

Shopping

# SHOPPING

## Introduction

- 7.1 In South Derbyshire, shopping provision is dominated by Swadlincote Town Centre, which provides for a wide range of every-day goods and services. Melbourne performs a similar role, albeit on a much smaller scale. Outside the two district centres, there are small parades of shops at Newhall, Woodville and Church Gresley and in several of the larger villages such as Hatton, Repton and Etwall. However, in many villages, shopping provision is often limited to no more than a post office and/or general store.
- 7.2 For comparison shopping, Burton upon Trent and Derby and the larger, regional centres of Nottingham, Leicester and Birmingham are within convenient travelling distance. Burton upon Trent, like Swadlincote, provides for everyday goods and services. However, as a higher order centre, it has a much larger shopping catchment which takes in Swadlincote and its rural hinterland. The imbalance between overlapping catchment areas necessitates positive measures to maintain the viability of Swadlincote Town Centre and prevent trade loss to its larger neighbour.
- 7.3 Retailing is a major industry of great significance to the economy. It provides jobs and services in the community and there is a complex interaction between retailing and other activities. It is also significant in tourism and leisure activity. PPG6 recognises that town centres provide a mixture of interdependent land uses including leisure facilities and restaurants, entertainment, offices and residential development, all of which should be underpinned by the retail function. The PPG advises that although the planning system should not inhibit commercial competition, it should have regard to the vitality and viability of a town centre as a whole. The scale, type and location of out-of-centre retail developments should not therefore undermine the vitality and viability of those town centres that would otherwise serve the community well.
- 7.4 Over the past decade, major improvements have taken place in the town centre, in accordance with the Swadlincote Town Centre Plan, approved in 1979. The main shopping streets have been pedestrianised, new shops, a market hall and extra car parking provided and the Town Hall refurbished. In August 1990, a conservation area was designated. Additional public car parking was provided during 1993. Following expression of concern about the number of vehicles using the pedestrianised area, revised Traffic Orders have been implemented together with a phased upgrading of the street furniture in the town centre. Most recently, long and short stay spaces have been designated in public car parks to ensure adequate parking is available for shoppers and contribute to enabling the continued vitality and viability of the town centre.
- 7.5 At present, the shopping centre is concentrated along High Street, Market Street, Midland Road, West Street and off Civic Way. Some 25 shops (41% of total floorspace) sell food, drink and related items, with the remaining 41 shops selling durable goods. The shops are mainly small in character, with a relatively high proportion of independent retailers. In common with other centres, the proportion of non-retail uses (such as Banks and Building Societies, Travel Agents, Estate Agents, Cafes, etc.) has increased in recent years and now accounts for about 1 in 4 premises.
- 7.6 Since 1986, gross retail floorspace has increased from 13,475 sq.m. to 22,150 sq.m. (October 1994), including a 3,700 sq.m. Sainsburys supermarket opened Spring 1994. There were just 8 vacant properties in the town centre. This would suggest that with the improvements that have been made to the shopping environment, Swadlincote has maintained (if not improved) its position relative to Burton upon Trent. However, continued success will be dependant upon further improvements to shopping facilities, car parking, accessibility and the environment. Although several key sites have already been

## SHOPPING

developed, there are a number of significant development opportunities within or immediately on the edge of the centre. The Local Plan must adopt a flexible approach to enable a range of development proposals (which cannot necessarily be foreseen at this stage) to come forward. It will be necessary, however, in accordance with the revised PPG13, to ensure that development is readily accessible by foot from the centre and can be served by a variety of means of transport.

- 7.7 Melbourne is an attractive, historic village with about 30 shops providing 2,075m<sup>2</sup> gross retail floorspace. A new car park off Derby Road was opened by the Council in 1991 and traffic management measures have been implemented to improve the quality of the shopping environment. Further measures are needed, however, to reinforce Melbourne's position as a district centre serving a large rural catchment. Such measures will be required to respect the scale and character of this important conservation area and enhance its role as a visitor/tourist centre.
- 7.8 Since the 1960's, retailing has undergone enormous changes. This period has witnessed the emergence of large food stores and hyper-markets, followed by non-food retail warehouses and most recently, larger, out-of-centre sub-regional and regional centres. The latter are usually located close to a motorway junction. To date, there have been no applications for major out-of-centre shopping developments in the district. Although recent ministerial statements suggest town centres and edge-of-centre locations are likely to be looked upon more favourably than traffic-generating out-of-centre proposals, pressure for this form of development is likely to grow, especially along the A50 Stoke-Derby Link Road, in the A38 corridor and on the fringes of Derby and Burton upon Trent. There may also be pressure for smaller, retail warehouse developments on industrial estates.
- 7.9 Finally, new residential development on the scale proposed may generate a requirement for local shopping facilities, which PPG13 advises should be allocated within large new developments, wherever feasible. A policy is required to permit proposals for small shops to come forward which have no adverse effect upon the environment or lead to parking problems.

### Derbyshire Structure Plan

- 7.10 In the Structure Plan, priority is given to improving and strengthening existing centres, which in the case of South Derbyshire includes Swadlincote and Melbourne. Where suitable land is not available in existing centres, adjacent sites may be acceptable. Where neither possibility is available, out-of-centre locations will be considered, with preference normally being given to the consolidation of an existing out-of-centre shopping location rather than the establishment of new facilities on green field sites.

### Objectives of the Local Plan

- 7.11 The objectives of the Local Plan are:-
- (i) To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of Swadlincote and Melbourne in their role as district shopping centres;
  - (ii) To meet the needs of pedestrians and disabled people in the provision of new shopping development;
  - (iii) To prevent the loss of industrial land;
  - (iv) To meet local shopping needs particularly those arising from new developments.

## SHOPPING

### SHOPPING POLICY 1 : EXISTING SHOPPING CENTRES

- 7.12 A. NEW SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT WITHIN SWADLINCOTE AND MELBOURNE SHOPPING CENTRES WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:-
- (i) IT IS OF A SCALE AND CHARACTER COMPATIBLE WITH THAT OF THE CENTRE; AND,
  - (ii) IT IS ACCEPTABLE IN TERMS OF TRAFFIC GENERATION AND CAR PARKING PROVISION.
- B. NEW SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO SWADLINCOTE SHOPPING CENTRE WILL BE PERMITTED, PROVIDED THAT:-
- (i) IT IS OF A SCALE AND CHARACTER COMPATIBLE WITH THAT OF THE CENTRE;
  - (ii) IT IS ACCEPTABLE IN TERMS OF TRAFFIC GENERATION AND CAR PARKING PROVISION;
  - (iii) THE DEVELOPMENT CANNOT BE ACCOMMODATED WITHIN THAT CENTRE;
  - (iv) THE SITE IS NOT REQUIRED FOR INDUSTRIAL OR BUSINESS USE, AND
  - (v) THE DEVELOPMENT HAS ACCEPTABLE LINKS FOR PEDESTRIANS AND DISABLED PEOPLE TO THAT CENTRE, OR SUCH LINKS WILL BE PROVIDED.

#### Justification

- 7.13 The existing pattern of shopping in the District establishes Swadlincote and Melbourne as existing shopping centres where new shopping development should be directed in order to maintain and improve the range of goods and services offered. Both centres are served by bus services.
- 7.14 Considerable public and private funds have been enlisted in maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of these centres which provide a significant number of jobs in retailing. It is important that these investments should be consolidated by further improvements and developments.
- 7.15 It is recognised that modern retail developments require large sites and it may not be possible to accommodate new retailing within established centres. In Swadlincote sites immediately adjacent to the existing shopping centre represent an acceptable method of accommodating new shopping development, providing that satisfactory links for pedestrians and disabled people to the centre are achieved. The policy above provides the framework for retailing opportunities to come forward.
- 7.16 Improvements in Swadlincote town centre in recent years have maintained the viability of the town centre and a review of the Traffic Orders has been undertaken in relation to the pedestrianised streets. In Melbourne, additional car-parking has been provided.

## SHOPPING

### Implementation

- 7.17 By the use of development control powers and by reference to supplementary planning guidance.

### SHOPPING POLICY 2 : OUT OF TOWN SHOPPING

- 7.18 A. NEW SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT IN TOWN CENTRES WILL BE PREFERRED TO THAT IN OTHER LOCATIONS. NEW SHOPPING IN OUT-OF-CENTRE LOCATIONS WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THAT:
- (i) THE DEVELOPMENT CANNOT BE ACCOMMODATED WITHIN OR IMMEDIATELY ADJACENT TO AN EXISTING MAJOR CENTRE;
  - (ii) THE SCALE AND NATURE OF THE DEVELOPMENT, EITHER INDIVIDUALLY OR CUMULATIVELY, IS NOT SUCH AS TO AFFECT SERIOUSLY THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF ANY EXISTING NEARBY MAJOR CENTRE AS A WHOLE;
  - (iii) THE SITE IS NOT REQUIRED FOR INDUSTRIAL OR BUSINESS USES;
  - (iv) THE DEVELOPMENT IS NOT AN INTRUSION INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE, AND FEATURES OF NATURAL HISTORY OR HERITAGE IMPORTANCE ARE RETAINED WHEREVER POSSIBLE;
  - (v) THE DEVELOPMENT IS ACCEPTABLE ON TRAFFIC/HIGHWAY AND AMENITY GROUNDS AND HAS ADEQUATE CAR PARKING PROVISION;
  - (vi) THE SITE CAN BE ADEQUATELY SERVED BY PUBLIC TRANSPORT.
- B. ANY DEVELOPMENT WHICH MEETS THE ABOVE CRITERIA WILL BE PERMITTED IN OUT-OF-CENTRE LOCATIONS WHERE IT CONSOLIDATES EXISTING OUT-OF-CENTRE SHOPPING.
- C. NEW SHOPPING DEVELOPMENT ON INDUSTRIAL ESTATES WILL NOT BE PERMITTED."

### Justification

- 7.19 Structure Plan Shopping Policy 4, recognises that it may not be possible to accommodate new retailing either within or adjacent to existing major centres. Consolidation of existing out-of-centre locations is preferred to the establishment of a new out-of-centre locations. Particular attention will be paid to the accessibility of proposed sites by public transport services operating in rural as well as urban parts of the district. The above proposal defines criteria to ensure that the development does not have other adverse effects for example on the countryside. The impact on the town centres will be judged by:
- (i) the likely impact on private sector investment to safeguard the viability of the centre;
  - (ii) the effect on the strategy to direct shopping to Swadlincote and Melbourne town centres and maintain and improve the range of goods and services there;

## SHOPPING

- (iii) changes to the quality and attractiveness of the town centres;
- (iv) changes to the physical condition of town centres;
- (v) changes to the range of services the centres will continue to provide;
- (vi) likely increases in the number of vacant properties within the centres."

The proposal also restricts retailing development on industrial estates because of the loss of industrial land.

### Implementation

- 7.20 By the use of development control powers.

### SHOPPING POLICY 3 : LOCAL SHOPPING

- 7.21 PROPOSALS FOR SMALL SHOPS WILL BE PERMITTED PROVIDED THEY DO NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITIES OF NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES AND ADEQUATE ACCESS, CAR PARKING AND SERVICING FACILITIES ARE PROVIDED.

### Justification

- 7.22 Local shopping facilities in the villages and communities of the Swadlincote urban area (Church Gresley, Midway, Newhall and Woodville) provide a valuable service to the immediate population. They serve local needs and are convenient for those sections of the community without access to a car. Nevertheless they do attract car-borne customers and it is essential that adequate provision should be made for car parking. In villages particularly, it is recognised that village shops provide an important focus for the community.

### Implementation

- 7.23 By the use of development control powers.