5

Chapter 5
Shopping

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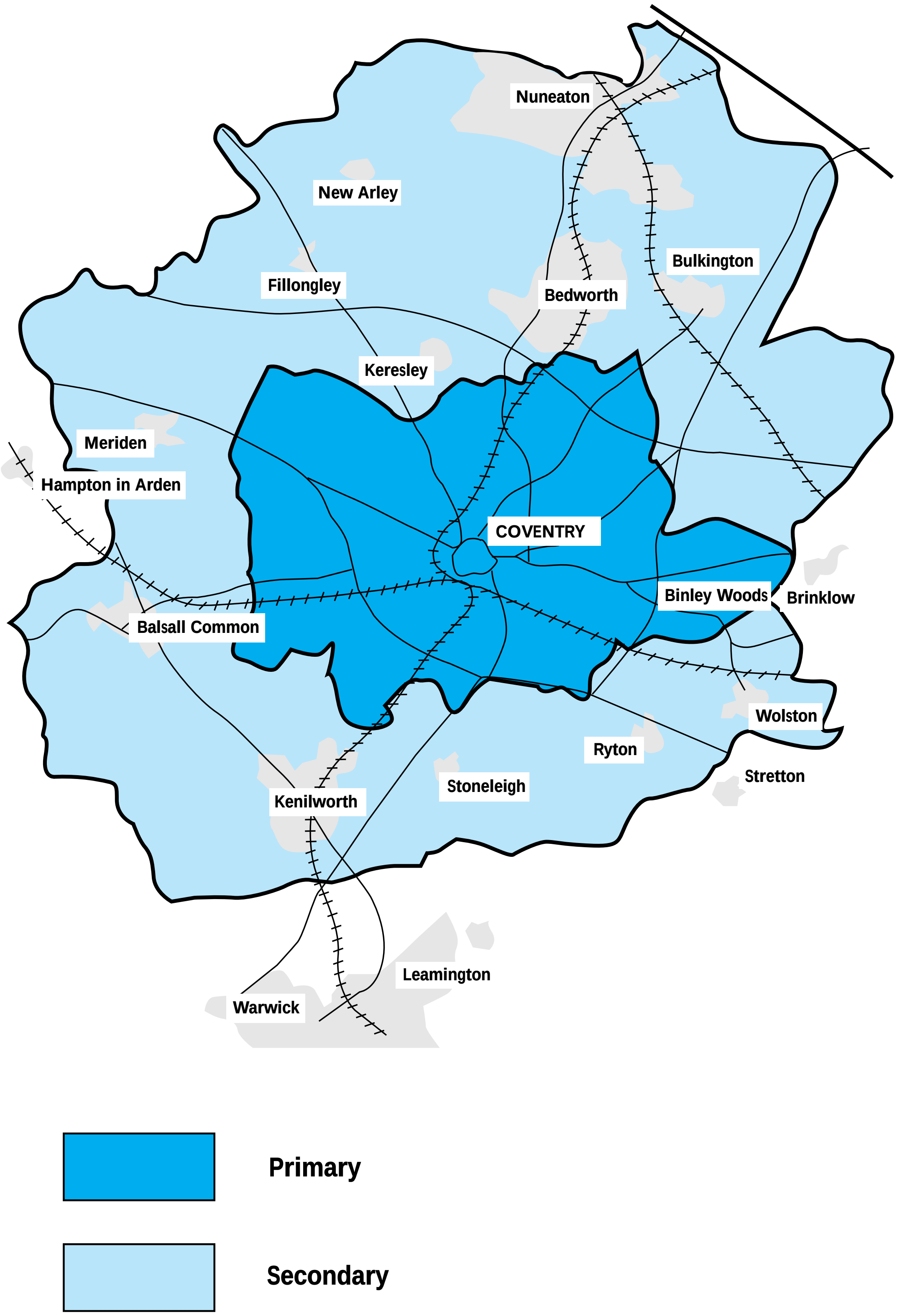


Nuneaton
New Arley
Bulkington
Fillongley
Bedworth
Keresley
Meriden
Hampton in Arden
COVENTRY
Binley Woods
Brinklow
Balsall Common
Wolston
Ryton
Stretton
Stoneleigh
Kenilworth
Leamington
Warwick
Primary
Secondary

INTRODUCTION AND POLICY AIM

5.1 Shopping is a key part of people's lives, enabling them to buy food to eat, clothes to wear and fulfil a wide range of other requirements.

5.2 The policy aim of the Shopping Chapter is to develop and maintain a range of defined Centres across the City to provide the highest possible quality shopping and other services and meet the needs of the whole community in locations accessible by a choice of means of transport. There is also a need to focus office employment and social, community and leisure provision in these locations to move towards the "Sustainable City" (see Overall Strategy Chapter). The range of locations goes from the City Centre down to the other defined Centres to local parades and even individual corner shops.

National and Regional Policy Context

5.3 The main Government guidance is in Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG) 6 "Town Centres and Retail Development" 1996. As the title implies, this deals with these two linked aspects but principally stresses an approach where the free market operates within a plan-led environment. It does not, however, seek to restrict competition, preserve existing commercial interests or prevent innovation. The guidance therefore focuses on:

- an emphasis on a plan-led approach to promoting development in town and district centres;
- an emphasis on the sequential approach to selecting sites for retail development; and
- support for local centres.

5.4 In assessing retail proposals, guidance explains:

- the three key tests - impact on vitality and viability - accessibility by a choice of means of transport - impact on overall travel and car use;
- how to assess out-of-centre developments; and
- how certain new types of retail development should be assessed.

5.5 "Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands" 1998 (RPG 11) identifies Coventry as an important centre within the region.

Local Policy Context - The Coventry Shopping Study 1998

5.6 Retailing in Coventry has changed significantly since the 1990 Shopping Study and the resulting policies in the 1993 Plan. Out-of-centre superstores and retail warehouse parks have been developed which have taken trade away from some of the traditional centres although planning policies have succeeded in limiting the damage in most cases. A new Coventry Shopping Study has been undertaken by consultants Donaldsons which includes surveys of people's shopping habits and discussion with retailers and investors covering the City Centre, the District and Local Centres and the free-standing shops.

5.7 The overall shopping catchment population for the City has increased to around 460,000 people. The primary catchment area is still only the City area and Binley Woods but the secondary area has expanded and now includes Nuneaton and Bedworth to the north, Brinklow and Wolston to the east, Kenilworth and Stoneleigh to the south and Balsall Common, Meriden and Fillongley to the west. These are shown on Text Map S1.

5.8 The City Centre is the most important location for clothing and footwear with around 83% of the survey population going to it. Birmingham is the next most popular destination. The City Centre is also still the most important destination for furniture and carpets, the Alvis Retail Park being the next most important location for these goods. Alvis Retail Park is the most popular location for DIY and electrical goods. Other retail warehouse locations do not feature with any prominence.

5.9 For food shopping, most people do a single weekly trip to their nearest superstore by car although, after Tesco at Cannon Park and Sainsburys at Fletchamstead Highway, small local shops are the most popular. Nearly a third of the survey population say they do no "top-up" shopping at all.

5.10 Three of the existing District Centres have emerged as performing a wider role than just serving their district with bulk convenience shopping and a full range of goods and services. Cannon Park serves a very extensive area across the south and west of the City, including some of the inner city area. Ball Hill serves a lot of the east and north of the City as well as some of the inner city area. Bell Green also serves people from the north and north-east of the City but there is a gap in quality provision in this part of the City.

5.11 Four of the remaining six District Centres are performing their defined role well but both Walsgrave (Brade Drive) and Jardine Crescent continue to provide only a limited shopping attraction. Jardine Crescent is supported by the wide range of social uses that were a planned part of the Centre but Walsgrave (Brade Drive) has failed to widen its range of uses.

5.12 The Local Centres continue to provide for day-to-day shopping needs with greater or lesser success. Hillfields and Willenhall are the subject of partial or total redevelopment proposals responding to decline while Radford Road and Stoney Stanton Road have virtually lost their role. The other Centres are maintaining their role and there are a number of locations which now meet the general requirements in PPG 6.

5.13 The food superstores are experiencing mixed fortunes. Tesco at Cannon Park, Sainsburys at Fletchamstead Highway and Trinity Street and Morrisons all appear to be trading above their company averages. Conversely, Sainsburys at Austin Drive, Asda at Brade Drive and Tesco at Dorchester Way are all trading below their company averages. Tesco have responded to this by planning to redevelop the Dorchester Way store.

5.14 By assessing the growth in population within the catchment areas and the increase in their spending power, it has been possible to assess additional capacity that could be provided. For convenience goods, a 7% increase over the Plan period is predicted. This amounts to:

1996-2001	2 200 sq m gross
1996-2006	4 300 sq m gross
1996-2011	6 200 sq m gross

5.15 For comparison goods, a 79% increase over the Plan period is predicted. This amounts to:

1996-2001	17 200 sq m gross
1996-2006	39 500 sq m gross
1996-2011	67 300 sq m gross

5.16 Projecting past trends in the City forward would suggest that 35,000 sq m gross of retail warehousing could be expected by 2011. This is a reflection of earlier national and regional guidance which has changed. The City Council takes the view that retail warehouse park development is not to be encouraged and that the bulk of future non-food development should therefore be within the defined Centres.

5.17 New types of shopping, including home shopping by computer, are considered to be unlikely to have any significant effect during the Plan period. They will, however, need to be kept under review.

SHOPPING STRATEGY

Overall Approach

S 1: SHOPPING STRATEGY

The City Council will protect, maintain and enhance the network of Centres shown on the Proposals Map in order to provide access to a wide range of shops, services and other activities for all sections of the community in locations accessible by a choice of means of transport.

New shopping development should be focused on the City Centre, the Major District Centres, the District Centres and the Local Centres.

Local shopping areas will be protected.

Apart from allocated retail warehousing provision, a sequential approach will be rigorously applied to out-of-centre retail proposals.

(Part 1 Policy)

5.18 A network of Centres across the City helps to define locations where an appropriate level of provision of shopping, services and other activities for the community may be made. This should help those without access to a car and also discourage unnecessary or over-long car journeys for those who do. In areas where there are low levels of car ownership, it is necessary to support some Centres where there has been a decline in retail activity but where there is little alternative for local residents.

5.19 The City Centre is the heart of this network and provides for the needs of both Coventry residents and people living well beyond the City boundary. Policies for shopping in the City Centre are found in the City Centre Chapter.

5.20 Government guidance in PPG 6 then suggests “Town Centres” as the next level of provision which, in many cities, consist of a historically distinct centre or a more recent planned development which complements the main centre with a wide range of shops and services. Because of the scale of Coventry and its pattern of development, “Town Centres” is not a helpful term and instead, the phrase “Major District Centre” has been used to equate with this “Town Centre” definition in PPG 6. Similarly, the terms “District Centre” and “Local Centre” in Coventry broadly equate to the term “District Centre” used in PPG 6, but reflect the different scales and functions actually found in the City. Generally “Local Shopping Area” equates to the term “Local Centre” used in PPG 6 and individual local shops.

5.21 Coventry’s hierarchy of Centres has been defined in relation to this approach and is shown on the Proposals Map. Two existing Centres have developed this “Major District Centre” role and a third is proposed to be developed to meet the needs of the northern part of the City, and are shown on the Proposals Map and Text Map S 2 and are referred to in Policy S 2 overleaf.

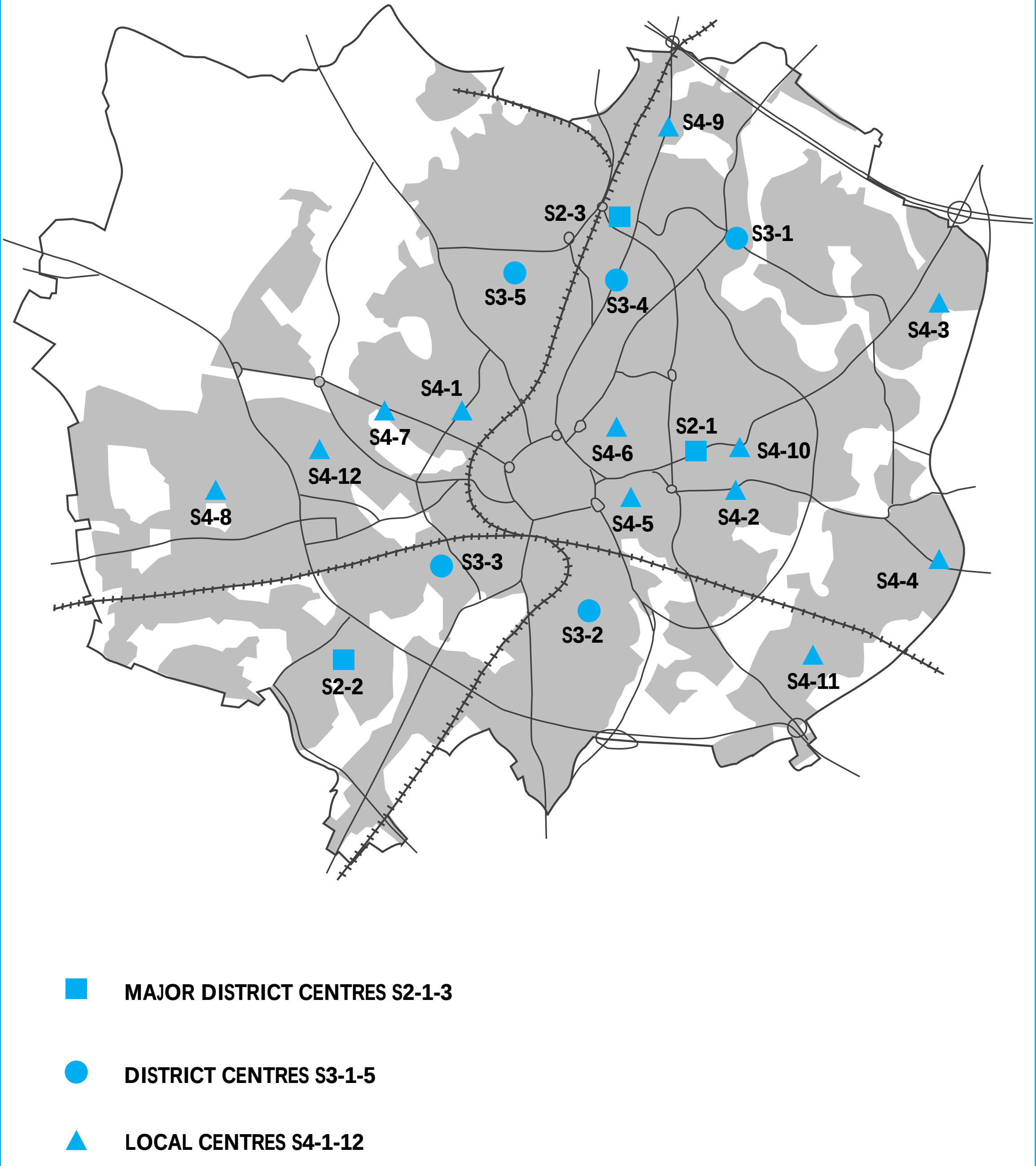
5.22 District Centres usually include a food supermarket and a range of other shops and services and provide for more than just day-to-day needs. Most of the existing District Centres fall into this category. These Centres are shown on the Proposals Map and are referred to in Policy S 3 below.

5.23 Local Centres provide for day-to-day needs and some other services. They are shown on the Proposals Map and are referred to in Policy S 4 below.

5.24 Local shopping areas consist of individual shops and small groups of shops which have not achieved the level of a Centre or which have, over time, declined to below this level as a result of other changes. They are also afforded protection by PPG 6. They are not shown on the Proposals Map but are referred to in Policy S 10 below.

5.25 While the Coventry Shopping Study has identified capacity for new shopping developments within the Plan Period, there are issues of the difference in the quality of provision between the north of the City and the south resulting in unnecessarily long shopping trips by car to the south of the City. The bulk of the new development should be within the Central Shopping Area (referred to in the City Centre Chapter) or within or immediately adjacent to the other defined Centres. Some of this capacity will be provided at Foleshill Gasworks as a new Major District Centre which will improve the quality of provision in that part of the City. This will be promoted through Policy S 2 below. A smaller new opportunity also exists for a Local Centre at Brandon Road referred to in Policy S 4 below.

5.26 Some space for retail warehousing development is allocated adjacent to an existing retail warehouse park which is well served by public transport. It is shown on the Proposals Map and is referred to in Policy S 12 below. The sequential approach will be applied to other out-of-centre proposals. This approach means preference for locations in or adjacent to defined Centres with less central locations being considered only in the circumstances, and against the criteria, in Policy S 13 below.


S4-9
S2-3
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S4-10
S4-12
S4-8
S4-5
S4-2
S3-3
S4-4
S3-2
S2-2
S4-11
MAJOR DISTRICT CENTRES S2-1-3
DISTRICT CENTRES S3-1-5
LOCAL CENTRES S4-1-12

DEFINED CENTRES

S 2: MAJOR DISTRICT CENTRES

Major District Centres are shown on the Proposals Map at:

1 Ball Hill;
2 Cannon Park;
3 Foleshill Gasworks.

These Centres will complement the City Centre, offering a similar range of shops and services on a smaller scale. They will include provision for bulk convenience shopping and a wide range of comparison shopping and other services.

They will also be a focus for business office, training, conference, hotel, social, community and leisure uses for the sector of the City which they serve.

5.27 Ball Hill and Cannon Park both emerged from the Coventry Shopping Study as serving large sectors of the City. The boundaries of both Centres have been re-assessed in the light of PPG 6 and have been extended in order to provide the opportunity for continued development and change to meet the defined role.

5.28 The Coventry Shopping Study identified a gap in quality provision in the north of the City. The City Council considered a number of alternative locations, including the extension or redevelopment of existing Centres. They have concluded that the Foleshill Gasworks site offers the only opportunity to provide a Major District Centre for the north of the City which is accessible by a choice of means of transport. The Foleshill Gasworks site is referred to in Policy OS 2. The convenience shopping capacity identified in paragraph 5.14 is absorbed by this Major District Centre.

S 3: DISTRICT CENTRES

District Centres are shown on the Proposals Map at:

1 Bell Green;
2 Daventry Road;
3 Earlsdon;
4 Foleshill;
5 Jubilee Crescent.

These Centres will provide for bulk convenience shopping, an element of comparison shopping and a range of other services.

They will be a focus for social, community and leisure uses for the district which they serve.

5.29 These Centres are those which have traditionally served their districts of the City. In the main, these Centres are expected to stay the same size but, in response to their wider role, some boundaries have been redefined to include office, social, community and leisure sites and buildings served by a choice of means of transport.

S 4: LOCAL CENTRES

Local Centres are shown on the Proposals Map at:

1 Barkers Butts Lane;
2 Binley Road;
3 Brade Drive;
4 Brandon Road;
5 Far Gosford Street;
6 Hillfields;
7 Holyhead Road;
8 Jardine Crescent;
9 Longford;
10 Walsgrave Road;
11 Willenhall;
12 Winsford Avenue.

These Centres provide for the day to day convenience shopping needs.

They will be a focus for social, community and leisure uses for the locality.

5.30 Most of these Centres are the existing Local Centres. Brade Drive and Jardine Crescent have been reclassified from District Centres to Local Centres in view of their limited range of shops and services. Radford Road and Stoney Stanton Road have been reclassified as Local Shopping Areas as they no longer meet even day-to-day convenience shopping needs.

5.31 Three new Centres have been added at Binley Road, Brandon Road and Holyhead Road. The first of these is the group known as the "Empress Buildings" next to a Kwik Save which has an appropriate level of provision for a Local Centre. The second is adjacent to the free-standing Morrisons superstore, where an existing permission for 7,432 sq m retail warehouse should be reshaped into a development of small units to complement Morrisons and provide a Local Centre for residents in the adjacent new development areas. Further convenience or service uses, a small number of larger units to provide a comparison element and possibly social, community and leisure use would be appropriate. The third is the group of shops at the junction of Holyhead Road with Grayswood Avenue which also have an appropriate range of provision for a Local Centre.

S 5: GROUND FLOOR UNITS IN DEFINED CENTRES

Proposals to use ground floor units within defined Centres for non-retail uses will normally be permitted provided that:

- **the overall retail function of the Centre would not be undermined;**
- **the use would make a positive contribution to the overall role of the Centre; and**
- **the use is compatible with other Plan policies.**

The impact of a proposal on the retail function will be determined on the basis of:

- **the location and prominence of the unit within the relevant frontage;**
- **the width of the frontage of the unit;**
- **the number and proximity of other units occupied by non-retail uses or with permission for those uses; and**
- **compatibility of the proposal with nearby uses.**

5.32 Within defined Centres, the maintenance of vitality and viability will always be a matter of concern. While the main purpose of the Centres will be for shops, (Class A1 of the Use Classes Order - UCO) professional and financial services (Class A2 of the UCO), catering outlets (Class A3 of the UCO), sui generis or social, community and leisure uses can add variety. Any proposal for non-retail use will be examined against the criteria in Policy S 5 according to the particular circumstances, but, in general, concern will grow as the proportion of non-retail units in a centre increases between 15 and 30%.

5.33 When considering a proposal for a use other than Class A1 ("a non-retail use") the prominence of the unit within a frontage will be important so that the overall impression of an area of shops is retained. The relevant frontage will usually be defined by significant breaks in it, for example, where streets cross or at a corner. Considering the width of the frontage is important to ensure that a lively street frontage is retained; some non-retail uses can be poor in this respect. The number and proximity of other non-retail units in the relevant frontage again need to be considered to ensure that a lively street frontage is retained.

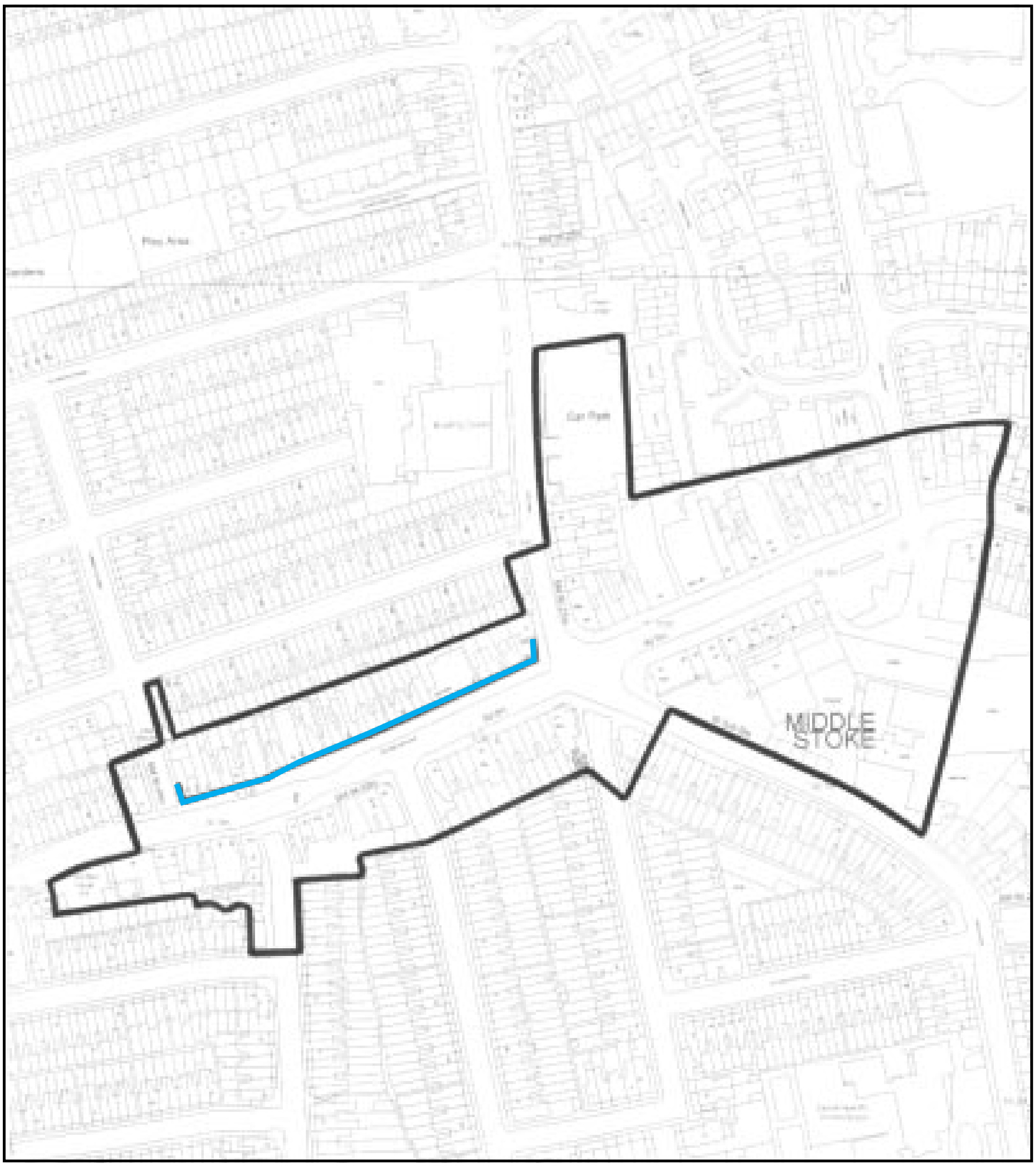
5.34 Proposals for catering outlets will also be subject to consideration under Policy S 11. Other non-retail uses will also be subject to relevant policies. For example, entertainment venues will usually also need to satisfy Policy SCL 2.

S 6: PRIMARY RETAIL FRONTAGES

Primary Retail Frontages are shown on the Proposals Map in the Ball Hill, Earlsdon and Far Gosford Street Centres at:

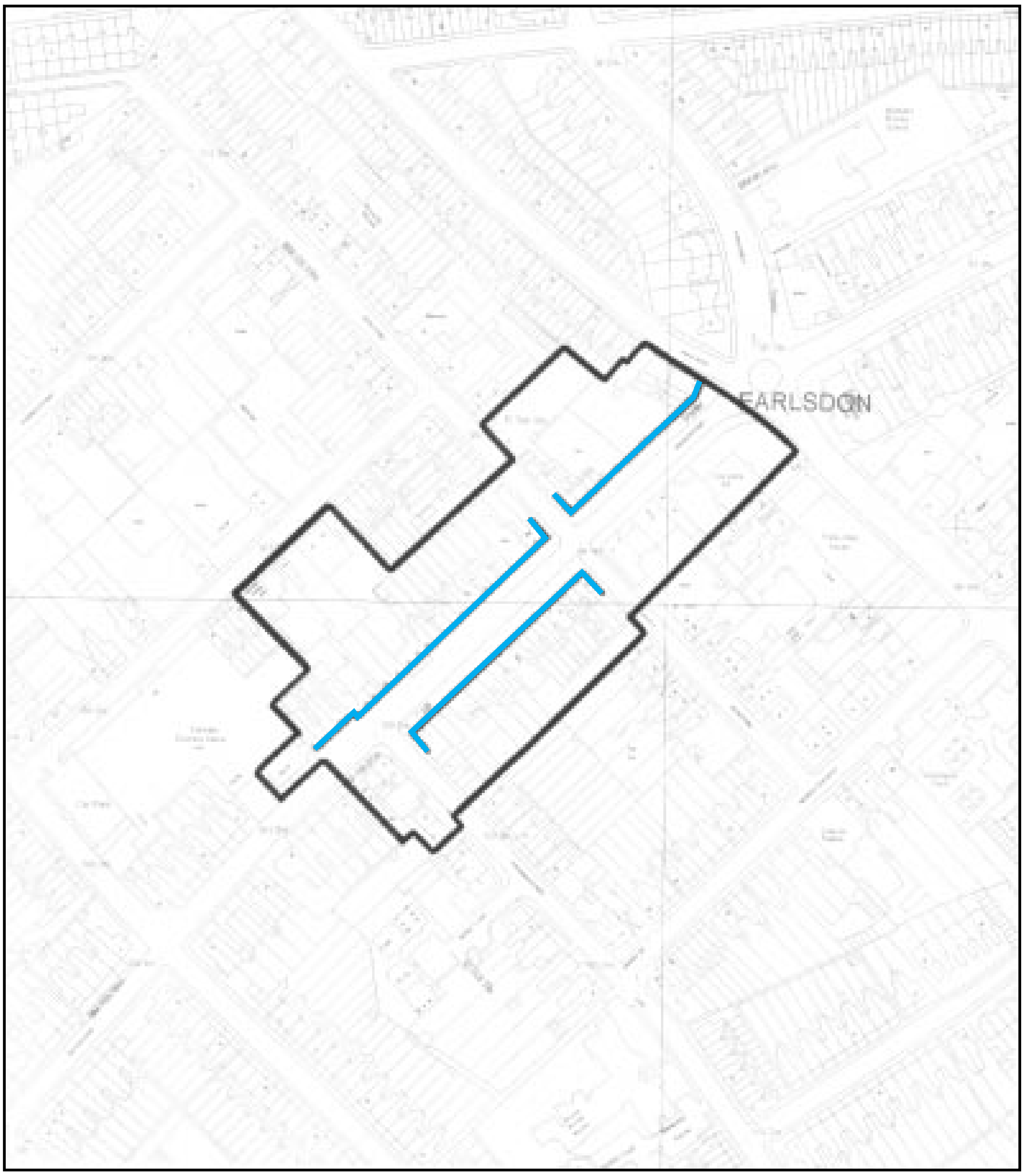
Ball Hill	**: 173-239 Walsgrave Road.**
Earlsdon	**: 41 Moor Street and 13-45 Earlsdon Street**
	: 2-64 Earlsdon Street.
Far Gosford Street	**: 52-73 Far Gosford Street.**
	: 116-133 Far Gosford Street.

A proposal which would result in more non-retail uses in a Frontage than the number in that Frontage at the date of deposit of the Plan will not be permitted.



Primary Retail Frontage

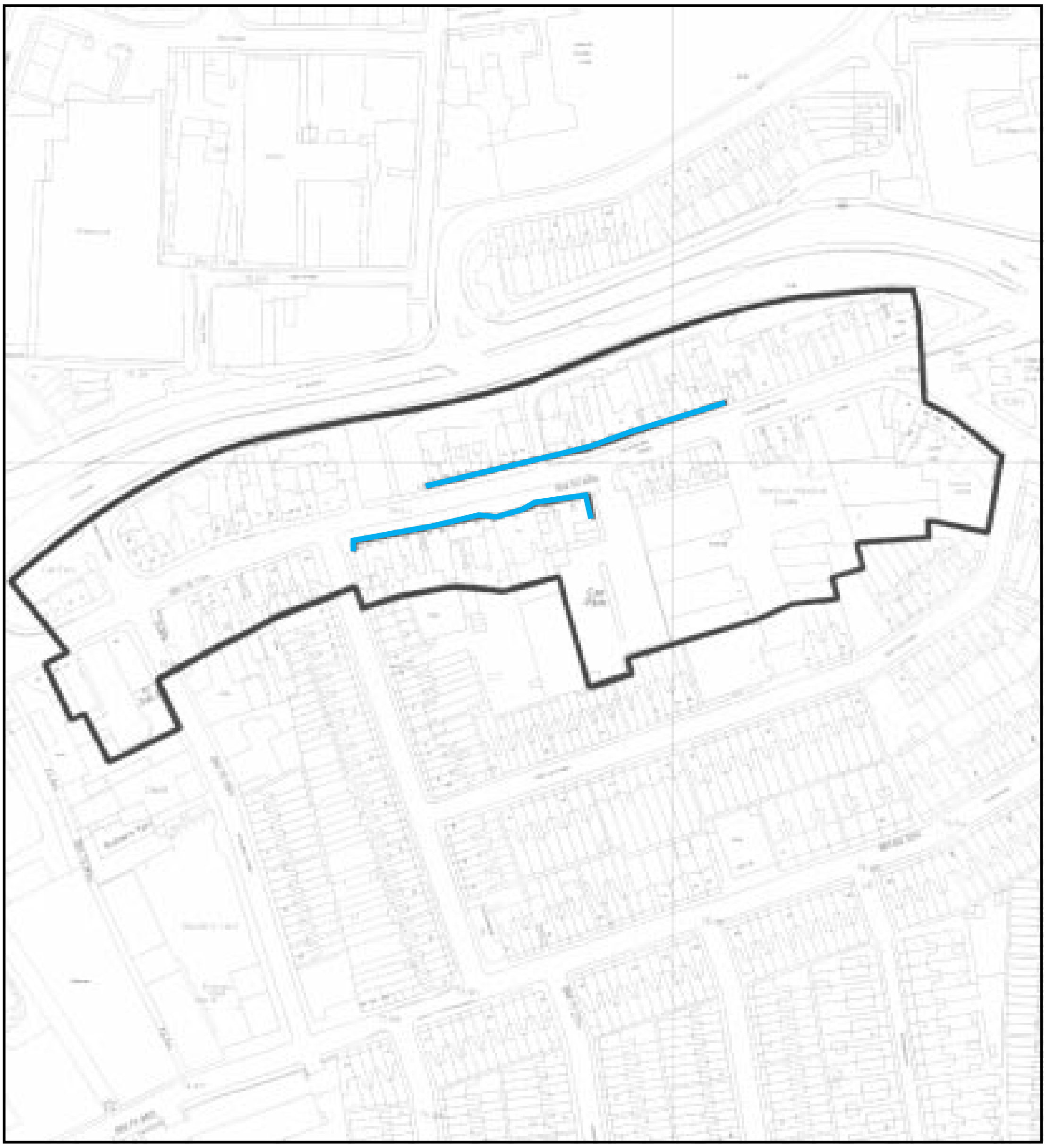
Boundary of Defined Centre



Primary Retail Frontage

Boundary of Defined Centre

Map S (5) Primary Retail Frontages in Far Gosford Street - Policy S 6



Primary Retail Frontage

Boundary of Defined Centre

5.35 Within these three Centres, specific problems with concentration of uses have emerged. In Ball Hill the problem has been with Class A2 uses while Earlsdon has suffered with both Class A2 and A3 uses together. Far Gosford Street suffers from problems caused by a combination of its local role, its City-wide role and its developing role related to the expansion of Coventry University. In all three Centres it is desirable to define a minimum retail core to secure the continued dominant role of the Centre for shopping. Primary retail frontages are shown on Maps S (3), S (4) and S (5).

S 7: UPPER FLOOR UNITS IN DEFINED CENTRES

Proposals to use the upper floors of units within defined Centres for shopping, residential, employment, social, community or leisure uses will be permitted, subject to:

- **compatibility with nearby uses; and**
- **compatibility with other Plan policies.**

5.36 Upper floor units within defined Centres can have a variety of acceptable uses including extension to shopping floorspace, residential ("living over the shop"), employment, social, community or leisure uses. Any or all of these would be likely to add to the vitality and viability of the Centre and will be supported.

5.37 Extensions for all uses except residential raise no significant considerations apart from their general compatibility. Car parking will be expected to be provided communally and is referred to in Policies AM 18 and AM 19. For residential uses, a reduced standard of amenity is sometimes inevitable.

S 8: LOCATION OF NEW SUPERMARKETS

Proposals for new supermarkets will only be permitted within or immediately adjacent to a defined Centre if they would:

- **support the role of the Centre;**
- **be compatible with nearby uses; and**
- **be compatible with other Plan policies.**

5.38 While most of the defined Centres either include a sizeable supermarket or combine a small supermarket with traditional shops, there are a number of Centres where development of a small supermarket (between 250 sq m and 1,300 sq m gross) would strengthen the role of the Centre for bulk convenience shopping. The boundaries of a number of the defined Centres include land which should be suitable for this sort of development. If such land is not available, a site immediately adjacent to a defined Centre may be acceptable provided that its location would encourage a substantial number of joint trips to the Centre.

S 9: REGENERATING DEFINED CENTRES

Defined Centres which show significant signs of decline will be the subject of planning and environmental measures to strengthen their position.

5.39 Significant signs of the decline of a Centre will usually include an increasing vacancy rate and dereliction. During the lifetime of the 1993 Plan the Local Centres in Hillfields and Willenhall have both been the subject of extensive action to strengthen their position. In Hillfields long vacant units in a poor state of repair are to be cleared and new residential development with a "village square" to focus activity is to be constructed. In Willenhall a largely derelict 1960s precinct is being demolished to enable the construction of new residential development and a new shopping centre consisting of a small supermarket, unit shops and social and community facilities.

5.40 In the Plan period, action may be needed in other Centres involving redevelopment in whole or in part or smaller scale programmes of environmental works. Developing a particular specialised role for a Centre may be appropriate (for example, as Far Gosford Street has) while promotion of a Centre is always useful.

OTHER SHOPPING POLICIES

S 10: LOCAL SHOPPING AREAS

Local shopping areas will be protected where they provide a service to the local area.

Proposals for new local shops, extensions to existing local shops or changes of use to service uses will be determined on the basis of:

- **the vacancy rate of comparable shops within easy walking distance;**
- **any significant retail impact upon a defined Centre or local shopping area;**
- **compatibility with nearby uses;**
- **compatibility with other Plan policies; and**
- **any special needs of the local area.**

5.41 Local shops, whether in local shopping areas or free-standing, still form an important part of the shopping provision for the City but the recent tendency has been for their numbers to decline as a result of people choosing to shop in defined Centres or superstores. This is often accompanied by a tendency for those shops which survive to expand, or for pressures for change of use. Free-standing local shops, whether deliberately planned or arriving through this process, will not be allowed to expand beyond around 250 sq m gross in order to protect existing Centres and local shopping areas. Proposals for a change of use to Class A2 or to expand the shopping element of petrol filling stations will be considered under this policy. Changes of use to Class A3 will be considered under Policy S 11.

5.42 The vacancy rate of shops in the nearby area will be considered to establish the basis of any local demand for a proposal. Easy walking distance is considered to be within 200-300 metres. Trading impact on a defined Centre or local shopping area will be considered to establish whether, individually or cumulatively, a proposal would weaken their role. Consideration of compatibility with nearby uses should result in the protection of residential amenity and a suitable design and layout. Finally, special needs may include the need for a new local shop to serve a new residential development or the need to retain an isolated local shop serving its immediate locality.

5.43 The conversion of local shops to residential use, particularly in areas where there is a historic over-supply of them, will be supported unless this would result in the complete removal of local shops. When conversion is proposed in a parade or group of local shops it will be necessary to consider whether a satisfactory residential environment can be created and detail design matters will also need to be considered.

S 11: CATERING OUTLETS

Catering outlets will be generally discouraged outside defined Centres and employment areas.

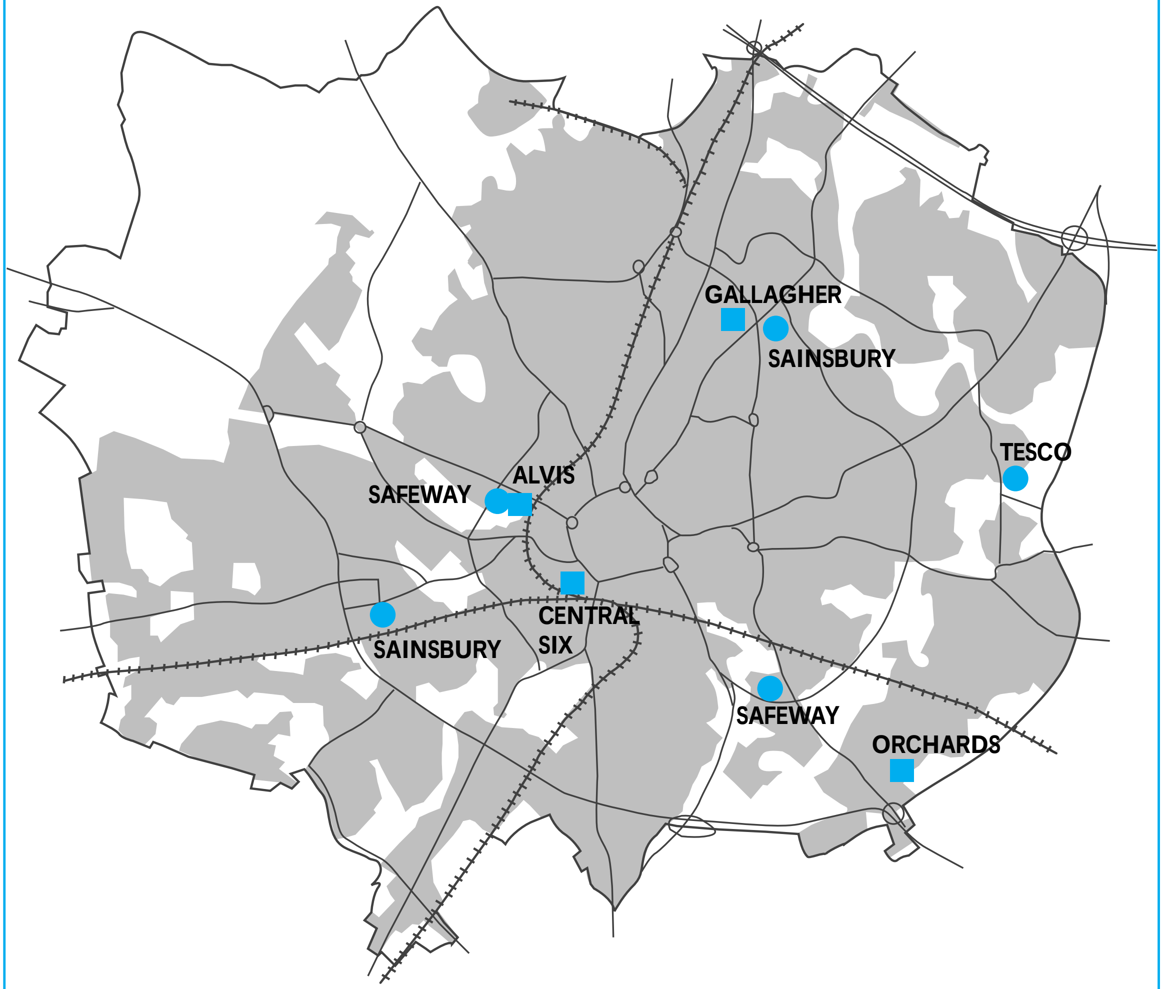
Proposals for catering outlets will be determined on the basis of:

- **compatibility with nearby uses;**
- **the cumulative impact of the proposal with any existing or proposed outlet; and**
- **compatibility with other Plan policies.**

5.44 Catering outlets (Class A3) typically include pubs, restaurants, cafes and hot food takeaways and there can be a considerable amount of overlap between these different types. The Policy will apply both to proposals for new buildings and conversions. Policy CC 20 will also need to be considered within the Central Shopping Area and Policy S 5 within other defined Centres.

5.45 Consideration of compatibility with nearby uses will ensure the protection of residential amenity and a suitable design and layout. There may be locations where it is felt that a significant group of catering outlets could cause cumulative problems with the other criteria, for example if there were too many outlets competing for a limited amount of car parking. Highway considerations, which include capacity, road safety, car parking and delivery facilities may be considered to distinguish between hot food takeaways and the other types of outlets (for example, restaurants and cafes open during normal shop hours). If there are problems with these criteria, a condition prohibiting takeaway sales will be imposed.

Map S (6) Out-of-Centre Retailing - Policies S 12 & S 13



S 12: RETAIL WAREHOUSING

A site for additional retail warehousing is allocated at Gallagher Retail Park and shown on the Proposals Map.

5.46 The Coventry Shopping Study suggested a possible capacity for retail warehousing, referred to in paragraph 5.16. At the time of the Study, the Gallaghers and Central Six Retail Parks were under construction and their trading pattern could not be assessed but they provide between them around 24,200 sq m gross of retail warehousing. In addition to this, there is the 3,250 sq m gross balance of the part implemented permission at Brade Drive and the existing 7,432 sq m gross permission at Oak Farm. This latter proposal should be reshaped to form a new Local Centre at Brandon Road, referred to in Policy S4 and paragraph 5.30.

5.47 This would indicate that there could still be some remaining capacity for retail warehousing which should be provided within or immediately adjacent to existing retail warehouse parks provided that the criteria set out in Policy S 13 below are satisfied. On this basis, up to 2,800 sq m gross is allocated at the Gallagher Retail Park.

S 13: OUT-OF-CENTRE RETAILING

Proposals for out-of-Centre retailing, other than local shops, will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that sites within or adjacent to defined Centres are not suitable, viable and likely to become available within a reasonable time and that the proposed site is accessible by a choice of means of transport.

Proposals will be considered on the basis of:

- **any likely retail impact upon a defined Centre or local shopping area;**
- **accessibility by a choice of means of transport;**
- **the impact upon wider travel patterns and car use;**
- **compatibility with nearby uses; and**
- **compatibility with other Plan policies.**

A minimum unit size of 930 sq m and restrictions on the range of goods to be sold may be imposed.

5.48 Out-of-centre retailing is an option to be considered if more centrally located sites are not available and, even then, access by a choice of means of transport is required. No specific capacity has been identified for either food or non-food development but there remains a possibility that retailers could seek new sites which will be considered under this Policy. It will apply both to traditional non-food retail parks and food proposals including discount operations.

5.49 If there is a question of potentially significant retail impact, a retail impact assessment will be required. Elsewhere a more general statement will be adequate. Accessibility by a choice of means of transport and considerations of wider travel patterns will be required to be demonstrated in a suitable statement. Consideration of compatibility with nearby uses will ensure the protection of residential amenity and a suitable design and layout. If the site is allocated for some other use in the Plan (for example as a principal housing or employment site), this will take precedence.

5.50 A minimum unit size and restrictions on the range of goods to be sold will ensure that the retail impact of a proposal upon a defined Centre will be controlled. For retail warehousing proposals, goods that would be expected to be found within the defined Centres will be excluded. Generally, conditions will prevent the sale of tobacco, books, electrical goods, pharmaceutical goods, jewellery, silverware, watches, clocks and sports and recreational goods.