

UTTLESFORD DISTRICT COUNCIL
RETAIL MONITORING
2012-2013

This report looks at the availability of town centre uses within the District in terms of allocated land and land with planning permission for town centre uses. For the purpose of this report town centre uses are defined as:

Use class A1 – Shops

Use class A2 – Finance and Professional Services

Use Class B1(a) – Office, other than a use within Class A2 (financial services)

Use Class D2 – Assembly and Leisure

For a more detailed description of the use classes please see appendix 1.

Both in the adopted Local Plan 2005 and the Draft Local Plan, Town and Local Centres have been identified. These are:

- Saffron Walden
- Great Dunmow
- Stansted Mountfitchet
- Thaxted

Please see appendix 4 for maps of the Town and Local Centre boundaries as identified in the Draft Local Plan.

Retail Allocations in Adopted Local Plan 2005

In the Uttlesford Local Plan 2005 there are a number of policies which seek to protect existing and encourage new retail uses, such as policies RS2 – Town and Local Centres and RS3 – Retention of Retail and other Services in Rural Areas. Of the allocated sites in the adopted local plan the following made provision for retailing:

- Great Dunmow 2: land to the rear of 37 to 75 High Street. Mixed use of 0.75 ha site
- Oakwood Park - it provides for a local centre including suitable shopping

In the Draft Local Plan Local Centres have been identified with primary and secondary shopping areas (appendix 4), this will help give our four local centres (Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Stansted Mountfitchet and Thaxted) some extra protection.

Planning Permissions

Essex County Council conducts an annual survey of non-residential land on behalf of the District Council. The survey is dated April each year and monitors the planning permissions for non-residential use in the previous year. In addition to any new permissions during the year it also

records outstanding town centre use floorspace, town centre use floorspace which has been completed, and town centre use lost to other uses. Only schemes above a certain size threshold are included in the monitoring. The threshold is 250 sq metres or more involving a gain or a loss.

The table below records the amount of floorspace for town centre uses which has been completed during the years up to 2013 both within the identified local centres and the District as a whole.

In the past three years a total of 1681 square meters of town centre use floorspace has been completed within the District. In the year up to April 2013 no retail development was completed.

Completed Town Centre Use Floorspace 2011-2013					
	A1	A2	B1a	D2	Total
2011	-312	-	-	-	-312
2012	313	-	1680	-	1993
2013	-	-	-	-	-
					1681

The table below shows that there is 3,748 sqm of A1/A2 retail floorspace outstanding. Of which 1508 sqm is within the adopted Local Plan 2005 Local Centre boundaries, Land at Emson Close, Saffron Walden (953m2) and 2 Lower Street Stansted Mountfitchet (555m2). Of the 15,942 sqm of B1(a) floorspace none of it is within the four local centre boundaries.

Outstanding Town Centre Use Floorspace 2013	
	2013
A1 & A2	3748
B1(a)	15,942

Appendix 2 lists all of the sites with outstanding planning permission for retail use.

Town Centre Use - Floorspace loss

The total loss (including B1a) of floorspace due to change of use in 2011-2013 is 14,626m2. Of this 13290m2 was within the town centres of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow.

Appendix 3 details the applications for change of use.

Town/Local Centre Survey 2013

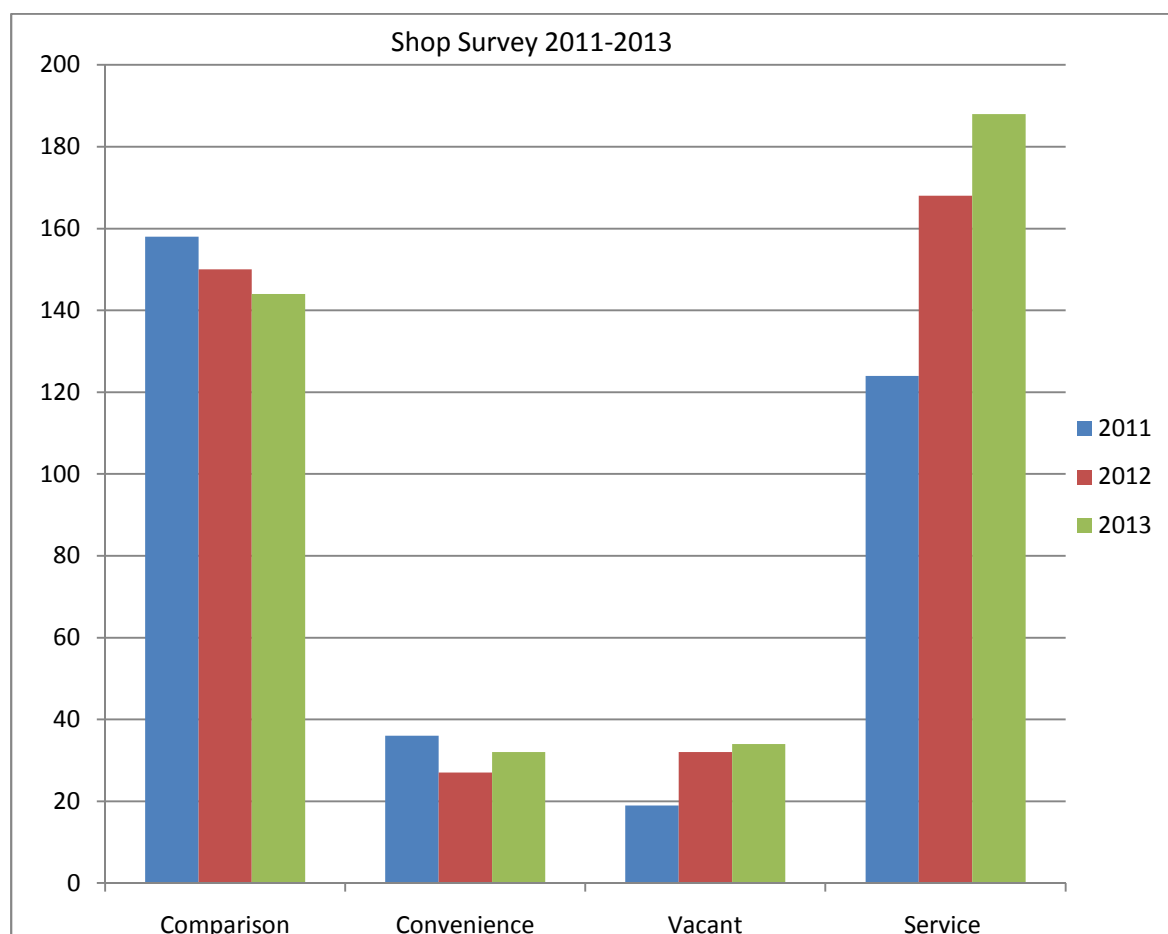
Every year a retail survey is carried out. The following table shows the retail floorspace in the four main centres as defined in the current Proposals Map;

- Saffron Walden
- Great Dunmow
- Stansted Mountfitchet
- Thaxted

Shop Survey 2013

Town	Retail Trade Group									
	Comparison		Convenience		Vacant		Service		Total	
	No. of shops	Net floorspace	No. of shops	Net floorspace	No. of shops	Net floorspace	No. of shops	Net floorspace	No. of shops	Net floorspace
Saffron Walden	99	7650	11	2985	14	436	80	7622	204	18693
Great Dunmow	35	2199.1	10	1568.3	7	202.4	72	3907.2	126	7877
Stansted	4	242.2	8	677.2	11	631.23	26	1604.94	52	3155.57
Thaxted	6	379.8	3	293.3	2	141.1	10	682.4	21	1496.6

The graph below shows historical data on the number of shops the four main centres collectively have. Over the past three years the number of comparison shops has been steadily decreasing, whilst the service industry has grown by 34%. Vacant shops have increased by 15 since 2011, with Stansted town centre having the most vacant shops this year with 11. However, some of the vacant shops in the town are being done up and planning applications have been received regarding new shop signage etc, which suggests they will be brought back into use soon.



National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Consistent with PPS4 (Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth), the NPPF advocates a 'town centres first' approach, and requires planning policies to positively promote competitive town centre environments and manage the growth of centres over the plan period.

Draft Permitted Development Rights

In August 2013 the government published a document entitled 'Greater Flexibilities for change of use - consultation' within which they set out their proposals to allow the change of use of shops to dwellings.

It is proposed to introduce a national permitted development right for change of use and physical works. There will be prior approval in respect of design, the potential impact of the loss of the retail unit on the economic health of the town centre, the need to maintain an adequate provision of essential local services such as post offices and the potential impact on the change of use on the character of the local area.

The Draft Local Plan, June 2012 (Composite)

The retail strategy in the Draft Local Plan, as set out in policy SP5, is to support new retail, leisure and other town centre uses and to focus these uses in the town and local centres. SP5 details the amount of retail floorspace needed in the main centres throughout the plan period; 10,600m² of comparison floorspace, 2,200m² of convenience floorspace and 4,500m² of retail warehousing.

The following Site Allocation Policies make provision for retail use:

Saffron Walden 1 and Saffron Walden 2 – Retail Warehousing

Saffron Walden 7: Development Opportunity Site

Great Dunmow 2 – it provides for 1,400m² of retail floorspace

Great Dunmow 8 – Development Opportunity Site

Elsenham 5 – land at Gaunts End, allocated for B1(a) business use

Stansted Mountfitchet 2 – Land at Lower Street, mixed use development with a retail element

Stansted Mountfitchet 3 – Forest Hall Park – suitable shopping facilities

Stansted Mountfitchet 5 – Development Opportunity Site

Employment Densities

Employment densities can be used in the appraisal of potential employment in the retail sector. The Homes and Communities Agency Employment Densities guide has been used to calculate the possible employment opportunities generated by the retail allocations in the Draft Local Plan.

Most of the broad categories of use contain wide ranges of density. The figures in the table below are indicative only of the levels of employment that could be generated.

Use Class	Floorspace (Net)m ²	Full Time Employees	Allocation in Draft Local Plan
Saffron Walden			
Comparison (shopping centre location)	10,200	42	Saffron Walden 7: Development Opportunity Sites
Convenience	790	46	
Retail Warehouse	4,500	50	Saffron Walden 1 & 2 (already has PP)
Service Sales	9,280	580	No provision in Plan *
Great Dunmow			
Comparison	391	21	
Convenience	1,400	82	
Service	2,177	136	No Provision in Plan*
Stansted			
Comparison	695	37	
Convenience	1,034	61	
Service *	1,826	114	No Provision in Plan *
Total		1,169	
Source: Homes and Communities Agency, Employment Densities Guide 2 nd Edition 2010.			

In total it is estimated that 1,169 jobs could be created by the implementation of the policies in the Draft Local Plan.

See appendix 5.

Conclusions

- New Opportunity Area allocations are being put forward in the emerging Local Plan which will help meet the anticipated retail need in the local centres of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow
- The new Local Plan has allocated sites for retail warehousing and large convenience shops, which will meet the anticipated need.
- The number of vacant shops in the four main retail centres has risen overall in the past three years, this could be an outcome of the economic downturn. Annual monitoring will continue to see if this trend carry's on.
- The new permitted development rights, if adopted by Government, could bring about new challenges, however, the Draft Local Plan makes provisions to protect and enhance our main centres.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1:

Use Class Definitions

A1 -

A1 Convenience

These are shops where the goods on sale are purchased frequently. The convenient location of the shops is a high priority to the customer when making purchases. Such shops include supermarkets, newsagents and off licences.

A1 Comparison

These are shops selling durable goods which are purchased at irregular intervals. A customer would probably not make a purchase until a comparison has been made with other shops. Examples of these shops are clothes shops, electrical shops and jewellers.

Town Centre Uses:

Use Class	Use Type	Permitted Change of Use
A1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Retail sale of goods other than hot food• Post Office• Sale of tickets or as a travel agency• Sale of sandwiches or other cold food (consumption off the premises)• Hairdressing• Direction of funerals• Displaying of goods for sale• Hairing shops• Dry cleaners• Reception of goods to be washed, leaned or repaired• Internet café	None (flat above permitted)
A2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial services• Professional services (other than health or medical services)• Any other services (including use as a betting office)	Flat above and A1 (when there is a display window at ground level).
B1(A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• As an office other than a use within class A2	B8
D2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A cinema or concert hall• Bingo hall• Dance hall• Swimming bath• Skating rink• Gymnasium and other recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms	None

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 2

Outstanding A1/A2 Floorspace

Utt Ref	Site	Development Description	Outstanding Floorspace (Sq M)
0609/11	Land at Emson Close, Saffron Walden	Renewal of approved planning application UTT/0536/07 for mixed use including retail	555
1323/09	Radwinter Road, Saffron Walden	Extension to existing class A1 retail store at Tesco Stores	1274
1522/12	2 Lower Street, Stansted	Demolish existing commercial building. Mixed use development, including A1 retail.	953
1841/10	Site 4B Southgate London Stansted Airport	Construction of 2 units. Mixed use A1 shops and A2 financial	552
2092/10	Priors Green, Takeley	Erection of local retail centre retail parade	414
Total			3748

Outstanding B1(a) Floorspace

Utt Ref	Site	Development Description	Outstanding Floorspace (SqM)
1473/11	Tri Sail Water Circle, Elsenham Meadows	Demolish existing office and car park. Construction of 3 interlinked buildings containing offices and ancillary mixed retail, café and spa	6978
2310/10	Hartford End Brewery, Mill Lane, Felsted	Redevelopment and change of use of former brewery to provide mixed use including B1(a)	650
1572/12	Land at Ashdon Road, Saffron Walden	B1(a) use	3800
1788/07	Civic Amenity Site/Granite Building, Thaxted Road, Saffron Walden	B1(a) use	1128
0811/10	Hanger 10, Long Border Road, Stansted Airport	Extension to Aircraft hanger to improve office B1(a)	630
0849/05	Site 600 Taylors End Stansted Airport	Business and storage units including B1(a)	585
1735/10	Land adjacent Skyway House, Parsonage	Office building for B1(a) use with associated parking	1180

	Road, Takeley		
0801/11	Elmdonbury, Bury Lane, Elmdon	C/U of agricultural building to B1(a)	459
1402/12	Glandfields Farm Felsted	Change of use of barn to offices	532
Total			15,942

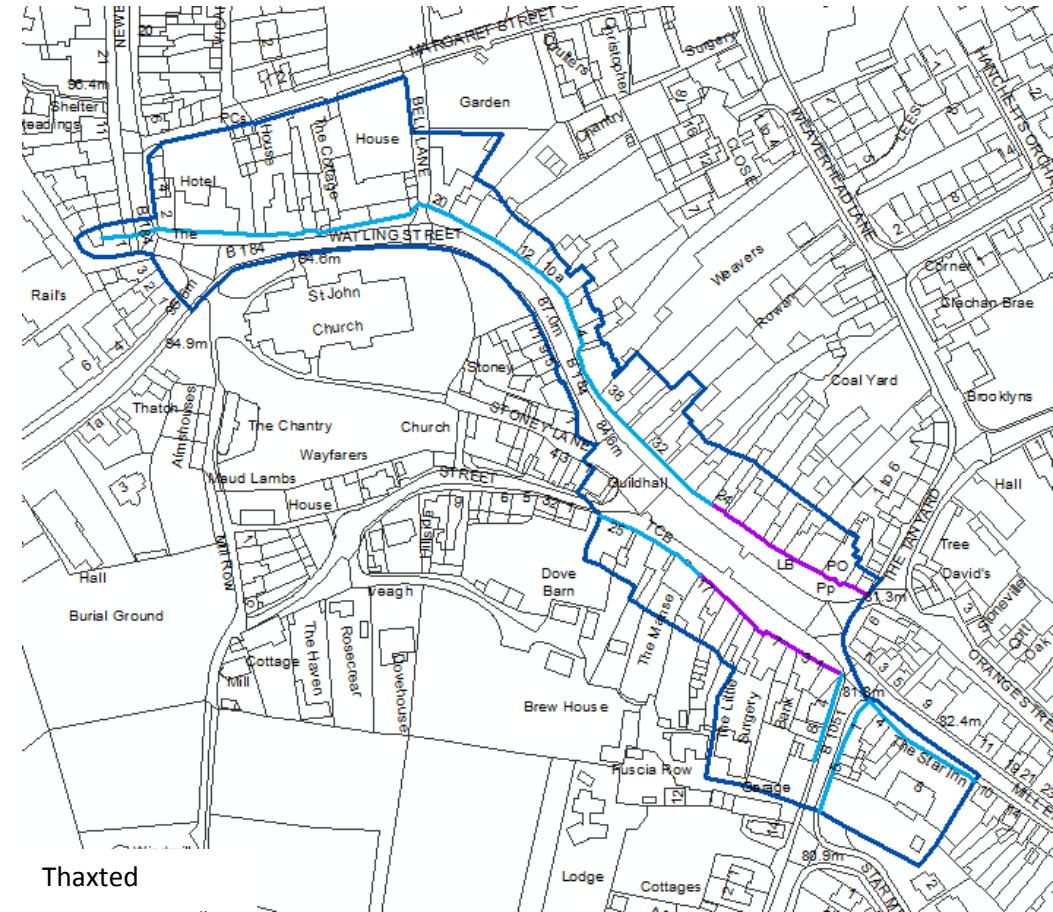
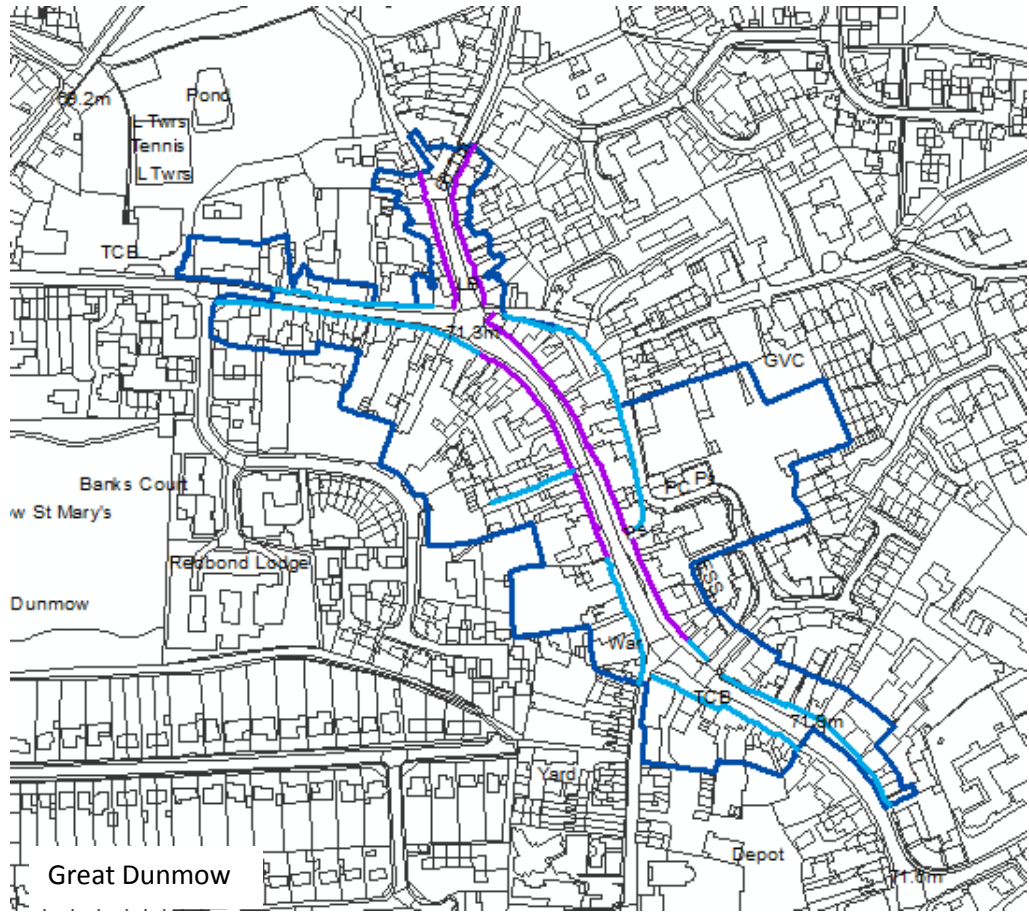
Appendix 3

Retail loss to C3 residential 2011-2013




UTT Reference	Address	Description	Floorspace lost
1427/12	Rear of Dorringtons, 24 High Street Newport	Change of use of offices above shop to one 3 bed flat and conversion of vacant unit to 3 bed dwellings	260m2
6109/12	8b Cross Street, Saffron Walden	Change of use of first floor office to residential	115m2
0280/12	8-10 King Street, Saffron Walden	Change of use from retail to residential	475m2
5739/12	Waggoners Court, 77, The Street, Manuden	Change of use from office to dwelling	414m2
0373/09	Cambridge road, Quendon	Pottery & Craft shop to one 3 bed dwelling	312m2
1353/09	White House, Cambridge Road, Quendon	Change of use from offices to hotel	350m2
2116/10	Former Council Offices, High Street, Great Dunmow	Change of use from offices to residential	12700m2
Total			14626m2

Appendix 4

Local Centres and Primary and Secondary shopping areas



Legend

-  Secondary_Frontages
-  Primary_Frontages
-  TownLocal_centre_boundary

Appendix 5

Table to illustrate possible job creation from retail development (both in town and out of town centres)

Use Class	Use Type	Area per FTE (m2)	Comment
A1	High Street Shop	19	Town/City Centre location
A1	Food Superstores	17	
A1	Other superstores/retail warehouse	90	
A2	Financial and professional services	16	Includes the back office function as well as the customer facing areas
A3	Restaurants & Cafes	18	Range of 10-30 m2

Source: Homes and Communities Agency, Employment Densities Guide 2nd Edition 2010.