

CHAPTER 6 Retail

Retail

Paragraphs 6.1- 6.9

This supporting text was responded to by 14 people/organisations.

Support	1
Object	4
Comment	9

Overarching Summary

- Retail in smaller towns should be supported where retail is being lost to accommodation
- Query on location of Uttlesford Retail Study (2016) in Local Plan
- Food_superstores do not capture nearly all the main food-shopping spend in the District
- The Local Plan seeks to address the loss of village services where possible and it would be interesting to know which items address this issue
- Village services should be a requirement

Statutory consultees and other bodies

No comments received.

Developers/landowners/site promoters

No comments received.

Individuals

- Where is the Uttlesford Retail Study (2016)? There is an Uttlesford Retail Capacity Study. Is this what is meant?
- Better design of retail and commercial units on the edges of towns would give a stronger sense of identity with the historic centres.
- Where is the Uttlesford Economic Development Strategy (2016-2018)? It is not held in the Retail section of Local Plan evidence and background studies
- Support should be given for retail in smaller towns such as Thaxted, where retail is being lost to accommodation.
- A significant proportion of expenditure on comparison spend albeit.
- This section is hardly consistent with 6.6. Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow food superstores do not capture nearly all the main food-shopping spend in the District. Residents of Elsenham and Stansted Mountfitchet shop either in Stansted Mountfitchet or in Bishop's Stortford.
- Stansted Mountfitchet now has a medium-sized Co-operative store.
- This may be true about Thaxted, but it is rather dismissive. Thaxted residents need support to retain local retail
- This section states, the Local Plan seeks to address the loss of village services where possible. It would be interesting to know which items address this issue.
- Village services should be a requirement. Is there costing for maintaining health and well-being in small communities with such services compared with no services? Perhaps the potential for saving money would change the "where possible" into "definite provision".
- Policy supported.

No policies to appraise.

Retail Strategy

Paragraphs 6.10- 6.11

This policy was responded to by 3 people/organisations.

Support	0
Object	1
Comment	2

Overarching Summary

- Out of Town retail cannot be encouraged at NUGC to the detriment of Saffron Walden.
- Traffic consequences will be significant and adverse.
- Whether it would be appropriate for retail provision in the proposed neighbourhood centres to be restricted to just a supermarket and small convenience shops for a settlement of this size.

Statutory consultees and other bodies

Clerk Great Chesterford Parish Council - It is noted that a town centre first approach is adopted. NUGC will therefore be reliant on Saffron Walden for retail. This is the predictable outcome. Out of Town retail cannot be encouraged at NUGC to the detriment of Saffron Walden (and the inevitable traffic consequences for all). It is therefore highly unrealistic to suggest that NUGC can have a sustainable retail offering. It may well have local shops/chemists etc, (as backed up by paragraph 6.17) but independent shops of the depth and history of Saffron Walden will not be achieved at NUGC and so the retail focus will, rightly, remain at Saffron Walden. The traffic consequences will be significant and adverse. Policy RET1 specifically states that retail development will need to ensure the totality and viability of Uttlesford's existing town and local centres and the scale of development will need to be consistent with the hierarchy which has Saffron Walden at the top.

Developers/landowners/site promoters

Clearly, retail providers have an interest in supporting new housing but this conflicts with AECOM's concerns that no large single Town Centre be provided as part of WoB since this could have a detrimental impact on the sustainability and vigorous activity of Braintree town centre and may well affect its viability. In addition, AECOM acknowledge that a development of this scale could have the potential to act as a competitor location and thus impact the resilience of established centres, especially Braintree Town Centre. BDC themselves have suggested that the level of new retail provision for the new settlement should be limited. They also question whether it would be appropriate for retail provision in the proposed neighbourhood centres to be restricted to just a supermarket and small convenience shops for a settlement of this size. This is an important point which seems to have been ignored.

Individuals

- Where is the Uttlesford Retail Study (2016)?

No policies to appraise.

Town and Local Centres Strategy

Paragraphs 6.12- 6.17 and Policy RET1

This policy was responded to by 24 people/organisations.

Support	7
Object	7
Comment	10

Overarching Summary

- Saffron Walden NP note no mention of increasing SW town centre retail area with a need to support independent shops in Saffron Walden to maintain character of town
- Saffron Walden Town Council support policy noting hierarchy of Saffron Walden/do not support out of town retail
- Littlebury Parish Council consider the growth of on line shopping/impact not addressed
- Stansted Mountfitchet NP consider 30 minutes of free parking needed Grafton/Lower Street
- Braintree District welcome inclusion of local centre for West of Braintree/consider likely that the size of the West of Braintree garden community may require a town centre in the long term
- Thaxted Society support with improved compliance
- Thaxted Parish support
- Individuals note new developments need to be sustainable, doubt that the Garden Communities will reach the size/pace necessary to support local retail services, travelling to Saffron Walden requires a car, retail outside of Saffron Walden only where not viable in the town centre
- Developers consider West of Braintree Garden Community provide local centres for day to day needs, within walking or cycling distance
- Switch from A1 retail to a range of service uses including A3/A4 and D1 and D2.
- The new communities should provide retail floor space in order to meet the day-to-day needs of the new settlements residents and to create a vibrant centre in order to encourage social interaction and a sense of community.
- New retail opportunities are supported in Thaxted village to ensure its longer term vitality and viability.
- Important that daily retail needs are met at the outset to minimise traffic movements and develop the community.

Statutory consultees and other bodies

The Thaxted Society - RET1 Support but with improved compliance.

Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - No mention of increasing the retail area in SW town centre. How does providing the retail development for North Uttlesford Garden Village work? Where will people park? Suggestion: Need to support independent shops in Saffron Walden to maintain character of town.

Stansted Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - The best way of maintaining the vitality of Stansted Mountfitchet is to allow 30 minutes or so of free parking at Crafton Green and Lower Street Suggestion: Plus - better provision of on-street parking for impulse in-out quick shopping

Braintree District Council - Policy RET1 Town and Local Centres Strategy BDC welcomes the recognition of the West of Braintree garden community has a local retail centre in the policy. However we would welcome clarification if this is related to only the Plan period. Whilst the changing nature of town centres and retail makes future requirements difficult to predict, it is likely that a town the size of the West of Braintree garden community is likely to require a town centre in the long term.

Saffron Walden Town Council - Note Saffron Walden Business Centre is not shown on the policies map Query, this policy notes that floor space for a convenience store by 2026 of 5,000sqm but this is contrary to page 19 (last para) which notes there is not additional employment floor space in SW. No mention of increasing the retail area in SW town centre. Query: We support this policy noting the hierarchy of Saffron Walden. The town does not need a supermarket of this size the floor space represents a superstore, not a convenience store. Need to support independent shops to maintain the character of the town. Also note that we wish to protect the town centre and we do not at all support out of town retail parks. New developments need to be sustainable. Query this discrepancy.

Littlebury Parish Council - There should be sufficient properties in garden villages eventually for most of their regular retail needs to be provided within the settlement. However, it is important that daily retail needs are met at the outset to minimise traffic movements and develop the community. The growth of on line shopping, and its impact on established shopping centres is not addressed. Out of town retail should be minimised.

Thaxted Parish Council - Supported

Developers/landowners/site promoters

- Support policy RET1, requiring the provision of local centres at each of the three proposed Garden Communities. The development vision and master plan submitted by GL Hearn on behalf of ANSC (July 2017 update enclosed) identified three district centres, two of which would be provided within the ANSC controlled land, and one within the Boxted Wood development promoted by Galliard Homes. Each district centre would be served by a food store and community uses and an employment park. Each district centre would be split in to 3 hamlets with every hamlet containing a local shops and communities uses, allotment / community orchard and neighbourhood play areas. Local primary schools would also be accessible within each hamlet. In summary, it is envisaged that the West of Braintree Garden Community (WBGC) should provide local centres that provide for the day to day needs of the new community, within walking or cycling distance. Further detailed master planning relating to the local centres for the WBGC will need to be progressed through a Supplementary Planning Document, framework or similar.
- Once again we are broadly supportive of the Council's policies and approach in relation to their retail strategy; however this needs to be adopted flexibly given the clear impact of the internet, amongst other influences, on the viability of many town centres. The practical effect of this is to switch demand from A1 retail to a range of service uses including A3/A4 and D1 and D2. In the circumstances we believe the Council should adopt a flexible approach, particularly for smaller units within the town centre, in accordance with the General Development Order in order to maintain the viability of the core town and local centres.
- Support policy RET1 requiring the provision of a local centre at the North Uttlesford Garden Community with the type and scale of the retail floor space determined through the masterplan process and commensurate with the scale of the new settlement. Grosvenor support Paragraph 6.17 recognising that the new communities should provide retail floor space in order to meet the day-to-day needs of the new settlements residents and to create a vibrant centre in order to encourage social interaction and a sense of community. As identified in paragraph 6.14 of the Plan, provision of food and drink retail in particular can increase the number of residents shopping locally, reducing unnecessary travel and in particular encourage walking. The provision for the North Uttlesford Garden Community will seek to create a mixed retail offer in order to meet these needs, encourage local shopping whilst being mindful of complimenting the retail offer of the established District centre market town of Saffron Walden as noted in Paragraph 6.10, whilst also seeking opportunities, where appropriate, to prevent further loss of expenditure to centres outside of the District as identified in Paragraph 6.9.
- 3. Retail (Policy RET1) Policy RET1 - Town and Local Centres Strategy 3.1 We support the identification of Thaxted as a 'Local Centre'. 3.2 Thaxted plays an important role in providing for the local community and tourists. It is important new retail opportunities are supported in the village to ensure its longer term vitality and viability.

Individuals

- We seem to have many coffee bars and charity shops. In so far as the former add to sociability that's fine. More mention should be made of the markets held in the town square on Tuesdays and on Saturdays.
- Paragraph 6.14 supported
- The wording in paragraph 6.16 suggests unawareness that Stansted Mountfitchet now has a medium-sized Co-operative store
- The new garden communities should provide for more than the top-up shopping suggested in the second sentence - and indeed that sentence is not consistent with the end of the paragraph.
- No artificial new settlements please.
- It is unreasonable/unsustainable to force inhabitants of towns the size (and bigger!) of Saffron Walden to shop elsewhere by only providing for top up shopping!! People will have to use cars to go shopping in SW I strongly object. I ran out of time/gave up at this point.
- It is indicative of the irresponsible attitude to development in Elsenham that the village has increased by over 60% and yet there is apparently no need for it to be included in the Retail Strategy.
- Doubtful that the proposed Garden Villages will reach the necessary dwellings at a sufficient pace in order to support local retail services.
- It is likely that Garden Villages will become wholly dependent upon door step deliveries derived from internet shopping.
- This is in conflict with Policy TA2, as travelling to and from Saffron Walden to use retail services will require a car to accommodate goods and this does not encourage a modal shift to sustainable transport.
- Any retail development outside of Saffron Walden town centre should only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that it is unviable to locate it within the town centre.

Sustainability Appraisal June 2017

Significant, Temporal and Secondary Effects

This policy effectively safeguards retail provision in the district which would positively ensure employment provision in this sector. Positive impacts will also be associated with maintaining the district's historic centres as these correspond to town and local centres which this policy seeks to maintain the character and function of. There will be positive impacts on accessibility and the use of sustainable transport through town and local centres benefitting from established transport interchanges for the wider area.

Alternatives Considered

No alternative approaches can be considered reasonable as the policy reiterates the thread of sustainable development as espoused in the NPPF. Any alternative that deviates from this approach would either be contrary to NPPF and therefore an unsound approach, or not distinctly different from the Policy to be considered an alternative for the purposes of identification and assessment within this SA.

Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations

Through iterative working, it was recommended within a draft SA that the Garden Communities be included and defined within the retail hierarchy as appropriate (as per paragraph 23 of the NPPF), in order to inform future proposals for retail, leisure uses in the latter stages of the plan period and an indication of their status beyond. It was further recommended that the new settlements are categorised as equivalent to local centres within the retail hierarchy, so as to adhere to Garden City principles. This recommendation has been factored into the Policy. As such, no mitigation measures or recommendations are proposed at this stage.

The Location and Impact of New Retail Development

Paragraphs 6.18 and Policy RET 2

This policy was responded to by 9 people/organisations.

Support	3
Object	0
Comment	6

Overarching Summary

- Saffron Walden/ Stansted Neighbourhood Plan Steering Groups/Saffron Town Council add out of town retail only if no town centre site/convenience stores are needed on developments more than 500m from retail centres
- Harlow Council welcome recognition of retail hierarchy/future retail floor space for each garden community could be linked to Retail Impact Assessment threshold in Policy RET2 (1000m2).
- The Thaxted Society support with improved compliance
- Developer considers threshold in proposed Policy RET2 is not based on any empirical evidence/ should be 750sqm for out of centre retail development
- Individual want out of centre applications to show they will provide a net increase in jobs

Statutory consultees and other bodies

The Thaxted Society support Policy RET2 however with improved compliance. It is also the Society established policy.

Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - Should add to policy that any retail development outside town centres must demonstrate unviability or impracticality of the development being in the town centre. Suggestion: Convenience stores are needed on developments more than 500m from retail centres.

Stansted Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - Should add to policy that any retail development outside town centres must demonstrate unviability or impracticality of the development being in the town centre. Suggestion: Convenience stores are needed on developments more than 500m from retail centres. (FHP combined shop/community centre).

Saffron Walden Town Council - Should add to policy that any retail development outside town centres must demonstrate unviability or impracticality of the development being in the town centre. Proposed Change: Amend wording as proposed. Also note that convenience stores are needed on developments more than 500m from retail centres.

Harlow District Council - Retail Policy (Para 6.9 Policy RET 1 RET2 and RET5) The recognition given that it is an unrealistic position for settlements in Uttlesford to compete against Harlow's retail sub-regional role is welcome given the largely rural nature of Uttlesford District. Future retail floor space for each garden community could be linked to the Retail Impact Assessment threshold mentioned in Policy RET2 (1000m2).

Developers/landowners/site promoters

- On behalf of our client, Sainsbury's Supermarkets Ltd, we submit representation in respect of the Uttlesford District Council Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation. Whilst Sainsbury's currently does not have any stores within the District, Sainsbury's has a keen interest in emerging planning policy for the District. Proposed Policy RET2 suggests the requirement for an impact assessment to be submitted with proposals of more than 1,000 sqm on sites outside town and local centres. However, the retail capacity study prepared by Savills (July 2016) does not recommend any threshold. The

threshold outlined in proposed Policy RET2 is therefore not based on any empirical evidence. On this basis, we consider that in order for the Council to be able to assess the cumulative effects of out of centre development, the threshold should be 750sqm for retail development. We trust these representations will be taken into account in the next iteration of the Local Plan and would be grateful if you could keep us informed of the progress of the Plan.

Individuals

- Applications for retail development outside of town centres should robustly demonstrate that they will provide a NET increase in employment. That is that there will be a net increase in jobs once all the jobs they have destroyed in the town centres have been deducted from the new jobs they claim their new retail outlet will provide.

Sustainability Appraisal June 2017

Significant, Temporal and Secondary Effects

There will be positive impacts on the economic function of existing town centres as a result of the Policy. The Policy seeks to protect town centres for suitable retail uses in the first instance, however is flexible enough to ensure that each scheme for out of centre retail is judged and determined on its own merits.

Alternatives Considered

No alternative approaches can be considered reasonable as the policy reiterates the thread of sustainable development as espoused in the NPPF. Any alternative that deviates from this approach would be contrary to NPPF and therefore an unsound approach.

Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations

No mitigation measures or recommendations are proposed at this stage.

Town and Local Centres and Shopping Frontages

Paragraph 6.19- 6.21 and Policy RET3

This policy was responded to by 13 people/organisations.

Support	6
Object	0
Comment	7

Overarching Summary

- Saffron Walden Town Council query if prevents A3 uses in the town centre/reduces protection
- Saffron Walden/ Stansted Neighbourhood Plan Steering Groups/Saffron Town Council consider reduces protection/ prioritise primary shopping frontages to remain so, especially in Saffron Walden, not allow change of use from A1
- The Thaxted Society opposes any change of use from retail/considers the encouragement of revived crafts and arts to fulfil both retail growth and tourist attraction.

Statutory consultees and other bodies

The Thaxted Society - RET3 The Thaxted Society as a matter of policy opposes any change of use from retail to residential. Whilst there is merit in a mix, and the policy suggests conversion of 1st floors to residential, where these are separate they deny new forms of retail now emerging. A business may prove viable where the owner lives above. At Thaxted we consider the encouragement of revived crafts and arts to fulfil both retail growth and tourist attraction. Thaxted has a long tradition of 'making' and at the Society

we have lobbied for this to be recognised and encouraged. Live work makes low profit commerce viable, sustainable, and appropriate.

Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - This policy is supposed to protect retail but in fact reduces the protection. We should be increasing the amount of primary shopping frontage, not reducing it. We do not want to allow any change of use from A1 without planning consent. Suggestion: This policy needs to be flexible in the right places but prioritise Primary shopping frontages to remain so, especially in Saffron Walden.

Stansted Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - This policy is supposed to protect retail but in fact reduces the protection. We should be increasing the amount of primary shopping frontage, not reducing it. We do not want to allow any change of use from A1 without planning consent. Suggestion: This policy needs to be flexible in the right places but prioritise Primary shopping frontages.

Saffron Walden Town Council - This would not allow food/restaurants in King Streets or the Market Square? This policy is designed to protect retail but reduces the protection in reality. We should be increasing the amount of primary shopping frontage, not reducing it. We do not want to allow change of use from A1 without planning permission Proposed : This policy needs to be flexible in the right places but prioritise Primary frontages to remain so, especially in Saffron Walden.

Developers/landowners/site promoters

No comments received.

Individuals

- Keep and protect key retail

Sustainability Appraisal June 2017

Significant, Temporal and Secondary Effects

This policy effectively safeguards retail provision in the district which would positively ensure employment provision in this sector. Positive impacts will also be associated with maintaining the district's historic centres as these correspond to town and local centres which this policy seeks to maintain the character and function of. There will be positive impacts on accessibility and the use of sustainable transport through town and local centres benefitting from established transport interchanges for the wider area.

Alternatives Considered

One alternative policy approach has been considered reasonable.

- Alternative RET1(a): To delete the policy and let the market determine acceptable uses. The alternative of deleting the policy would be contrary to the NPPF which states in paragraph 23 that Local Plans should, 'define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, based on a clear definition of primary and secondary frontages in designated centres, and set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations.' As such, this alternative can be deemed unreasonable and uncertain and negative impacts have been highlighted for relevant SA objectives. The Council sought to progress Policy RET1 above as it reflects the NPPF; referring to primary and secondary shopping frontages and what type of uses will be permitted in these areas.

Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations

No mitigation measures or recommendations are proposed at this stage.

Loss of Shops and Other Facilities

Paragraphs 6.22 – 6.23 and Policy RET4

This policy was responded to by 8 people/organisations.

Support	6
Object	1
Comment	1

Overarching Summary

- Thaxted Society consider criteria for viability in Appendix 5 be strengthened and then enforced
- Saffron Walden/ Stansted Neighbourhood Plan Steering Groups/Saffron Town Council request policy to prevent pubs from becoming Express stores under permitted development rights.

Statutory consultees and other bodies

Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - Support Comment: Can you clarify whether this would effectively prevent pubs from becoming Express stores for leading supermarket chains under permitted development rights?

Stansted Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group – Support the policy. Can you clarify whether this would effectively prevent pubs from becoming Express stores for leading supermarket chains under permitted development rights?

Saffron Walden Town Council support this policy

The Thaxted Society - Beyond what UDC may not do this policy may be improved. The suggestion of future availability to offset immediate loss is unacceptable. Thaxted has suffered commitments unfulfilled and promises of future benefit that are not enforced. Again the examination of criteria for viability at Appendix 5 should be strengthened and then enforced!

Developers/landowners/site promoters

- Support paragraph 6.22 which states that local shops, services and facilities located outside of designated town and local centres can be of importance to the communities they serve

Individuals

- Support paragraphs 6.22 and 6.23.

Sustainability Appraisal June 2017

Significant, Temporal and Secondary Effects

This policy seeks to protect village shops and other facilities which are considered important to the local communities and rural areas they serve. In recent years there has been a continual loss of village services including village shops, public houses, places of worship, village halls and health service provision which communities rely on. The policy will have a significant positive impact on promoting accessibility as it seeks to prevent the loss of facilities and services which serve the rural community. This also seeks to retain local employment opportunities. Protecting rural services ensures that people in rural communities have easy access to them which also adheres to the notion of social inclusion across the District. Furthermore, retaining village shops and other local facilities maximises the potential for rural communities to walk and cycle to them which positively impacts on encouraging the use of sustainable methods of travel.

Alternatives Considered

One alternative policy approach has been identified as reasonable.

- Alternative RET4(a): To remove the current controls and allow changes of use of existing services in response to market conditions regardless of the availability of other alternatives.

The alternative of removing current controls would have greater uncertainty as to whether services and facilities will be retained. This alternative approach would also offer no level of flexibility for future needs or possible village expansion. The Council rejected this approach due to the danger of a loss of rural facilities adversely impacting on the social wellbeing of rural communities and selected the Policy approach due to positive impacts in this regard.

Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations

No mitigation measures or recommendations are proposed at this stage.

New Shops in Rural Areas

Paragraph 6.24 and Policy RET5

This paragraph and policy was responded to by 7 people/organisations.

Support	5
Object	0
Comment	2

Overarching Summary

- Saffron Walden Town Council supports with requirement on foot/cycle paths
- The Thaxted Society concerned over new retail beyond development Limits/protect centre
- Thaxted Parish Council requires footpaths cycle paths to access such development
- Saffron Walden/Stansted Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group requires policy to support all community facilities, e.g. churches, pubs, schools, halls, museums etc

Statutory consultees and other bodies

Saffron Walden Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - Support. Why not can this policy not support all community facilities, e.g. churches, pubs, schools, halls, museums etc.?

Stansted Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group - Support. This policy should support all community facilities, e.g. churches, pubs, schools, halls, museums etc.

Saffron Walden Town Council support this policy to add appropriate footpaths/cycle paths are provided by developers/applicant to access facility Support policy with amended wording as proposed

The Thaxted Society - New retail beyond DL. Whilst this does not apply at Thaxted it is worth noting that a policy allowing development for community amenity, even commercial, misunderstands the simple fundamental of the holistic community centre. A small village has a precarious balance of purpose however ancient and moving beyond that centre may destroy that balance.

Thaxted Parish Council - Policy RET5 (page 87) Comment: To add appropriate footpaths/cycle paths are provided by developers/applicant to access facility Support policy with amended wording as proposed

Developers/landowners/site promoters

No comments received.

Individuals

- Support paragraph 6.24.

Sustainability Appraisal June 2017

Significant, Temporal and Secondary Effects

This policy seeks to protect village shops and other facilities which are considered important to the local communities and rural areas they serve. In recent years there has been a continual loss of village services including village shops, public houses, places of worship, village halls and health service provision which communities rely on. The policy will have a significant positive impact on promoting accessibility as it seeks to prevent the loss of facilities and services which serve the rural community. This also seeks to retain local employment opportunities. Protecting rural services ensures that people in rural communities have easy access to them which also adheres to the notion of social inclusion across the District. Furthermore, retaining village shops and other local facilities maximises the potential for rural communities to walk and cycle to them which positively impacts on encouraging the use of sustainable methods of travel.

Alternatives Considered

One alternative policy approach has been identified as reasonable.

- Alternative RET5(a): To remove the current controls and allow changes of use of existing services in response to market conditions regardless of the availability of other alternatives.

The alternative of removing current controls would have greater uncertainty as to whether services and facilities will be retained. This alternative approach would also offer no level of flexibility for future needs or possible village expansion. The Council rejected this approach due to the danger of a loss of rural facilities adversely impacting on the social wellbeing of rural communities and selected the Policy approach due to positive impacts in this regard.

Proposed Mitigation Measures / Recommendations

No mitigation measures or recommendations are proposed at this stage.