



**South
Derbyshire**
District Council
Planning Services



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

South Derbyshire Local Development Framework

LDF

core
strategy

South Derbyshire Local
Development Framework
(LDF)

Core Strategy Topic Paper

HOUSING
ECONOMY

Retail & Leisure

TRANSPORT
INFRASTRUCTURE
CLIMATE CHANGE & RENEWABLE ENERGY
WATER & FLOODING
BUILT ENVIRONMENT
SPATIAL VISION & STRATEGY



January 2010

South Derbyshire Changing for the better

Derby Housing Market Area Core Strategies

Retail and Leisure Topic Paper

1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF TOPIC PAPER

- 1.1 This topic paper is number three of a set of nine. The topic papers are:
1. Housing
 2. Economy
 3. Retail and Leisure
 4. Transport
 5. Infrastructure
 6. Climate Change and Renewable Energy
 7. Water and Flooding
 8. Built Environment
 9. Spatial Vision and Strategy
- 1.2 The topic papers have been prepared to support the development of options for consultation as part of the preparation of the Core Strategy. The topic papers bring together relevant policies, evidence base and previous consultations that need to inform the Core Strategy. More information about the Core Strategy evidence base can be found online at: www.south-derbys.gov.uk
- 1.3 The topic papers have been prepared in collaboration with Amber Valley and Derby City who are also developing Core Strategies. The topic papers therefore include information and analysis common to the Derby Housing Market Area as well as content that is specific to South Derbyshire.
- 1.4 Also supporting the preparation of the Core Strategy is the Sustainability Appraisal. An initial Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report was published in July 2008 and is available online at www.south-derbys.gov.uk. The key sustainability implications of the Core Strategy will be considered more fully as the Core Strategy progresses.
- 1.5 Finally, a series of Area Profiles have been produced. The profiles are ward based but in some cases profiles are made up from a number of aggregated ward areas which share similar characteristics. The Area Profiles can be viewed online at: www.south-derbys.gov.uk.
- 1.6 This Topic Paper considers how the future growth of retailing and leisure development in the Derby HMA should be planned and coordinated up to 2026, particularly in terms of the need for such development in the future and its location, scale and type. Retail and leisure development is an important part of the economy of the HMA, will be strongly influenced by the future scale and location of new housing growth in the HMA and the location of new transport infrastructure. This paper should therefore be read in conjunction with the Economy, Housing and Transport Topic Papers.

2.0 DERBY HOUSING MARKET AREA CONTEXT

2.1 The Derby HMA comprises the three local authority administrative areas of Amber Valley Borough, Derby City and South Derbyshire District. Retail and leisure facilities within the HMA are primarily located in the sub-regional shopping centre of Derby city centre; the four market towns of Alfreton, Belper, Heanor and Ripley in Amber Valley Borough; and the market town of Swadlincote in South Derbyshire District. A number of other purpose built out-of-centre retail and leisure parks and other stand alone supermarkets, retail warehouses and leisure facilities such as cinemas, bowling alleys etc, add to the overall level of retail and leisure provision in the HMA. Local shopping provision is provided by 13 smaller suburban district shopping centres around Derby City and many smaller district and local centres in Amber Valley and South Derbyshire.

2.2 Derby city centre serves a wide catchment area for retail and leisure activities for both the population of the City itself and the wider area north of the City into Amber Valley Borough and south of the City into South Derbyshire. The catchment area also extends well beyond the boundaries of the HMA, particularly the rural areas to the northwest and west of the City into Derbyshire Dales and East Staffordshire. The recent completion of the Westfield Centre in the City centre has added considerably to the amount of shopping and leisure floorspace in the City. Retail and leisure development in recent years in the other main towns of Alfreton, Belper, Heanor, Ripley and Swadlincote has been of a more modest scale, mainly related to new supermarket and / or retail warehouse developments within or on the edge of these centres.

2.3 Outside the HMA, Nottingham city centre has a major influence on shopping and leisure patterns in the Derby HMA, particularly on the population of Derby City, for which it provides major competition for the city centre particularly for comparison goods shopping, and also for much of Amber Valley Borough, particularly for the population to the east of the Borough. Shopping patterns in South Derbyshire, particularly to the south of the District are influenced more by the nearby sub-regional centre of Burton on Trent and regional centre of Birmingham beyond.

2.4 The retail and leisure sector contributes considerably to the economy of the HMA, accounting for high levels of expenditure by its population and turnover by its businesses. The sector also provides thousands of jobs. The Economy Topic Paper provides further detail on the influence of retail and leisure on the wider economy of the HMA.

3.0 EXISTING NATIONAL, REGIONAL, SUB-REGIONAL AND LOCAL POLICIES

National Policies

3.1 PPS4 'Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth' was published at the end of 2009. PPS4 replaced both PPG4 and PPS6 and represents the main document reflecting national policy on the economy. This also replaced substantial elements of PPS7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas.

- 3.2 PPS4 states that economic development includes all development within the 'B' Use Classes (offices, general industry and storage and distribution), public and community uses and 'main town centre' uses including retail, leisure, offices, arts, cultural and tourism development. The policy also applies to any development which provides employment opportunities, generates wealth or produces or generates an economic output or product. The PPS also has significant implications for the specifics of retail and leisure and the relevant Topic Paper looks in more detail at certain elements of the statement.
- 3.3 The Government's overarching objective is sustainable economic growth. This means growth that can be sustained and is within environmental limits, but which also enhances environmental and social welfare and avoids greater extremes in future economic cycles. To achieve this, planning should build prosperous communities, reduce the gap in economic growth rates, promoting regeneration and tackling deprivation, deliver more sustainable patterns of development, reduce the need to travel and respond to climate change.
- 3.4 The promotion of town centre vitality and viability remains in place from earlier policy documents, with the Government expecting new economic growth to be focussed into existing centres with the aim of offering a wide range of services to communities in attractive and safe environments. Problems of poor access to facilities should be remedied. Enhanced consumer choice through the provision of innovative and efficient shopping, leisure, tourism and local services, which allow a genuine choice to meet the needs of the entire community.
- 3.5 The PPS includes nine 'plan making' policies (plus a further ten on monitoring and development management). These are summarised below:
- 3.6 Policy EC1 (Using Evidence to Plan Positively) requires local authorities to assess the detailed need for land or floorspace for economic development, identify any deficiencies, assess the existing and future supply of land available for economic development and assess the capacity of existing centres to accommodate new town centre development. Existing allocations should be reassessed against policies in the PPS, particularly where they are for single or restricted uses.
- 3.7 Policy EC2 (Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth) sets out the detailed criteria for what should be included within a local authority's development plan. This includes setting out a clear economic vision and strategy and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth
- 3.8 Policy EC3 (Planning for Centres) states that local authorities should set out a strategy for the management and growth of centres. This should include flexible policies for centres, which are able to respond to changing economic characteristics and encourage high-density development, accessible by alternatives to the car. A network and hierarchy of centres should be defined based on a range of criteria.

- 3.9 Policy EC4 (Planning for consumer choice and promoting competitive town centres) states that local authorities should promote competitive town centre environments. While this focuses on providing for a mix shops and services, it does relate to all town centre uses including office development.
- 3.10 Policy EC5 (Site selection and land assembly for main town centre uses) states that local authorities should identify an appropriate range of sites to accommodate the identified need (in terms of this topic, this would mainly relate to office and tourism facilities). This should take account of the sequential approach and impact. Sites which best serve the needs of deprived areas should be given preference when considered against alternatives with similar location characteristics.
- 3.11 Policy EC6 (Planning for Economic Development in Rural Areas) states that the countryside should be protected for the sake of its character and beauty. It sets out where development should be focused in rural areas, where it should be restricted and the types of development that are appropriate in rural areas.
- 3.12 Policy EC7 (Planning for Tourism in Rural Areas) states that local authorities should support sustainable rural tourism and beneficial leisure developments. It sets out where in the countryside tourism development should be located, the most appropriate types of tourism development for rural areas and the broad requirements that should be considered for tourism development in rural areas.
- 3.13 Policy EC8 (Car Parking for Non-Residential Development) replaces elements of PPG13 in relation to non-residential parking standards. This states that local authorities should set maximum parking standards, taking into account a number of criteria. These include taking account of the needs of different business sizes and types and major employers and ensuring that there are adequate levels of parking to encourage investment and maintain town centre viability.
- 3.14 In addition to the 'plan making' policies, there are also a number of 'development management' policies. These essentially set out how planning applications for 'main town centre uses' should be determined, including setting out revised sequential and impact tests.
- 3.15 Whether any further studies will be required as a result of this PPS will be considered in the near future.
- 3.16 The Competition Commission (CC) is also currently carrying out an investigation into the Government's proposals to create a 'competition test' for grocery retailing planning applications. The Government has been concerned about the dominance and monopoly of individual large supermarket operators in many catchment areas of the country and its impact on consumer choice and price and how it can be a barrier to new operators entering the market. Tesco challenged the lawfulness of the proposals for the competition test and this was upheld at appeal by Competition Appeal Tribunal in March 2009.

3.17 Tribunal then referred the matter back to the CC for further consideration. The CC is expected to make its final judgement on proposals for the test in October 2009 but its provisional decision, which was published in July 2009, concludes that the competition test should be introduced. Key principles of the test are that new entrants to the local area would pass the test and that any existing grocery company wishing to expand or build a new store, would pass the test only if the operator would have less than a 60% share of total grocery sales in the local area.

Regional and Sub-Regional Policies

3.18 The East Midlands Regional Plan (RSS8) approved in March 2009 provides the broad development strategy for the East Midlands up to 2026. It contains topic based policies (including those which relate to the retail and leisure) and sub-regional strategies (including the Three Cities Sub-area which includes the Derby HMA).

3.19 In relation to retail and leisure, the Regional Plan (Policy 22) requires local authorities, the East Midlands Development Agency (emda), and Sub-Regional Strategic Partnerships to work together on a sub-area basis to promote the vitality and viability of existing centres, including those in rural towns. Where town centres are under-performing, action should be taken to promote investment through design led initiatives and the development and implementation of town centres strategies. In particular, Local Authorities are expected to:

- Within town centres, bring forward retail, office, residential and leisure development opportunities, and any other town centre functions as set out in PPS6 (replaced by PPS4), based on identified need;
- Prevent the development or expansion of additional regional-scale out-of-town retail and leisure floorspace; and
- Monitor changes in retail floorspace on a regular basis.

3.20 Other policies in the Plan (Policy 23), require local authorities, emda and Sub-Regional Strategic Partnerships to work together to ensure that proposals for new large casinos benefit key regeneration areas such as the Principal Urban Areas and Sub-Regional Centres that exhibit high and concentrated levels of deprivation and are subject to a full assessment of their social, economic and environmental impacts.

3.21 In terms of locational guidance, the Regional Plan (Policy Three Cities SRS4) recognises that Derby city centre (along with Nottingham and Leicester) serves a wide catchment area extending well beyond the Three Cities Sub-Area boundaries for both shopping and service functions. The Plan notes that the city centre has significant regeneration and development proposals, which will enhance the range of facilities offered. In order to make best use of these facilities and the City's high levels of accessibility, the Plan encourages the enhancement of the regional role of the City. The Plan also recognises that there is potential for complementary growth in the surrounding centres to enhance their vitality and viability, retain a higher proportion of local income and reduce pressure on strategic transport infrastructure.

East Midlands Regional Plan Partial Review

- 3.22 Work on a Partial Review of the Regional Plan is currently in progress, However, retail and leisure issues are not proposed to be subject to Partial Review but housing provision is subject to the Review and is likely to have a significant impact on the need for and distribution of new retail and leisure development in the HMA up to 2031.

Derbyshire Sustainable Community Strategy 2006-2009

- 3.23 The Derbyshire Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) sets out a process for joint action and working between many public, private and voluntary organisations on key issues affecting people of the County such as tackling crime, improving health and protecting the environment. The vision of the Community Strategy is:

- 3.24 'For everyone in Derbyshire to enjoy a good quality of life, both now and in the future'.

- 3.25 In terms of retail and leisure, the Strategy indicates that people in the County consider that access to life's essentials such as local shops and services is important to their quality of life and access to these facilities is more likely to make neighbourhoods good places to live. It is important that everyone has equality of access to life opportunities and local services. The main priorities identified in the Strategy are therefore to increase economic prosperity and ensure people have fair access to local services and facilities. To achieve these priorities, the Strategy aims to minimise the need to travel by influencing the location of new and relocated facilities and ensure access by travel modes other than the car; identify and tackle barriers that people face in accessing jobs and services; and increase economic prosperity in rural areas.

Derbyshire Local Area Agreement 2008-2011

- 3.26 The Derbyshire Local Area Agreement (LAA) contains a range of improvement targets which are based on local and national outcomes. It is negotiated by the County Council on behalf of the Derbyshire Partnership Forum (DPF) and the Government Office for the East Midlands on behalf of central government.

- 3.27 The agreement is one part of the Delivery Plan that the DPF is using to ensure that the priorities contained in the Derbyshire Community Strategy are acted on and real improvements delivered. The LAA identifies a set of priorities based on 35 national indicators. Key priorities identified are to improve access to local services and facilities and to develop the local economy and increase economic productivity.

South Derbyshire Local Policies

Adopted South Derbyshire Local Plan (1998)

- 3.28 The adopted South Derbyshire Local Plan (1998) contains numerous policies, which relate to the provision of retail and leisure facilities within the District.

The related policies have their own individual aims, however, the main goals, which are apparent throughout the relevant section, are:

- Ensuring that retail development is located, where possible, within the existing retail centres and respects the retail hierarchy;
- Ensuring that new retail and leisure developments do not lead to unsuitable traffic issues and that car parking provision is acceptable;
- Ensuring that new retail and leisure developments have good access for pedestrians and disabled people; and
- Ensuring that new retail developments do not compromise the character of South Derbyshire by ensuring that new development is of an appropriate scale and is of a high quality design.

Sustainable Community Strategy for South Derbyshire 2009-2029

3.29 The SCS 2009-2029 was adopted in June 2009 and sets out the vision and direction for the economic, social and environmental well being of South Derbyshire to 2029. The Strategy has an overall vision of: ‘... a dynamic South Derbyshire, able to seize opportunities to develop successful communities, whilst respecting and enhancing the varied character and environment of our fast growing District.’

3.30 In order to achieve this overall vision there are five key themes and priorities for action. The themes are:

- Healthier communities;
- Safer communities;
- Vibrant communities;
- Sustainable development; and
- Children and young people.

3.31 Within ‘Sustainable development’, there is the aim of achieving ‘growth in visitor spend’ and this can be assisted by improving the retail and leisure offerings in the District.

Local Area Agreement Indicators

3.32 In the longer term, the LDF Core Strategy will be crucial in delivering longer-term goals set out in the SCS. In the short-term, there are a number of LAA priorities. Of these priorities, the most relevant to this topic paper are: improving and increasing access to local services and facilities (National Indicator 175 - Aiming for a high level of accessibility to essential services), and developing the local economy and increasing economic productivity (National Indicator 172 – 99.8% of Regional level of VAT registered business’ showing growth).

Summary of National, Regional and Local Policy

- Retail and leisure contributes significantly to overall economic prosperity;
- Local Authorities should adopt a plan-led approach to retail and leisure development;
- Retail and leisure development should be focused in existing centres;
- Primary shopping frontages should contain a high proportion of retail uses, whilst secondary shopping frontages;
- Consumer choice should be enhanced through provision of a range of shops and services;
- Accessibility should be improved and a range of transportation methods should be available to reach new development;
- There should be equality of access to life opportunities and local services across the District;
- Rural area should not be neglected and provision should be made to ensure that there is adequate provision in all areas;
- Ensure that there is adequate transport and parking capacity to meet new retail and leisure development; and
- Ensure that the character of South Derbyshire is preserved.

4.0 EVIDENCE BASE / STUDIES

Regional Town Centres Study for the East Midlands (DTZ 2003)

- 4.1 The Regional Town Centres Study was commissioned by the East Midlands Regional Assembly (EMRA) to feed into the review of RPG8 and inform the delivery of the Regional Economic Strategy. It was published in March 2003 by consultants DTZ Pieda to identify the current hierarchy/network of larger town centres in the East Midlands and provide guidance for establishing policies to support the role of lower order centres. The Study also assessed the scale of need for major new retail and leisure developments on a Sub-Area basis.
- 4.2 For the Three Cities Sub-Area which includes Derby and Swadlincote, the study estimated that there was capacity for 20,800 sq m net sales area of new comparison goods floorspace by 2005, but that a surplus of floorspace emerged in 2006, 2007 and 2008 of about 33,900 sq m as development in the pipeline came on stream. Thereafter the market is forecast to develop such that by 2010 there is likely to be capacity for 33,400 sq m of new comparison goods floorspace and 69,400 sq m by 2012.
- 4.3 For the Northern Sub-Area, which includes Alfreton, Belper, Heanor and Ripley, the study estimated that by 2006, there would be capacity for 15,300

sq m of new floorspace and this would increase up to 32,000 sq m by 2010 and 41,000 sq m by 2012.

- 4.4 The report concludes that overall there is no clear hierarchy justification for preferential treatment of major town centres in the Region and that there are clear advantages in adopting a sub-regional approach based on the five sub-areas identified in Regional Planning Guidance. Within these sub-regions, the study recommends that development strategies should seek to maximise 'complementarity' between town centres wherever possible and identify appropriate roles for the range of town and district centres and smaller rural centres in each area. In assessing the need for new floorspace, the study recommends that quantitative forecasts of capacity should be supplemented by a holistic approach that assesses each centre's role, environmental qualities, vision and strategies. Forecasts of floorspace capacity in the study for each sub-area are only one of the indicators of the need for new development which authorities should consider in deciding their planning policies.
- 4.5 Within each sub-area, the study recommends a framework, which should be applied to planning for new development. For the Three Cities Sub-Area, it is recommended that Derby (Nottingham and Leicester) are the largest centres and should be encouraged to develop their individual roles for the Region. Complementary visions and strategies should be developed for the centres wherever possible. But it is likely that their retail functions will remain competitive for the foreseeable future. There is potential for up to 100,000 sq m of new comparison goods retail floorspace by 2012. This needs to be monitored against changes to the local economy and particularly against expenditure.
- 4.6 For the Northern Sub-Area, the recommended framework recognises that the main town centres are not currently performing well. Restructuring of the local economy is taking place and the centres need time to be able to benefit from new investment. There is potential for up to 59,000 sq m of comparison goods floorspace by 2012.

East Midlands Revised Retail Capacity Assessment (DTZ 2005)

- 4.7 The DTZ study of 2003 outlined above was updated by the company in 2005. The revised study was commissioned by EMRA to build on the 2003 study and provide projections for retail capacity up to 2016 and 2026 using more up to date data and other new evidence such as the National Survey of Local Shopping Patterns (NSLSP). The study provides details of the catchment areas of the main centres including Derby, based on the NSLSP. The catchment area defined for Derby highlights the effect of competing towns. The main core and secondary catchment areas cover the administrative area of the City and extend to the north into Amber Valley, northwest into much of Derbyshire Dales and the south into the northern part of South Derbyshire. This is due to the competition of both Nottingham and Leicester to the east and southeast. The city attracts shoppers from the Peak sub-region due to the lack of a significantly large retail centre within the region.

- 4.8 The revised capacity analysis provides projections based on two growth scenarios (basically one high and one low). For the Three Cities Sub-Area, which includes Derby and Swadlincote, the study projects that by 2016 there would be a residual spend of between £1,898 m and £2,401 m, equivalent to an additional 94,200 sq m to 161,400 sq m of floorspace. The forecast takes into account the fact that there was a substantial amount of retail development in the pipeline at that time (158,708 sq m) such as the Westfield Centre in Derby, which was deducted from the residual capacity forecast. The study concludes that this sub-area represents the 'retail power house' in terms of the quantum of comparison goods floorspace and the key issue for the future planning of the area was whether growth should continue to be directed to the larger centres such as Derby, Nottingham and Leicester, or to smaller centres with a view to attaining a more balanced network of larger and smaller centres as per PPS4.
- 4.9 For the Northern Sub-Area, the study forecasts that there would be a residual spend of between £475m and £609m by 2016 equivalent to an additional 53,600 sq m to 71,400 sq m of new comparison goods floorspace. The main centres identified were Mansfield, Chesterfield, Sutton in Ashfield and Newark. The study concludes that these centres are likely to dominate their position and where potentially any planned growth may occur. Some 9,742 sq m of commitments were identified at that time. The constituent authorities were therefore required to consider which centres needed to have priority for future investment.
- 4.10 Although the revised study only makes forecasts for sub-areas up to 2026, in broad terms it forecasts that for the Region as a whole there would be likely to be a residual spend of £13.5bn by 2026 equivalent to between 1.2 m and 2.0 m sq m of new comparison goods floorspace. The study considers that this could double the existing floorspace stock in the main town centres of the Region.

South Derbyshire Local Studies

Local Development Framework Annual Monitoring Report, December 2009

- 4.11 The latest AMR reports on the period April 2008 – March 2009. In terms of retail and leisure development, it reports that there was one application to convert a retail unit to another use in the monitoring year, there has been further applications relating to this since the end of the monitoring year. In addition to the information published in the AMR it has also become clear that the amount of vacant frontage in Swadlincote town centre has increased.

Swadlincote Town Centre: A Vision and Strategy - Five Years On (2005)

- 4.12 The monitoring Report demonstrates that significant progress has been made in implementing the range of measures and actions identified in the original Vision and Strategy document in February 2001 and other developments and initiatives have occurred. Most importantly, real improvements to the quality and role of the town centre can be seen on the ground.

4.13 It is clear that regeneration efforts must continue and that further work will be required. The most pressing actions now need to be implementation of the major long term elements identified in the Action Plan, such as repaving and the redevelopment of town centre sites in order to improve the physical quality of the centre and extend its role in terms of shopping, commercial and leisure opportunities.

Swadlincote Town Centre Masterplan: Public Realm Improvements

4.14 The approved Swadlincote Town Centre Masterplan contains a set of environmental improvements mostly in the public realm covering all of Swadlincote town centre. The proposals were split into areas suitable for phased implementation. The Masterplan was prepared following consultation with key stakeholder groups including members and a public exhibition in March 2006. A second public exhibition was held in February 2009.

4.15 The first phase of implementation focused on improvements to the eastern approach to the town. The package of improvements, completed in March 2008, comprised the resurfacing and naming of three pedestrian routes between the East End car park and High Street, a new traditionally detailed boundary retaining wall and tree planting along Civic Way and the resurfacing of Church Street incorporating granite kerbs and channel blocks.

4.16 Phase 2 is more ambitious in scope and applications have been made for repaving and other improvements to 1) The Delph, 2) West Street and 3) Ernest Hall Way. Tackling The Delph and West Street early will help to stamp a high quality identity on two important spaces and signal very clearly that the regeneration process is firmly under way. Tackling Ernest Hall Way will improve accessibility to the Morrisons site and the future retail site to the south.

4.17 The works, which will be most relevant to Swadlincote's retailers, will include:

- De-cluttering the streets, achieving better segregation between pedestrians and vehicles and facilitating the enforcement of parking and other traffic restrictions;
- Creating a flexible space in the town centre to host various events and the potential future expansion of the market;
- Improving access for all users;
- Creating more attractive and accessible links between the town centre and Ernest Hall Way;
- Creating a better setting for the entrance to the Town Hall whilst accommodating the continuation of the on street market and other events; and
- Carrying out any necessary improvements to surface water drainage.

Swadlincote Retail and Leisure Study (2005)

- 4.18 Donaldsons were appointed to carry out a Retail and Leisure Study in Swadlincote in 2005. They commented that Swadlincote is a small town, which performs several distinctive roles, all of which are interrelated:
- It is the administrative centre of the South Derbyshire District, serving an important role as the focal point, in local government terms, for residents of the area;
 - It provides essential shopping facilities (both food and non-food) and services for its residents and those located within a relatively small catchment area;
 - It is a centre for learning; and
 - It is a centre for leisure, both for eating and drinking (in a limited way) and for sporting activities.
- 4.19 Despite these roles, it was found that, in retail terms, its market share of expenditure generated by the catchment population was disappointingly low. It was found that Swadlincote lacks the range of comparison outlets necessary to increase its market share in this sector. It also lacks a wide range of eating facilities. Overall, the evening economy is undeveloped and the leisure base of the town centre would benefit from being broadened.
- 4.20 Other observations, which were passed on Swadlincote town centre included:
- The need for additional floorspace, capable of accommodating sectors, which are currently under-represented;
 - The lack of vacancies in the town centre, demonstrating no lack of demand, although this is predominantly from the independent sector and recent years have seen an increase in the number of service outlets and discount and charity shops;
 - Rental values are low and do not appear to have risen for some years;
 - Whilst there is limited demand from mainstream retailers, there are also few units within the town centre capable of satisfying their requirements - particularly so in the case of the bulky goods sector; and
 - Swadlincote Town Centre provides a pleasant and accessible shopping environment. Like all towns however, it is not without problem areas, which would benefit from enhancement.
- 4.21 In order to tackle the issues, Donaldsons made several recommendations:
- Further survey work should be done into the feasibility of known town centre sites;
 - The leisure base should be broadened, particularly in terms of the quantity and range of places to eat and drink;
 - The Council should consider identifying a “cultural area” in the town centre where such uses will be encouraged;
 - Swadlincote’s market would benefit from improvement and consideration should be given to the possibility of expanding the outdoor facility and to the potential redevelopment of the market hall; and

- The Council should regard favourably any proposals which are likely to broaden the choice of goods on offer, which are well located in relation to the town centre core and which will bring additional benefits by attracting new customers (or more frequent visits of existing customers) into Swadlincote.

South Derbyshire Economic Development Strategy (2008-12)

- 4.22 The Strategy identifies the economic strengths and weaknesses affecting the District. The most relevant strengths to this topic include:
- Significant development sites within the town centre with potential for retail, leisure, office and other business uses; and
 - The arrival of Morrisons supermarket as first major investment in the town centre in some years, including extensive additional free parking in the town centre.
- 4.23 The most relevant weaknesses to this topic include:
- The poor quality of the town centre and market, together with the public realm in some other areas; and
 - A poor mix of retail provision in town centre, including the market, with an emphasis on convenience shopping and a lack of national multiples.
- 4.24 Following this, the Strategy sets out a series of “ambitions” for the District. The most relevant of these is ambition 7, which is ‘Continuing the revival of Swadlincote town centre as a service centre and focus for the community and visitors’.
- 4.25 The Strategy states that the rationale for this ambition comes from the town centre suffering a long period of decline and being overshadowed by neighbouring centres. The Strategy believes that there is scope for significant retail, leisure, office and residential provision with substantial sites available both within and adjacent to the town centre. Similarly, there is potential to recapture spending that is currently ‘leaking’ to neighbouring centres, through promoting support for the town centre and local businesses.
- 4.26 The indicative actions for this ambition include:
- Pursue the phased implementation of the town centre masterplan for the improvement of the public realm;
 - Explore the potential for a cultural quarter based upon West Street;
 - Promote private sector investment, including the development of the evening economy based upon new leisure uses and food and drink outlets;
 - Work with businesses to improve their vitality and the profile and perceptions of the town centre;
 - Support the use of the town centre as a location for markets and events;
 - Maintain high standards of cleanliness, accessibility and free parking – a key advantage over neighbouring centres; and
 - Provide grants to encourage the improvement of shop fronts and the external appearance of buildings within the Conservation Area.

The National Forest Strategy 2004 - 2014

- 4.27 The National Forest Strategy (2004-2014) recognises that the Forest's towns and larger villages are where the majority of local residents live and that they are important in terms of the impression which they give to visitors as they attract visitors to use local services, find tourist information and to look for accommodation and restaurants. It states that 'Action RE4' is to '... encourage town centre improvement and management programmes which support tourism development and offer opportunities to promote and market the Forest'.

Data Gaps:

- 4.28 Consideration is being given to the commissioning of a Retail Capacity Study for South Derbyshire (remainder of the District outside Swadlincote) and Health Check study of main South Derbyshire centres.

Summary of evidence base findings

- Within the 'Three Cities sub-area' there is estimated to be capacity for between 69,400 sq m and 100,000 sq m of comparison goods floorspace by 2012;
- Within the 'Three Cities sub-area' there is estimated to be capacity for between £1,898m and £2,401m residual spend by 2016;
- Efforts to regenerate Swadlincote town centre should continue and further work will be required in the future;
- Swadlincote provides essential services and shopping facilities for residents in the catchment area;
- The evening economy in Swadlincote is undeveloped and the leisure base is considered to be too narrow;
- There are few units which meet the needs of mainstream retailers in Swadlincote town centre;
- Rental values in Swadlincote town centre are low and have not risen for some time; and
- Spending which currently 'leaks' from Swadlincote into other centres and neighbouring Districts could be recaptured through growth within Swadlincote town centre.

5.0 SOUTH DERBYSHIRE OUTCOMES OF PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The main messages which came through from the LDF Core Strategy Issues and Ideas consultation for South Derbyshire are summarised below:

Defined areas

- 5.2 It was highlighted through consultation that there were two ideas which people felt should be incorporated into the LDF process to provide clarity to local people, shop owners and developers. The first is that service villages should

be located and their local centre defined on a map so that existing facilities can be protected and new development focused. The second matter raised that was Swadlincote's town centre boundary (as shown in the Swadlincote Retail and Leisure Study) should be reconsidered and potentially expanded, if it was deemed that retail uses which are currently in edge of centre locations formed part of the town centre.

Analysis

- 5.3 PPS4 states that Local Authorities should define the extent of the primary shopping area and the town centre, for the centres in their area on their proposals map. Thus there is a level of correlation the requirements of policy and the responses to the earlier period of consultation.

Location of future growth

- 5.4 In terms of where future retail and leisure developments should be located the majority of the support was for Swadlincote town centre. As well as ensuring the continued regeneration of Swadlincote it was felt that the role of Melbourne as a focus for retail provision should be expanded further. It was also pointed out that wherever major new housing growth is planned, measures should be put in place to ensure that an appropriate amount of retail floorspace accompanies the development. There was also some support for encouraging appropriate retail developments, including farm shops, in rural areas of South Derbyshire.

Analysis

- 5.5 PPS4 is in favour of developing existing centres first. The RSS supports promotion of existing centres through directing the correct type of development into existing centres and by limiting development outside of existing centres where it is appropriate to do so. The location of growth will also need to be considered in terms of improving accessibility to services and facilities in line with the relevant LAA. Public consultation is in general conformity with this aim as it was focused on the continued regeneration and promotion of Swadlincote and Melbourne for retail provision. It was also raised that needs should be met where housing growth is anticipated. The retail and leisure response to future housing supply will be considered at a later stage in the process.

Future retail need in South Derbyshire

- 5.6 In terms of where and what the future retail need is for South Derbyshire, there were several comments received through consultation. It was felt that shopping facilities in rural areas should be allowed due to the significant benefits to the local population and local economy. It was suggested that there is a lack of budget convenience shops in South Derbyshire and this is something that should be tackled. In specific relation to Swadlincote town centre, it was felt that the regeneration and renovation of the town centre should be prioritised, whilst major new national retailers should be attracted to the town centre to improve upon the existing retail offer.

Analysis

- 5.7 The RSS does highlight needs at the district level and so it is necessary for these to be assessed and tackled at the local level. Public consultation has suggested some of the retail areas which are currently deemed to be lacking and are thus priorities for future retail development in the District.

Future leisure need in South Derbyshire

- 5.8 There was a specific area of leisure need highlighted in South Derbyshire, which was to improve the nighttime economy in Swadlincote. It was suggested that an area of Swadlincote town centre could also be specifically set aside for leisure uses in order to meet this identified need.

Analysis

- 5.9 The RSS does not highlight needs at the District level and so it is necessary for these to be assessed and tackled at the local level. Public consultation has suggested some of the leisure areas which are currently lacking and are thus priorities for future leisure development in the District.

Existing facilities

- 5.10 In terms of the existing facilities it was suggested that existing retail facilities should be protected and that in Swadlincote town centre, efforts should be made to ensure that as many of the shops remained in retail use and did not continue the current trend of converting to various services.

Analysis

- 5.11 National guidance states that a 'high proportion' of units in primary shopping frontages should be maintained in A1 usage. The RSS supports promotion of existing centres by directing the correct type of development into existing centres and by limiting development outside of existing centres where it is appropriate to do so. Public consultation is in general conformity with this aim as it was focused on the protection of existing facilities and also ensuring that the most appropriate developments were focused into existing centres.

Other Matters

- 5.12 It was suggested that, if convenience development were to be proposed, then a study should be completed giving an up-to-date and robust assessment of the need for convenience floorspace in Swadlincote to enable future growth in this sector to be appropriately managed. It would also provide existing convenience traders in Swadlincote with clarity for the future.

Summary of Issues and Ideas consultation responses

There was a wide-range of comments relating to retail and leisure matters received in the Issues and Ideas consultation responses. It was generally considered that retail and leisure development should be focused in Swadlincote, other existing centres and in coordination with future housing growth, whilst also having regard to local circumstances in rural areas. It was also felt that boundaries should be plotted to define retail areas in existing and proposed centres.

It was felt that there was a lack of budget convenience stores in South Derbyshire and that the regeneration of Swadlincote town centre should remain a priority in order to attract a wider range of retailers to the town.

Other comments included that the nighttime economy offering in Swadlincote should be improved upon and that the spread of services in Swadlincote should be halted and more units protected for A1 use.

6.0 WORKING TOWARDS OPTIONS FOR CONSULTATION

Key issues for South Derbyshire

6.1 The key retail and leisure issues that have been identified through both consultation and evidence gathering, as highlighted in this document, are as follows:

- Town centre boundaries have not been clearly defined in previous plans, which contributed to previous development in town centres being 'market-led' rather than 'plan-led';
- The Regional Town Centres Study indicates that there is significant capacity within the Three Cities Sub-Area (which includes Derby City and Swadlincote) for new comparison goods floorspace up to 2026;
- Limited evidence on the overall capacity for new convenience goods floorspace leisure development across the HMA;
- Town centres should remain the focus for retail and leisure development in the future;
- High levels of new residential development will alter the retail and leisure requirements of the District and it will be necessary to adapt to the changing demands (*see Housing topic paper for details*);
- A lack of leisure services in Swadlincote town centre, particularly relating to food and drink uses and the evening economy;
- Expenditure is currently leaked to surrounding centres such as Burton-on-Trent and Derby;
- There are no units in Swadlincote town centre which are suitable for bulky goods retailers and mainstream retailers;
- The public realm of Swadlincote town centre is suitable but could be improved further and updated;
- The proportion of vacant retail units in Swadlincote town centre is currently rising, although it is lower than national averages; and

- The proportion of A1 use class units in Swadlincote town centre is currently reducing.

Strategic Retail and Leisure Aims for South Derbyshire

6.2 The retail and leisure issues listed above have been considered and the following aims have been set out to best deal with these issues in South Derbyshire:

- To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of Swadlincote town centre, as well as the existing centres in the remainder of the District (Melbourne, Hilton, Etwall);
- To ensure that existing centres fulfil an appropriate role by ensuring that they have the correct mix of uses within them;
- To provide new retail and leisure facilities in rural settlements of an appropriate scale to meet the needs of communities (i.e. farm shops) whilst protecting their character and setting;
- To provide new retail and leisure development to meet the needs of the population of major new housing developments across South Derbyshire;
- To ensure that future retail and leisure development is plan-led and supported with appropriate infrastructure;
- To improve accessibility to existing and new retail and leisure developments for all by ensuring that development is, or will be, accessible by a choice of modes of transport for all sections;
- To provide a wide range of retail choice, services and facilities in order for retail and leisure to play a role in the economic prosperity of the District as a whole and claw-back leaking expenditure;
- Ensure that retail units available meet the needs of business' looking to invest in the District, including national level and bulky goods retailers;
- Improve the night-time economy offer of Swadlincote, particularly focusing on food and drink leisure uses; and
- Improve the public realm of Swadlincote town centre so that it is a high quality environment.

6.3 These retail and leisure issues and objectives have been considered alongside other issues and objectives, which have been set out in the remaining topic papers. Following the consideration of the full range of issues and objectives, overall objectives for both South Derbyshire and the Derby HMA have been drafted and are included in the main consultation document. These are set out below with those of less relevance to this topic greyed out:

(Draft) South Derbyshire Strategic Objectives:

6.4 The South Derbyshire strategic objectives are as follows:

SDSO 1

To ensure future development is locally distinctive and environmentally sustainable through the achievement of design excellence, addressing the threats and causes of climate change and reducing waste and pollution

SDSO 2

To ensure the needs of an ageing population, and a higher than average proportion of younger people, are recognised in shaping all aspects of our communities

SDSO 3

To enable a robust and diverse economy, resistant to downturns and providing a strong base for sustainable growth

SDSO 4

To ensure the District's housing stock is decent, suitable and affordable and balanced with access to employment opportunities

SDSO 5

To ensure our communities can be safe, clean, vibrant, active and healthy

SDSO 6

To ensure sustainable, living and working rural communities

SDSO 7

To reduce the need to travel and to encourage travel by sustainable modes of transport, providing access to jobs, shopping, leisure, services and facilities from all parts of the District.

SDSO 8

To ensure the social, physical and green infrastructure needed to support strong growth levels is provided at an appropriate time and accessible to our communities

SDSO 9

To respect and enhance the varied character, landscape, cultural, heritage and natural environment of our fast growing District

SDSO 10

To make the most of the economic, social and environmental opportunities presented by the District's central location within the National Forest

SDSO 11

To make optimum use of previously developed and under-used land

SDSO 12

To enhance and develop the role of Swadlincote town centre and its wider urban area as a focus for living, working, shopping and leisure

SDSO 13

To ensure growth in South Derbyshire is co-ordinated with development in adjoining areas both within and outside the Derby HMA

6.5 **(Draft) Derby HMA Strategic Objectives:**
The Derby HMA strategic objectives are as follows

HMASO1

To promote the principles of sustainable development and address the causes and mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change, including flood risk, particularly from rivers and surface water

HMASO2

To deliver economic success, making the Derby Housing Market Area an attractive location for major employers and inward investment, and address inequalities through the regeneration of deprived communities

HMASO3

To grow and strengthen the roles of Derby city centre and the Derby Principal Urban Area, Swadlincote sub-regional centre and, in Amber Valley, the market towns of Alfreton, Belper, Heanor and Ripley

HMASO4

To build on relationships within and outside of the HMA, particularly with the Northern, Greater Nottingham and Leicester and Leicestershire areas in the East Midlands and Burton-upon-Trent in the West Midlands

HMASO5

To give priority to making best use of previously developed land and vacant or under-used buildings in urban or other sustainable locations

HMASO6

To bring forward mixed use sustainable urban extensions to Derby Principal Urban Area and urban extensions elsewhere in the HMA

HMASO7

To provide sufficient housing to meet the needs of communities that is decent, suitable and affordable

HMASO8

To provide high quality, well designed and sustainable development, working towards zero-carbon development and Building For Life standards, minimising resource consumption and waste and maximising opportunities for renewable energy generation and recycling

HMASO9

To increase biodiversity and protect and enhance the strategic green infrastructure, open spaces, landscape and townscape character, cultural and heritage assets, and designated sites, including the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site

HMASO10

To promote equality and community cohesion, healthy and active lifestyles and support improvements in community safety, particularly for children and young people

HMASO11

To make the best use of existing infrastructure and to fully integrate and coordinate new development with investment in and provision of new infrastructure, taking into account changes to our population including the needs of older people, children and young people

HMASO12

To enhance transport links and public transport accessibility to deliver an integrated transport system and achieve viable travel choice, reducing car use, especially commuting

Options

6.6

The purpose of the Core Strategy Issues and Alternative Options document is to set out options for how South Derbyshire could grow and change over the next 15-20 years. However, for the retail and leisure topic area several of our identified aims may not be fully considered in the Issues and Alternative Options Consultation. The reasons for this are varied and include; current gaps in knowledge/evidence base and/or the options not being considered strategic matters. Where issues are not presently dealt within in the Options Consultation it is likely they will be dealt with in a later stage of the Core Strategy preparation process; will be subsumed into a broad-brush policy (which seeks to tackle a number of related issues) or in subsequent planning documents published after the Core Strategy. Aims that are not considered fully in the Issues and Alternative Options Consultation Document include the following:

- To maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of Swadlincote town centre, as well as the existing centres in the remainder of the District (Melbourne, Hilton, Etwall);
- To provide new retail and leisure facilities in rural settlements of an appropriate scale to meet the needs of communities (i.e. farm shops) whilst protecting their character and setting;
- To provide new retail and leisure development to meet the needs of the population of major new housing developments across South Derbyshire;
- To ensure that future retail and leisure development is plan-led and supported with appropriate infrastructure;
- To improve accessibility to existing and new retail and leisure developments for all by ensuring that development is, or will be, accessible by a choice of modes of transport for all sections;
- To provide a wide range of retail choice, services and facilities in order for retail and leisure to play a role in the economic prosperity of the District as a whole and claw-back leaking expenditure;
- Ensure that retail units available meet the needs of business' looking to invest in the District, including national level and bulky goods retailers;

- Improve the night-time economy offer of Swadlincote, particularly focusing on food and drink leisure uses; and
- Improve the public realm of Swadlincote town centre so that it is a high quality environment.

6.7 We have, however, identified one retail and leisure aim, which is strategically important and is based on a sufficient level of evidence to allow some consideration of potential options. This aim is discussed below and the full Alternative Options are set out in the main Issues and Alternative Options Consultation Document.

Priority to A1 uses

6.8 PPS4 defines Primary Shopping Areas as being ‘where retail development is concentrated’. It also states that Local Authorities should realistically define primary and secondary shopping frontages and, ‘set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations’. It has been noted as an issue that the longer-term trend has been a reduction of the primary shopping frontage in Swadlincote in A1 retail use.

6.9 On the basis of this consideration of the appropriate uses in the primary shopping area is a key issue for the Core Strategy, and can apply to both Swadlincote and Melbourne centres. An option is to afford the highest priority to retail uses in the primary shopping frontage and the alternative option is to allow for a wider mix of uses. The decision made relating to this will influence the roles that those centres take over the plan period and whether they continue as traditional shopping centres or evolve more into service centres.

6.10 Relevant Objectives and Options:
The priority given to A1 uses in the town centre may assist South Derbyshire and the Derby HMA in meeting several Objectives, including:

- (Draft) Derby HMA Strategic Objective 3; and
- (Draft) South Derbyshire Strategic Objective SDSO 12.

6.11 The Options in the main document which relate most closely to this area include the following options:

- Town Centres Options 1 – 2.

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