

Appendix 9 - Retail and Leisure

Retail and Leisure

- 1) Rickmansworth town centre and the district centres of South Oxhey, Chorleywood and Abbots Langley will remain the focus for retail, leisure activity and other town centre uses.
 - i) Within the primary frontages at ground floor level, as defined on the Policies Map, development will normally be permitted where:
 - Uses retain active frontages at ground floor level and demonstrate a positive contribution to the vitality, viability, balance of services and/or evening economy of the centre within which it is proposed
 - Development is of a scale, type and format that reflects and enhances the role and function of the centre within which it is proposed
 - ii) Within the primary and secondary frontages, the use of upper floors for residential use is supported in principle across all parts of the town centre hierarchy subject to other local planning policies.
 - iii) Within the secondary frontages at ground level, development within Use Class E, Sui Generis uses suited to a town centre, Class F1 and Class F2(b) will normally be permitted.
 - iv) Redevelopment proposals providing managed workspace, flexible workspace accommodation will be encouraged to support small businesses within the defined retail hierarchy.
 - v) The intensification of town centres to provide additional floorspace for main town centre uses is supported in principle subject to impacts on townscape and heritage.
- 2) Local and Neighbourhood Centres, as defined within Appendix X should provide commercial and community uses to meet residents' day to day shopping needs, provide local employment opportunities, and support opportunities for community interaction.
- 3) Retail impact assessments will only be required for proposals of more than 2,500 sq m of (gross) new retail floorspace outside the town centre hierarchy, including proposals for Class E (commercial, business and service) uses that would enable at least 2,500 sq m of (gross) floorspace to be occupied by retail use.

Reasoned Justification

9.1 The NPPF states that policy should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities. Local Plans must define a network and hierarchy of centres that is resilient to economic changes. The policy defines these centres and supports their economic viability.

9.2 The South West Hertfordshire Retail and Leisure Study 2018 sets out an objective assessment of retail and leisure development needs. The study finds a need for an improvement in the evening economy and the standard of shop frontages in Rickmansworth Town Centre. The policy allows for the creation and retaining of active frontages at ground floor level which demonstrate a positive contribution to the vitality, viability, balance of services and/or evening economy of the town centre.

9.3 With regard to convenience (food) floorspace, this equates to a net gain of around 2,400-3,100 square metres by 2036. The target provision over forthcoming five year periods will be broadly as follows:

- a) 1,000-1,300 square metres by 2026
- b) 700-800 square metres from 2026 to 2031
- c) 700-1,000 square metres from 2031 to 2036

9.4 With regard to comparison (non-food) floorspace, the provision of additional floorspace equates to the net gain of around 1,900-2,600 square meters by 2036. This is broadly set out over forthcoming five year periods below:

- a) 300-400 square meters by 2026
- b) 800-1,000 square meters from 2026 to 2031
- c) 800-1,200 square meters from 2031 to 2036

9.5 With regard to the development of restaurants, cafés and bars, the provision of net additional floorspace equates to a net gain of:

- a) 327 square meters by 2036 in Rickmansworth Town Centre
- b) 402 square meters by 2036 in the District and Local Centres

9.6 These targets will be reviewed regularly and amended in light of new evidence in relation to forecast expenditure and population. Proposals that would result in provision over and above these targets will be considered on their merits taking into account their appropriateness in scale and function to the relevant centre.