

Outer Area Local and District Centres Briefing Note

A survey was undertaken in July 2009 to assess how Local Plan policy SHO15 was being enforced. An identical survey was also undertaken in September 2008 and this briefing note summarises the main findings. A summary sheet is attached.

Policy SHO15 states:

“Within the district and Local Centres, as defined on the Proposals Map, proposals for change of use from class A1 to other uses will only be permitted where;

- (i) the proportion of class A1 uses in the defined centre would not fall below 60% as a result; or
- (ii) the proposed use provides a service appropriate to the centre’s position in the hierarchy, which is underrepresented in that centre or is a community use and there are no other units available in or adjacent to the centre, in which such a use could be accommodated.”

Vacancies

District Centres

Overall out of 129 units in the seven frontage groups, the number of vacant units increased from 4 to 5. Two units became vacant, one at DC04 Plumstead Road, increasing the percentage of vacant units to 3.4% and the other at DC06 Earlham House, raising the percentage of vacant units to 5.9%. One unit was occupied in DC07 The Larkman, reducing the vacant units from 7.1% to 0%.

Local Centres

Overall out of 313 units in the 25 frontage groups, the number of vacant units increased from 23 to 31. This is an increase from 7.4% to 8.9%. The following table shows where changes have occurred.

Frontage Group	2008	2009
LC02 Hall Road/Queens Road	3	6
LC04 Grove Road	1	0
LC06 Unthank Road	1	2
LC07 St Augustine’s Gate	1	2
LC08 Dereham Road/Distillery Square	1	0
LC12 Woodcock Road	1	0
LC13 Catton Grove/Ring Road	0	2
LC16 Sprowston Road/Shipfield	1	0
LC18 Earlham West Centre	4	5
LC19 Colman Road/The Avenues	1	5
LC22 St Johns Close/Hall Road	3	2
LC24 Heartsease, Witard Road	0	1

Non- retail units

District Centres

Out of the total 129 units in the seven frontage groups, the percentage of non-retail units increased from 39.2% to 39.56%. The SHO15 policy threshold has been exceeded in the following district centres:

- DC01 Bowthorpe Main Centre;
- DC03 Eaton Centre;
- DC04 Plumstead Road; and
- DC07 The Larkman.

Changes occurred in the following district centres:

DC03 Eaton Centre;

Number of non-retail units decreased from 10 to 9 of 16, resulting in a percentage decrease of non-retail from 62.5% to 56.3%, this however, still exceeds the 40% threshold.

DC04 Plumstead Road;

The number of non retail units increased from 11 to 12. A new unit was created through subdivision, with the proposed used non-retail. The percentage non-retail was 41.4% due to this new unit, but the change of use was considered acceptable due to the new Aldi superstore opening directly adjacent to this district centre. It was not within the boundary of the district centre but it would offer retail to mitigate against the 40% threshold being exceeded.

DC05 Aylsham Road, Mile Cross;

The number of non-retail units rose from 7 to 8, resulting in a percentage increase from 31.8% to 36.4%.

Local Centres

Overall out of 314 units in the 25 frontage groups, the percentage of non-retail units increased from 36.5% to 38.3%. The SHO15 policy threshold has been exceeded in the following local areas;

- LC02 Hall Road/Queens Road
- LC06 Unthank Road
- LC07 St Augustine's Gate
- LC10 Aylsham Road/Glenmore Gardens
- LC15 Sprowston Road/Silver Road
- LC16 Sprowston Road/Shipfield
- LC17 Bishop Bridge Road
- LC20 Colman Road, The Parade

The frontage groups where changes have occurred during the past year are as follows:

LC02 Hall Road/Queens Road;

Number of total units increased from 27 to 28 with 209 becoming two separate units. The percentage of non-retail uses therefore reduced from 44.4% to 42.9%, which still exceeds the 40% threshold.

LC08 Dereham Road/Distillery Square;

The total number of units has decreased from 30 to 29 and the total number of non-retail units has increased from 9 to 10. This has caused an increase from 30% to 34.5% of non-retail units.

LC11 Aylsham Road/Boundary Road;

The total number of units has decreased from 12 to 11 units as two units (365 A and B Aylsham Road) have merged. This has increased the percentage of non-retail units from 25% to 27.3%.

LC13 Catton Grove Road/Ring Road;

The total number of units has increased from 12 to 13; this in turn has decreased the percentage of non-retail units from 16.7% to 15.4%, well below the threshold.

LC14 Magdalen Road

Number of non-retail units decreased from 5 to 4 out of 11, resulting in a percentage decrease of non-retail units from 45.5% to 36.4%, under the 40% threshold.

LC20 Colman Road, The Parade;

Number of non-retail units has increased from 3 to 5 out of 11, resulting in a percentage increase from 27.3% (below the threshold) to 45.5% exceeding the 40% threshold. This was due to two pairs of units merging, reducing the amount of retail units by two. At the same time an appeal was allowed for a change of use to non-retail for 88 Colman Road, and the identification of 96a being three separate sui generis units. The total number of units therefore did not change, but the level of retail reduced by 2 units.

LC21 Woodgrove Parade;

The total number of units has increased from 9 to 10. The number of non-retail units has also risen from 3 to 3 out of the 10. This has in turn caused a percentage increase from 22.2% to 30%, but this is still below the threshold.

LC22: St John's Close/Hall Road

The number of units increased from 8 to 9 as 3 St John's Close had divided into two units. A change of use was granted for 5 St John's Close from retail to a hot-food takeaway, which has since been implemented. The number of non-retail units has therefore increased from 1 to 2, with the percentage increasing from 12.5% to 22.2%.

LC24 Heartsease, Witard Road;

Total number of units has increased from 8 to 9 and the number of non-retail units has risen from 2 to 3, as 23 Witard Road was identified as two separate units (both non-retail). This has caused an increase in the percentage of non-retail units from 25% to 33.3%.

Conclusion

Within the district centres out of the total 129 units in the 7 frontage groups, the percentage of non-retail units increased from 39.1% to 39.6%. The SHO15 policy threshold has been exceeded in four frontage groups. The number of vacant units increased from 4 to 5 which equates to a vacancy rate increasing from 3.1% to 3.5%.

Within the local centres out of the total 313 units in the 25 frontage groups the percentage of non-retail rose from 36.5% to 38.3%. The SHO15 Policy threshold has been exceeded in 8 frontage groups. The number of vacant units increased from 23 to 31. This is an increase from 7.4% to 8.9%.

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