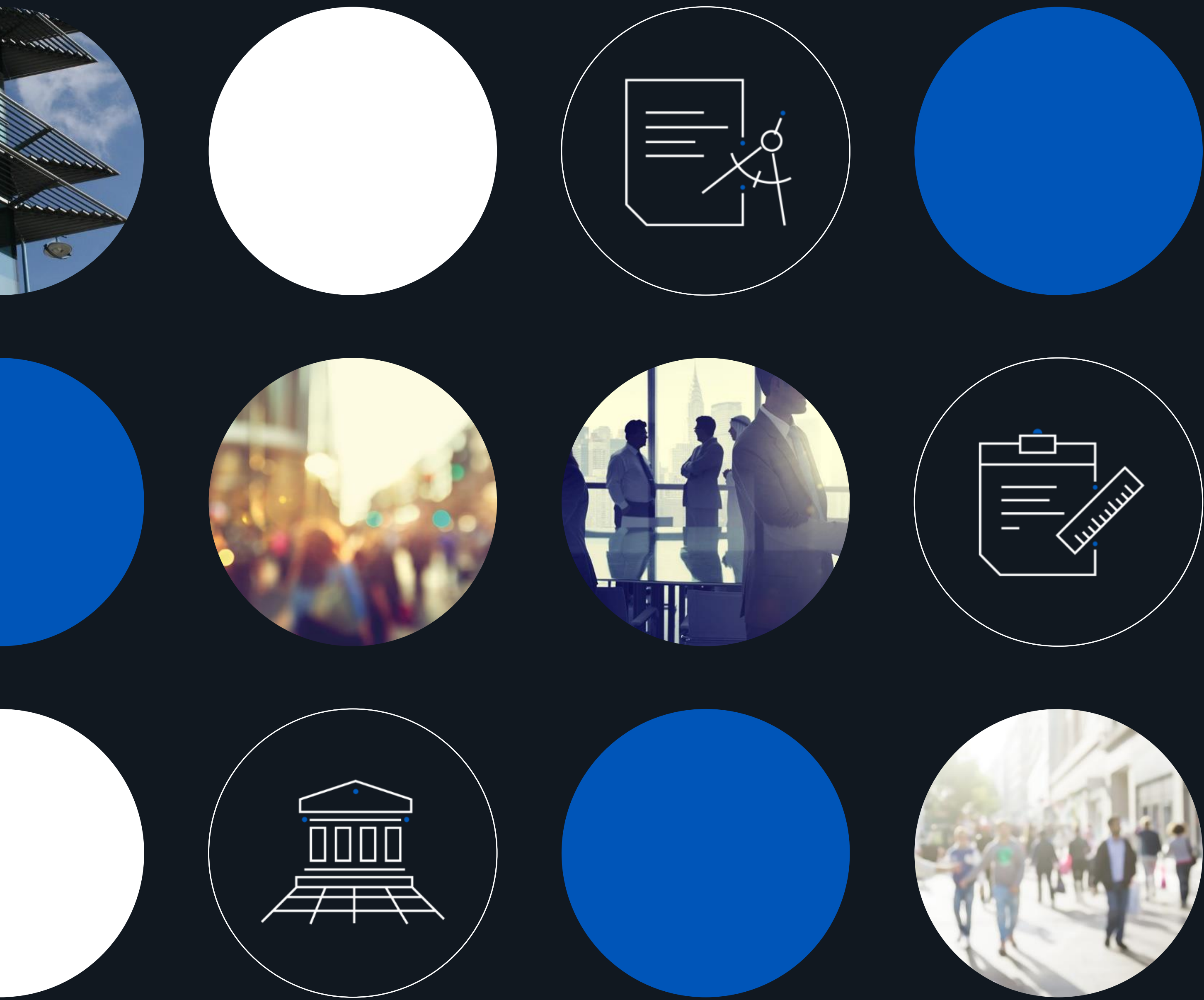
FIRSTPLAN



# Oakham and Uppingham Town Centres – Local Plan Retail Policy Advice

Firstplan for Rutland County Council | Final Report, June 2021

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# Contents



## Appendices or documents

# Section 1 Introduction & structure of report

1.1 Firstplan have been instructed by Rutland County Council to provide retail policy advice to the Council in respect of the Council's policy approach in respect of the retail and town centre policies in the emerging Rutland Local Plan Review, which is currently under preparation with a Regulation 19 consultation held between 27th August and 6th November 2020.

1.2 The review of the policy approach is required following a number of recent changes to national planning policy, as well as regulatory legislature in respect of the Use Classes Order.

1.3 In respect of the former, a reconsideration of the Council's approach to defining Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages is required following a revision to the wording of town centres policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2019). The 2019 iteration of the NPPF removes the requirement for local planning authorities to define Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages in their town centres, but places a requirement for authorities to define Primary Shopping Areas.

1.4 The Reg.19 Local Plan (and accompanying Policies Maps) does not define Primary Shopping Areas for the authority's two town centres of Oakham and Uppingham, and therefore to be consistent with the requirements of the NPPF, this exercise needs to be undertaken. The Reg.19 does define Primary Shopping Frontages for the two centres, which is no longer a requirement under the amended NPPF, although the accompanying PPG identifies that authorities can retain this if there is a robust case for doing so. This study therefore will assist the Council in ensuring its policy approach in respect of town centres is consistent with the requirements of the NPPF in this respect.

1.5 The recent changes to the Use Classes Order, and most specifically the introduction of new Use Class E and recent changes to Permitted Development Rights (PDRs) also presents challenges to the policy approach set out in the Reg.19 consultation. The report summarises these changes and provides recommendations for an appropriate policy response. However, it is important to note that, in the context of the significant number of changes in planning legislation which are currently taking place, the advice set out in this report provides a 'snapshot' correct at the time of report finalisation in April 2021. Should further changes to the Use Classes order and/or PDRs come forward in respect of town centres, there may be a future need to update the findings of this report.

**UPDATING THE EVIDENCE**

1.6 The rationale for the town centre boundaries and PSF designations as currently proposed was originally set out in the 'Oakham & Uppingham Town Centre Boundaries Study' (Roger Tym & Partners, 2012), which has in turn informed the Council's approach to its town centres both in the adopted Rutland Local Plan Site Allocations and Policies DPD (SAP) (adopted 2013) and the consultation drafts of the Local Plan

Review. In order to provide a consistent approach to the evidence base, we have sought to update the findings of the previous study (referred to throughout this report as 'the 2012 Study'), where relevant.

1.4 In order to ensure that the Council's new Local Plan has a robust, evidence-based policy approach, the findings and recommendations of the study are informed by new primary evidence in the form of an audit of commercial uses and planning permissions in the County's two town centres, Oakham and Uppingham, to inform the definition of an appropriate Primary Shopping Area for each centre. The purpose of this exercise is to establish the extent to which the composition of the Oakham and Uppingham town centres has evolved since the 2012 Study, and in particular to see whether the centres have followed trends seen in many centres across the country where a more diverse mixture of uses in town centres has begun to come forward in response to a declining retail function.

## STRUCTURE OF REPORT

1.5 Our report is set out as follows:

- **Section 2** provides an updated policy and development management context, summarising changes to the NPPF, Use Classes Order, as well as changes to PDRs

- **Section 3** provides a market context overview. This provides important background context for the changes in the national policy approach which have come forward in recent years. The rationale behind the NPPF's removal of the requirement for local planning authorities to define PSFs was the changes in shopping patterns which have taken places in recent years, largely as a consequence of the continued growth of online shopping, which has resulted in a diversification of activity in many town centres away from a predominantly retail-based function. In this section, an overview of these changes is set out.

- **Section 4** sets out an updated assessment of commercial uses in Oakham and Uppingham town centres, based on a review of sub-areas in each town centre, which updates a similar exercise undertaken for the 2012 Study. The findings of this assessment are then used to develop recommendations on the extent of definition of Primary Shopping Areas in each town centre.

- **Section 5** draws the analysis of the preceding sections together to review the appropriateness of the Council's retail policies as set out in the emerging Local Plan, suggest alternative wording where appropriate, and details other measures which the Council can apply in order to support the vitality and viability of their town centres over the course of the new Local Plan period.

- **Section 6** sets out conclusions.

## SUMMARY OF ABBREVIATIONS USED IN REPORT

| | |
|---|---|
| **NPPF** | National Planning Policy Framework (refers to 2019 iteration unless stated otherwise) |
| **PPG** | Planning Practice Guidance |
| **UCO** | Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended) |
| **RCC** | Rutland County Council ('the Council') |
| **PSF** | Primary Shopping Frontage |
| **SSF** | Secondary Shopping Frontage |
| **PSA** | Primary Shopping Area |
| **PDR** | Permitted Development Rights |

# Section 2 Overview of changes to national policy and permitted development

## NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY

2.1 Current national policy in respect of retail and other 'main town centre uses' is set out in the NPPF, originally published by Government in 2012 with a revision published in 2019.

2.2 Section 3 of the NPPF (2019) sets out the requirements which local planning authorities should follow when preparing development plans. It states that '*succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for addressing housing needs and other economic, social and environmental priorities'* (para.15). Development plans should include strategic policies to address the local planning authority's priorities for the development of an area. Non-strategic policies should be used by local planning authorities '*to set out more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development. This can include allocating sites, the provision of infrastructure and community facilities at a local level, establishing design principles, conserving and enhancing the natural and historic environment and setting out other development management policies.'*

**The NPPF's approach to town centres**

2.3 Successive national planning guidance (the NPPF, and Planning Policy Guidance Notes before it) sought to advocate a 'town centres first' approach to development. Section 7 of the NPPF (2019) 'Ensuring the vitality of town centres' specifically considers this. It states that '*Planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptatio*n' (para.85) and that planning policies should, inter alia:

- *'define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters';* and
- *'define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, and make clear the range of uses permitted in such locations, as part of a positive strategy for the future of each centre'* (our emphasis).

2.4 This report therefore seeks to provide RCC with guidance in respect of the definition of suitable PSAsfor its two town centres, and the range of uses which the council should seek to support in these areas.

2.5 In order to do so, however, it necessary to examine the definitions which the NPPF applies to 'town centres' and 'primary shopping areas'. These are provided at Annex 2 of the NPPF and are reproduced in **Table 2.1** below. The equivalent definitions from the 2012 iteration of the NPPF are also provided for reference in Table 2.1, and it can be seen that the current (2019) NPPF:

- Removes references to 'Primary Shopping Frontages' in its definition of the 'Primary Shopping Area', instead describing PSAs as a '*defined area where retail development is concentrated'*;

- Does not explicitly define what 'retail development' is, although the separate definition of 'main town centre uses' (also shown in the table below) defines retail development as '*including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres*'. For the purposes of this report, we have considered that 'retail development' to be that which falls within part (a) of Use Class E (discussed further below), which is use of a unit for '*for the display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food, principally to visiting members of the public'*;

- Removes any reference to 'Primary Shopping Frontages' or 'Secondary Shopping Frontages' in its glossary of terms at Annex 2; and

- Retains a virtually unchanged definition of 'main town centre uses'.

**Table 2.1 – Definition of key terms in the NPPF (2012 and 2019)**

| Definition | NPPF (2012) | NPPF (2019) |
|---|---|---|
| Town Centre | An area which '*includes the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area'*. | |
| Primary Shopping Area (PSA) | A '*defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage*)' | A '*defined area where retail development is concentrated'* |
| Primary Shopping Frontages (PSF) and Secondary Shopping Frontages (SSF) | '*Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses'.* | No definition |
| Main town centre uses | '*Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation* | '*Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation* |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | *uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).'* | *uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities)'* |

2.6 As can be seen from Table 2.1, the current iteration of the NPPF removes reference to PSF and SSF, both in the text of the main document and in the glossary at Annex 2. Instead, it only requires local planning authorities to define PSAs in their development plan. The consequence of this is that RCC's proposed emerging policy in respect of its approach to development in the County's town centres does not align with current national policy, as both draft policies E9 and E10 make reference to PSFs in their policy wording.

**Planning Practice Guidance**

2.7 PPG 'Town Centres and Retail' (published September 2020) confirms that 'Planning policies are expected to define the extent of primary shopping areas.' It also clarifies the role of PSF and SSF which, as we have identified above, are no longer incorporated into the NPPF. The PPG states that 'authorities may, where appropriate, also wish to define primary and secondary retail frontages where their use can be justified in supporting the vitality and viability of particular centres.'

2.8 The PPG does not seek to clarify how the use of PSF and SSF, which requires a high proportion of units to be in retail uses (as per the definition in the NPPF 2012 shown above), can work alongside the changes to the Use Classes Order which have recently come into force, particularly in respect of the new Use Class E, details of which are set out below.

## CHANGES TO THE USE CLASSES ORDER

2.9 On 1st September 2020 the Government introduced a number of significant changes to the Use Classes Order 1987 (as amended), which have implications for how local planning authorities in planning for their town centres. An overview of these is set out below.

**Use Class E**

2.10 The most significant change put forward in the September 2020 legislation was the introduction of a new Use Class E. The change combines all of the former Use Classes of A1 (shops), A2 (financial and professional), A3 (restaurants and cafes), class B1 (offices), together with parts of class D1 (non-residential institutions) and class D2 (assembly and leisure) into a single Use Class E called 'Commercial, Business and Service'. The extent of operations covered under Use Class E are shown in the text box below.

| |
|---|
| **Box 1 – Use Class E** |
| **E(a)** Display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food |
| **E(b)** Sale of food and drink for consumption (mostly) on the premises |
| **E(c)** Provision of:<br>**E(c)(i)** Financial services,<br>**E(c)(ii)** Professional services (other than health or medical services), or<br>**E(c)(iii)** Other appropriate services in a commercial, business or service locality |
| **E(d)** Indoor sport, recreation or fitness (not involving motorised vehicles or firearms) |
| **E(e)** Provision of medical or health services (except the use of premises attached to the residence of the consultant or practitioner) |
| **E(f)** Creche, day nursery or day centre (not including a residential use) |
| **E(g)** Uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity:<br>**E(g)(i)** Offices to carry out any operational or administrative functions,<br>**E(g)(ii)** Research and development of products or processes<br>**E(g)(iii)** Industrial processes |
| Source: Planning Portal |

2.11 As can be seen from the text box above, Use Class E extends beyond traditional commercial activities to also include medical and health services and creche/nursery facilities. It also incorporates a wide range of leisure uses ('indoor sport, recreation or fitness') and business uses, with part (g) of Class E effectively replacing Class B1(a) to (c).

2.12 It is important to note that Use Class E does not directly correspond to the definition of 'main town centre uses' as defined by the NPPF. Of particular note is that former Use Classes A4 (drinking establishments) and A5 (hot food takeaways), which are considered by the NPPF as 'main town centre uses', are not included within Use Class E and instead are moved to Sui Generis.

2.13 The introduction of Use Class E thus provides greater flexibility, allowing seamless change between any of the different components (a) to (g) within Use Class E without the need for planning permission, as movement from one primary use to another would not constitute 'development'. It also allows different types of class E use to be accommodated within a single unit without requiring planning permission – meaning that, for example, a retail unit or a yoga studio can introduce a customer café without a requirement for planning permission for change of use.

2.14 It should also be noted that Use Class E is not specifically related to town centres, but covers any site currently in operation in one or more of the above uses; in other words, an out of centre supermarket, retail warehouse unit or restaurant would also be considered as a Class E use and would be afforded the same level of flexibility in changing between different components of the use class, unless planning conditions are in place to restrict the range of goods which can be sold.

**Use Class F**

2.15 A series of more protected 'community uses' have been moved into a new Class F 'Local Community and Learning' use class. Class F.1 includes schools, galleries, museums, halls, libraries and places of worship. Class F.2 includes 'essential isolated shops', as well as community halls, outdoor sports facilities and swimming pools/skating rinks.

**Sui Generis uses**

2.16 The former A4 Drinking establishments and A5 Hot food takeaway use classes have been removed and will be considered 'Sui Generis' uses as will cinemas, concert, dance and bingo halls which fell within the former D2 use class. This will mean that changes to and from these uses will be subject to full local consideration through the planning application process.

## PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS IN TOWN CENTRES

2.17 In recent years the Government has sought to introduce a wider range of flexibility into town centres, to reflect their changing role and function. Prior to the recent changes to the Use Classes Order as summarised above, the principal mechanism for this has been through the introduction of new national Permitted Development Rights (PDRs). The rationale for the changes was set out in a consultation paper published by Government in October 2018, which stated that:

> *'The government is committed to helping high streets adapt to meet the range of experiences consumers are demanding. High streets and town centres are already providing a wider range of leisure and community services and business uses alongside traditional high street shops and financial services. Permitted development rights for change from retail and other high street uses would provide a quicker more certain route to enable business to adapt and help town centres to remain vibrant'*

2.18 Accordingly, PDRs have been introduced which allow use of a building to change without requiring planning permission, although in many cases prior approval from the local planning authority is still required. The PPG 'Town Centres and Retail' provides a useful high-level overview of the current permitted development rights applicable to town centres which allow the change of use without any application process, including the following:

- from shops to financial and professional services uses, such as a bank;
- from financial and professional services, a betting shop or pay day loan shop to a shop;
- from a betting shop or pay day loan shop to financial and professional services,
- from a restaurant or café, or a hot food takeaway to a shop or financial or professional services; and
- from a hot food takeaway to a restaurant or café;

2.19 Further permitted development rights allow for a change of use subject to prior approval by the local planning authority on specific planning matters:

- from shops and financial and professional services, a betting shop or pay day loan shop to a restaurant or café;
- from shops and financial and professional services, a betting shop or pay day loan shop to an assembly and leisure use;
- from shops, financial and professional services, a betting shop, pay day loan shop, launderette, and hot food takeaway premises to office use;
- **from shops, financial and professional services, a betting shop, pay day loan shop, launderette, and hot food takeaway premises to residential use;**
- from amusement arcades / centres or casinos to residential use;
- from offices to residential use.

2.20 Of particular note is that conversion of shops and other commercial outlets typically found in town centres e.g. financial and professional services, and takeaways, can convert to residential use (as shown highlighted in bold above). Under the current PDR this is only applicable to units which are under 150 sq.m, and was in use in the uses specified in the bold text above on 20th March 2013. Prior approval is required, which can be refused by the authority where it is 'undesirable' for the building to change use because the impact of the change of use on the 'adequate provision of services' (but only where there is a 'reasonable prospect of the building being used to provide such services')' and *'where the building is located within a key shopping area, on the sustainability of that shopping area'.*

2.21 The PDR set out above will be in place until 31st July 2021, and will be based on the use class of the property as at 31st August 2020. It is then anticipated that new PDR for the revised use classes (as summarised above) will come into effect from 1st August 2021; no consultation on these has taken place at the time of preparation of this study.

2.22 Government has also introduced a separate permitted development right which runs until 31st July 2021 (i.e on a temporary basis) which allows the temporary conversion of uses including shops, financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, hot food takeaways, assembly and leisure uses) to convert temporarily to another use (such as office, shop, financial and professional service, restaurant) for a single continuous period of up to three years, as well as allowing for the temporary change of use to specified community uses (health centre, art gallery, museum, public library, public hall or exhibition hall). Further temporary PDR is also currently in place in response to COVID-19.

2.23 The above summary of PDR should be read in conjunction with the relevant legislation at the legislaton.gov.uk website.

**<u>Permitted Development Rights – Class E to Residential</u>**

2.24 Following consultation in December 2020, the Government confirmed on 31st March 2021 that a new PDR to allow the change of use in England from any use, or mix of uses, from the Commercial, Business and Service use class (Class E) to residential use (Class C3) will be introduced under Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development etc.) (England) Order 2021.

2.25 The new PD rights, which will take effect on 1st August 2021, will allow unused commercial buildings to be granted permission for residential use via a fast-track prior approval process. Councils will only be able to assess prior approval applications on specific considerations, which include flooding, noise from commercial premises and adequate light to habitable rooms. Councils are also able to take into account other site specific such as the impact of the loss of a health service and in conservation areas the impact of the loss of a ground floor Class E use. Of note is that the permitted development rights will apply in Conservation Areas (although not on listed buildings).

2.26 There is a requirement that the building changing use has been vacant for three months before the date of the application to protect successful businesses in existing use. The building must also have been in a commercial, business, or service use for at least two continuous years previously. A size limit of 1,500 square metres of floorspace will also apply, to avoid the loss of larger units (although in Rutland's centres there are very few units which fall above this threshold).

2.27 As these Permitted Development Rights apply to all uses in Class E, they could potentially greatly expand the range of premises granted a right to convert to residential uses.

2.28 The above summary of PDR should again be read in conjunction with the relevant legislation at the legislaton.gov.uk website.

# Section 3 Market context update

3.1 In this section we provide an overview of the current market context within which local planning authorities should plan for vital and viable town centres

3.2 Town centres at all levels of the retail hierarchy have witnessed a significant pace of change in recent years, with the growth of online shopping influencing how people use town centres. As a result, many town centres have sought to diversify their offer in order to appeal to as broad a section of the local community as possible, and encourage people to have multiple reasons to visit (including, in the case of historic centres such as Oakham and Uppingham, attracting tourism/ visitors). In other words, town centres are, at a national level and to varying degrees, becoming more multi-dimensional in nature. The recent changes to the Use Classes Order (as reviewed in the previous section) recognise this evolving trend and provide the mechanism for it for it to continue.

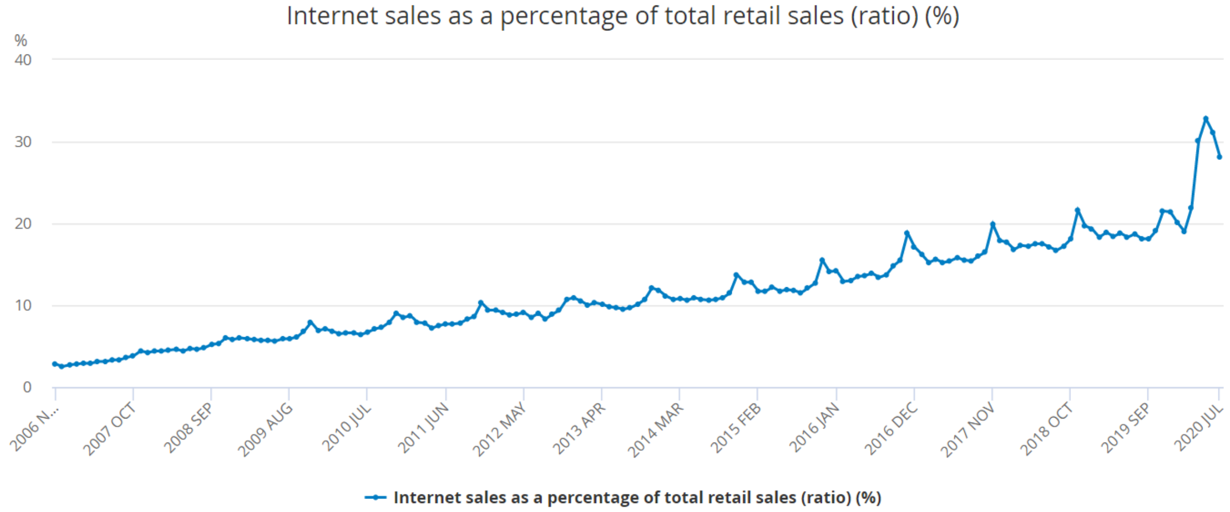
3.3 However, this does not mean the retail function of town centres has completely ceased, and in most centres it continues to act as the principal driver of footfall and the reason which people visit centres. Indeed, the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has placed renewed emphasis on the ability of town centres to meet their local residents' shopping needs effectively and safely, and has resulted in many smaller/ suburban high streets and town centres experience an upturn in footfall at the expense of larger centres.

## THE GROWTH OF ONLINE SHOPPING

3.4 The growth of online shopping has, for many sectors of the retail industry, reduced the need for as much physical retail floorspace as was the case even five years ago. Whilst online shopping has formed part of the retail sector for two decades, recent evolutions in technology (e.g. mobile/app-based shopping) and logistics (same/next day delivery, click and collect, integration with operators such as Deliveroo) have strengthened the role which online shopping plays in consumers' lives.

3.5 The role of online shopping has taken on an even greater prominence as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic; prior to the pandemic roughly 20% of total retail spend was spent online; this increased to 33% in May 2020, although has since subsided slightly (**Figure 3.1**). Nevertheless, the pandemic is, in the long term, likely to have increased the 'shift' to online shopping which has been taking place in recent years, particularly in key footfall-driving sectors such as clothing and fashion.

**Figure 3.1 – Internet sales as a % of total retail sales, 2006-2020**




3.6 The effect of the growth in online shopping and changing operational requirements has been a reduced demand for physical retail premises for many operators. This has in turn meant that some locations have begun to experience problems of over-supply of floorspace, in turn leading to a poorer quality offer/ higher rate of vacancies in non-prime areas. This has, until recent years, been an issue which smaller cities and large towns have had to contend with, but the uptick in online shopping observed recently is likely to mean that higher-order centres (e.g Leicester and Nottingham) begin to experience issues of floorspace oversupply. The recent confirmation that Debenhams' and Arcadia Group (Topshop, Topman, Burton, Dorothy Perkins) are both expected to solely become online operations with no physical store estate demonstrates the challenges which many centres are likely to face.

**Implications for Rutland's centres**

3.7 Rutland's town centres have not been as vulnerable as many others of the contraction in national retailer activity. National multiple retailer representation in both centres has historically been relatively low, and those retailers are present are predominantly those which meet day to day shopping needs (e.g. Wilko, Boots) and which continue to have a fairly extensive store estate. Therefore, the centres have not witnessed the same levels of vacancies on account of national retailers downsizing their store estates and/or entering administration as other town centres.

3.8 Nevertheless, the growth of online shopping is a trend from which the independent retail sector is not immune, and the increasing proportion of spend which online shopping captures can be expected to provide an increasing challenge moving forward. Businesses which are able to deliver a strong online offer as well as physical retail space are likely to be best placed to withstand the challenges arising from online shopping.

3.9 The trends also demonstrate the need for centres to provide a diverse, well-promoted town centre offer, which balances national retailer representation with a strong independent retail and leisure sector, to give people clear reasons to visit town centres to gain experiences which online shopping cannot match.

## THE DIVERSIFICATION OF TOWN CENTRES

3.10 Notwithstanding the growth in online shopping, a centre's retail offer will continue to be its principal attractor and the primary reason why people will visit a centre. A retail offer which mixes representation from national multiple retailers which can act as 'anchors' and specialist independent retailers which provide diversity and meet specialist local shopping needs, is important in attracting footfall.

3.11 However as retail continues to change and evolve, expectations of residents and visitors has changed in terms of the overall 'offer' they expect. People are increasingly seeking to combine shopping and leisure activities as an overall 'going out' experience, and therefore successful town centres offer a strong mix of both types of activity. There is a need for town centres to offer an 'experience', not simply be a place to shop, and it is this trend which has been behind the considerable growth of the café/dining sector in many centres in recent years. Essentially, to ensure that town and district town centres have a viable function moving forwards they must provide an attractive shopping and leisure experience which the internet is unable to match. The role of key town centre assets such as markets also plays an important role in helping to define this 'experience'.

### Implications for Rutland's centres

3.12 In many ways, Rutland's town centres are well-placed in this respect; Rutland's town centres have a strong and well-established independent retail sector, a good supporting array of uses (e.g. leisure, civic, tourism, education) and attractive shopping environments. This makes them well placed in the context of the wider trends taking place in the sector, although they will continue to require investment and promotion to ensure their ongoing attractiveness.

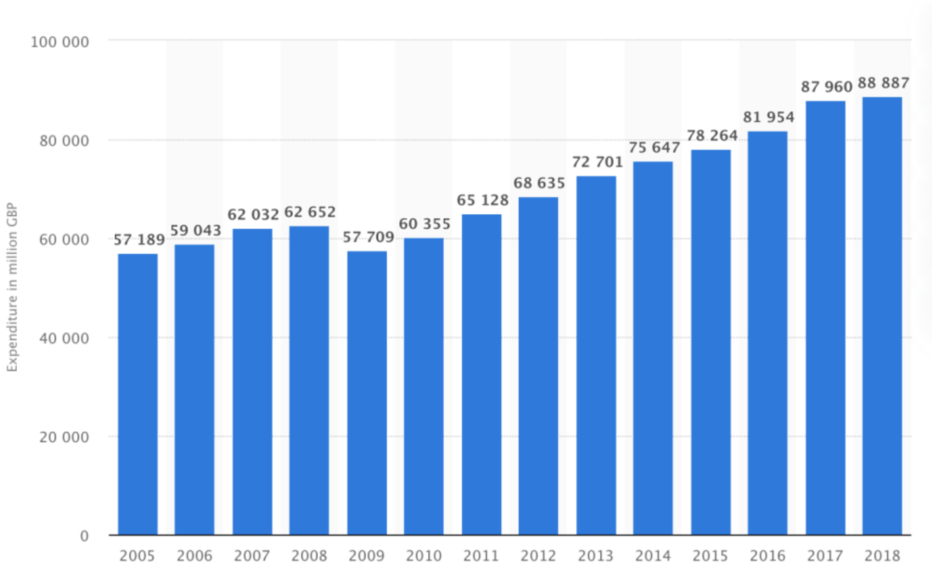
## THE ROLE OF COMMERCIAL LEISURE IN TOWN CENTRES

3.13 The changes described above have meant that commercial leisure, and in particular food and drink uses such as cafes, bars and restaurants have taken on an increased prominence in supporting the vitality and viability of town centres. Recent research from Cushman & Wakefield identifies that food and drink alone now accounts for more than 20% of retail and leisure units across the UK.

3.14 A wide-ranging commercial leisure offer can deliver benefits to the vitality and viability of the centre as a whole, through increased dwell-time and linked trips spend in cafes, restaurants and other commercial leisure facilities. It can also attract a broader variety of visitors to a centre, over a longer time period (i.e. outside retail trading hours and supporting the development of an 'evening economy') and reduce 'leakage' of spend from local residents who may consider the current offer of the centre to be limited.

3.15 The growth in personal spending in restaurants and cafes in the UK over the period 2005-18 is shown in **Figure 3.2,** clearly demonstrating the increasing contribution which facilities of this nature can contribute to the overall vitality of a centre.

**Figure 3.2 – Personal spending in restaurants and cafes (£m), 2005-18**




**<u>Implications for Rutland's centres</u>**

3.16 Again, Rutland's centres are relatively well placed to respond to this trend. Both centres already have a number of pubs and restaurants which trade in both Oakham and Uppingham town centres, and our analysis in section 4 shows that the food and beverage sector has increased its representation in both centres in recent years, albeit on a relatively small scale and not one which has compromised the retail function of either centre. Uppingham in particular appears to be currently benefiting from the emergence of a small 'café culture'.

## THE ROLE OF THE CONVENIENCE SECTOR

3.17 The last decade has seen several shifts in the convenience goods sector, including the well-documented growth of the discount retail sector (Aldi/Lidl), who have expanded store networks rapidly and successfully challenged the 'big four' convenience retailers for 'market share'. Other changes in this sector have included a period of rapid growth for smaller-format 'c-stores' such as Co-Op, Aldi Metro, M&S Food To Go, Tesco Express and Sainsbury's Local, in part aligned towards an increased trend towards town/city centre living and preferring to shop little and often.

3.18 Whilst the convenience sector has, like the wider retail sector, seen diversification, it is important to note that 'main'/weekly shopping trips still account for the majority of convenience goods spending. Data from Mintel indicates that on average 58% of convenience shopping still takes place in superstores (plus a further 9% in Aldi/Lidl stores); 9% takes place in 'major c-stores' such as Sainsbury's Local and Tesco Express and 24% takes place in other stores, e.g. independent stores or specialist retailers. Ideally therefore a centre should offer a mix of these difference types of convenience goods retailing to maximise footfall potential.

**Implications for Rutland's centres**

3.19 Oakham and Uppingham are both anchored by foodstores which, whilst sitting away from the prime retail of each centre, are sufficiently well-related to the rest of the centre to enable 'linked trips' with other town centre businesses to be made. Both Oakham and Uppingham also have a number of independent / specialist convenience shops, e.g. butchers and bakers, which are often footfall attractors in their own right. The opening of Aldi and Lidl foodstores on the north edge of Oakham – reflecting both operator's major expansion in the UK in recent years, as outlined above - can be expected to have diverted some convenience spend away from the town centre Tesco store, although levels of impact were deemed to be acceptable in the determination of the relevant planning applications.

## THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON SHOPPING PATTERNS

3.20 The main beneficiaries of the pandemic in respect of shopping patterns have been local high streets lower down the retail hierarchy, e.g smaller town centres, district and local centres, as more people reduced travelling to 'higher order' centres and shopped on a more local level. For example, at the outset of the pandemic in spring 2020, district centres saw a drop in footfall of only 34.5% during the compared to 75.9% for city centres. This is due to residents not travelling into city centres for work and/or shopping, and therefore local centres benefiting from increased footfall from those who live locally and are working from home – a trend which is expected to continue for some parts of the workforce beyond the end of the pandemic.

3.21 Residents are also choosing to support local businesses and there appears to be a general increase in momentum behind movements to 'shop local'. Polling undertaken by market research company YouGov in summer 2020 identified that as a result of lockdown, 38% of respondents identified that hey had purchased more food and drink from local sources; and that 70% of respondents who stated they shopped locally during the pandemic would continue to do so at the same, or greater, level, once lockdown restrictions were fully lifted[1].

3.22 Whilst it is anticipated that footfall will return to larger/higher order centres in due course as attractors such as clothing and department stores, and cinemas, theatres and cultural venues reopen, the pandemic has heightened the need for shopping and services to be provided in a sustainable manner. Local town centres will potentially need to cater for the needs of significantly larger daytime catchment populations than was the case previously, if increasing numbers of people work from home, even for only some of the week. Town centres which are therefore able to provide a comprehensive range of day-to-day shopping and local services are likely to continue to retain positive levels of vitality and viability in the medium to long term therefore.

3.23 It should be acknowledged that at the time of preparation of this study, the Covid-19 pandemic remains ongoing, and the long term impacts on how we shop, socialise and work will take time to be established, as well the extent to which people seek to return to 'old habits'. Nevertheless, centres which are able

[1] Source: https://yougov.co.uk/topics/consumer/articles-reports/2020/07/10/-covid-19-coronavirus-UK-high-street-local-effect

to offer a variety of needs to enable residents to shop in a sustainable manner are likely to continue to be successful moving forwards.

**Implications for Rutland's centres**

3.24 Rutland's two town centres are geographically isolated from their nearest competitors, and for residents in many parts of the County, they will be the closest centres for undertaking day to day shopping, although some parts of the County are also well-related to surrounding centres such as Stamford, Peterborough, Leicester and Corby. The most recent audit of town centre uses in both centres (discussed in section 4) indicates that both centres continue to be able to offer day to day convenience and comparison goods shopping to their respective catchments, although a full 'health check' audit of retailer representation in the centres has not been undertaken. Both centres' relatively isolated nature means that if patterns of work and commuting change, they may be able to benefit from increased daytime footfall and spend, providing an attractive shopping (and supporting leisure, e.g. coffee shops) offer remains in place.

## CONCLUSIONS ON THE RETAIL MARKET CONTEXT

3.25 The retail and leisure market continues to change and evolve, and early indications are that the pace of change – particularly in respect of online shopping – are increasing as a consequence of the current pandemic. Our analysis has demonstrated that for many of the changes in the sector which have taken place, Rutland's town centres are well-placed to respond positively, and if there are long term changes in how local residents choose to shop, work and commute in the future, both Oakham and Uppingham town centres could indeed stand to benefit. However, it will be important for neither centre to be complacent, and continued investment in providing attractive town centre environments and supporting and promoting the town centres and businesses within them will be vital to their continued success in the long term.

# Section 4 Updated town centre analysis

4.1 In this section we undertake an updated audit of commercial uses in Oakham and Uppingham town centres. The exercise updates a previous audit of the town centres which was undertaken as part of the 2012 Study. The purpose of this updated audit is to determine the extent to which the composition of the two town centres has changed and evolved over the subsequent nine years, to inform the definition of the PSAs for the centres and establish whether there is a policy case for retention of PSF in the centres.

4.2 The diversity of uses in a centre is assessed by Experian Goad, who undertake surveys of centres on an annual or bi-annual basis. For Oakham, the most recent survey was undertaken by Experian in August 2017, whilst for Uppingham it was August 2018. Usually, we would seek to update the Experian Goad surveys by undertaking site visits to ascertain any changes to the composition of a centre which may have taken place subsequent to the Experian surveys. Owing to the travel restrictions which were in place at the time of the preparation of this study as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, this has not been possible. However, in order to ensure an assessment of the mix of uses in each centre is as up-to-date as possible, we have cross-referenced the Experian data with approved planning applications for changes of use in each town centre which have been granted subsequent to the publication of the Goad data[2].

4.3 The 2012 Study undertook an analysis of the diversity of uses of each town centre in the form of a series of sub-areas. For consistency, our updated analysis adopts the same sub-area boundaries[3], in order for retail change to be accurately captured.

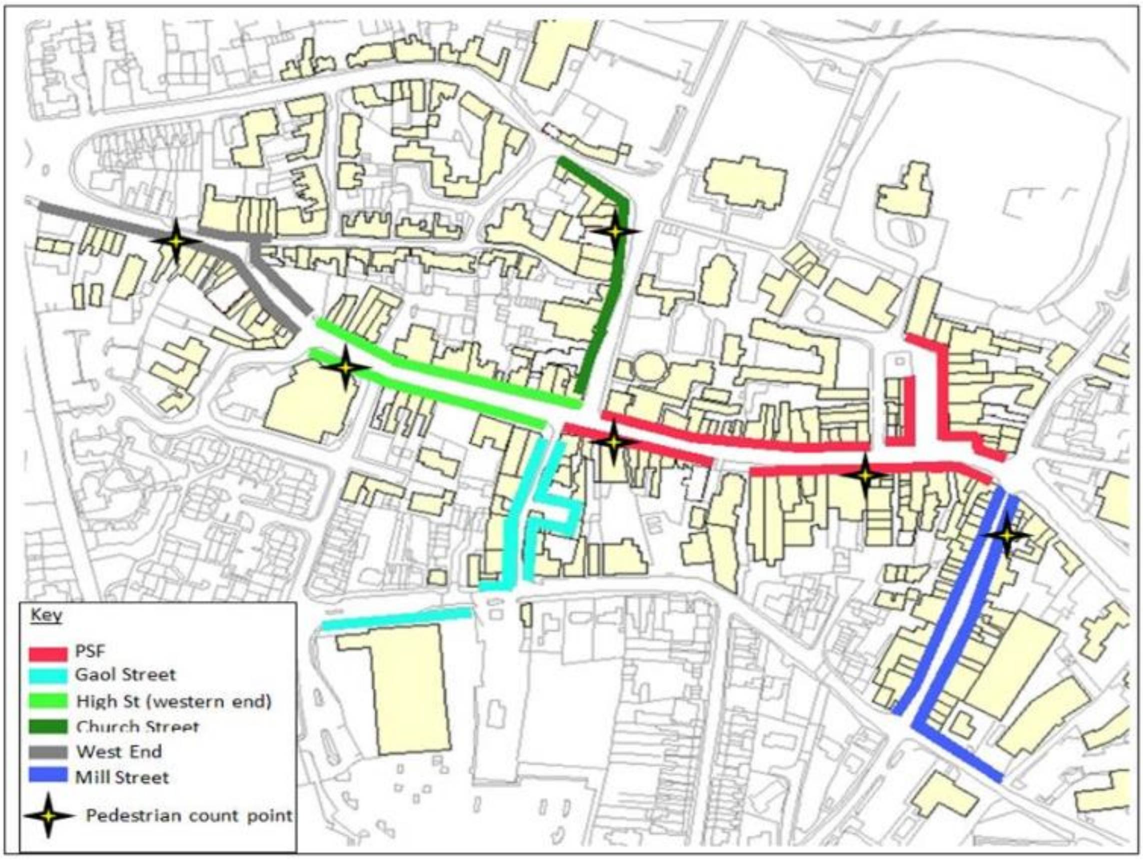
## OAKHAM TOWN CENTRE

4.4 **Figure 3.1** (overleaf) shows the sub-areas which were adopted for the analysis of Oakham town centre in the 2012 Study. It shows the town centre was split into six sub-areas, which for the purpose of this analysis we have labelled as follows:

- **OAK01** – Primary Shopping Frontage
- **OAK02** – Mill Street
- **OAK03** – High Street, Western End
- **OAK04** – West End
- **OAK05** – Gaol Street
- **OAK06** – Church Street

[2] This analysis does not include any prior approvals which have been granted under permitted development.
[3] With the exception of the 'PSF' and 'Church Street' sub-areas, which have been adjusted to reflect the extension of PSF along the western side of Church Street.

**Figure 3.1 – Oakham town centre sub-areas**




*Source: 2012 Boundaries & Frontages Study. Note: no pedestrian counts undertaken as part of this study.*

**<u>The position in 2012</u>**

4.5 At the time of the 2012 audit, the sub-areas with the highest concentration of retail (i.e. formerly use class A1) uses were in the existing PSF area (64%) and Mill Street (70%). The remaining sub-areas showed significantly less reliance on retail, with under 60% of units in use for this purpose. As a consequence of this assessment, no extension of the PSF was identified for Oakham town centre, with the exception to cover a small number of units on Church Street.

4.6 Mill Street was identified as having a higher proportion of retail uses than the defined PSF, however was considered to play a more secondary shopping role. On this basis, the 2012 Study recommended that Mill Street was designated as SSF. However, the Council's Local Plan did not proceed to identify SSF and therefore Mill Street did not ultimately form part of a frontage allocation. The justification put forward by the 2012 Study for not forming part of the PSF was as follows:

> *'The retail offer is slightly different to that of much of the PSF, in the sense that the offer is geared towards niche, specialist boutique retailers, which are likely to have a more limited customer base compared to some of the retailers in the PSF. This is reflected in the comparatively lower levels of footfall observed along Mill Street relative to the PSF area. Based on the findings of our analysis, we are of the opinion that the Council may wish to designate Mill Street as a secondary shopping area, reflecting the role which it contributes to*

*the overall vitality and viability of the centre, but allowing for the flexibility of different uses to come forward as the market dictates'*

**Retail change since 2012**

4.7 Tables OAK1 to OAK6 (Appendix 1) set out the retail change which has taken place in each sub-area of Oakham town centre since the 2012 Study. Each table is split into four parts, as follows:

- Part 1 – shows the diversity of uses in each sub-area recorded at the time of the 2012 Study, set out by use class.
- Part 2 – shows the diversity of uses in each sub-area recorded by the Experian Goad survey in August 2017, again set out by use class.
- Part 3 – shows adjustments made to the August 2017 Goad data to incorporate subsequent planning permissions for change of use of retail units within each sub-area. Further detail of these permissions are set out below in Table 3.1.
- Part 4 – shows the resultant diversity of uses and the retail change between 2012 and 2021 by calculating the difference in diversity of uses.

4.8 As identified above, the most recent Experian Goad survey of Oakham town centre was undertaken in August 2017. **Table 4.1** below summarises the planning applications for change of use or development of new 'main town centre uses' which have taken place in Oakham town centre between August 2014[4] and January 2021 which we have incorporated into our analysis in Part 3 of Tables OAK1-OAK6 of Appendix 1, as set out above. We have sought to verify the implementation of these permissions using desktop research where possible.

**Table 4.1 – summary of approved planning applications for change of use in Oakham town centre, August 2014-current (excluding prior approvals)**

| App. Ref | Location | Sub-area | Description of development | Decision | Implemented? | Retail change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2017/0651/ FUL | 24 Mill Street | Mill Street | Change of use from residential to a retail shop and health clinic. | Approved 06/07/17 | Yes | +1 A1 unit |
| 2017/1014/ FUL | Unit 2, Bakers Yard, Church Street | Church Street | Change of Use from Wine Bar (Class A4) to Retail (Class A1) | Approved 13/12/17 | Yes | +1 A1 unit<br>-1 A4 unit |
| 2018/0375/ FUL | 16 Church Street | Church Street | Retrospective application for separate retail unit in courtyard. | Approved 08/10/18 | Yes | +1 A1 unit |
| 2019/0526/ FUL | Unit 5, Knights Yard | Gaol Street | Change of use from a retail premises (A1) to a food premises (A3) | Approved 09/08/19 | Yes | +1 A3 unit<br>-1 A1 unit |

[4] Allowing three years for implementation of permission prior to Goad survey

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2019/0898/ FUL | 15-17 High Street | PSF | Internal alterations to conjoin ground floor retail space of No. 17 with No. 15 High Street to form a single shop/retail unit. Alterations to existing shop frontages. Single storey extension to rear. | Approved 17/01/20 | Unknown | -1 A1 unit |

*Notes: applications have been crossed-referenced with Experian Goad data and those not included in the Goad analysis have been manually incorporated into our analysis. Source: Rutland County Council planning application search. Excludes prior approvals.*

## Results

4.9 **Table 4.2** summarises the findings of Tables OAK1-OAK6 of Appendix 1, showing the composition of each of the sub-areas at 2012 and 2021 based on the findings of our analysis, and the extent of change which has taken place in each category.

**Table 4.2 – Composition of main town centre uses in Oakham town centre, 2012 and 2021**

| | | Shops | Financial and professional | Restaurants and cafes | Drinking establish'ts | Hot food takeaways | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Current use class | Class E | Class E | Class E | Class SG | Class SG | Other |
| | Former use class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | |
| Sub-area | Year | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| OAK1 Oakham PSF | 2012 | 64% | 15% | 8% | 2% | 2% | 11% |
| | 2021 | 66% | 13% | 9% | 4% | 1% | 7% |
| | Change | **2%** | **-2%** | **1%** | **3%** | **0%** | **-3%** |
| OAK2 Mill Street | 2012 | 70% | 3% | 5% | 0% | 11% | 11% |
| | 2021 | 74% | 10% | 5% | 2% | 7% | 2% |
| | Change | **4%** | **7%** | **-1%** | **2%** | **-4%** | **-8%** |
| OAK3 High Street (Western End) | 2012 | 48% | 19% | 0% | 10% | 0% | 24% |
| | 2021 | 47% | 11% | 16% | 16% | 0% | 11% |
| | Change | **0%** | **-9%** | **16%** | **6%** | **0%** | **-13%** |
| OAK4 West End | 2012 | 56% | 4% | 4% | 7% | 15% | 15% |
| | 2021 | 54% | 4% | 4% | 4% | 23% | 12% |
| | Change | **-2%** | **0%** | **0%** | **-4%** | **8%** | **-3%** |
| OAK5 Gaol Street | 2012 | 56% | 15% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 30% |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2021 | 53% | 26% | 11% | 0% | 0% | 11% |
| | Change | **-3%** | **12%** | **11%** | **0%** | **0%** | **-19%** |
| OAK6 Church Street | 2012 | 27% | 20% | 33% | 7% | 0% | 13% |
| | 2021 | 70% | 10% | 20% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| | Change | **43%** | **-10%** | **-13%** | **-7%** | **0%** | **-13%** |
| TOTAL | 2012 | 58% | 12% | 7% | 3% | 5% | 16% |
| | 2021 | 63% | 12% | 9% | 4% | 5% | 7% |
| | Change | **5%** | **0%** | **2%** | **1%** | **1%** | **-9%** |

*Notes: Commercial units only, excludes class C3 residential properties which fall within each sub-area. Includes vacant units – where a unit is vacant, the last commercial use of the unit is recorded. Source: 2012 data sourced from Oakham and Uppingham Town Centre Boundaries Study, Roger Tym & Partners 2012. 2021 data sourced from Experian Goad plan August 2017 and updated as per changes set out in Table 4.1.*

4.10 Table 4.2 shows that overall, Oakham town centre continues to have an offer which is predominantly focussed on retail. In 2012, 58% of units (112 units) were in retail use; this has now increased to 63% of units (117 units). Therefore, notwithstanding the changes in the wider sector which has seen many town centres diversify away from retail, the retail function of Oakham town centre has actually slightly increased over the past decade.

4.11 There has been a marginal increase in café/restaurant uses (7% to 9%) and drinking establishments (3% to 4%). However these remain a relatively small proportion of units relative to the retail units. Overall, the biggest change has been a decline in ‘other’ uses (those uses which previously fell outside Use Classes A1-A5), which previously comprised 16% of the units in the centre but now account for 7%. This suggests that Oakham’s viability as a location for ‘main town centre uses’ has increased over the course of the past decade.

4.12 Overall, the town centre continues to have a broad array of ‘main town centre uses’, with retail outlets, financial & professional services, café/restaurant uses, drinking establishments and hot food takeaways combined accounting for 93% of all commercial units in the town centre, an increase from 84% in 2012. This indicates that the centre is performing well as a retail and commercial destination.

4.13 Turning to the individual sub-areas, the analysis set out in Table 4.2 shows that:

- In the **PSF**, retail uses continue to account for approximately two-thirds of all units. There has been a decline in the proportion of units occupied by financial/professional services, which have been offset by increases in the proportion of units occupied by café/restaurant uses and drinking establishments. However, it is clear that the dominant activity in this part of the centre remains retail use.

- **Mill Street** also continues to have a predominantly retail-orientated focus. In the 2012 Study, the proportion of retail uses was found to be higher than the PSF, and this remains the case with 74% of all units on Mill Street now in retail use, an increase from 70% at the time of the 2012 Study. There has been an increase in the number of financial/professional services, which account for the second highest proportion of uses in this part of the centre.

- The **western end of the High Street** (to the west of the PSF) has the lowest proportion of retail uses, at 47%, which is virtually unchanged from 2012, suggesting this part of the town centre has historically had a more diverse retail function.

- There has been a decrease in retail units in the **West End** sub-area, from 56% in 2012 to 54% in 2021, with this area historically accommodating a broader mix of uses. There has been an increase in the number of hot food takeaways from 15% to 23%, a trend which the council may wish to monitor going forward, to ensure the area continue to benefit from a positive diversity of uses (as hot food takeaways are classed as Sui Generis, planning permission will still be required to change a unit in class E use to a hot food takeaway).

- **Gaol Street** has seen increases in financial/professional services and café/restaurants, although there are still only a small number of units in each category. The proportion of units in retail use has remained virtually static.

- The proportion of retail uses in **Church Street** has increased from 27% to 70%, although comparative analysis of this sub-area should be treated with caution owing to a transfer of a number of units to form part of the PSF as part of the Council's adopted Local Plan, and the fact there are so few units in this sub-area that small changes in provision can equate to a significant percentage change.

**Analysis and recommendations**

4.14 The analysis demonstrates that each of the sub-areas across the town centre benefits from a largely positive diversity of uses which, whilst subject to a degree of change and 'churn' of retailers as is the case in any centre, nevertheless indicates a diverse and healthy town centre. The proportion of hot food takeaways in the West End of the centre should be monitored moving forwards.

4.15 The historically-designated PSF continues to perform its function, with two-thirds of units in this sub-area in retail use. Analysis of the Experian Goad data shows that the PSF continues to accommodate a small number of national multiple retailers (e.g. Boots, Day Lewis and McColls), as well as a branch of Specsavers which opened in 2018. There are also charity shops, specialist convenience goods stores (e.g. a butchers), pet food shops, and other uses such as banks. Analysis of the Goad data also shows that, with the exception of the large Wilko and Tesco stores to the west of the PSF, the floorplates of the units in the PSF is also typically larger than the remainder of the centre. We consider that the PSF continues to perform its role and function effectively, therefore.

4.16 Mill Street retains its focus as the centre's hub for independent / specialist shopping, with over 70% of units in retail uses. Uses are typically smaller-format 'boutiques' rather than larger-floorplate stores, enabling a clear distinction to be made of the more mainstream-orientated offer of the PSF. It is also considered that the retail offer of Mill Street plays a role in supporting Oakham's tourism role, with its diverse retail offer likely to appeal to visitors to the area (given the proximity to Rutland Water) as well as local residents.

4.17 As the analysis has demonstrated, these areas have a notably more significant retail-orientated focus than the rest of the town centre, and accordingly it is recommended that these areas form the basis of the town's Primary Shopping Area.

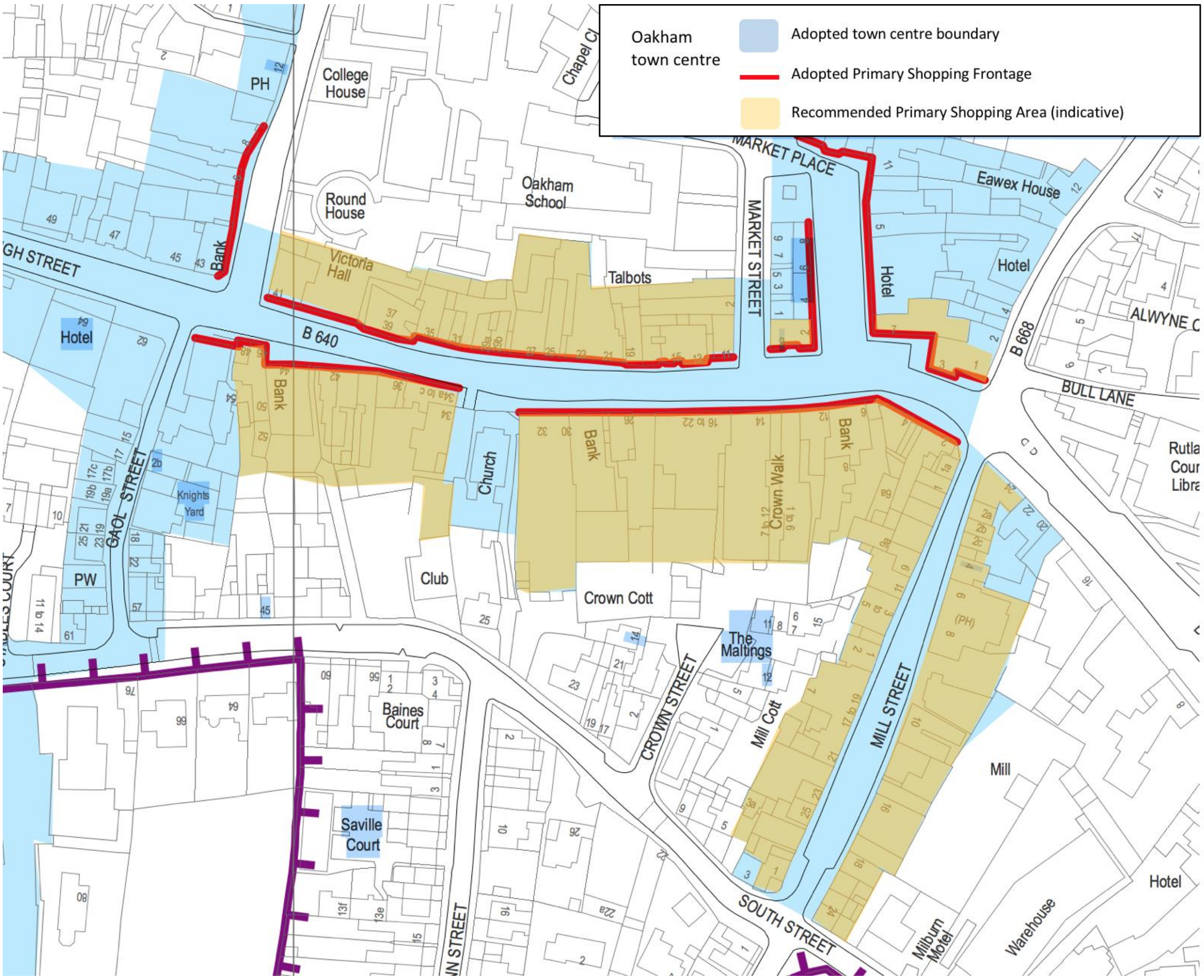
4.18 However, it is recommended that the Market Place is excluded from the Primary Shopping Area designation, notwithstanding the fact it currently forms part of the defined PSF (excluding units which front the High Street). Analysis of the retail mix of Market Place shows that it incorporates an estate agent, bank, newsagents, coffee shop, pub, restaurant, bakers, and charity shop. Whilst this is considered a healthy mix of uses which makes a positive contribution to the overall vitality of the centre, it is not retail orientated with retail accounting for only 3 of the 8 units, and the retail which is present being small-scale in nature. It is recommended that the units which front onto High Street from the Market Place are, however, included with the PSA, both to provide an uninterrupted inverse 'L'-shaped retail circuit and provide a visually connection of the retail offer between the High Street and Mill Street when viewed from the latter.

4.19 The 2012 Study recommended the extension of the PSF along part of Church Street, up to and including what was then the Fords of Oakham department store. The Fords store has now closed, and replaced with a discount retailer, QD Stores, and therefore continues to have a retail function. An adjacent unit has also been converted into an opticians, increasing the proportion of retail uses in this section of the PSF sub-area. However, as the analysis above has demonstrated, the wider Church Street area has seen a number of changes in use in recent years which have resulted in it taking on a more mixed use role and function akin to that of a secondary shopping street, performing a complementary role to the area currently defined as PSF along High Street. On this basis, we do not consider there to be merit in including the part of Church Street which was formerly in the PSF as forming part of the new PSA.

4.20 Consideration has been given to whether Gaol Street should be included with the recommended PSA, on account of the presence of the large Tesco foodstore on South Street within this sub-area, which acts as the 'anchor' to the town centre's convenience offer. Given the mix of uses along Gaol Street itself is however considerably more diverse, with emerging evidence of a small 'café culture' cluster (aided by the fact that the street is pedestrianised), it is not considered that there is sufficient evidence for it to form part of the PSA. However, the role of Gaol Street in providing an active thoroughfare between the High Street and Tesco store should continue to be supported through policy, given the benefits which can potentially arise from 'linked trips'.

4.21 The reaming sub-areas (High Street Western End, West End, Church Street) perform a more diverse, secondary function and are therefore omitted from the recommended PSA. A plan showing the extent of the recommended PSA, focussed on High Street and Mill Street, is shown in **Figure 4.2.**

**Figure 4.2 — Recommended PSA for Oakham town centre**

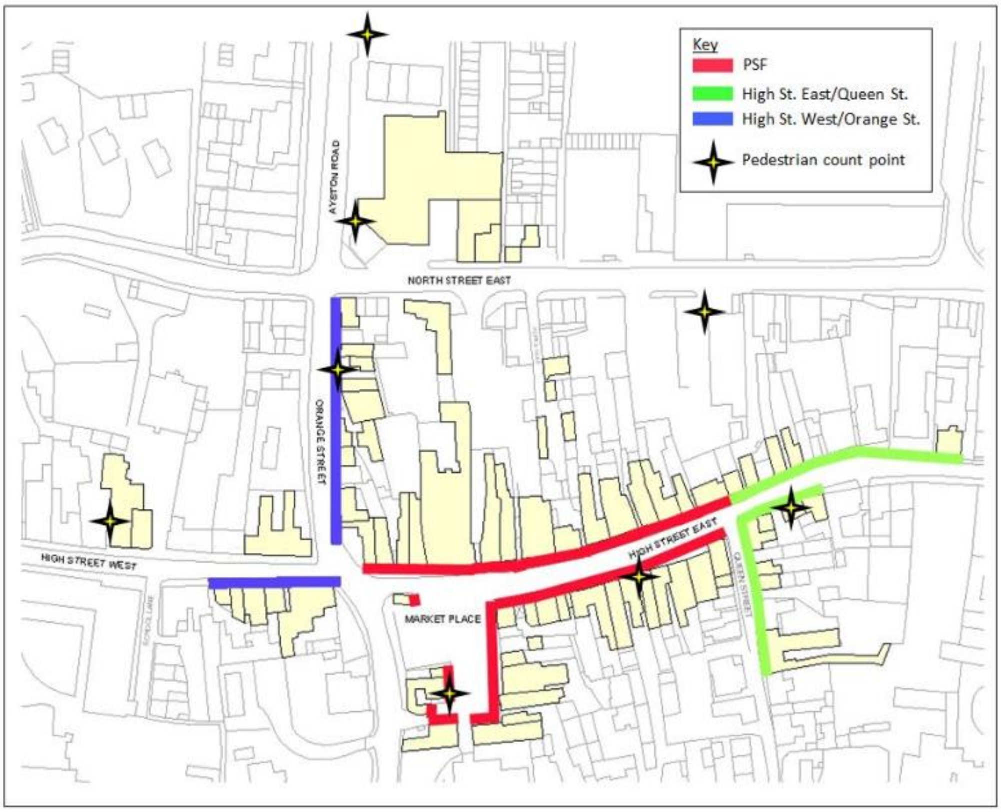



## [UPPINGHAM TOWN CENTRE]()

4.22 **Figure 4.3** shows the sub-areas which were adopted for the analysis of Oakham town centre in the 2012 Study. It shows the town centre was split into six sub-areas, which for the purpose of this analysis we have labelled as follows:

- **UPP01** – Primary Shopping Frontage
- **UPP02** – High Street West / Orange Street
- **UPP03** – High Street East / Queen Street

**Figure 4.3 – Uppingham town centre sub-areas**




*Source: 2012 Boundaries & Frontages Study. Note: no pedestrian counts undertaken as part of this study.*

**<u>The position in 2012</u>**

4.23 At the time of the 2012 Study, over 70% of the units in the PSF were in retail use, as well as 73% in the High Street West / Orange Street sub-area. The 2012 Study considered that the retail function of the High Street West / Orange Street sub-area was secondary in nature to that of the PSF, and that the area performed a complementary role rather than one which justified an extension to the PSF. Accordingly, the 2012 Study recommended that the Council considered allocating part of this sub-area as SSF, but this recommendation was not taken forward through into the Council's Site Allocations DPD.

**<u>Town centre change since 2012</u>**

4.21 Tables UPP01 to UPP03 (Appendix 2) set out the retail change which has taken place in each of the three sub-areas shown above since the 2012 Study, with the tables split into four sections as described in the 'Oakham town centre' section above.

4.22 The most recent Experian Goad survey of Uppingham town centre was undertaken in August 2018, a year later than the Oakham study. **Table 4.3** below summarises the planning applications for change of use or development of new 'main town centre uses' which have taken place in Uppingham town centre between August 2015[5] and January 2021 which we have incorporated into our analysis in Part 3 of

[5] Allowing three years for implementation of permission prior to Goad survey.

Tables UPP01-UPP03 (Appendix 2). Again, we have sought to verify the implementation of these permissions using desktop research where possible.

**Table 4.3 – summary of approved planning applications for change of use in Uppingham town centre, August 2014-current (excluding prior approvals)**

| App. Ref | Location | Sub-area | Description of development | Decision | Implemented? | Retail change |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 2017/0651/ FUL | 24 Mill Street | Mill Street | Change of use from residential to a retail shop and health clinic. | Approved 06/07/17 | Yes | +1 A1 unit |
| 2017/1014/ FUL | Unit 2, Bakers Yard, Church Street | Church Street | Change of Use from Wine Bar (Class A4) to Retail (Class A1) | Approved 13/12/17 | Yes | +1 A1 unit<br><br>-1 A4 unit |

*Notes: applications have been crossed-referenced with Experian Goad data and those not included in the Goad analysis have been manually incorporated into our analysis. Source: Rutland County Council planning application search. Excludes prior approvals.*

4.23 The above changes of use retain a retail element as their primary function, and on this basis we have not made any adjustments to the Experian Goad data. However, they nevertheless provide evidence of a diversification of the offer of Uppingham town centre.

**Results**

4.24 **Table 4.4** summarises the findings of Tables UPP1-UPP3 of Appendix 2, showing the composition of each of the sub-areas in Uppingham town centre at 2012 and 2021 based on the findings of our analysis.

**Table 4.4 – Composition of main town centre uses in Uppingham town centre, 2012 and 2021**

| | | Shops | Financial and professional | Restaurants and cafes | Drinking establish'ts | Hot food takeaways | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Current use class | Class E | Class E | Class E | Class SG | Class SG | Other |
| | Former use class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | |
| Sub-area | Year | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| UPP01 Uppingham PSF | 2012 | 72% | 8% | 8% | 5% | 3% | 5% |
| | 2021 | 73% | 5% | 8% | 3% | 3% | 10% |
| | Change | **1%** | **-3%** | **0%** | **-3%** | **0%** | **5%** |
| UPP02 High St West / Orange St | 2012 | 72% | 6% | 6% | 0% | 0% | 17% |
| | 2021 | 86% | 7% | 7% | 0% | 0% | 0% |
| | Change | **13%** | **2%** | **2%** | **0%** | **0%** | **-17%** |

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| UPP03High Street East / Queen St | 2012 | 53% | 6% | 0% | 6% | 0% | 35% |
| | 2021 | 73% | 13% | 0% | 7% | 0% | 7% |
| | Change | **20%** | **7%** | **0%** | **1%** | **0%** | **-29%** |
| TOTAL | 2012 | 68% | 7% | 5% | 4% | 1% | 15% |
| | 2021 | 73% | 8% | 7% | 3% | 1% | 8% |
| | Change | **6%** | **1%** | **1%** | **-1%** | **0%** | **-7%** |

*Notes: Commercial units only, excludes class C3 residential properties which fall within each sub-area. Includes vacant units – where a unit is vacant, the last commercial use of the unit is recorded. Source: 2012 data sourced from Oakham and Uppingham Town Centre Boundaries Study, Roger Tym & Partners 2012. 2021 data sourced from Experian Goad plan August 2018 and updated as per changes set out in Table 4.3..*

4.25 Table 4.4 shows that, in common with Oakham, Uppingham town centre has an offer which remains largely focussed on retail, with almost three quarters of units across the three sub-areas in retail use. The current figure of 73% for the PSF is an increase from the equivalent figure of 68% from the 2012 Study. The analysis also shows that there has been a minor increase in the number of financial/professional services and cafes/restaurants in the centre.

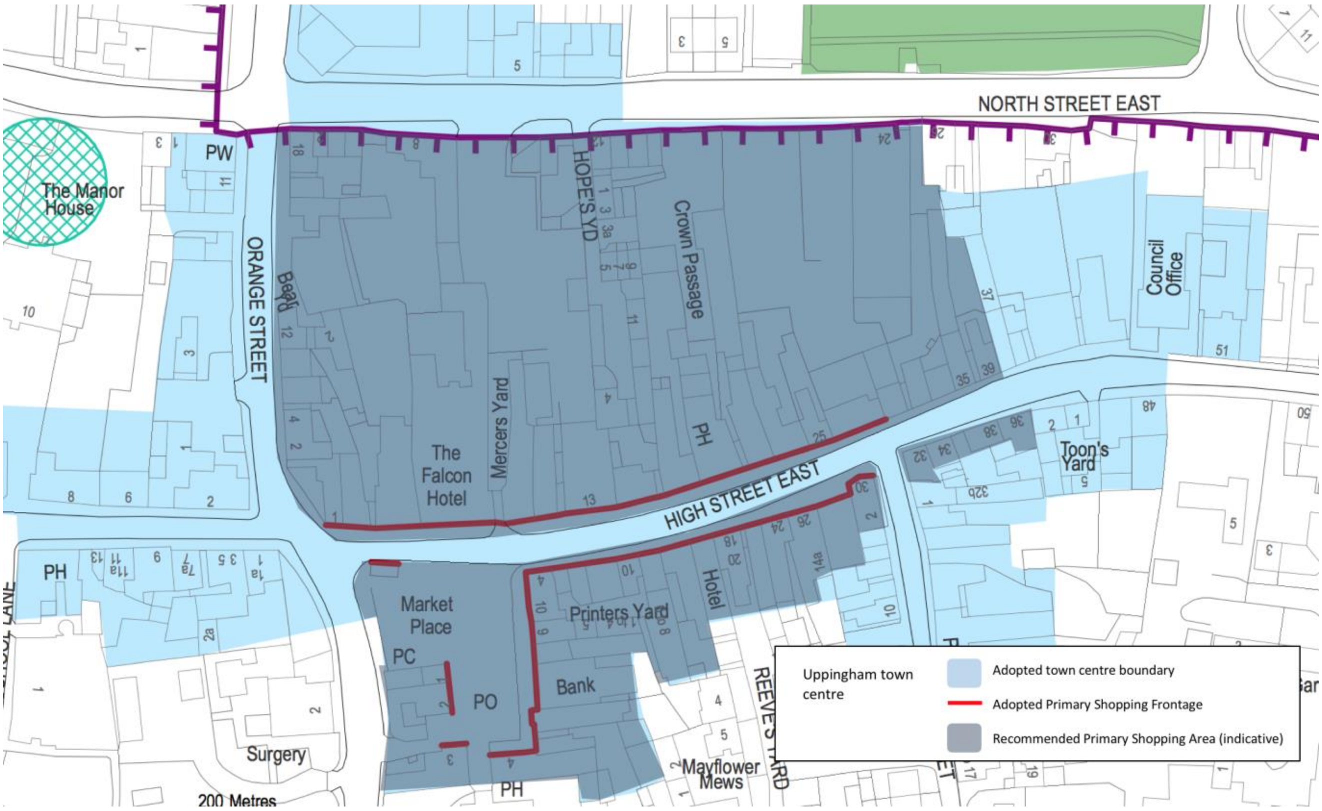
4.26 Analysis of the mix of uses in the three sub-areas shows that all have over 70% of units in retail use. 73% of units in the PSF are in retail use, supported by a complementary mix of supporting other main town centre uses, as well as other supporting uses such as hotels. The High Street East / Orange St sub-area also has high proportion of retail uses, although many of these are more specialist in nature, reflecting the town centre's long-standing role as a location for specialist art galleries focussed on Orange Street. Retail uses have increased in representation in the High Street East / Queen Street sub-area, from 53% to 73%. However it should be noted that in both the High Street West and High Street East sub-areas only contain a small number of commercial units, and therefore even relatively limited changes in the mix of uses can equate to high percentage differences.

**Analysis and recommendations**

4.27 Based on the above analysis which highlights the continued successful retail function of the town centre, it is considered there is a strong case for the PSA in Uppingham town centre to incorporate the retail core of the PSF, and the more specialist shopping of Orange Street. Indeed it is considered that Uppingham town centre benefits from a fairly naturally-definable PSA, as to the western and eastern fringes of the centre, commercial units quickly become more interspersed with residential and other uses (e.g. buildings associated with Uppingham School in the case of High Street West). The 'critical mass' of commercial activity therefore drops off considerably in these areas, and, combining with the lack of retail 'anchors' in these areas, means there is a limited policy case for their inclusion within a PSA.

4.28 The suggested PSA for Uppingham town centre is shown mapped at Figure 4.4. It includes the entirety of what is currently defined as PSF in the town centre, the eastern side of Orange Street, and extends eastwards away from the PSF to just past the junction with Queen Street where there continues to be a strong level of commercial activity. It is recommended that the PSA is extended northwards as far as North Street East, to allow for the inclusion of commercial uses which sit to the rear of the High Street frontage, e.g. the Rutland Antiques and Arts Centre, and the Co-Op foodstore which, notwithstanding its slight detachment from the wider town centre offer, can be considered to perform the role of an 'anchor' store within the town centre.

**Figure 4.4 – Recommended Primary Shopping Area for Uppingham town centre**



# Section 5 Review of Reg.19 Local Plan Policy Approach

5.1 In this section, informed the findings set out in the preceding sections in respect of the changes to the approach to town centres at the national level in a planning and legislative context, as well as the current market trends and diversity of uses in Oakham and Uppingham town centres, we set out an assessment of the Council's current policy approach to town centre uses in its Reg.19 Local Plan. We assess the robustness of the policy approach in light of the changes described above and identify areas where the Council may want to consider amendments in future revisions to the Plan.

5.2 The draft policies in respect of retail/town centre matters in their current form are set out as Policies E9, E10 and E11 of the Reg.19 Local Plan and we consider these in turn below.

**Policy E9 – Town Centres and Retailing**

5.3 The current draft policy wording of Policy E9 is shown in Box 3 below. Areas for potential review / amendment are shown as red highlights, with the recommended changes and justification for these shown in the table which follows the policy text.

**Box 3**

***Policy E9 – Town Centres and Retailing*** [Rec E9.1]

*Main Town Centre uses* will be supported where they are located in accordance the following retail hierarchy:* [Rec E9.2]

· *Oakham: Main Town Centre – serving the whole of Rutland* [Rec E9.3]

· *Uppingham: Town centre – serving Uppingham and the surrounding rural catchment and tourists*

*The Town centres are defined on the policies map. Where proposals for main town centre use developments are not located within the defined town centres a sequential approach will be followed with preference given first to sites on the edge of the defined town centres prior to the consideration of out-of-centre sites.* [Rec E9.4]

*Proposals for all town centre and retail uses should:* [Rec E9.5]

*a) support the vitality and viability of the defined town centres;*

*b) support the 'evening economy' and complementary leisure uses outside the primary shopping frontage;* [Rec E9.6]

*c) demonstrate they will not have an adverse impact on the town centre through an Impact Assessment (for retail proposals of 500m2 gross or more and for town centre uses outside of the defined town centres).*

*Where the Council requires an independent review of this work the cost will be borne by the applicant;* [Rec E9.7]

*d) consider the use of upper floors above shops and commercial premises for residential or office purposes where appropriate;*

*e) demonstrate good shop front design in accordance with the Council's adopted Shop Front Design Guide.*

** main town centre uses are defined in Annex 2 of the NPPF*

5.4 It is considered that, in light of the changes to policy and the findings set out in this report, that this policy remains largely robust and fit for purpose, with the exception of some minor recommendations to the wording of the policy, as annotated in Box 3 and described below.

| Rec number | Suggested change | Justification |
|---|---|---|
| E9.1 | Amend name of policy to 'Town Centres' | Reflects change of emphasis following introduction of Use Class E. |
| E9.2 | Remove reference to retail and reword to state '*Main town centre uses will be supported where they are located within the following town centre hierarchy*'. | Reflects change of emphasis following introduction of Use Class E. |
| E9.3 | Reference to Oakham having a tourism role should also be included. | Oakham town centre is also considered to perform a tourism role on account of proximity to Rutland Water and it may be beneficial for this to be reflected in the policy text. |
| E9.4 | Wording of this paragraph should be reviewed to ensure consistency with NPPF definition of town centre. The town centre boundaries defined on the proposals map are not the same boundaries as used for the application of the sequential test as the NPPF (Annex 2) defines edge of centre sites as being 'For retail purposes, a location that is well connected to, and up to 300 metres from, the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary.' In other words, a site can fall within a town centre boundary but still be edge / out of centre for the purposes of assessment against the sequential test. | To ensure consistency with NPPF terminology / correct application of the sequential test. |
| E9.5 | Remove reference to retail and reword to state '*Proposals for **commercial, business and services (Use Class E)** uses should..*' | Reflects change of emphasis following introduction of Use Class E. |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| E9.6 | Remove reference to primary shopping frontage. Suggested reword to state *'support complementary commercial, business and services uses, or other main town centre uses which fall within or outside Class E, outside of defined Primary Shopping Areas, including those which will assist in facilitating the development of an evening economy and improving the leisure offer of the town centre'.* | We do not consider there to be a sufficient policy justification for the retention of primary shopping frontage in the County's town centres in light of the introduction of Use Class E, which provides no development management mechanism for the protection of retail uses in these areas. In addition, some evening economy uses, e.g. restaurants are now covered by Class E and will therefore be able to locate in any part of a town centre, and this will not be able to be controlled. However others such as drinking establishments do fall outside Class E and therefore can continue to be controlled under policy. As a strategic approach, it is considered robust to keep these in secondary areas of the town centre (i.e. outside the PSA) so as to support the retention of retail and other Class E uses to as greater extent as possible. |
| E9.7 | Some minor amendments needed to ensure compliance with the NPPF (additions shown in bold text):<br><br>***In respect of proposals for retail and leisure uses outside of a defined town centre,*** *demonstrate they will not have* ***a significant*** *adverse impact on the town centre through* ***the submission of*** *an Impact Assessment (for* ***Class E retail and leisure*** *proposals of 500m2 gross or more* ~~*and for town centre uses*~~ *outside of the defined town centres****)'*** | Paragraph 90 of the NPPF (2019) states that '*Where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have <u>significant adverse</u> impact on one or more of the considerations in paragraph 89, it should be refused*'. In other words, an application can only be refused on impact grounds if the impact in question is judged to be 'significant'.<br><br>Para.014 of the PPG 'Town Centres and Retail' states that '*The [impact] test relates to retail and leisure developments (not all main town centre uses) which are not in accordance with up to date plan policies and which would be located outside existing town centres*'. On this basis, it is not considered there is a requirement for Policy E9 to require developments other than retail and leisure proposals to submit an impact assessment. |

**<u>Policy E10 – Primary Shopping Areas</u>**

5.5 Policy E10 in its current form seeks to protect the retail function of the County's town centres. The current proposed policy text is shown in Box 4 below.

**Box 4**

*'A1 retail uses will be supported within the Primary Shopping Area. Proposals for non-retail uses in the primary shopping frontages will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that the proposal:* [Rec E10.1]

*a) will not result in an adverse cluster of non-retail A1 uses in the primary shopping area;* [Rec E10.2] *b) will retain a 'shop-like' appearance with an active frontage;* [Rec E10.3]

*c) will not harm the predominantly retail character of the primary shopping areas, and* [Rec E10.4]

*d) will provide a direct service to the public'* [Rec E10.5]

5.6 In the table below, we set out a number of revisions to the policy wording which the Council may wish to consider. Further discussion of the overall policy approach is set out following the table.

| Rec number | Suggested change | Justification |
|---|---|---|
| E10.1 | Remove reference to A1 retail uses and primary shopping frontages. Amend to state:<br><br>*'Commercial, business and services (Use Class E) uses will be supported within the Primary Shopping Area. Proposals for non-commercial, business and services uses which fall outside of Use Class E will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that…'* | Reflects changes to Use Classes Order, which removes class A1 and introduces Class E 'Commercial, Business and Service'<br><br>We do not consider there to be a sufficient policy justification for the retention of primary shopping frontage in the County's town centres in light of the introduction of Use Class E, which provides no mechanism for the protection of retail uses. |
| E10.2 | Reword to remove reference to A1 use. Amend to state *'will not result in an adverse cluster of non-commercial, business and services uses (Use Class E) in the primary shopping area'.* Clarity should be provided that the policy is only applicable in instances where planning permission is required.<br><br>It is considered that the Council should define how it will assess what comprises an 'adverse cluster' in light of the changes to the Use Classes Order. This may include setting a quantifiable threshold (e.g. no more than 'X' consecutive non-class E units, or no more than 'X%' of units within the Primary Shopping Area or a certain part of the Primary Shopping Frontage), or identifying that applications for non class-E development will be assessed on a case by case basis against the part of | Reflects changes to Use Classes Order, which removes class A1 and introduces Class E 'Commercial, Business and Service' |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Primary Shopping Frontage they occupy. | |
| E10.3 | This should be retained and is a positive mechanism in ensuring that, even if future diversification of the offer occurs in the future, the town centres retain a degree of coherence as concentrations of commercial activity. The Council may wish to expand on the wording of this section of the policy to restrict the use of full vinyl coverings of the windows of commercial premises where these front onto a street within the Primary Shopping Area. | Reflects change of emphasis following introduction of Use Class E.<br><br>The use of vinyl window displays can undermine the appearance of an 'active frontage' as well as negatively impact on the street scene. Partial window coverage may be acceptable. |
| E10.4 | Reword to remove reference to 'retail character'. Suggested replacement with 'commercial character and historic appearance' of the primary shopping areas. | Reflects change of emphasis following introduction of Use Class E. |
| E10.5 | Amend to state 'will provide a direct service to the public **where possible'** | Certain uses which fall within class E (e.g class E(g)) will not always provide a direct service to the public, and therefore it is considered it would be difficult to make this an outright policy requirement. By adding 'where possible', it shows the aspiration of the Council to retain an active town centre commercial core, which the other strands of the policy support. |

5.7 The evidence in this study has shown that the approach sought by Policy E10 remains clearly justified – retail uses continue to make up the majority of the commercial offer of both Oakham and Uppingham town centres, and have increased their representation in proportionate terms since the 2012 Study. Accordingly, it can be inferred that, notwithstanding the trends seen on a wider scale nationally, retail uses continue to be integral to the overall vitality and viability of both town centres.

5.8 As the Use Classes Order is a legislative framework, it is considered that whilst it would be desirable to have a policy in place which continued to protect this strong retail function of the centres in the Council's new Local Plan, it would be difficult to enforce and would be against the spirit of what Government is intending to achieve through the introduction of Class E as well as the forthcoming changes to Permitted Development Rights. Even if the Council were to put a policy in place to support retail uses in the PSA, under the new legislative framework introduced by Class E it is not considered that there would be any mechanism for the Council to control this, as any proposal which wished to vary the use away from retail would not require planning permission.

5.9 Ultimately, at the time of the preparation of this study, the guidance set out in the NPPF has not caught up with the changes to the Use Classes Order this study has identified. Thus, whilst the NPPF requires authorities to define a Primary Shopping Area in their development plans, there is no mechanism in place through the current Use Classes Order legislation to protect the retail functioning of Primary Shopping Areas even when there may be a strong policy case for doing so.

5.10 On this basis, it is considered that the most robust approach at the current time for the Council to follow in respect of Policy E10 would be to broaden the scope of the wording of Policy E10 to support a concentration of all uses which fall within class E within the defined Primary Shopping Areas. Future iterations of the NPPF should be monitored during the preparation of the Local Plan, and if there is scope through national policy/PPG to rename a 'Primary Shopping Area' as a 'Primary Commercial Area' (or equivalent) the Council may wish to consider this, as it provides a better alignment with the range of uses which are now supported in these areas.

5.11 As section 2 of this report has set out, under current Permitted Development Rights, units which are in retail or financial/professional services, amongst others, can change to class C3 residential use, subject to prior approval. Currently this applies to units up to 150 sq.m, which in the case of centres such as Oakham and Uppingham, means it is applicable to many of the units in the town centres. From 1st August 2021 the scope of permitted development from class E to residential will be extended significantly. This change will also need to be reflected in any revised wording of policy E10.

5.12 Given the evidence set out in this report, it is considered that the Council may wish to consider – as is suggested in the Reg.19 draft of the Local Plan – to introduce Article 4 directions across the two town centre PSAs to prevent the loss of commercial units to residential use. However, in respect of Article 4 directions, it is important to note that the draft revisions to the NPPF which were placed on consultation between January and March 2021 states that (para. 53):

'*The use of Article 4 directions to remove national permitted development rights should:*

- *where they relate to change of use to residential, be limited to situations where this is essential to avoid wholly unacceptable adverse impacts*
- *[or as an alternative to the above – where they relate to change of use to residential, be limited to situations where this is necessary in order to protect an interest of national significance]*
- *where they do not relate to change of use to residential, be limited to situations where this is necessary to protect local amenity or the well-being of the area (this could include the use of Article 4 directions to require planning permission for the demolition of local facilities)*
- *in all cases apply to the smallest geographical area possible'*

5.13 The Council will need to monitor for future revisions to the NPPF to determine if the use of Article 4s will be possible moving forwards.

**<u>Policy E11 - Site for retail development</u>**

5.14 Policy E11 allocates a site for retail development at Burley Road, Oakham. The associated policy text indicates that the allocation is to meet a need for 'bulky goods' retail but this is not identified in the draft wording of the policy text itself, shown in Box 6.

**Box 6**

*'To meet the identified need for new retail development proposals for Non-food retail - Use Classes A1 at ground floor level with other appropriate town centre or residential uses at upper floors will be supported in the following location (as shown on the Policies Map).*

*Oakham*

*R1 - The Co-op site, Burley Road 0.15ha'*

5.15 The need for additional 'bulky goods' retailing to serve the Oakham area has been long identified in the Council's retail evidence base studies. It is important to note that the updated 'need' for this facility has not been considered as part of this instruction. However, if this 'bulky goods' allocation is to be carried forward into the adopted new Local Plan, it is considered that in light of the changes to the Use Classes Order we have set out, the policy wording ought to be strengthened to make explicit reference to the Council's preferred use for the site being bulky goods retail, in order to meet an identified qualitative shortfall of this type of provision in the County.

5.16 It is also recommended that, as the site is not allocated as a defined town centre, the policy is strengthened to require any applications on the site to demonstrate compliance with the sequential and retail impact tests.

5.17 From discussions with RCC in May 2021 we now understand that the Council are seeking a further amendment to the wording to policy E11 to remove reference to the bulky goods allocation altogether, and instead promote allocation R1 at Burley Road as a neighbourhood centre to support the adjoining proposed residential allocation. Whilst we have not specifically considered the policy case for such an approach, the provision of local-scale shopping facilities will improve the sustainability of day-to-day shopping patterns for residents in the north Oakham area.

5.18 There remains a requirement for RCC to ensure that any new commercial development at this location does not undermine the established centre hierarchy which is set out under Policy E9. Therefore it is recommended that:

- any revisions to policy wording make reference to development being of an appropriate scale designed to serve the local shopping needs of the new residential community only, and the Council may wish to apply an indicative total quantum of floorspace it wishes to see come forward at the site to support this.

- In order to demonstrate that the impacts on the existing network of centres will be acceptable, any planning application for a new neighbourhood centre which proposes floorspace above the impact assessment threshold of 500 sq.m , should be required to undertake a retail impact assessment.

- Appropriate development management measures should be included within the policy, e.g. maximum unit sizes and restrictions on the amalgamation of units, to ensure the development operates as a neighbourhood centre.

# Section 6 Conclusions

6.1 This report has sought to provide RCC with advice on the policy approach for the Council's emerging Local Plan in respect of retail and town centres. The advice has had regard to recent changes in national planning policy and, of particular significance, the introduction of Use Class E in September 2020. It has also considered the introduction of new Permitted Development Rights, including the recently-confirmed significant changes which allow the change from class E to residential use under permitted development, subject to satisfaction of a limited number of criteria. These permitted development rights will come into effect as of 1st August 2021.

6.2 The advice set out in this report reflects the national planning policy/legislation position at the time of preparation of this study, April 2021. As this report has identified, there is currently a disconnect in existence between the aims and objectives of the NPPF, which requires authorities to define a Primary Shopping Area, and the introduction of Class E, which removes any protection of retail uses in policy terms which was previously afforded by their inclusion in a separate use class (Use Class A1). This evidently makes strategic planning by local authorities for their town centres a complicated matter, and emphasises the need for close attention to be made in future months to further Government publications/ announcements. Given the above, it is cautioned that this report provides a 'snapshot' of the policy and legislative position which is correct as of April 2021 but may require further revision / updating in the short to medium term as further policy and legislation announcements follow**. Further changes to the policy approach/recommendations set out in this report may be required as the policy and legislation context continues to evolve.**

6.3 It is clear that the current aim of Government is to introduce a greater degree of flexibility into town centres, and the introduction of Use Class E is to be the primary vehicle to deliver this. Future revision to the Council's policy approach will, therefore, need to reflect this, and a shift in policy approach to protecting the overall commercial function of a town centre, rather than purely its retail role, may be required. Additional measures such as Article 4 Directions should also be considered to assist in this point to prevent the loss of commercial units to residential use under permitted development, although the draft revisions to the NPPF placed on consultation in January 2021 suggests the Government is seeking to reduce their scope and influence over town centre planning. The Council should monitor this moving forward.

6.4 The shift in focus at the national level has come about as many town centres have seen a reduced reliance on retail as a consequence of national trends, particularly the growth in online shopping, which have left many centres with an over-supply of retail floorspace as national retailers reduce their physical store portfolios.

6.5 The evidence set out in this report has shown that Oakham and Uppingham town centres have been less vulnerable to these national trends – partly because their retail offer has historically not been reliant on the presence of national multiples, and partly because of their role as retail and service hubs for fairly large rural catchment areas. Indeed, in both centres, the retail offer remains strong and has increased in proportionate terms over the last decade, suggesting that both centres remain viable retail trading destinations.

6.6 Both centres also have a strong array of other 'main town centre which also supports their vitality and viability, and both centres also benefit from having a tourism and specialist retail role. These roles will help support their long term vitality and viability as further changes in shopping patterns take place. It remains to be seen what the long term impacts of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic will have on town centres and shopping patterns (although an increased growth of the online sector appears inevitable), but if one of the consequences is a longer-term shift to more homeworking and reduced commuting, more residents may look towards the town centres for their shopping and services needs, for example.

6.7 Whilst the changes set out above may mean that the Council's options for purely protecting the retail function of its town centres may be reduced by matters out of its own hands, the findings of this report serve to emphasise the need to ensure policy protects both centres' overall commercial function to as strong a degree as possible within the framework of the current legislation. This approach will assist as best as possible in ensuring a critical mass of commercial activity continues to be present in each town centre, presenting the best possible conditions for retailers and other businesses to thrive, whilst also allowing flexibility for changes of use to other commercial functions within class E (as well as from class E to residential under permitted development) if market conditions dictate.

6.8 To this end, this report sets out suggested Primary Shopping Areas which will, in effect, act as 'Primary Commercial Areas' when having regards to the changes in national legislation which are not presently reflected in the NPPF. They allow for a 'critical mass' of commercial activity to be retained within each centre when supported by a robust policy position.

6.9 Finally, it should be noted that, in addition to having a robust policy position in the new Local Plan, the continued vitality of the County's centres will also require support and investment in terms of investing in the physical appearance of the centre, place marketing, and business support.

FIRSTPLAN

# Appendix 1
# Oakham diversity of uses tables

| Centre: | Oakham | OAK1 |
|---|---|---|
| Street/area: | **Primary Shopping Frontage** | |

**Table 1 - Unit count by use class, August 2012**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | 42 | 10 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 7 | 66 |
| % | 64% | 15% | 8% | 2% | 2% | 11% | 100% |

**Table 2 - Unit count by use class, August 2017**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | 47 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 71 |
| % | 66% | 13% | 8% | 4% | 1% | 7% | 100% |

**Table 3 - Planning approvals for change of use by use class, August 2017 to January 2021**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | -1 | | | | | | |

**Table 4 - Unit count by use class, January 2021**
(Table 2 plus Table 3)

| Use Class | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 46 | 9 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 5 | 70 |
| % | 66% | 13% | 9% | 4% | 1% | 7% | 100% |
| **Change from 2012 %** | **2%** | **-2%** | **1%** | **3%** | **0%** | **-3%** | |

Note: parts of Church Street were moved into PSF subsequent to 2012 centre survey.

| Centre: | **Oakham** | OAK2 |
|---|---|---|
| Street/area: | **Mill Street** | |

**Table 1 - Unit count by use class, August 2012**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 26 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 37 |
| % | 70% | 3% | 5% | 0% | 11% | 11% | 100% |

**Table 2 - Unit count by use class, August 2017**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 30 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 41 |
| % | 73% | 10% | 5% | 2% | 7% | 2% | 100% |

**Table 3 - Planning approvals for change of use by use class, August 2017 to January 2021**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 1 | | | | | | |

**Table 4 - Unit count by use class, January 2021**
(Table 2 plus Table 3)

| Use Class | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 31 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 42 |
| % | 74% | 10% | 5% | 2% | 7% | 2% | 100% |
| **Change from 2012 %** | **4%** | **7%** | **-1%** | **2%** | **-4%** | **-8%** | |

| Centre: | Oakham | OAK3 |
|---|---|---|
| Street/area: | **High Street, Western End** | |

**Table 1 - Unit count by use class, August 2012**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 10 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 5 | 21 |
| % | 48% | 19% | 0% | 10% | 0% | 24% | 100% |

**Table 2 - Unit count by use class, August 2017**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 9 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 19 |
| % | 47% | 11% | 16% | 16% | 0% | 11% | 100% |

**Table 3 - Planning approvals for change of use by use class, August 2017 to January 2021**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | | | | | | | |

**Table 4 - Unit count by use class, January 2021**
(Table 2 plus Table 3)

| Use Class | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 9 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 19 |
| % | 47% | 11% | 16% | 16% | 0% | 11% | 100% |
| **Change from 2012 %** | **0%** | **-9%** | **16%** | **6%** | **0%** | **-13%** | |

| Centre: | Oakham | OAK4 |
|---|---|---|
| Street/area: | **West End** | |

**Table 1 - Unit count by use class, August 2012**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 15 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 4 | 27 |
| % | 56% | 4% | 4% | 7% | 15% | 15% | 100% |

**Table 2 - Unit count by use class, August 2017**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 14 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 26 |
| % | 54% | 4% | 4% | 4% | 23% | 12% | 100% |

**Table 3 - Planning approvals for change of use by use class, August 2017 to January 2021**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | | | | | | | |

**Table 4 - Unit count by use class, January 2021**
(Table 2 plus Table 3)

| Use Class | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 14 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 26 |
| % | 54% | 4% | 4% | 4% | 23% | 12% | 100% |
| **Change from 2012 %** | **-2%** | **0%** | **0%** | **-4%** | **8%** | **-3%** | |

| Centre: | **Oakham** | OAK5 |
|---|---|---|
| Street/area: | **Gaol Street** | |

**Table 1 - Unit count by use class, August 2012**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | 15 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 27 |
| % | 56% | 15% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 30% | 100% |

**Table 2 - Unit count by use class, August 2017**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | 11 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 19 |
| % | 58% | 26% | 5% | 0% | 0% | 11% | 100% |

**Table 3 - Planning approvals for change of use by use class, August 2017 to January 2021**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | -1 | | 1 | | | | |

**Table 4 - Unit count by use class, January 2021**
(Table 2 plus Table 3)

| Use Class | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 10 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 19 |
| % | 53% | 26% | 11% | 0% | 0% | 11% | 100% |
| **Change from 2012 %** | **-3%** | **12%** | **11%** | **0%** | **0%** | **-19%** | |

| Centre: | **Oakham** | OAK6 |
|---|---|---|
| Street/area: | **Church Street** | |

**Table 1 - Unit count by use class, August 2012**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | 4 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 15 |
| % | 27% | 20% | 33% | 7% | 0% | 13% | 100% |

**Table 2 - Unit count by use class, August 2017**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | 5 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 9 |
| % | 56% | 11% | 22% | 11% | 0% | 0% | 100% |

**Table 3 - Planning approvals for change of use by use class, August 2017 to January 2021**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | 2 | | | -1 | | | |

**Table 4 - Unit count by use class, January 2021**
(Table 2 plus Table 3)

| Use Class | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 7 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 |
| % | 70% | 10% | 20% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% |
| **Change from 2012 %** | **43%** | **-10%** | **-13%** | **-7%** | **0%** | **-13%** | |

Note: parts of Church Street were moved into PSF subsequent to 2012 centre survey.

| Centre: | **Oakham** | OAK7 |
|---|---|---|
| Street/area: | **Total for all sub-areas** | |

**Table 1 - Unit count by use class, August 2012**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | 112 | 23 | 13 | 6 | 9 | 30 | 193 |
| % | 58% | 12% | 7% | 3% | 5% | 16% | 100% |

**Table 2 - Unit count by use class, August 2017**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | 116 | 22 | 15 | 9 | 10 | 13 | 185 |
| % | 63% | 12% | 8% | 5% | 5% | 7% | 100% |

**Table 3 - Planning approvals for change of use by use class, August 2017 to January 2021**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | 1 | 0 | 1 | -1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |

**Table 4 - Unit count by use class, January 2021**
(Table 2 plus Table 3)

| Use Class | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 117 | 22 | 16 | 8 | 10 | 13 | 186 |
| % | 63% | 12% | 9% | 4% | 5% | 7% | 100% |
| **Change from 2012 %** | **5%** | **0%** | **2%** | **1%** | **1%** | **-9%** | |

Note: parts of Church Street were moved into PSF subsequent to 2012 centre survey.

# Appendix 2
# Uppingham diversity of uses tables

| Centre: | Uppingham | UPP1 |
|---|---|---|
| Street/area: | **Primary Shopping Frontage** | |

**Table 1 - Unit count by use class, August 2012**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 28 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 39 |
| % | 72% | 8% | 8% | 5% | 3% | 5% | 100% |

**Table 2 - Unit count by use class, August 2018**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 29 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 40 |
| % | 73% | 5% | 8% | 3% | 3% | 10% | 100% |

**Table 3 - Planning approvals for change of use by use class, August 2018 to January 2021**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | | | | | | | |

**Table 4 - Unit count by use class, January 2021**
(Table 2 plus Table 3)

| Use Class | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 29 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 40 |
| % | 73% | 5% | 8% | 3% | 3% | 10% | 100% |
| **Change from 2012 %** | **1%** | **-3%** | **0%** | **-3%** | **0%** | **5%** | |

| Centre: | Uppingham | UPP1 |
|---|---|---|
| Street/area: | **High Street West / Orange Street** | |

**Table 1 - Unit count by use class, August 2012**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 13 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 18 |
| % | 72% | 6% | 6% | 0% | 0% | 17% | 100% |

**Table 2 - Unit count by use class, August 2018**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 12 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 |
| % | 86% | 7% | 7% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% |

**Table 3 - Planning approvals for change of use by use class, August 2018 to January 2021**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | | | | | | | |

**Table 4 - Unit count by use class, January 2021**
(Table 2 plus Table 3)

| Use Class | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 12 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 14 |
| % | 86% | 7% | 7% | 0% | 0% | 0% | 100% |
| **Change from 2012 %** | **13%** | **2%** | **2%** | **0%** | **0%** | **-17%** | |

| Centre: | Uppingham | UPP1 |
|---|---|---|
| Street/area: | High Street East / Queen Street | |

**Table 1 - Unit count by use class, August 2012**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 9 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 17 |
| % | 53% | 6% | 0% | 6% | 0% | 35% | 100% |

**Table 2 - Unit count by use class, August 2018**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 11 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 15 |
| % | 73% | 13% | 0% | 7% | 0% | 7% | 100% |

**Table 3 - Planning approvals for change of use by use class, August 2018 to January 2021**

| Use Class<br>Use Class (as of 2020) | A1<br>E(a) | A2<br>E(b) | A3<br>E(c ) | A4<br>E(d) | A5<br>SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | | | | | | | |

**Table 4 - Unit count by use class, January 2021**
(Table 2 plus Table 3)

| Use Class | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | Other | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Count | 11 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 15 |
| % | 73% | 13% | 0% | 7% | 0% | 7% | 100% |
| **Change from 2012 %** | **20%** | **7%** | **0%** | **1%** | **0%** | **-29%** | |

| Centre: | Uppingham |
| --- | --- |
| Street/area: | Total for all sub-areas |

**Table 1 - Unit count by use class, August 2012**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | 50 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 11 | 74 |
| % | 68% | 7% | 5% | 4% | 1% | 15% | 100% |

**Table 2 - Unit count by use class, August 2018**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | 52 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 69 |
| % | 75% | 7% | 6% | 3% | 1% | 7% | 100% |

**Table 3 - Planning approvals for change of use by use class, August 2018 to January 2021**

| Use Class | A1 | A2 | A3 | A4 | A5 | Other | Total |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Use Class (as of 2020) | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | | |
| Count | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |

**Table 4 - Unit count by use class, January 2021**
(Table 2 plus Table 3)

| Use Class | E(a) | E(b) | E(c ) | E(d) | SG | Other | Total |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Count | 52 | 5 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 5 | 69 |
| % | 75% | 7% | 6% | 3% | 1% | 7% | 100% |
| **Change from 2012 %** | **8%** | **0%** | **0%** | **-1%** | **0%** | **-8%** | |

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