

# CHAPTER 14

## SHOPPING

### **A READER'S AND LISTENER'S GUIDE TO SHOPPING POLICIES AND PROPOSALS**

The shopping policies and proposals in this chapter have been developed with regard to advice and guidance issued by the Secretary of State for the Environment, and the particular concerns of the Local Planning Authority. These matters are summarised below with the policies and proposals in the Plan which seek to address them.

|   | <b>Relevant Piece<br/>of Advice (Para.)</b> | <b>Relevant<br/>Policies/Proposals</b>  |
|---|---|---|
| <b><u>Matters on which the Secretary of State has issued<br/>Regional Planning Guidance (RPG):</u></b>  |   |   |
| The quality of service is more important than preserving a shopping hierarchy;  | RPG1 (14)                                   | S1, S2  |
| Town centres should be the main focus of retail facilities;   | RPG1 (15)                                   | S1, S2, S3,<br>UR3, ED3, ED7  |
| There is no place for retailing provision in the Green Belt;  | RPG1 (17)                                   | S3,<br>ENV25, ENV25/1   |
| Measures should be taken to improve centres and tackle decline;   | RPG1 (15 & 18)                              | S4, S5, S6, S7, S8  |
| A balance is needed between future proposals and existing provision.  | RPG1 (16)                                   | S4/6, S5/3, S6, S7/2  |
| <b><u>Matters on which the Government has issued<br/>additional Policy advice:</u></b>  |   |   |
| UDP Part Is should set out the hierarchy of centres, where investment in new retail development will be promoted and existing provision enhanced.                           | PPG6 (1.5)                                  | S1, S4, S5, S6, S7,<br>ENV3   |
| UDP Part IIs should consider existing provision and identify sites for development.   | PPG6 (1.6 - 1.7)                            | S4/5, S4/6, S5/3, S7/1 - S7/4,<br>ENV4/1, ED6/1                                     |
| In drawing up their development plans, local authorities should adopt a sequential approach to selecting sites for new retail development.                                  | PPG6 (1.10)                                 | S1, S3  |
| The local planning authority should encourage diversification of uses in the town centre as a whole, whilst recognising the shopping function of the primary shopping area. | PPG6 (2.12)                                 | S2/2, S4, S4/4, S4/6, S5,<br>S5/2 - S5/4, S6, S6/2,<br>UR3, ED6, ED6/1, H5, H7, SC3 |

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|   | <b>Relevant Piece of Advice (Para.)</b> | <b>Relevant Policies/Proposals</b>  |
|---|---|---|
| <p>Local planning authorities should use their development plans to set out policies for mixed-use development in town centres by identifying suitable areas and sites.</p>   | PPG6 (2.13)                             | S1/1, S4, S4/4 - S4/6, S5, S5/3, S5/4, S6, S6/2, UR3, ED6, ED6/1, RL7   |
| <p>Local authorities should adopt a positive approach to changes of use, the reuse of vacant sites and to demands for new and interim uses. They should take a pro-active role to try to identify new uses for vacant buildings, especially vacant office buildings in town centres that may be suitable for conversion to other uses, such as flats and hostels.</p> | PPG6 (2.14)                             | S1/1, S2, S4, S4/1, S4/3, S4/6, S5/2 - S5/4, S6/2, S7/1 - S7/4, S8, S9, UR3, ED6, ED6/1, H5, H7, H7/1 - H7/3, SC3 |
| <p>Local planning authorities should seek to ensure that comparison shopping developments are located where they will be easily accessible by a choice of means of transport.</p>   | PPG6 (3.3)                              | S1, S1/2, S2, S2/1, S3, S4, S5, S6, S7, S9, T2, T7, T9, T10/2, T16/1, T17   |
| <p>Local authorities should encourage, through their planning policies and actions, a wide range of facilities in district and local centres, consistent with the scale and function of the centre, to meet people's day-to-day needs, so reducing the need to travel.</p>  | PPG6 (3.18)                             | S1, S2/1, S7, S7/1 - S7/4, S8   |
| <p>Local planning authorities should adopt a positive approach to applications for conversion and extensions to village shops, designed to improve viability.</p>   | PPG6 (3.20)                             | S9, S10   |
| <p>Development plans should provide sites for different types of retail developments. Applications for non-retail use of these sites should not normally be permitted. Equally, planning applications for retail development should not normally be allowed on land designated for other uses in an approved development plan.</p>                                    | PPG6 (3.23)                             | S3, S4/4, S4/5, S4/6, S5/3, S5/4, S7/1 - S7/4, ED3  |
| <p>Development plans should specify preferred locations for retail development which sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of existing centres.</p>  | PPG6 (4.2)                              | S1, S3, S4, S4/1 - S4/4, S4/6, S5, S5/1 - S5/4, S6, S7, S7/1 - S7/4, S8   |
| <p>Where new retail development is proposed away from town centres, the local planning authority should identify and appraise its likely accessibility by a choice of means of transport.</p>   | PPG6 (4.7)                              | S2, S3, S8, S9, T2, T5, T7, T9, T17   |
| <p>Plans may also distinguish between primary and secondary frontages in town centres and consider their relative importance to the character of the centre.</p>  | PPG6 (Annex B - 6)                      | S4/1 - S4/3, S5/1, S5/2, S6/1, S6/2   |
| <p>Plans should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- maintain and revitalise existing centres;</li> </ul>  | PPG13 (3.10)                            | S1, S2, S4, S5, S6, S7, ENV4/1, T5, T10/2   |

|   | <b>Relevant Piece of Advice (Para.)</b>       | <b>Relevant Policies/Proposals</b>     |
|---|---|--|
| - encourage the provision of local convenience shopping;                                |   | S1, S1/2, S2, S2/1, S7, S8, S9, S10    |
| - resist off-centre developments where alternative sites exist;                         |   | S3, S4/6, S5/3, S6, S7/2, S7/4         |
| - avoid sporadic siting of durable shops; and   | (also PPG6 (3.2))                             | S3, S4/5, ENV3, ED3                    |
| - provide for local shopping and residential uses in large new developments.            |   | S7/4, S8, S9, S10, SC4, H5             |
| Plan policies should foster attractive and safe environments that help to reduce crime. | Circular 5/94<br>Planning Out Crime 1994 (14) | S2, S4, S5, S6, S6/2, ENV5, SC2/1, ED2 |

### Relevant Policies/Proposals

**Matters of additional concern to the Borough Council:**

Producing a sustainable shopping environment throughout the Borough with particular emphasis on:

- bringing vacant premises into use; and
- making shops accessible to all residents.

S1, S2, S3, S7/2, ENV2, ENV3, ENV4

S1/1, S4/6, S7/1

S1/2, S2/1, S4, S5, S6, T2, T5, T6/5, T6/6, T10/2, T16

Securing the future vitality of the main shopping centres;

S1, S4/2, S4/4, S4/5, S5/1, S6/1, S7/2, S7/3, ENV4/1, T6/1, T6/4, T6/5, T12, T16/1

Safeguarding a basic local shopping service for all residents;

S2/1, S7, S7/1, S7/4, S8, S9, S10

Resisting retail proposals that are inconsistent with the principles of sustainable development.

S2, S3, S9, ENV1, ENV2, ENV3, ED3

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## 14.1 Introduction

14.1.1 Regional Planning Guidance Note 1 (para 17) recognises that the effects of the 1980s shopping boom have yet to be fully assessed in Tyne and Wear. The most important aspects of this significant increase in retail investment are:

- a) two new major shopping centres have been established in the Gateshead Enterprise Zone. The MetroCentre is now the third largest centre in Tyne and Wear, with 84,840 sqm net retail space, and Retail World the fifth largest, with 26,170 sqm net;
- b) major extensions to Eldon Square (Eldon Garden and Monument Mall) in Newcastle City Centre;
- c) the new Tyneside Retail Park, with 14,570 sqm of retail selling space, at North Shields; and
- d) The Bridges shopping centre in Sunderland City Centre has been refurbished.

14.1.2 Since that time, Government advice has placed increasing emphasis on working towards sustainable development (refer to Section 4.2 of the Strategy Chapter. Three documents are of particular relevance to retailing policy:

- a) “Reducing Transport Emissions through Planning” (1993) which states that:  

“The planning policies most pertinent to reducing carbon dioxide emissions associated with travel for shopping are those which:

  - . encourage local convenience shopping;
  - . maintain and revitalise existing central and suburban shopping centres; and
  - . encourage in-centre location of large convenience/food stores in district centres” (para. 4.2.7).
- b) The revised version of PPG6 “Town Centres and Retail Development” which was published in June 1996 advises that:  

“The Government’s objectives are:

  - . to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of town centres;

- . to focus development, especially retail development, in locations where the proximity of businesses facilitates competition from which all consumers are able to benefit and maximises the opportunity to use means of transport other than the car;
- . to maintain an efficient, competitive and innovative retail sector; and
- . to ensure the availability of a wide range of shops, employment, services and facilities to which people have easy access by a choice of means of transport.” (para. 1.1)

“These objectives seek to promote sustainable development and are consistent with the Government’s Sustainable Development Strategy and with PPG13 “Transport”.” (para. 1.2)

- c) The revised version of PPG13 “Transport” was published in March 1994. Its guidance refers to structure plans and local plans, which in this Plan correspond to Part I Policies and Part II Proposals respectively. In regard to the location of retail development it states that:

“Structure plan policies for retailing should seek to promote the vitality and viability of existing urban and suburban and rural centres. Shopping should be promoted in existing centres that are more likely to offer a choice of access, particularly for those without the use of a private car.

Travel for shopping has grown strongly, particularly in the non-food sector. In local plans, authorities should:

- . maintain and revitalise existing central and suburban shopping centres by enabling development to take place there and by policies which improve the quality and competitiveness of those areas;
- . encourage local convenience shopping by promoting the location of facilities in local and rural centres, and ensuring such areas are attractive and readily accessible on foot or by bicycle;
- . where suitable central locations are not available for larger retail development, seek edge of centre sites, close enough to be readily accessible by foot from the centre and which can be served by a variety of means of transport;

- . avoid sporadic siting of comparison goods shopping units out of centres or along road corridors; and
- . provide for both local shopping and residential uses in large new developments where feasible". (paras. 3.9 and 3.10).

14.1.3 More recently still, has been the publication of the following two Government-sponsored or Parliamentary reports:

- a) "Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution: Transport and the Environment" was published in October 1994. Most of its recommendations are aimed at Central Government, but it emphasises the need to translate the results of those ideas, to the local level via development plans by, for example:
- i) promoting development which does not rely on car access;
  - ii) locating travel-generating schemes where they can be reached by foot, bicycle and public transport;
  - iii) encouraging local facilities so that journeys are shorter and can be made on foot;
  - iv) siting freight development where it can be served by rail or water;
  - v) implementing schemes to create lively and attractive town centres;
  - vi) introducing measures to foster walking, cycling and public transport; and
  - vii) allocating housing sites in locations which allow people to live near their work.

The Commission recognises the start that PPG6 and PPG13 represent, but highlights the need for Central Government to be less equivocal in its attitude to out-of-centre developments.

- b) "House of Commons Environment Committee: Shopping Centres and the Future" was published in November 1994. Its findings were summarised by its Chairman, Barry Field MP, in the following terms:

"The Committee is of the view, supported by the great majority of those who gave evidence to the inquiry, that retail development policies have allowed the building of too many superstores and other large retail developments in locations which

are inappropriate on environmental, heritage and social grounds. We believe that it is now time to reverse this trend and to require developers to demonstrate that their proposals for new stores will not harm the vitality and viability of town centres. Change will come more easily if the Government's planning and transport policies provide for it" (as quoted in "Planning" 4th November 1994).

14.1.4 Section 14.2 of this Chapter details current retailing provision in South Tyneside. Section 14.3 sets this within the context of sustainable development (refer to para. 14.1.2a). Section 14.4 develops a strategy based on this information which seeks to focus environmental improvement and new shopping development in existing centres. This analysis frequently distinguishes between:

- a) convenience shopping, which consists of everyday items which include: food, groceries, tobacco, alcohol, confectionery, cleaning materials, newspapers and magazines (but not books); and
- b) durable shopping, which is for all non-convenience goods. Typically, these consist of longer term and less frequent purchases such as: electrical goods, carpets, furniture, clothing, footwear, toys, hardware, tools, books, DIY goods, china, glass and household textiles. Other documents use the term "comparison shopping" instead of durable shopping. The goods that each category covers are broadly similar but not exactly the same (eg. refer to quotation from PPG13 in para. 14.1.2c).

These categories can also be applied to the shops themselves, eg. convenience units or durable floorspace.

## 14.2 Retailing in South Tyneside

### Floorspace and Population

14.2.1 During the period 1971 to 1996 the trends in retail provision\* in the Borough have followed national trends in that:

- a) the number of shops has fallen by 25% (from 1,397 to 1,050);
- b) selling space in shops has fallen by 20% (from 90,206 to 72,057 sqm);
- c) the average size of convenience stores has increased by 25% while the mean area of durable shops has decreased by 3%, this difference being masked in an overall increase of 6%; and

d) there is, however, only one out-of-town outlet in the Borough - a convenience superstore of 1,553 square metres net.

\* All figures in this section include vacant shops, as the 1971 data does not list these separately.

14.2.2 There has also been a tendency for a growing proportion of the Borough's retail floorspace to be concentrated in the larger centres. South Shields town centre, the largest shopping centre in South Tyneside contained 30% of occupied floorspace in 1971. By 1994, this figure had increased to 44%, but reduced to 35% with the closure of the Binns department store in June 1995, although planning permission has since been granted for the redevelopment of this site. A breakdown of floorspace in the larger centres is contained in Table 14.1.

**Table 14.1: Retail Floorspace in South Tyneside June 1996 (sq metres net)**

| Centre                    | Convenience   | Durable       | Service       | Vacant        | Total         |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| South Shields             | 5,266         | 16,169        | 3,232         | 6,353         | 31,020        |
| Jarrow                    | 4,140         | 2,640         | 1,087         | 738           | 8,605         |
| Hebburn                   | 1,431         | 538           | 790           | 344           | 3,103         |
| <b>Town Centres</b>       | <b>10,837</b> | <b>19,347</b> | <b>5,109</b>  | <b>7,435</b>  | <b>42,728</b> |
| Frederick Street          | 880           | 3,012         | 507           | 2,875         | 7,274         |
| Boldon Colliery           | 3,488         | 1,651         | 295           | 70            | 5,504         |
| Harton Nook               | 1,914         | 734           | 700           | 190           | 3,538         |
| Dean Road                 | 329           | 729           | 636           | 144           | 1,838         |
| Boldon Lane               | 438           | 671           | 417           | 165           | 1,691         |
| Ocean Road (East)         | 181           | 133           | 773           | 68            | 1,155         |
| Westoe Bridges            | 180           | 264           | 214           | 77            | 735           |
| <b>Other main centres</b> | <b>7,410</b>  | <b>7,194</b>  | <b>3,542</b>  | <b>3,589</b>  | <b>21,735</b> |
| Out of Centre             | 1,553         | 5,307         | -             | -             | 6,860         |
| Other shops               | 4,815         | 1,999         | 3,089         | 1,390         | 11,293        |
| <b>TOTAL</b>              | <b>24,615</b> | <b>33,847</b> | <b>11,740</b> | <b>12,414</b> | <b>82,616</b> |

Source: South Tyneside MBC Development Services Department.

14.2.3 These changes reflect the changes in population in the Borough during this period, falling rapidly from 177,080 in 1971 to 160,001 in 1981 (-9.6%) and more gradually to 156,078 (-2.5%) in 1996 (the latest data available). This represents an overall loss of 11.9% from the 1971 figure. This population has, however, become more mobile. The rate of growth in car ownership in South



An artists' impression of the proposed Kings Oak House retail development on the site of the former Binns department store, King Street, in South Shields town centre.

Tyneside was especially high in the period 1971-81 (30%), but it fell to only half this rate between 1981 and 1991. The majority of households still do not own a car (53.6% in 1991). Not all vehicles are available for shopping trips, the 1988 household shopping survey (refer to para. 14.2.5) revealed that only 39% of main household shoppers had access to a car.

### Employment

14.2.4 Shopping is also important as a major employer in the Borough. The main features of employment in retail and associated trades are:

- a) in 1991 there were 5,451 people employed in shops in South Tyneside. This represented 12% of all jobs in the Borough;
- b) retail employment fell by 26% between 1971 and 1991 (from 7,358 jobs);
- c) a further 2,400 people were employed in associated trades in retail areas in 1991 (eg. banks, hairdressers, travel agents, building societies and estate agents);
- d) about three-quarters of these 7,851 jobs in the retail and related sectors were based in the 10 main centres in 1991 (refer to Table 14.1);
- e) employees were overwhelmingly female (73%) in 1991, and a significant proportion worked part-time (44%); and
- f) on average, there was 1 job for every 12 sqm of retail selling space in South Tyneside in 1991. For convenience shopping this figure was 1 job per 8 sqm; for durables it was 1 job per 20 sqm.

### Residents Shopping Patterns

14.2.5 In 1988, the Borough Council undertook a sample survey of the household shopping habits of the residents of South Tyneside. The results of this research were published in the report "Household Shopping Patterns in South Tyneside". Its main conclusions were that:

- a) average retail spending by Borough residents was significantly below both national and regional levels. These differences were especially marked for expenditure on durable goods;
- b) spending by mail order and other forms of special trading were more popular in South Tyneside than the national average, especially for durable goods;

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- c) over 80% of all residents' spending in shops took place at locations within the Borough. This trend was most marked for the purchase of convenience goods (92%);
- d) South Shields town centre was the most important place for Borough residents' retail spending. It accounted for 37% of all expenditure in shops. The next most important centres were Jarrow (11%), Boldon Colliery (9%) and Harton Nook (7%);
- e) the most important centres for Borough residents outside South Tyneside, in terms of where they spend their money, were Newcastle City Centre (5%), Washington Town Centre (4%) and Sunderland City Centre (3%). The MetroCentre only accounted for 1½% of their retail spending; and
- f) walking was the most common means of travel for shoppers, accounting for 37% of all journeys. 34% of trips were made by car, and 29% by public transport. In total, 61% of shoppers did not have a car available for any shopping journey. The use of different modes of transport varied greatly from centre to centre.

### 14.3 Sustainable Development

14.3.1 Increases in car ownership (refer to para. 14.2.3) and the concentration of retail facilities (para. 14.2.2) have resulted in an increased use of cars for shopping trips. PPG6 expresses concern that this has led, elsewhere in Great Britain, to retail development in locations that are primarily accessible by car:

“Town and district centres should be the preferred locations for developments that attract many trips, and local planning authorities should adopt policies to:

- locate major generators of travel in existing centres, where choice by a means of transport, not only the car, is easy and convenient;
- enable town, district and local centres to meet the needs of residents of their area;
- safeguard and strengthen existing local centres, in both urban and rural areas, which offer a range of everyday community, shopping and employment opportunities;
- maintain and improve choice for people to walk, cycle or catch public transport; and
- ensure an appropriate supply of attractive, convenient and safe parking for shopping and leisure trips.” (para. 1.3)

14.3.2 Government advice is that there may be circumstances where out-of-town development is the sustainable solution. These will be restricted to occasions where existing town centres are either:

- a) already suffering from substantial congestion; or
- b) the scale of the proposed development is likely to result in such congestion.

Where one of these situations arises, the decentralisation of retail facilities may actually result in a reduction of vehicle emissions. In order for this to be the case the choice of the particular out-of-town location, its vicinity to potential shoppers and its accessibility by/to public transport users, pedestrians and cyclists will be crucial.

14.3.3 It should be emphasised, however, that such instances will be the exception to the rule, particularly in an area as highly urbanised as this Borough (refer to paras. 4.3.4, 4.3.5 of the Strategy Chapter and para. 6.2.1 of the Environment Chapter). This is emphasised by “Sustainable Development - the UK Strategy”:

“Quality of life is also materially affected by factors such as the location of homes and workplaces, the availability locally of a wide range of goods and services, and the availability and use of energy efficient modes ... Developments that attract a lot of employees or customers such as offices and shops, need to be located in town centres or other places which are well served by public transport. This improves the range of facilities available to those without cars. It enables people to choose more energy efficient means of transport, such as cycles and buses. It also enables a single journey to serve more than one purpose, thus increasing the business that can be achieved for each vehicle mile travelled ... Town centres are good locations, not only for offices and shops, but for restaurants and cafes, museums, hotels and conference centres, universities and colleges, and tourist attractions.” (paras. 24.24-24.26).

14.3.4 The Local Planning Authority is firmly of the opinion that:

- a) no existing centres in South Tyneside are congested by car traffic or are likely to become so as a result of the scale of development proposed or resulting from this Plan (refer to para. 14.4.1);
- b) there is sufficient scope within existing shopping centres in the Borough to physically accommodate this scale of development in terms of specific land allocations and policies to enable the recycling of existing town centre land;
- c) the vitality and viability of the main retail centres in the Borough require that such development is

guided towards locations within existing centres; and

- d) because of the low level of car ownership in South Tyneside it is all the more important that new retail facilities are developed in locations accessible to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users, and not just those who travel by car.

This approach is fully consistent with the long term sustainable development strategy of this Plan (refer to Sections 6.1 - 6.4) and, therefore, the principles of sustainable development (refer to Chapter 4). In particular it should assist efforts to reduce both the need to travel and the number and length of journeys.

## 14.4 Strategy

### Forecasting Future Demand for Shops

14.4.1 Using data from the household shopping survey (refer to para. 14.2.5) and the Unit for Retail Planning Information (URPI), an assessment can be made of the likely scale of demand for additional retail space in South Tyneside during the plan period. A wide range of scenarios on possible rates of change in population, spending power and average retail income per area of floorspace were used in these calculations.

The consistent conclusions were:

- a) there will be a small surplus of convenience floorspace, and any additional development of this type should be confined to areas of proven local need (eg. where there has been substantial population increase and existing provision needs to be enhanced);
- b) the potential will exist for a modest increase in durable provision. Some of this might be achieved by changes of convenience units to the sale of durable items; and
- c) the most likely outcomes indicate:
  - i) **an excess of** between 1,500 and 2,000 square metres of **convenience sales space** (about the size of Safeway in the Denmark Centre, South Shields); and
  - ii) **potential for** between 15,000 and 20,000 square metres of **new durable provision** (the equivalent of 3 or 4 times the size of the former Binns department store in King Street, South Shields).

### A Strategy for Shopping

14.4.2 The overall strategy of this Plan is to move towards a sustainable environment ensuring that:

- a) all development proposals respect the long term welfare of the environment and are located in accordance with the principles of sustainable development (Policies ENV1 and ENV3);
- b) priority is given to improving the quality of the environment, particularly in the areas most visited by residents (Policies ENV2 and ENV4 and Proposals ENV4/1 and ENV4/2); and
- c) good design and access for all residents and visitors, whether able-bodied or with disabilities, is promoted (Policy ENV5).

14.4.3 A strategy of supporting and enhancing existing large shopping centres is completely consistent with this approach as it:

- a) makes the maximum use of existing infrastructure;
- b) facilitates multi-purpose journeys to these centres (which are usually also administrative, cultural, entertainment, legal, business and employment centres) and hence reduces the need to travel; and
- c) allows shopping trips to be focused on locations which are already, and can increasingly be made, accessible to pedestrians, cyclists, public transport users and people with disabilities.

14.4.4 Local centres provide their communities with readily available sources of basic everyday shopping needs, which are easily accessible without the need for motorised transport. They tend to be especially important for those with mobility problems and those who are housebound, or indeed temporarily incapacitated, and rely on friends, neighbours and family for their shopping. This is particularly important in South Tyneside, where the household shopping survey revealed that 23% of main household shoppers had health problems that restricted their mobility. It is therefore crucial that all possible measures should be taken to retain essential local retail services.

14.4.5 In all cases, focusing attention and directing development towards existing centres can:

- a) ensure that a good level of shopping provision in pleasant and safe surroundings is available to all residents;
- b) maintain their vitality and viability;

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- c) encourage the continued attraction and reinvestment in other properties;
- d) make proper provision for all relevant services (retail and other) in locations which are safe and accessible to all residents;
- e) provide competition and choice for customers;
- f) focus demand for services at multi-purpose locations where they can be most easily accessed by public transport users, cyclists and pedestrians;
- g) maximise the use of major historical investment in the infrastructure;
- h) conserve, where relevant, buildings and areas of historical, architectural or natural history interest; and
- i) enhance the morale of the communities for which they form hubs.

It is therefore vital, so far as South Tyneside is concerned, that the potential for improving or expanding facilities in existing centres is properly investigated before any consideration is given to establishing alternative provision elsewhere.

14.4.6 The main retailing aims of this Plan are therefore:

- a) to improve the external shopping environment in a sustainable manner, in order to enhance the quality of multi-purpose centres and to retain and attract investment. In this way the range of services available to the public can be improved. Where centres show evidence of decline, to concentrate shops into a more viable central retail area while allowing other uses in more peripheral units;
- b) to promote a good shopping service which is accessible to all residents by concentrating most provision in existing centres. Owners will be encouraged to make vacant upper floor premises available for housing purposes where the local environment permits; and
- c) to protect local shops which provide an important service to their local communities. Where appropriate the provision of new local retail outlets will be encouraged, especially grocers, chemists and post offices.

### 14.5 General Principles

14.5.1 The shopping strategy in this Plan forms part of a longer-term programme aimed at creating a sustainable environment for South Tyneside and its residents. The Borough Council will continue to examine and analyse existing trends in both shopping and the wider environment in which it takes place. It will use this information to reinforce favourable trends, counter those that are unfavourable and implement the policies in this Plan. This will be achieved by establishing, and working towards, relevant sustainability targets. The retailing objectives of this approach are set out in Section 14.4 of this Chapter. They must also, however, be viewed within the context of the other policies, proposals and targets elsewhere in this Plan, particularly those relating to the Environment and Transportation. These wider linkages are set out in full in the Reader's and Listener's Guide at the start of this Chapter.

14.5.2 The key sustainability indicators in South Tyneside which relate to retailing are:

- a) the extent to which vacant properties can be brought into, and occupied units kept, in beneficial use, particularly upper floor premises above shops;
- b) enhancing access to, and accessibility within, shopping centres for non-car users and people with disabilities;
- c) securing a safe and crime-free shopping environment;
- d) making progress in directing development to existing centres;
- e) retaining and building upon the vitality and viability of established centres, particularly in the three town centres;
- f) rationalising and improving the environment of declining shopping centres, where appropriate, by declaring Commercial Improvement Areas; and
- g) protecting the basic shopping service provided by local and corner shops.

14.5.3 The broad principles of this approach may be summarised as in Policy S1:

## Towards a Sustainable Retail Environment

**S1 THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL PROMOTE AND ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF A SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR:**

- A) A VARIED RANGE OF RETAIL OUTLETS AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES OFFERING A GOOD QUALITY SERVICE TO ALL BOROUGH RESIDENTS, INCLUDING THOSE WITHOUT ACCESS TO A CAR;**
- B) INVESTMENT IN EXISTING CENTRES SO AS TO MAINTAIN THEIR VITALITY AND VIABILITY, IMPROVE THEIR ATTRACTIVENESS AND SUPPORT URBAN REGENERATION; AND**
- C) THE CONVENIENCE OF RESIDENTS, BY REDUCING THE LENGTH OF JOURNEY NECESSARY TO GAIN ACCESS TO RETAIL AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES.**

In order to monitor these objectives and indicators it will be necessary to employ both existing methods and to seek out new sources of information. Figure 1 in PPG6 lists the following factors in assessing vitality and viability:

- a) the diversity of uses;
- b) retailer representation and intentions to change representation;
- c) shopping rents;
- d) proportion of vacant street level property;
- e) commercial yields on non-domestic property;
- f) pedestrian flows;
- g) accessibility;
- h) customer views and behaviour;
- i) perception of safety and occurrence of crime; and
- j) state of the town centre environmental quality.

Obtaining this information will necessitate an active dialogue with the private sector, through such organisations as the Chamber of Commerce and Traders Associations. In recognition of this Target ST14.1 has therefore been set:

### **TARGET ST14.1 Involving Retailers**

The Borough Council will engage in a dialogue with private sector retail interests with a view to:

- a) Establishing the scope for information exchange;
- b) Investigating the feasibility of drawing up joint town centre management strategies; and
- c) Increasing their involvement in development plan preparation at the review stage.

All of these are to be completed by 2001.

This target is fully consistent with Government advice. PPG6 states that:

“Development plans should plan positively for such uses, working with the private sector to assess need or market demand, and identify locations and sites for development.” (para. 1.7)

14.5.4 Another way of engaging retailers is to encourage them to put forward schemes for the use of vacant premises above shops. Schemes involving conversion to a single flat have permitted development rights, subject to certain conditions, according to Class F of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. Proposal S1/1, therefore, applies to all other schemes for residential use in upper floor premises. The Borough Council will consider, in appropriate cases, the relaxation of some of its normal development criteria to allow such schemes to proceed, provided that potential occupants would be assured of a satisfactory level of residential amenity. Consequently, in pursuit of Policy S1:

#### **Residential Use in Upper Floor Premises**

**S1/1 The Local Planning Authority will permit the change of use, and encourage the refurbishment, of upper floor premises in the main town and district centres for residential purposes where:**

- a) the level of residential amenity which will be enjoyed by potential occupants will not be significantly affected by noise or other disturbance generated by adjoining or nearby uses;**
- b) the external standards of the resulting dwellings are acceptable in terms of day-lighting, outlook, privacy and refuse storage facilities;**

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- c) separate external pedestrian access is provided to the dwellings; and
- d) internal layouts and facilities are of an adequate standard to allow for the independent functioning of each household.

**Wherever site layout and access conditions allow, provision for residents' car parking will be made within the curtilage of the site.**

Reference should also be made to Policy H6.

14.5.5 The use of upper floors in shopping centres, where this is possible, assists efforts towards achieving sustainable development. It will result in more people living within town centres and, therefore, should reduce their need to travel. Where journeys are necessary, they are more likely to be made on foot or by public transport. The Borough Council will encourage and, where relevant, permit or implement other measures that achieve sustainable ends. Consequently:

### Non-Vehicular Accessibility - Shopping Centres

**S1/2 The Local Planning Authority will grant planning permission for development which contributes towards a more sustainable environment in shopping centres by:**

- a) increasing their accessibility to pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users; and
- b) improving pedestrian links connecting shops with bus and Metro stations, bus and ferry termini and other public transport facilities.

**The Borough Council's improvement programmes for shopping centres will reflect these priorities.**

Further details of schemes in support of this proposal may be found in Proposals T5/1, T6/4, T6/5, T6/6, and T10/2 in the Transportation Chapter.

14.5.6 The Borough Council can also assist by keeping its retail database up to date. The Development Services Department already routinely monitors retail floorspace and employment levels (refer to paras. 14.2.1 to 14.2.4). A household shopping survey was successfully completed in 1988 (refer to para. 14.2.5) and used to inform this Plan. It is important that, once the full results of the 1991 Census have become available, this household survey information is updated. Target ST14.2 aims to achieve this:

### **TARGET ST14.2 Household Shopping Survey**

The Borough Council will conduct, analyse and publish the results of a household shopping survey, comparable with that undertaken in 1988, by 2001.

### **14.6 Development Control Considerations**

14.6.1 The Local Planning Authority is concerned to ensure that proper regard is paid to the development of shopping facilities and their surroundings in terms of their impact on the environment and consequent implications for sustainable development. Accordingly, Policy S2 indicates matters to which it will give particular emphasis. Attention is drawn to the Local Planning Authority's concern that the needs of people with disabilities are properly accommodated (refer to Policies ENV5, T7 and T8, and Proposal S2/1, for example).

### **Development Control Considerations - Shops and Retail Centres**

**S2 IN DETERMINING APPLICATIONS FOR RETAIL AND SERVICE DEVELOPMENT, THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL ENSURE THAT, IN ITS OPINION:**

- A) THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF THE PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTABLE IN RELATION TO THE OTHER POLICIES AND PROPOSALS IN THIS PLAN AND RESIDENTIAL AMENITY;
- B) IT IS SATISFACTORILY RELATED TO EXISTING BUILDINGS IN TERMS OF SCALE, MASSING, FORM, DESIGN AND LANDSCAPING;
- C) THE DESIGN TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE NEEDS OF ALL POTENTIAL USERS WITH REGARD TO ACCESSIBILITY AND, IN BUILDINGS TO BE USED BY THE PUBLIC, CIRCULATION;
- D) IT CAN BE DIRECTLY SERVED BY TRANSPORTATION INFRA-STRUCTURE AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT SERVICES IN A MANNER WHICH ENSURES SAFE, PRACTICAL AND CONVENIENT ACCESS AND EXIT TO ALL USERS;

- E) **PROVISION IS MADE FOR CAR AND CYCLE PARKING AND THE LOADING AND UNLOADING OF DELIVERY VEHICLES IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS APPROVED STANDARDS;**
- F) **THE PROPOSAL INCORPORATES MEASURES TO PROVIDE A SAFE AND ATTRACTIVE ENVIRONMENT FOR ANY PARKING AND PEDESTRIAN AREAS;**
- G) **IT PROTECTS AND, IF POSSIBLE, ENHANCES ANY MATURE TREES, NATURAL AND LANDSCAPE FEATURES, AND STREET FURNITURE ON OR IN CLOSE PROXIMITY TO THE DEVELOPMENT SITE;**
- H) **IN APPROPRIATE INSTANCES, IT INCORPORATES RECYCLING FACILITIES;**
- I) **ANY POTENTIAL FOR PASSIVE SOLAR GAIN IS REALISED; AND**
- J) **ANY RESULTANT INCREASE IN STORM WATER RUN-OFF DOES NOT RESULT IN FLOODING PROBLEMS.**

**THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL USE PLANNING CONDITIONS AND, WHERE NECESSARY, SEEK PLANNING OBLIGATIONS TO ENSURE THAT ALL OF THE RELEVANT CRITERIA ARE SATISFIED.**

14.6.2 The detailed requirements of Policy S2 are outlined below. Where implementation depends on other parts of this Plan the necessary cross-references are made.

**Environmental Impact** - depending on the nature of the proposed development a number of different Plan policies and proposals may be relevant. Those that are likely to be most relevant are: Policies ENV1, ENV2, ENV3, ENV5, ENV6, ENV8, ENV9, ENV10, ENV11, ENV12, ENV19 and ENV25.

**Design, etc.** - refer to paragraphs 6.5.12-6.5.14.

**Access and Circulation** - refer to paragraphs 6.5.11 and 6.5.15 in the Environment Chapter, and paragraphs 13.8.1 - 13.8.2 in the Transportation Chapter.

**Transportation** - refer to paragraph 6.5.11 in the Environment Chapter and paragraph 13.5.1 in the Transportation Chapter.

**Cars, cycles, etc.** - refer to section 13.17 in the Transportation Chapter and Appendix T(A).

14.6.3 **Safety, etc.** - Government advice states that:

“By adopting plan policies that encourage a wide and varied range of uses, local authorities can help to foster the creation of lively, attractive and welcoming environments. This objective may require wider measures than those justified by land use policy. They might well extend, for instance, to enabling arrangements that help promote the ‘night economy’, eg. late night buses and trains fitting in with the closing times of entertainment facilities. This type of environment, coupled with the use of closed-circuit television cameras and security systems that provide a rapid response to criminal activity, can provide more safety and security for the public and prove a greater deterrent to crime in general than deserted areas with ‘dead’ shop fronts and fortress-like security measures. Policies aimed at fostering the vitality and viability of town centres should be used to encourage the development of recreational and cultural facilities - such as sports centres, cinemas and theatres - that bring urban areas to life after dark”. (Circular 5/94 “Planning Out Crime” para. 14).

The Borough Council has, for example, co-operated with traders in South Shields and Jarrow Town Centres installing Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV), and these have already been effective in reducing crime, and thus increasing the sense of security felt by shoppers and other visitors. Reference should also be made to Proposal SC2/1 and Sections 14.7, 14.8 and 14.9 of this Chapter.

14.6.4 **Trees and vegetation** - refer to the landscaping standards in Supplementary Planning Guidance.

**Recycling** - the design of new or refurbished stores with dedicated car and cycle parks or other extensive spaces should incorporate receptacles for the recycling of paper, glass, cans and, if possible, plastics. Elsewhere, results might be achieved by securing commuted payments for provision by means of legal agreements. Reference should also be made to paragraphs 7.7.1 - 7.7.5 of the Natural Resources Chapter.

**Passive solar gain** - refer to paragraph 6.5.14 of the Environment Chapter and paragraphs 7.6.4 - 7.6.6 of the Natural Resources Chapter.

**Storm-water run-off** - large car parks associated with out-of-centre stores can cause problems in respect of storm water run-off (refer to paras. 17-21 of Circular 30/92). In some cases, such risks may also pertain to existing centres near to flood risk areas, such as Boldon Colliery. Where these are known they are shown on the Proposals Map in relation to Proposal ENV17/1. Reference should be also made, in relation to the limitations of the available data, to paragraph 6.8.3 of the Environment Chapter. In other words, such risks may also exist elsewhere.

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14.6.5 In pursuit of Policy S2, particularly sub-section C):

## Accessibility in Shopping Centres for People with Disabilities

**S2/1 The Local Planning Authority will maximise accessibility to shops and other local services within retail areas by:**

- a) encouraging the retention of a widespread distribution of existing shops and associated outlets;
- b) negotiating the provision of fully accessible public toilet facilities in large stores and shopping centres;
- c) refusing planning permission for new or altered shop fronts which replace sloping shop accesses with steps; and
- d) implementing schemes which improve access for people with disabilities within existing shopping centres.

**If necessary, the Local Planning Authority will use planning conditions and, where appropriate, seek planning obligations to ensure that these objectives are achieved.**

The relevant part of Target ST6.4 from the Environment topic Chapter (6) is reproduced here as Target ST14.3:

### **TARGET ST14.3**      **Guidance on Accessible Buildings in Shopping Areas**

The Borough Council will publish general guidance on access for people with disabilities by 2001. Those of most relevance to town and district centres will be:

- a) Shops;
- b) Public Houses and Clubs;
- c) Leisure facilities;
- d) Offices; and
- e) Other public buildings.

14.6.6 In pursuit of sub-sections A) and F) of Policy S2:

## **Development Control - Shop Front Security and Amusement Centres**

**S2/2 The Local Planning Authority will determine applications for:**

- a) Shop fronts and shop front security; and
- b) Amusement centres;

**in accordance with the relevant development control policies in this Plan.**

The development control policies to which Proposal S2/2 refers can be found in Policy S2 and Proposal S2/1, and in Supplementary Planning Guidance Notes.

## **Development Outside Existing Centres**

14.6.7 The Borough Council wishes to direct retail and appropriate non-retail urban development to existing shopping centres wherever possible. There may be circumstances, however where alternative locations are required. As has already been indicated, the Local Planning Authority believes that such occasions will be extremely rare (refer to para. 14.3.4). In such instances, it is important that the vitality and viability of existing centres is maintained and that sustainable development is advanced. All types of retail development are covered by Policy S3, including retail warehouses and convenience superstores, but not including local shops which are covered by Policies S9 and S10. Attention is also drawn to 3 other sets of criteria of relevance to proposals for retail and associated development:

- a) Proposal ENV25/1 - in line with government policy, there will be a presumption against retail development in the Green Belt (refer to Section 6.11 of the Environment Chapter);
- b) Policy ED3 resists any major retail development in areas defined on the Proposals Map as Predominantly Industrial Areas (refer to Section 9.6 of the Economic Development Chapter); and
- c) Policies RL4, RL5 and RL6 set open space and playing fields standards, which should not be breached by retail or any other development. (refer to Sections 11.7 and 11.8 of the Sport, Recreation and Leisure Chapter).

14.6.8 Therefore, any retail or non-retail urban development proposal outside existing centres will be required to meet all of the following criteria:

**Development Outside Established Centres**

**S3 THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR RETAIL AND NON-RETAIL URBAN DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE EXISTING SHOPPING CENTRES IF ALL OF THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE SATISFIED:**

- A) THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF ANY ESTABLISHED CENTRE IS NOT UNDERMINED;**
- B) THERE WOULD BE NO UNACCEPTABLE IMPACT ON THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT OR ON THAT OF NEARBY SHOPPING CENTRES AND SUBURBAN SHOPS;**
- C) THE RESULTING DEVELOPMENT WOULD BE ACCESSIBLE TO, AND INCORPORATE ADEQUATE FACILITIES FOR PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE HIGHWAY AUTHORITY;**
- D) THE PROPOSAL COULD NOT BE ACCOMMODATED, FIRSTLY, WITHIN AN EXISTING TOWN CENTRE, OR, SECONDLY, ON AN EDGE OF TOWN CENTRE SITE, OR, THIRDLY, WITHIN ANOTHER MAIN SHOPPING CENTRE OR NEIGHBOURHOOD SHOPPING CENTRE, AS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP; AND**
- E) THERE WOULD BE NO SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN THE NUMBER AND LENGTH OF CAR JOURNEYS.**

**THIS POLICY DOES NOT REFER TO LOCAL SHOPS WHICH ARE COVERED BY POLICIES S9 AND S10.**

For the purposes of Policy S3, non-retail urban development refers to all other key town centre uses which attract large numbers of people, including commercial and public offices, leisure and entertainment facilities, museums and libraries, hotels, restaurants, pubs, bars and cafes, and other such uses. These are covered under the following categories of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987:

- a) A2 Financial and Professional Services;
- b) A3 Food and Drink;
- c) A (Sui Generis);

- d) B1(a) Business (Offices, not within A2);
- e) C1 Hotels, etc.;
- f) D1 Non-residential Institutions;
- g) D2 Assembly and Leisure; and
- h) D (Sui Generis).

**Vitality and Viability**

14.6.9 PPG6 offers some advice on criteria for measuring the vitality and viability of existing centres (refer to para. 14.5.3). It also advises that:

“In order to monitor the health of their town centres, local authorities should regularly collect information on key indicators ... This should enable early signs of decline to be identified, a fuller analysis to be made if necessary, and appropriate action to be taken.” (para. 2.7)

Such considerations are comparatively new: the latest version of PPG6 was published in June 1996 and the Department of the Environment’s advice on good practice: “Vital and Viable Town Centres: Meeting the Challenge” was issued in May 1994. At national, regional and local levels further research is still necessary. The Development Services Department has recently commissioned work on commercial yields in the period 1988-94 (refer to para. 14.5.3) in the 6 largest shopping centres in the Borough. Target ST14.4 commits the Borough Council to continuing its existing activities on vitality and viability.

**TARGET ST14.4**

**Measuring the Vitality and Viability of Shopping Centres and Suburban Shops - Existing Indicators**

The Borough Council will continue to assess the vitality and viability of retail centres and suburban shops in South Tyneside by:

- a) Monitoring the occupancy and vacancy of retail and associated properties; and
- b) Commissioning work on the commercial yield of properties in the largest shopping centres.

Reference should also be made to Target ST14.2 (para. 14.5.6).

14.6.10 Target ST14.5 outlines the additional measures that the Borough Council is now proposing to introduce in the period up to 2001:

**TARGET ST14.5**      **Measuring the Vitality and Viability of Shopping Centres and Suburban Shops - New Indicators**

The Borough Council will supplement its existing research into the vitality and viability of retail centres and suburban shops in South Tyneside. By 2001 it will:

- a) Research and publish a locally-based list of sustainability criteria to be used in assessing planning applications for major retail facilities; and
- b) Select and begin to monitor a series of key sustainability indicators which assess the retail health of both shopping centres and groups of suburban shops.

In relation to part b) of Target ST14.5 it is possible that different ranges of indicators could be used for retail centres and suburban shopping parades.

**14.7      South Shields Town Centre**

14.7.1 South Shields Town Centre is the largest shopping centre in the Borough and the fourth largest (after Newcastle, Sunderland and the MetroCentre) in Tyne and Wear. In 1996, it had about 150 occupied shops comprising 24,668 square metres of selling space. 63% of this space (19,401 sqm net) sold durable or service goods. 2,270 people were employed in retail and associated trades in 1991. The employees were mostly female (73%) including a high proportion of part-timers (42%). In addition, there is an open-air market on Mondays, Wednesdays (Summer only), Fridays and Saturdays. South Shields town centre's catchment area extends over the whole of the Borough and beyond (to the north and south). In 1991, public transport was by far the most popular means of travel to this centre (48% of trips) and it has the benefit of a Metro station in a central location.

14.7.2 The nature of this town centre is also significantly different in the way it is treated by this Plan. This is because it is approached not just as a shopping centre per se but as a wider, multi-functional town centre. This is shown, for example, by the extent of the area enclosed in the town centre boundary on the Proposals Map. This unique nature is, consequently, reflected in the town centre's treatment in terms of policies and proposals in both this Chapter and elsewhere in the Plan. Particular attention is drawn to Sections 9.7 and 9.10 (Economic Development), 11.7 (Sport, Recreation and Leisure), 12.4 (Social and Community Facilities), and 13.7, 13.10, 13.11, 13.16 and 13.17 (Transportation).

14.7.3 The main shopping issues in South Shields town centre are:

- a) creating and enhancing a secure and sustainable retail environment;
- b) improving access for non-car users; particularly pedestrians, people with disabilities, elderly people, those vulnerable to attack and those encumbered by children or shopping;
- c) maintaining and adding to the vitality and viability of the whole town centre;
- d) allocating and recycling sites for new retail and non-retail development;
- e) delineating those parts of the town centre which are appropriate and those which are inappropriate for retail, service, leisure and other town centre uses; and
- f) utilising urban heritage features to act as a focus of sustainable urban regeneration.



14.7.4 King Street, the main shopping street, is pedestrianised and contains the largest stores including Marks and Spencer, Boots, Etam and Woolworths. The pedestrianisation also includes parts of Fowler Street, North Street and Ocean Road (west) where the largest units are Safeway, Woods and Asda. Recent developments include the introduction of closed-circuit television into the pedestrianised area of the centre. This has been supplemented by the use of retractable bollards to restrict the hours at which service traffic has access to premises in this area. The combination of these measures has been successful in reducing crime in this centre. The Customs

House Arts Centre at Mill Dam, on the western fringe of the town centre, opened in late November 1994. It acts as a major leisure and cultural facility for the Borough as a whole. It provides for theatre performances and marks the re-introduction of a commercial cinema to South Tyneside. Therefore:

## South Shields Town Centre

**S4 THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE ROLE OF SOUTH SHIELDS TOWN CENTRE AS THE PRIMARY RETAIL, COMMERCIAL, CULTURAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE CENTRE IN SOUTH TYNESIDE BY GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION FOR, OR IMPLEMENTING, SCHEMES WHICH:**

- A) ENHANCE THE IMAGE OF THE TOWN CENTRE AS A SAFE PLACE TO SHOP AND WORK, AND A LOCATION IN WHICH RETAILERS WILL INVEST;**
- B) IMPROVE THE APPEARANCE OF, AND BRING INTO BENEFICIAL USE, ANY VACANT AND UNTIDY LAND;**
- C) INCREASE OR DIVERSIFY THE ATTRACTIONS AND SHOPPING OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOROUGH RESIDENTS;**
- D) ENHANCE ACCESSIBILITY TO AND WITHIN THE CENTRE FOR PEDESTRIANS AND PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES;**
- E) UPGRADE ACCESS AND FACILITIES FOR CYCLISTS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS;**
- F) RATIONALISE PROVISION FOR CAR AND CYCLE PARKING IN ACCORDANCE WITH ITS APPROVED STANDARDS; OR**
- G) MAINTAIN OR RE-INTRODUCE USES INTO HISTORIC BUILDINGS WHICH WILL CONSERVE THEIR SPECIAL ARCHITECTURAL OR HISTORIC INTEREST.**

The details of the various parts of Policy S4 can be found in its consequent Proposals (S4/1 to S4/6), plus Policies ENV6, ENV7, ENV8, ED4, RL3, SC3, SC4, T9, T10 and T11, and Proposals ENV4/1, ENV4/2, ENV7/1, ENV7/3, ENV8/1, ENV8/2, ED4/1 - ED4/6, ED5/1, SC1/1, SC2/1, T6/4, T6/5, T10/2, T11/1, T16/1, T17/3, T17/4 and Appendix T(A).

14.7.5 In pursuit of Policy S4, Proposal S4/1 identifies the primary shopping frontages within South Shields town centre:

### South Shields Town Centre - Consolidation of Shopping Facilities

**S4/1 The Local Planning Authority will consolidate the pattern and distribution of existing shopping facilities by maintaining the existing hierarchy of shopping streets, as shown on the Proposals Map, with:**

- a) King Street and Fowler Street (between its junctions with Keppel Street and King Street) as the primary shopping frontages; and**
- b) the remainder of the town centre streets, where retail uses already predominate, as secondary shopping streets.**

**New development within this hierarchy will be considered according to Proposals S4/2 and S4/3.**

The District Valuer has identified King Street and the Denmark Centre as the best performing retail frontages in South Shields town centre. They also focus the most important shops in the centre (including most of those occupied by national retail businesses) in an accessible, identifiable, vital and vibrant retail core. At times of cyclical decline in the shopping property market, however, some units come under pressure for changes of use into financial services (A2) or food and drink (A3) outlets. The Borough Council believes that the continuity of the primary shopping frontages should not be sacrificed for the temporary, and perhaps illusory, gain of ensuring the occupation of an underused or vacant shop which would still function viably in slightly more prosperous times. Secondary shopping streets are those in which additional non-retail uses will be encouraged alongside retail in order to diversify the attractions of the town centre.

14.7.6 Proposal S4/1 has already identified the parts of the town centre which represent the primary shopping frontages, not only in South Shields town centre but also in the Borough as a whole. In pursuit of Policy S4, Proposal S4/2 protects retail units in these primary shopping frontages from changes of use:

### South Shields Town Centre - Primary Shopping Frontages

**S4/2 In the primary shopping frontages of South Shields Town Centre, the Local Planning Authority will refuse planning permission for the change of use of ground floor retail premises.**

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The Borough Council seeks to ensure that there should be no net increase in ground floor non-A1 retail premises within the town centre primary shopping frontages. Changes of use could, however, be considered in the case of an effective transfer of Use Class designation. For example, an extant A2/A3 use may be revoked from one location in return for permission being granted in another, although remaining subject to considerations of potential cumulative effects.

14.7.7 There is a place for additional non-shopping uses in the town centre, and this is in the secondary shopping streets defined in Proposal S4/1 where diversification has most to contribute:

### **South Shields Town Centre - Secondary Shopping Streets**

**S4/3 In the secondary shopping streets of South Shields Town Centre, the Local Planning Authority will determine applications for the change of use of ground floor shop premises in terms of the potential impact of the proposal on the character, function and vitality of the street.**

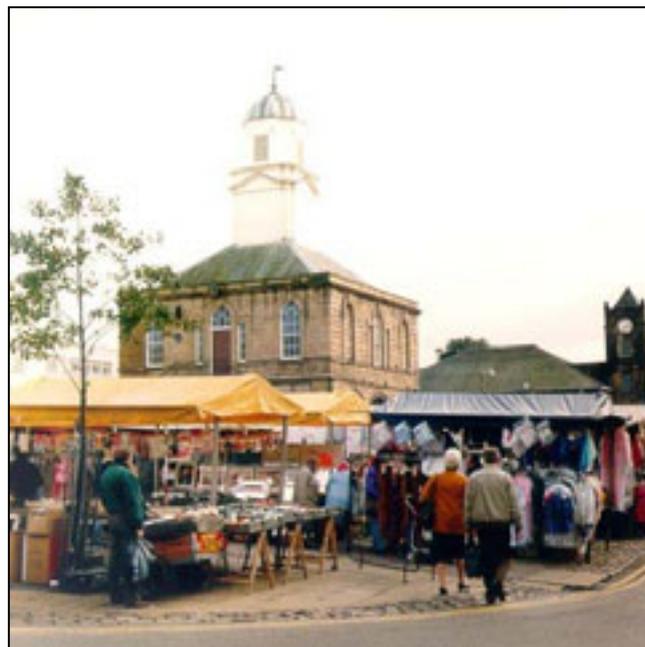
The main factor in assessing the potential impact of a proposal will be the existing uses in the particular street which determine its character and function. Secondary shopping streets are characterised by their mix of retail and non-retail uses. In order to retain this diversity, over-concentration of single uses and lengths of dead frontages will be discouraged. If the proposed new use is an amusement arcade or centre reference should also be made to Proposal S2/2 and Supplementary Planning Guidance.

14.7.8 Also in pursuit of Policy S4:

### **South Shields Town Centre - The Market Place**

**S4/4 In order to improve the vitality, and diversify the use, of the Market Place, the Borough Council will:**

- a) **relocate bus stops and lay-over facilities away from the perimeter roadway;**
- b) **restrict the use of the perimeter roadway to essential service vehicles and seek an alternative access for all other vehicles; and**
- c) **after, in the opinion of the Local Planning Authority, satisfactory progress has been made in achieving both these measures, implement environmental improvements to the appearance and setting of the Market Place.**



14.7.9 The Market Place is treated separately, owing to its special character. It forms the paved setting for the Grade I Listed Old Town Hall, and is the venue for the open air market (refer to para. 14.7.1). Various measures have already been implemented, but much remains to be done. Significant progress will only be made when it is possible to relocate bus stops to an alternative location (refer also to Proposal T10/2 and its associated Target ST13.5). In order to fully assess the retail function and importance of South Shields Market, Target ST14.6 has been set:

### **TARGET ST14.6 South Shields Market**

The Borough Council will commission and implement a research survey of the retail function and importance of South Shields Market by 2001.

14.7.10 Proposal S4/5 clarifies the position regarding the sale of bulky goods in South Shields:

### **South Shields Town Centre - Retail Warehouses**

**S4/5 The Local Planning Authority will continue to use planning conditions and seek planning obligations and other legal agreements to limit existing and proposed retail warehouses at Station Road, South Shields, to the sale of bulky goods. The sale of other goods will only be permitted where they form an ancillary part of this primary function.**

There are currently only 3 retail warehouses operating in South Tyneside. All of these are located in Station Road, South Shields. It is important to ensure that they do not develop in a manner which would prejudice the vitality and viability of the town centre. The classes of goods that they sell are controlled by planning obligation. The area concerned is shown on the Proposals Map.

14.7.11 For the purposes of Proposal S4/5, “bulky goods” are defined as those goods which are, by virtue of their size, shape and/or weight, difficult to carry easily, and result in the requirement of facilities such as large storage, display and car parking areas. Appropriate goods therefore include:

- bulky DIY and garden goods, furniture, carpets and floor coverings, motor vehicle goods, cycle goods and bulky electrical goods.

Goods outside this range, but which may also be defined as bulky, will require written confirmation from the Local Planning Authority that they are acceptable under the bulky goods category. Bulky goods do not include small items which, as part of the store’s operation, are sold in bulk.

This Proposal simply reinforces the status of current agreements at all three outlets. It also reaffirms the Local Planning Authority’s intention to continue such arrangements should new owners or occupiers seek to become established in these units. The Proposal only places restriction on this area, as shown on the Proposals Map. It does not apply elsewhere, in either South Shields town centre or in the remainder of the Borough.

14.7.12 Proposal S4/6 allocates land in South Shields town centre for development:

**South Shields Town Centre - Development Opportunities**

**S4/6 The Local Planning Authority will permit:**

- a) **the redevelopment of the land and buildings at Keppel Street, as shown on the Proposals Map, for mixed town centre uses which may include assembly and leisure (Class D2), non-residential institutions (Class D1), retail (Class A1), financial and professional services (Class A2), food and drink outlets (Class A3) or dwelling houses (Class C3);**
- b) **the redevelopment of the properties in Charlotte Street and East Back Fowler Street, as shown on the Proposals Map, for retail (Class A1) or business (Class B1) uses; and**
- c) **the re-use or renovation of obsolescent premises for replacement retail units.**

The sites indicated in sub-sections a) and b) of Proposal S4/6 are shown on the Proposals Map. The current users of the Keppel Street site (Northumbria Police, the Magistrates Court and the Fire Station and Training School) have firm plans to relocate to sites which better suit their operational requirements. This site provides an opportunity for redevelopment to complement the existing uses of the town centre and to diversify its attractions and shopping opportunities.

**14.8 Jarrow Town Centre**

14.8.1 This centre is the second largest in South Tyneside and, with 7,866 square metres of occupied selling space in 1996, is the fourteenth largest in Tyne and Wear. Most of the shops lie within the Viking Centre which was refurbished in 1992. 43% of the space in the centre as a whole sells durable goods or provides a service. Its catchment area extends throughout the Jarrow and Hebburn area, but the proportion of residents’ trade which it attracts (or trade draw rate) is marginally greater for convenience spending (39%) than for durables (37%). The most popular means of transport for shoppers is public transport (45%), and a further 26% arrive on foot. In 1991, 713 people were employed here in retail and associated trades; 76% of the employees were women and 49% of jobs were part-time.



14.8.2 By 1991, the occupied shopping floorspace had decreased by 39% from its 1971 level of 11,705 square metres. This is indicative of the decline in trade that occurred in that period. Between 1991 and 1996 there was some recovery with an increase of 20% largely as a result of the In-Shops and Kwiksave units opening in the last quarter of 1994. The Borough Council and, during its existence, the Tyne and Wear Development Corporation, are seeking to:

- a) continue to reverse this decline;
- b) stabilise or slightly increase retail floorspace provision;
- c) enhance the shopping environment in a sustainable manner; and

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- d) implement measures to increase the safety of shoppers and the security of town centre premises in a way which complements the CCTV facility.

Consequently:

### Jarrow Town Centre

**S5 THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL SEEK TO CONTINUE THE RECOVERY OF JARROW TOWN CENTRE BY GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION FOR PROPOSALS WHICH WILL:**

- A) **IMPLEMENT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT SCHEMES IN AND AROUND THE MAIN SHOPPING PRECINCT;**
- B) **MAINTAIN A MODERN RETAIL ENVIRONMENT IN THE PRECINCT;**
- C) **PROVIDE ENHANCED SECURITY FOR BOTH SHOPPERS AND SHOPKEEPERS;**
- D) **DIVERSIFY THE CENTRE'S ATTRACTIONS TO BOROUGH RESIDENTS; OR**
- E) **ENHANCE ACCESSIBILITY TO AND WITHIN THE CENTRE FOR PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS.**

14.8.3 Within Jarrow town centre there are three different types of area:

- a) the primary retail frontages of the centre which should be maintained and enhanced (refer to Proposal S5/1);
- b) the remainder of the precinct where new non-retail uses are also acceptable (refer to Proposal S5/2); and
- c) the rest of the town centre where a range of uses may be suitable, provided that the overall provision of retail floorspace is not significantly increased and that the residential amenity of nearby premises is protected (refer to Proposals S5/3 and S5/4).

As a result there is a lot less scope for the conversion of upper floor premises into residential use there than elsewhere in the Borough.

14.8.4 In pursuit of Policy S5:

### Jarrow Town Centre - Primary Shopping Frontages

**S5/1 In the primary shopping frontages of Jarrow town centre, as defined on the Proposals Map, the Local Planning Authority will refuse planning permission for the change of use of ground floor retail premises.**

The Borough Council seeks to ensure that there should be no net increase in ground floor non-A1 retail premises within the town centre primary shopping frontages. Changes of use could, however, be considered in the case of an effective transfer of Use Class designation. For example, an extant A2/A3 use may be revoked from one location in return for permission being granted in another, although remaining subject to considerations of potential cumulative effects.

### Jarrow Town Centre - The Shopping Precinct (non-primary shopping frontage)

**S5/2 In the shopping precinct, but not the primary shopping frontages, of Jarrow town centre the Local Planning Authority will grant planning permission for the use of ground and first floor premises for retail, financial and professional services and food and drink outlets.**

For the purposes of all these Proposals (S5/1-S5/4) the following definitions, from the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 will apply:

- a) Shops/retail premises (Class A1);
- b) Financial and professional services (Class A2);
- c) Food and drink outlets (Class A3);
- d) Quasi-retail uses (Classes A2 and A3).

14.8.5 Also in pursuit of Policy S5:

### Jarrow Town Centre - Land adjacent to Monkton Road

**S5/3 Land shown on the Proposals Map adjacent to Monkton Road in Jarrow Town Centre will be allocated for a mixed development of town centre uses which:**

- a) **could include retail and community uses and open space;**
- b) **excludes all entertainment uses;**
- c) **complements the uses in the existing shopping precinct; and**
- d) **do not adversely affect the residential amenity of the neighbourhood.**

**Jarrow Town Centre - Grange Road, Grange Road West and Ellison Street**

**S5/4 The Local Planning Authority will support the current range of retail, quasi-retail, office and public facilities in those parts of Ellison Street, Grange Road and Grange Road West shown on the Proposals Map. Applications for changes of use will only be granted planning permission where the residential amenity of nearby premises is maintained.**

In addition to those definitions in paragraph 14.8.4, the following definition from the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 will apply:

- a) Community uses/public facilities - Class D1 (non-residential institutions);
- b) Entertainment uses - Class D2 (Assembly and Leisure) plus Discotheques.

14.8.6 The area of Jarrow town centre based on Ellison Street, Grange Road and Grange Road West consists of a mixture of public buildings and commercial uses including offices, financial services and retailing. Many of the properties have either been the subject of unsympathetic elevational treatment, whilst a limited number require significant investment to bring them back to productive use. Improvements to street surfacing and furniture are required to create an attractive environment for town centre users and local residents. A comprehensive review of access arrangements, car and cycle parking provision, public transport facilities and traffic management is required. The most appropriate mechanism for achieving these objectives would be to declare a Commercial Improvement Area. At present, regrettably, sufficient resources to fund the necessary works are not available. Consequently Target ST14.7 has been set:

**TARGET ST14.7 Proposed Commercial Improvement Area**

The Borough Council will aim to identify sufficient resources to enable a Commercial Improvement Area in Jarrow Town Centre to be declared by 2001.

The designation will seek to:

- a) enhance the appearance of buildings;
- b) implement environmental improvements, especially to the floorscape and street furniture; and
- c) improve accessibility, parking and traffic circulation in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

**14.9 Hebburn Town Centre**

14.9.1 Hebburn town centre is a smaller shopping area than Jarrow or South Shields town centres, consisting of 2,759 square metres of occupied retail sales floorspace (in 1996), 52% of which sells convenience goods. This is reflected by the fact that some 66% of shoppers travelled here on foot. Its catchment area is largely restricted to the three Hebburn Wards of Hebburn Quay, Hebburn South and Monkton (refer to Map 1.3), from which it draws 32% of residents' convenience spending but only 15% of durable expenditure. The centre is focused upon a shopping precinct, an integral part of a 1960s comprehensive redevelopment scheme, which also includes several high-rise housing blocks and associated community uses. The shopping precinct now has a high number of vacant units and is in need of major refurbishment. Since 1985 over 1,000 new dwellings have been built in the town centre's catchment area. A 704 square metre discount supermarket opened here in late 1994. Therefore:

**Hebburn Town Centre**

**S6 THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO REVERSE THE DECLINE OF HEBBURN TOWN CENTRE BY GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION FOR, AND OTHERWISE ENABLING, PROPOSALS WHICH WILL:**

- A) ENCOURAGE THE PRECINCT OWNERS TO DEVISE AND IMPLEMENT A COMPREHENSIVE REFURBISHMENT SCHEME TO MEET SHOPPERS' EXPECTATIONS OF MODERN RETAIL ENVIRONMENTS;**
- B) MAINTAIN A MODERN RETAIL ENVIRONMENT IN THE PRECINCT;**
- C) PROVIDE ENHANCED SECURITY FOR BOTH SHOPPERS AND SHOPKEEPERS;**
- D) DIVERSIFY THE CENTRE'S ATTRACTIONS TO BOROUGH RESIDENTS;**
- E) IMPROVE ACCESS AND FACILITIES TO AND WITHIN THE TOWN CENTRE FOR PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS, PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS; OR**
- F) IMPLEMENT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS WITHIN AND ADJOINING THE TOWN CENTRE.**

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14.9.2 Proposals S6/1 and S6/2 seek to:

- a) protect the primary retail frontages of the centre from additional non-retail uses (Proposal S6/1);
- b) permit a variety of uses elsewhere so that they might enhance, and not detract from the vitality and viability of Hebburn Town Centre as a whole (Proposal S6/2); and
- c) upgrade shop fronts on Station Road (Proposal S6/2).

In pursuit of Policy S6:

### Hebburn Town Centre - Primary Shopping Frontages

**S6/1 In the primary shopping frontages of Hebburn Town Centre, as defined on the Proposals Map, the Local Planning Authority will refuse planning permission for the change of use of ground floor retail premises.**

A significant number of units within the shopping precinct of Hebburn Town Centre are currently in non-retail uses. Proposal S6/1 seeks to restrict further changes of use which would undermine the shopping function.

### Hebburn Town Centre (non-primary shopping frontages)

**S6/2 In Hebburn Town Centre, but not the primary shopping frontages, the Local Planning Authority will:**

- a) permit the use of ground floor premises for shops, financial and professional services and food and drink outlets, subject to the satisfaction of other Policies and Proposals in this Plan; and
- b) encourage the owners and occupiers on Station Road to improve the appearance of their shop fronts.

### Primary Shopping Frontages Generally

14.9.3 In pursuit of the following Proposals:

- a) S4/1 and S4/2 - South Shields town centre primary shopping frontages;
- b) S5/1 - Jarrow town centre primary shopping frontages; and
- c) S6/1 - Hebburn town centre primary shopping frontages.

Target ST14.8 has been set:

### **TARGET ST14.8**      **Protection of Primary Shopping Frontages**

The Borough Council will monitor the success in retaining the Primary Shopping Frontages of South Shields, Jarrow and Hebburn town centres, with a view to ensuring that the retail character of those centres is maintained.

### 14.10 Other Shopping Centres

14.10.1 The details of these centres: Frederick Street, Harton Nook, Boldon Lane, Dean Road, Ocean Road (east) and Westoe Bridges in South Shields plus Boldon Colliery are summarised in Table 14.2. More recent floorspace data is to be found in Table 14.1.

**Table 14.2: Other Main Shopping Centres**

|                   | 1991                                     |                          | 1988                               |                 |
|-------------------|--|--------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------|
|                   | % of the Borough's Occupied Retail Space | Retail & Associated Jobs | % of the Borough's Shopping Visits | Retail Spending |
| Frederick St      | 6%                                       | 6%                       | 3%                                 | 3%              |
| Boldon Colliery   | 8%                                       | 7%                       | 8%                                 | 9%              |
| Harton Nook       | 4%                                       | 6%                       | 7%                                 | 7%              |
| Boldon Lane       | 2%                                       | 5½%                      | 4%                                 | 3%              |
| Dean Road         | 2%                                       | 3%                       | 1%                                 | ½%              |
| Westoe Bridges    | 1%                                       | 1%                       | 1%                                 | ½%              |
| Ocean Road (East) | ½%                                       | -                        | ½%                                 | ½%              |

Possible measures which could be taken will vary with the size and nature of the centre concerned and the problems and opportunities which arise. Policy S7 sets out a range of possible measures:

### Other Main Shopping Centres

**S7 THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL MAINTAIN AND ENHANCE THE ABILITY OF OTHER MAIN AND DISTRICT SHOPPING CENTRES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THEIR CATCHMENT POPULATIONS BY:**

- A) DECLARING AND MAINTAINING COMMERCIAL IMPROVEMENT AREAS;
- B) ALLOCATING NEW SITES, AND ENABLING THE RECYCLING OF EXISTING LOCATIONS, WITHIN SHOPPING CENTRES FOR NEW RETAIL (CLASS A1), FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (CLASS A2) AND FOOD AND DRINK (CLASS A3) USES;
- C) UNDERTAKING IMPROVEMENTS TO PREMISES AND THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT;

- D) GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION FOR CHANGES OF USE TO AND FROM RETAILING IN A MANNER WHICH CONSOLIDATES OR ENHANCES THE VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF EACH INDIVIDUAL CENTRE;**
- E) BRINGING ANY VACANT AND UNDERUSED LAND INTO PRODUCTIVE USE; OR**
- F) IMPLEMENTING, OR GRANTING PLANNING PERMISSION FOR, SCHEMES WHICH WILL REDUCE TRAFFIC CONGESTION OR ENHANCE FACILITIES FOR PEDESTRIANS, CYCLISTS AND PUBLIC TRANSPORT USERS.**

The detailed implementation of this Policy is covered in Proposals S7/1 - S7/4 and the associated text. The primary catchment areas of these other main shopping centres listed in Table 14.2, in terms of 1982 electoral wards (refer to Map 1.3), are as follows:

- i) Frederick Street - Rekendyke, Tyne Dock and Simonside, Westoe;
- ii) Boldon Colliery - Biddick Hall, Boldon Colliery, Cleadon and East Boldon, Fellgate and Hedworth, Monkton and Primrose;
- iii) Harton Nook - Cleadon Park, Harton, Horsley Hill, West Park, Whitburn and Marsden, Whiteleas;
- iv) Boldon Lane - All Saints, Biddick Hall, Tyne Dock and Simonside, Whiteleas;
- v) Dean Road - Rekendyke, Westoe, West Park;
- vi) Westoe Bridges - Beacon and Bents, Rekendyke, Westoe;
- vii) Ocean Road East - Beacon and Bents, Horsley Hill.



### Commercial Improvement Areas

14.10.2 In pursuit of Policy S7:

#### Commercial Improvement Areas

- S7/1 The Borough Council will maintain the existing designations as Commercial Improvement Areas at:**
- a) Ocean Road East, South Shields; and
  - b) Boldon Lane, South Shields.

### Land Allocations and Underused Land

14.10.3 Also in pursuit of Policy S7:

#### Westoe Bridges: Land Allocation

- S7/2 The site of the former Council Window Factory and the adjacent railway embankment at Victoria Road, South Shields, as shown on the Proposals Map, is allocated for a retail development which will enhance the vitality and viability of Westoe Bridges Shopping Centre.**

This proposal seeks to enhance the status of Westoe Bridges by providing a retail development that will complement the facilities in the existing centre and the adjacent foodstore and provide a local service.

### Consolidation of Centres: Environmental Improvements and Transport Facilities

4.10.4 Also in pursuit of Policy S7:

#### Boldon Lane

- S7/3 The Borough Council will implement comprehensive improvement proposals for Boldon Lane shopping centre which will:**
- a) realign Boldon Lane;
  - b) upgrade pedestrian areas;
  - c) improve the shopping environment by landscaping; and
  - d) improve the physical condition and visual appearance of properties.

This comprehensive scheme centres around the proposed widening and realignment of the section of Boldon Lane between Stanhope Road and Stanley Street. Properties on the western side of the road, directly affected by this proposed scheme, were acquired by the Borough Council and have now been demolished. Reference should also be made to Proposal T5/1 in the Transportation Chapter.

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14.10.5 Also in pursuit of Policy S7:

### **Ocean Road (East), South Shields**

**S7/4 The Local Planning Authority will encourage reinvestment in Ocean Road (East) shopping centre by:**

- a) granting planning permission for the 2 sites shown on the Proposals Map for retail, financial and professional services, and medical or health services development;**
- b) only granting planning permission for the expansion of existing leisure uses or the change of use to new leisure uses where the impact upon the environmental quality or the amenity of neighbouring residents will not, in its opinion, be significant; and**
- c) only granting planning permission for the rear extension of any commercial property when, in its opinion, adequate provision is made or retained for the storage of refuse and returnable containers.**

Ocean Road links South Shields town centre to the seafront. It is occupied on its southern side by restaurants, hot food takeaway premises, amusement centres and shops and on its northern side by a mixture of largely residential uses. The restaurants, many of which specialise in Asian cuisine, attract customers on a sub-regional basis. The Borough Council wishes to support existing leisure and retail uses in this area. It will, however, only grant planning permission for additional leisure uses where proper protection is given to the residential and environmental amenity of the surrounding area. In addition, land allocations are made for the recycling of the sites of the former ABC Cinema and former Congregational Church and Church Hall in a manner which will complement the existing character of the centre. As a whole, this proposal seeks to foster a healthy economy and an attractive environment and visual appearance. For the purposes of Proposal S7/4 the following definitions from the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 apply:

- i) Retail - Class A1 (Shops);
- ii) Financial and professional services - Class A2;
- iii) Medical or Health Services - Class D1 (non-residential institutions);

iv) Leisure uses - Classes A3 (Food and Drink), D2 (Assembly and Leisure) and amusement centres; and

v) Commercial property - Classes A1, A2, A3, B1 (Business), B8 (Storage or Distribution), C1 (Hotels), C2 (Residential Institutions) and Class D2.

14.10.6 In relation to sub-sections D) and F) of Policy S7 the following additional clarification should be noted:

a) Changes of use - two possible scenarios are envisaged:

i) declining centres, where peripheral units will be granted permission for changes from retail in order to consolidate the retail and quasi-retail uses in the centre into a more compact and viable area; and

ii) vibrant centres, where integral or peripheral non-retail units may be permitted to change their use to retail so as to expand the extent of the centre or to secure its vitality and viability. In such instances, the Borough Council might also be looking to allocate or recycle land under sub-section B). Any such allocations should be both adjacent to, and physically linked to, the existing centre - as is the case with Proposal S7/2.

b) Traffic Schemes - reference should be made to the Transportation Chapter, especially Policies T4, T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10, T15, T16 and T17, and Proposals T5/1, T6/1, T9/2, T10/1, T15/1, T17/1 and T17/2.

14.10.7 Proposals S7/2 and S7/4 are the only specific proposals in this Chapter in relation to the other main shopping centres in South Tyneside. It should be noted, however, that other general policies should enable improvements to be implemented as opportunities arise. In this respect, particular attention is also drawn to Policies S2, S3, ED2, ED4, ED6, ED7, ED8, RL2, RL3, RL7, SC2, SC3 and SC4.

### **Neighbourhood Centres**

14.10.8 In South Tyneside the main issue in neighbourhood shopping centres is often the over-provision of retail space as a result of local population decline (refer to para. 14.2.3). This often results in a high proportion of vacant properties and a deterioration in the physical fabric of all buildings due to a lack of reinvestment. The Local Planning Authority wishes to renew the vitality of such centres by encouraging retail uses to concentrate in a smaller viable block in a central location and permitting changes of use to peripheral units:

**Neighbourhood Centres**

**S8 IN NEIGHBOURHOOD SHOPPING CENTRES WHERE, IN THE OPINION OF THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY, THERE IS AN OVER-PROVISION OF RETAIL FLOORSPACE, AND NEW HOUSING PROVISION IN THE SURROUNDING AREA IS UNLIKELY, IT WILL:**

- A) GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR CHANGES OF USE FROM RETAIL TO COMMERCIAL OR RESIDENTIAL USES, WHERE THIS WILL CONCENTRATE THE REMAINING SHOPS INTO A MORE COMPACT AND VIABLE CENTRE OR WILL ENCOURAGE OTHER APPROPRIATE USES WHICH WILL CONTRIBUTE TO AND RENEW THE QUALITY OF NEIGHBOURHOOD CENTRES;**
- B) IMPLEMENT SCHEMES TO IMPROVE THE BUILT FABRIC OF THE CENTRE AND ITS IMMEDIATE SURROUNDINGS; AND**
- C) GIVE PRIORITY TO RECYCLING ANY VACANT OR UNDERUSED LAND FOR OPEN SPACE OR THE CREATION OF WILDLIFE HABITATS.**

For the purposes of sub-section A) of Policy S8 the following definitions from the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 apply:

- i) Retail/Shop - Class A1;
- ii) Commercial - Classes A2, A3, B1, B8, C1, C2 and D2;
- iii) Residential - C1, C2 and C3 (dwelling houses).

**14.11 Individual Shops Outside Shopping Centres**

14.11.1 The Borough Council will do all that it can to maintain a good basic local shopping service accessible to all residents and visitors (refer to Policy S1A)). There has been an increasing tendency for retail services in South Tyneside to become concentrated in the larger centres. In 1996, 77% of retail floorspace in the Borough was located in only 10 centres. There is still a strong demand from residents for shops within easy walking distance of their homes. The 1988 shopping survey revealed that 37% of all shopping trips were made on foot. Furthermore, in all but the four largest centres over half of shoppers walked

there. 61% of main household shoppers did not have access to a car for any shopping trips. For all these people, and especially for the 23% of main shoppers who have health problems restricting their mobility, individual corner shops provide a useful service. In particular, many open for longer, often unsociable hours when other shops are closed. These policies therefore also compliment Proposal S2/1.

14.11.2 The main control available to the Borough Council is by granting or refusing planning permission, especially for changes of use. This, where necessary in conjunction with planning obligations, will be used to:

- a) retain local services where possible unless an alternative, accessible facility is available (Policy S9); and
- b) encourage new shops to establish in areas where no provision exists, especially in more remote parts of the Borough (Policy S10).

Therefore:

**Local Shops - Proposed Losses**

**S9 THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL NOT GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION FOR THE LOSS, BY CHANGE OF USE, OF EXISTING INDIVIDUAL RETAIL SHOPS OUTSIDE ESTABLISHED CENTRES UNLESS:**

- A) COMPARABLE ALTERNATIVE FACILITIES ARE AVAILABLE WITHIN REASONABLE WALKING DISTANCE; AND**
- B) THE PROPOSED USE MEETS ALL OF THE RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL CRITERIA CONTAINED ELSEWHERE IN THIS PLAN.**

**WHEN OPPORTUNITIES ARISE, THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL SEEK PLANNING OBLIGATIONS OR OTHER LEGAL AGREEMENTS TO MAINTAIN THE CONTINUANCE OF VITAL, BASIC SHOPPING FACILITIES.**

For the purposes of sub-section A) of Policy S9, "reasonable walking distance" will be based upon the guideline figure of 500 metres radius from houses to the nearest alternative. This guide figure will vary according to the configuration of pedestrian routes and any steep gradients in the particular area concerned and its accessibility to people with disabilities. For the purposes

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of Policy S9, basic shopping facilities are those listed under Target ST14.9.

14.11.3 Therefore:

### Local Shops - Proposed Additions

**S10 THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY WILL GRANT PLANNING PERMISSION TO DEVELOP SMALL LOCAL CONVENIENCE SHOPPING OUTLETS OUTSIDE EXISTING CENTRES WHERE THE PROPOSAL SATISFIES ALL OF THE RELEVANT DEVELOPMENT CONTROL CRITERIA CONTAINED ELSEWHERE IN THIS PLAN.**

For the purposes of Policy S10 “small” is defined as not exceeding 100 square metres net or 150 square metres gross (whichever is greatest).

In pursuit of Policies S9 and S10, Target ST14.9 has been set:

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### **TARGET ST14.9**

### **Accessibility of Basic Shopping Facilities**

The Borough Council will continue to monitor the progress of Policies S9 and S10 with a view to ensuring that all Borough residents are within reasonable walking distance of the following basic facilities:

- a) Post Office.
  - b) Chemist.
  - c) Supermarket or grocery shop.
-