessarily outside the urban area; and `out-of-town' is an out-of-centre development on land which is clearly not within the current urban boundary as defined by the Development Limits.
- 9.14 The Council will rigorously assess any proposals for edge-of-centre, out-of-centre and out-of-town retail units in order to ensure that they complement and do not undermine the shopping provision within the existing centres. In considering proposals for all these forms of development (including proposals for retail warehousing) and all retail schemes over 2,500 square metres gross floorspace, a number of key considerations will be applied, based on the advice in PPG6 (Town Centres and Retail Development, 1996). All such applications should be supported by evidence on:
- a) Whether the applicant adopted a sequential approach to the site selection and the availability of suitable alternative sites;
  - b) Their likely economic impacts on town centres, local centres and villages, including consideration of the cumulative effects of recently completed developments and outstanding planning permissions;
  - c) Their accessibility by a choice of means of transport, assessing the proportion of customers likely to arrive by different means;
  - d) The likely changes in travel patterns over the catchment area; and where appropriate;
  - e) The traffic impact and any other significant environmental impacts.
- 9.15 The District Council will also require assessments for smaller developments serving a more than local function where these are considered likely to have a large impact on an established centre depending on the relative size and nature of the development in relation to the centre.
- 9.16 In considering any future retail proposals, the District Council will require the submission of shopping and traffic impact studies in order to assess how existing centres within the catchment area of the proposal would be affected.
- 9.17 The purpose of POLICY S2 is to identify factors to be taken into account when considering proposals for future shopping developments in edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations. (The advice provided in PPG6 will also be

taken into account particularly regarding the sequential approach and when assessing the impact of proposals upon the vitality and viability of centres). Criterion 4 in POLICY S2 attempts to ensure that new developments enhance sustainability objectives by creating a reduction in the overall distances travelled for shopping purposes particularly by private car.

- 9.18 The Policy is not intended to apply to farm diversification or tourism activities which may have an acceptable retail element, in accordance with POLICIES EMP7 and RT11.
- 9.19 Where, exceptionally, proposals are permitted, planning conditions will be imposed to ensure that the character of development does not change to the extent that the District Council would have refused permission because of the potential impact on the vitality and viability of an existing centre. Planning conditions may be used, for example, to limit the range or types of goods sold.

**S2 Proposals for large scale edge-of-centre, or out-of-centre retail development (serving more than a local function) will only be permitted where:**

- 1) More suitable, viable and available alternative sites cannot be identified in accordance with the sequential approach; and**
- 2) The proposal would not individually or cumulatively harm the vitality and viability of existing centres; and**
- 3) 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, bicycle or who rely on public transport.**

**Local Shops**

- 9.20 Outside the three market towns of Selby, Sherburn in Elmet and Tadcaster, individual shops play an important role in providing for local shopping needs, especially convenience goods. They help to reduce the need to travel, thereby contributing to sustainability objectives and also provide an essential service for those with restricted mobility.
- 9.21 The role of local facilities in furthering sustainability objectives has been increasingly recognised in Government planning guidance and PPG6 (Town Centres and Retail Developments), published in June 1996, particularly addresses the issue of village shops in Paragraph 3.20. It emphasises the crucial role local shops play in maintaining villages as viable communities and suggests local authorities should adopt a positive approach to applications for developments which improve their viability. It also notes that their importance to the community should be taken into account when considering applications for change of use of existing shops.
- 9.22 In addition to village shops, public houses often provide a distinct social and community function and act as important meeting places. Where no alternative exists within a village, the closure of the local public house not

only creates a direct loss of that facility but inevitably will generally lead to an increase in the number and length of journeys that local people make. For these reasons, POLICY S3 also includes safeguards against the unnecessary loss of public houses within village communities.

9.23 With regard to safeguarding shopping provision and public houses in rural communities, the Council will resist the change of use of individual premises unless it can be demonstrated that a suitable alternative exists, or that it can be shown to be no longer viable for retail use and that reasonable attempts have been made to sell or let the business on an operational basis. What constitutes a 'reasonable period of time' and 'reasonable terms' will depend upon prevailing market conditions but, as a guide, less than six months is likely to be inappropriate and the terms on offer should compare with similar premises and locations of such premises that are being let or sold for the existing use. In certain circumstances retail businesses may be eligible for financial assistance from the Countryside Agency.

- S3**
- A) Outside defined shopping and commercial centres, proposals for local shops (Class A1\*) and commercial premises such as financial and professional services, public houses, cafes, restaurants and takeaways (Class A2\* and A3\*) will be permitted provided all the following criteria are met:**
- 1) The proposal is within defined development limits;**
  - 2) The proposal is intended to serve a purely local function or there is a demonstrable need for the particular outlet in the locality (including facilities related to tourism);**
  - 3) The scale of provision would be appropriate to the locality;**
  - 4) The proposal would not create conditions prejudicial to highway safety or the free flow of traffic;**
  - 5) Satisfactory parking and servicing could be achieved, and the site is accessible and safe for pedestrians and cyclists; and**
  - 6) The proposal would not have a significant adverse effect on residential amenity or the character and appearance of the area.**
- B) Outside Selby, Tadcaster and Sherburn in Elmet, proposals involving a loss of retailing (Class A1\*) use, or loss of a public house (Class A3\*), will not be permitted unless:**

- 1) **It can be demonstrated that there is alternative provision for a similar type of use within reasonable walking distance; or**
- 2) **It can be shown that the business is no longer viable for retail purposes within its existing use class, and that it has remained unsold or unlet for a substantial period of time, despite genuine and sustained attempts to market it on reasonable terms.**

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

### **Retail Development in the Countryside**

- 9.24 The changes taking place in agriculture and through rural diversification are likely to give additional momentum to the practice of selling farm produce, country crafts and similar goods direct to customers within rural areas. Similarly, increasing numbers of visitors in the countryside may create demand for small-scale outlets associated with recreation and leisure uses. Careful controls are needed to ensure that this does not result in a proliferation of retail outlets outside existing settlements.
- 9.25 Proposals should not detract from the undeveloped character of the countryside. In addition care should be taken to avoid creating traffic hazards by the use of concealed entrances or by insufficient parking.

**S4 Outside defined development limits, proposals for retail shops (Class A1\*) and commercial premises such as financial and professional services, public houses, cafes, restaurants and takeaways (Class A2\* and A3\*) will only be permitted where:**

- 1) **The proposal is ancillary to an existing use; or**
- 2) **It would secure the preservation of a building of architectural or historic importance; or**
- 3) **There is a demonstrable need for the particular outlet in the locality (including facilities related to tourism).**

**and provided that:**

- i) **The scale of provision would be appropriate to the locality;**
- ii) **The proposal would not create conditions prejudicial to highway safety or which would have a significant adverse effect on local amenity; and**
- iii) **The proposal would not have a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the countryside.**

### **Garden Centres**

- 9.26 There are a number of garden centres located within the Plan area some of which have evolved from traditional nurseries
- 9.27 It is essential that any proposals to extend or to provide new garden centres are well related to the local highway network and will not damage the open character of the countryside. Whilst recognising the fact that nurseries tend to be established with particular regard to the presence of especially good soil, it is important that nursery shops/garden centres are not located in remote and prominent countryside locations. An urban type of development, incorporating large covered display and storage areas, and associated car parking, would have an adverse effect on the character of the area, and would not be acceptable. It is equally important to ensure that proposals are primarily related to the sale of plants and horticultural goods rather than creating outlets for other types of goods.
- 9.28 The District Council may give favourable consideration to the development of small-scale garden centres within the grounds of a Historic Park or Garden which may benefit from the development of such facilities.

**S5 Proposals for garden centres will only be permitted within or close to defined development limits or within the grounds of a historic park or garden, provided:**

- 1) The proposal is located along or close to a road with the capacity to accommodate the additional traffic generated;**
- 2) The proposal would not have a significant adverse effect on the character and appearance of the countryside;**
- 3) The proposal is not located within green belt;**
- 4) The proposal would not create conditions prejudicial to highway safety or which would have a significant adverse effect on local amenity; and**
- 5) A significant part of the site is devoted to the cultivation or sale of plants.**