Retail Study Update

Prepared for:
Uttlesford District Council

Prepared by:

Savills (UK) Limited
Embassy House
Queens Avenue
Bristol
BS1 1SB

Contents

Retail Study Update

Written by:	Matt Tucker
Checked by:	Craig O’Brien
Issue date:	09/05/2018
File reference:	

1. Introduction

1.1. Introduction

1.1 A Retail Capacity Study was prepared in 2016 for Uttlesford District Council and we are now instructed to update that earlier Report. Much of what was contained in the 2016 Study has remained unchanged, it being considered that that material continues to provide a reliable basis for the analysis and assessment of retailing provision in the District. However, there are key areas demanding modification which can be summarised as follows:

- Review of the Planning Policy context;
- Update of the retail facilities both within the main towns of the District and surrounding towns; and
- Review of the population and retail expenditure data underpinning the capacity exercises and carrying the data horizon through to 2033.

1.2 The purpose of the Study is to examine the existing shopping patterns in the area, the nature and content of the shopping facilities within the district and the need for additional facilities, if any, over the period until 2033. In order to fully appreciate shopping behaviour, a broad appraisal was also made of the major retail facilities beyond the District since it was evident that significant proportions of convenience and, in particular, comparison expenditure, was being attracted to those facilities. An important objective of the Study is to assess whether, for sustainable and other planning reasons, the existing patterns should be modified and, if so, to determine the consequences in terms of additional retail floorspace within the defined centres. We have been instructed to look particularly at the main centres of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow and to a lesser extent the smaller centres of Stansted Mountfitchet and Thaxted and to additionally investigate town centre's outside of Uttlesford that draw trade from the District.

1.3 The Updated Study will provide an evidence base for the emerging Local Plan for the district concerning retail matters. To assist that process the Study will provide assessments at 2016, 2021, 2026, 2031 and 2033. Should the Study indicate a need for a significant increase in retail floorspace over the plan period, consideration as to where such facilities might be provided will also need to be examined given that both

Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow are historic centres hemmed in by existing development. That exercise will examine the nature of the retail floorspace requirements and how it might be accommodated, and give consideration to the general locations which might be employed to give effect to those options. It does not examine specific site solutions.

1.4 The report structure has been framed to provide a logical sequence of inputs to the Study to ensure that all the relevant considerations have been taken into account in evaluating and reaching conclusions on the retail need. We have had particular regard to the advice contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the recently published National Planning Practice Guidance – Planning for Town Centres - the Draft National Planning Policy Framework, and the emerging Local Plan for the District. Although it was cancelled in March 2014 we also refer to the Practice Guidance for Town Centres issued in associated (also cancelled) PPS4. These policy documents are summarised in Section 2.

1.5 The Study Area and Retail Zones employed in the Study are explained in **Section 3** to include the interrelationship with the telephone household survey which was conducted by North East Market Surveys (NEMS).

1.6 **Section 4** contains a comprehensive analysis of the retail expenditure flows running through the area and beyond as revealed by the household survey. In conjunction with other questions related to consumer behaviour and the information feeding in from our appraisals of the various levels and types of shopping facilities, this section provides an understanding of why people shop where they do and provides the basis for assessing any desirable changes to those patterns.

1.7 There are a number of other factors influencing retail movements – rates of expenditure and their year on year growth, floorspace efficiency ratios and Special Forms of Trading (SFT) which is the phenomenon of purchases undertaken outside of shops, e.g. TV purchases, on line sales, and these are examined in **Section 5**. The inputs rely upon published data from recognised economic forecasters, in this instance Pitney Bowes Business Insight and Oxford Economics.

1.8 **Section 6** looks at the need for additional floorspace. The assessment of convenience floorspace looks firstly at need based upon the continuation of the existing pattern but then goes on to consider the implications of introducing sustainable retail planning objectives to underpin future requirements. In relation to comparison floorspace the study examines requirements based upon an extension of the existing patterns of shopping.

1.9 The penultimate chapter, **Section 7,** broadly considers the implications of the quantitative and qualitative retail exercise for Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow and the nature and scale of facilities to meet future requirements. Initial conclusions are reached as to the practicality of accommodating such floorspace within or outside the centres. **Section 8** refers to the need to regularly monitor the study.

1.10 The Retail Study is accompanied by an extensive set of appendices set down on the contents page which will be cross referenced with the text.

2. The Policy Framework

2.1 The capacity assessment is heavily influenced by the policy backcloth in that the need for different types of retail floorspace and their location are conditioned by the planning, retail planning and sustainable objectives of the various policy documents. There have been limited changes in the policy backcloth since 2014 and whilst the direction of travel is not significantly different, we set out the planning policy position for completeness.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.2 The Framework was published in March 2012 and is the principle Government planning policy guidance. It replaces the majority of the Planning Policy Guidance notes.

2.3 Paragraph 6 of the Framework refers to the purpose of the planning system to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and this is a continuing theme throughout the whole of the document. Paragraph 7 refers to three dimensions to sustainable development – economic, social and environmental – which collectively seeks to provide wide ranging and appropriate facilities and services to the community so as not to prejudice the environment. The implications for plan making in paragraph 14 is that local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development meets of their area and also meet objectively assessed needs with sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change.

2.4 Section 1 advises upon Building a Strong and Competitive Economy. Paragraph 19 recalls that the Government is committed to ensuring that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. It continues in paragraph 21 towards support for existing business sectors and plan for new and emerging sectors likely to locate in an area.

2.5 Section 2 is entitled Ensuring the Viability of Town Centres. Paragraph 23 recalls planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres. It continues by stating that planning authorities should, inter-alia, recognise that town centres are the heart of communities and pursuit policies to support their viability and vitality. The town centres should be competitive, provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer.

2.6 Where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available for town centre uses, appropriate edge- of-centre sites should be identified well connected to the centre. In the absence of edge-of-centre sites policies should be set for meeting retail needs in other accessible locations well connected to the town centre.

2.7 Planning applications for retail developments are subject to a sequential test with priority being given to town centre sites before edge-of-centre, or finally, out-of-centre. The latter opportunities should have good access to the town centre

2.8 Section 4 is Promoting Sustainable Transport. Paragraph 29 notes that transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development. Choice of mode of travel is an important objective but the Government recognises that urban and rural communities require different policies and measures.

2.9 The reduction of greenhouse gases is considered in paragraph 30 and Local Plans should support a pattern of development which, where reasonable to do so, facilitates the use of sustainable modes of transport. Paragraph 34 continues the theme by advising that plans should ensure that developments that generate significant movements are located where the need to travel is minimised. Paragraph 37 states that plans should aim for a balance of land uses so that people can be encouraged to minimise journey lengths for, inter-alia, shopping.

2.10 The section Local Plans notes that such plans are key to delivering sustainable development. Amongst the priorities identified in paragraph 156 is the strategic priority to deliver the provisions of retail developments.

2.11 Under the heading Using a Proportionate Evidence Base, the Framework advises in paragraph 161 that the evidence base should be used to assess the need for economic development, including both the qualitative and quantitative needs for all foreseeable types of activity over the plan period including retail development. This should include consideration of the role and function of town centres and the relationship between them.

Draft National Planning Policy Framework

2.12 Since the publication of the 2016 Study, there have been a small number of important changes in the prevailing policy context. Most importantly, the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework Draft text for consultation, March 2018 ('the draft NPPF'). Whilst the draft National Planning Policy Framework is at an early stage in the plan making process, it does set out the Government's preferred direction of travel for changes to national policy.

2.13 The draft NPPF has brought forward, within the order of the document and placed greater emphasis on, the requirement for local planning authorities to set strategic policies and strategic site allocations necessary to, among others, provide an overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development. In setting out the strategic policies, plans should make explicit what they are and to how they address the strategic priorities of the area (including relevant cross-boundary issues), to provide a clear starting point for any local policies that may be needed. As with the published NPPF, the draft NPPF requires the strategic priorities to be set out in Local Plans and to deliver, among other things, provision of retail, leisure and commercial development.

2.14 The draft NPPF retains a section entitled Ensuring the Viability of Town Centres albeit at section seven as opposed to section two. Paragraph 86 of the draft NPPF contains broadly the same emphasis as the policy guidance in the published NPPF but expands on the need for planning policies and decisions to support the role of town centres, which are at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. To achieve this, planning policies are expected to, inter alia, define a network and hierarchy of towns centres and promote their long term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and change in a way that supports a diverse retail offer, provides customer choice, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characteristics.

2.15 The draft NPPF also requires planning policies to allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development needed, looking at least ten years ahead. Meeting needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses over this period should not be compromised by limited site availability, so town centre boundaries should be kept under review.

2.16 Where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available, the draft NPPF requires planning policy to allocate of appropriate edge of centre sites for main town centre uses that are well connected to the town centre. Planning Policies is also required to define the extent of town centre and primary shopping areas, identify primary and secondary shopping frontages, and make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations.

2.17 In planning for growth, the draft NPPF requires planning policy to recognise that residential development can often play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites.

2.18 Section 9 of the draft NPPF contains guidance on Promoting Sustainable Transport. Paragraph 104 requires significant development to be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes. Paragraph 105 states that planning policies should support an appropriate mix of uses across an area, and within strategic sites, to minimise the number and length of journeys needed for, inter alia, shopping.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres

2.19 In March 2014 the final version of this document was published which sets out Government policy towards ensuring the vitality of town centres.

2.20 The Guidance sets down the key elements of policy to achieve such objectives and continues with an appreciation of how such policies should be employed in both plan making and decision taking. We consider the relevance for this report is the advice relating to plan making.

2.21 The Guidance commences with a short review of the NPPF relating to planning of town centres. It draws attention to the need to promote town centres, beneficial competition within and between centres and to create an attractive environment for living, working and visiting. Local authorities should assess and plan to meet the needs of main town centres uses in full, adapting a ‘town centre first’ approach. The amount and quality of parking is seen as an important consideration in contributing to the vitality of town centres.

2.22 The NPPF sets two key tests which should be applied when planning for town centre uses, which are not in an existing town centre, namely the Sequential Test and the Impact Test. They are relevant for determining individual applications and maybe useful in informing the preparation of Local Plans.

2.23 The Sequential Test should be considered first as this may identify that there are preferable sites in the town centres for accommodating main town centres uses and, therefore, avoid the need to undertake an Impact Test. The Sequential Test will identify development that cannot be located in town centres and which would then be subject to the Impact Test.

The Importance of a Strategic Vision for Town Centres

2.24 The Guidance advocates a positive vision or strategy for town centres, articulated through the Local Plan; it is key to ensuring a successful town centre enabling sustainable economic growth and a wide range of social and economic benefits.

The Content of a Town Centre Strategy

2.25 Further advice is provided upon the content of a town centre strategy, often expressed as a series of questions. What is the appropriate and realistic role, function and hierarchy of town centres and potential to accommodate new development. Such an assessment should cover three 5 year periods but also take into account the lifetime of the Plan. Where there is need for main town centre uses consideration should be given to expanding a centre or identifying redevelopment opportunities. It should involve evaluating different policy options, for example expanding the market share of a particular centre.

2.26 Strategy should identify changes in the hierarchy of centres including where a centre is in decline and policies to manage such circumstances.

2.27 Market signals are an important input in formulating plans for town centres.

Town Centre Health Indicators

2.28 The Guidance sets down a schedule of indicators that should be used to determine the health of town centres. They include diversity of uses, vacancy rates, retailer representation and the quality of the town centre management.

Town Centre Development Capacity

2.29 Where the required development cannot be accommodated in the town centre, the planning authority should plan positively to identify the most appropriate alternative strategy for meeting such needs. It should ensure that any proposed main town centre uses which are not in an existing centre are in the best location to support the vitality and vibrancy of the centre and that no likely significant adverse impacts upon that centre will arise.

2.30 Tourism is seen as an important element of the Local Plan including examining its economic implications.

The Sequential Test

2.31 The use of the Sequential Test in plan making requires a thorough assessment of the suitability, viability and availability for main town centre uses and clearly explained reasons if more central opportunities for locating such uses are rejected.

2.32 The Guidance provides a checklist of matters that should be considered when taking a sequential approach to plan making. The checklist of matters to be considered when taking a sequential test approach to plan making includes:-

- Has the need for main town centre uses been assessed to include future need?
- Can the identified need be met on town centre sites?
- If the additional main town centre uses cannot be accommodated on town centre sites, what are the next sequentially preferable sites?

2.33 The Guidance recognises that certain main town centres uses have particular market and locational requirements, which mean they may only be accommodated in specific locations. Robust justification must be provided where this is the case.

2.34 It is accepted that the 'town centre first' approach may well lead to the promotion of more expensive, complicated and unviable solutions than building elsewhere and planning authorities need to be realistic and flexible in terms of their expectations.

The Impact Test in Plan Making

2.35 The Impact Test becomes relevant when determining whether proposals in certain locations outside town centres would impact upon existing committed and planned public and private investment or on the role of a centre.

The adopted Uttlesford Local Plan (2005) (Saved Policies)

2.36 The Uttlesford Local Plan was adopted in 2005. It still forms the basis for making planning decisions within the district alongside the National Planning Policy Framework published in March 2012 and the Planning Practice Guidance but it is becoming increasingly out of date and a replacement plan is being prepared.

2.37 The saved policies of the Plan set a framework for the two main centres of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow as well as the smaller centres of Stansted Mountfitchet and Thaxted.

2.38 Policy RS2 of the Local Plan allows for retail, commercial and other uses in Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Stansted Mountfitchet and Thaxted subject to a number of criteria including the following:-

- It maintains or enhances their role as retail and service centres
- It contributes to the diversity of retail and other commercial activity

2.39 Further specific policies apply to each of the centres.

Saffron Walden

2.40 Saffron Walden is the most important shopping centre in the District and is defined as a principal shopping centre. The objectives of the saved policies is to sustain and enhance its viability.

2.41 The 2014 report revealed the centre's function to be one of meeting the main food shopping requirements of the town in its wider hinterland and a significant proportion of the comparison retail needs of the Study Area.

2.42 The combined effect of the policies and its current retail functions leads us to conclude that it would be consistent with policy for the centre to maintain its status as a focus for main food shopping and enhance its comparison shopping role provided it did not step outside its position within the wider hierarchy.

Great Dunmow

2.43 Great Dunmow is described in the Local Plan as a smaller town centre and the 2016 household survey shows it to perform (largely because of its association with the out of centre Tesco store) a major convenience shopping role and to meet some of the lower order comparison shopping requirements of a very small proportion of the Study Area.

2.44 The policy suggests that some expansion of the centre would be acceptable in policy terms provided that the consequences would not be such as to take it outside the modest comparison goods status it currently enjoys and into conflict with the wider retail hierarchy.

Stansted Mountfitchet and Thaxted

2.45 Stansted Mountfitchet is described in the Local Plan as a local centre and the 2016 household survey indicates its convenience role is limited and almost entirely devoted to that of a top-up facility. It attracts a very modest level of comparison expenditure. Accordingly we consider it unrealistic for the centre to expand significantly.

2.46 Thaxted is also designated as a local centre and similarly to Stansted Mountfitchet, the 2016 household survey demonstrates that Thaxted provides a convenience role that is limited mainly to top-up shopping. We consider that it would be unrealistic for the centre to expand significantly.

Emerging Local Plan

2.47 UDC published the Local Plan Issues and Options (October 2015) for consultation including levels of development with distribution scenarios, options around towns and Areas of Search for new settlements.

2.48 Since the publication of the Local Plan Issues and Options (October 2015), UDC has progressed its Local Plan with consultation on the Regulation 18 (Draft) Local Plan having been carried out in Autumn 2017. The emerging Regulation 19 (Pre-Submission) Local Plan comprises a series of draft retail policies which provide the direction for housing growth and the location of retail development throughout the District across the Plan Period.

2.49 The emerging Regulation 19 (Pre-Submission) Local Plan proposed to introduce the concept of garden communities as part of the Spatial Strategy for the delivery of development throughout the District. The proposed Spatial Strategy for the District is set out in Draft Local Plan Policy SP2. The supporting text to this Policy states that the Spatial Strategy will be underpinned by the settlement hierarchy which is set over four tiers comprising:

- Market Towns (Saffron Walden & Great Dunmow);
- Key Villages (including, among others, Stansted Mountfitchet and Thaxted);
- Type A Villages; and
- Type B Villages and Hamlets.

2.50 In addition to the settlement hierarchy, three new garden communities are proposed that will deliver no less than 4,820 new homes by 2033 and will continue to deliver further development beyond 2033. The three garden communities comprise:

- Easton Park – The whole garden community will comprise 10,000 new dwellings of which a minimum of 1,925 homes will be built by 2033, and a range of local employment opportunities and services and facilities including schools, health, retail and leisure. This garden community will take advantage of its proximity to London Stansted Airport for employment and as a transport hub in the A120 corridor. These are opportunities for sustainable transport links to the Airport.

- West of Braintree – This garden community straddles the District boundary with Braintree District Council. The whole garden community, within both districts, will comprise 10,000 new dwellings, of which a minimum of 970 homes will be built in Uttlesford District by 2033, and a range of local employment opportunities and services and facilities including schools, health, retail and leisure. Located close to the A120 this garden community will be conveniently located to Braintree and Stansted Airport for employment opportunities. The Council will work closely with Braintree District Council to ensure that this garden community is jointly master planned and delivered.

- North Uttlesford - The whole of the garden community will comprise 5,000 new dwellings, of which a minimum of 1,925 homes will be built by 2033 and a range of local employment opportunities and services and facilities including, schools, health, retail and leisure. This garden community will maximise opportunities for economic linkages with nearby science parks, such as the Wellcome Genome Campus and Chesterford Research Park.

2.51 In line with the Council's settlement hierarchy, draft Policy SP2 proposes that the majority of development will be focused at the towns of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow and the three new garden communities at Easton Park, West of Braintree and North Uttlesford. The Key Villages are proposed to provide the major focus for development in the rural areas reflecting their role as provider of services to a wide rural area. Limited development will be delivered in the Type A and Type B Villages with the emphasis being on: enhancing and maintaining the distinctive character and vitality of rural communities; shortening journeys and facilitating access to jobs and services; and, strengthening rural enterprise and linkages between settlements and their hinterlands.

2.52 The number of dwellings to be delivered in the District in set out in Draft Policy SP3. This Policy identifies 14,700 new homes to be delivered over the plan period to 2033 (including a buffer of 600 dwellings against the housing requirement). A significant proportion of the dwellings have already been delivered or committed through the grant of planning permission. Taking into account that some dwellings will be delivered on small unidentified windfall sites, there is a residual housing requirement of 6,463 dwellings which need to be planned for. Draft Policy SP3 directs a number of these dwellings to the towns and villages identified in the settlement hierarchy associated with the Spatial Strategy in Draft Policy SP2 and in addition, it proposes the delivery of new housing at three new Garden Communities: Easton Park (1,925 dwellings), North Uttlesford (1,925 dwellings) and West of Braintree (970 dwellings).

2.53 Draft Policy RET 1 sets out the hierarchy of Towns and Local Centres within the District that will be the focus for the provision of new retail development. The emerging Policy requires new retail development to be provided consistently with the identified need. In accordance with the need to maintain the vitality and viability the of Uttlesford's existing town and local centres, retail development will need to be consistent with the following hierarchy with larger scale development focused on the town centres. The hierarchy comprises:

Town Centres

- Saffron Walden
- Great Dunmow

Local Centres

- Stansted Mountfitchet
- Thaxted

Proposed Local Centres

- North Uttlesford Garden Community
- Easton Park Garden Community
- West of Braintree Garden Community

2.54 The draft Policy outlines when capacity may arise for convenience and comparison floorspace within the town centres identifying that capacity arises by 2026 for a small to medium sized foodstore in both Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow. The draft Policy continues to state that there is capacity for additional comparison floorspace in Saffron Walden by 2026, amounting to 5,000 sq m (net) and that there is no capacity in Great Dunmow for comparison floorspace by 2026. The Policy does not state what amount of retail floorspace is appropriate to support the new garden communities other than to advise the type and scale of retail development within the new garden communities should be commensurate with their scale and will be determined through the masterplanning process for each garden community.

2.55 Draft Policy RET2 requires proposals for retail and other town centre uses outside of the defined town and local centres or other sites allocated for those uses to demonstrate compliance with the impact and sequential tests in National Planning Policy Framework. This draft Policy states that a Retail Impact Assessment must accompany proposals where they exceed 1,000 sq m (net) in Uttlesford District.

2.56 Guidance on the permitted use and type of alterations that are appropriate to units within Town and Local Centres and Shopping Frontages is contained within Draft Policy RET3. The draft Policy states that changes of use that require planning permission within Primary Shopping Frontages will only be permitted where the applicant is able to demonstrate that the unit is not viable as an A1 shop use. This would need to be demonstrated by a marketing or an independent assessment that is undertaken in accordance of Appendix 5 (Marketing Assessment Information) of the draft Local Plan. The draft Policy allows greater flexibility within Secondary Shopping Frontages, permitting the change of use of A1 shop units to town centre uses of retail, leisure, other and other main town centre uses. The draft Policy allows the provision of residential uses above ground floor within Primary and Secondary Shopping Frontages and mixed use schemes with a residential element will be deemed appropriate within the town and local centres. Where development contributes to the tourism function within these centres the draft Policy will support proposals where it conserves and enhances the character of the townscape.

2.57 Draft Policy RET4 concerns the loss of shops and other facilities. Where proposals lie beyond Town and Local Centres, changes of use (that require planning permission) of shops and other community facilities including those identified as Assets of Community Value will only be permitted where the applicant can demonstrate that:

- There is no significant demand for the facility within the catchment area;
- The facility is not financially viable
- The marketing criteria in Appendix 5 has been met; and
- Equivalent facilities in terms of their nature and accessibility are available or would be made available nearby.

2.58 Draft Policy RET5 comprises guidance on the provision of new shops in rural areas. This draft Policy states that for settlements where a Town or Local Centre is not identified, planning permission will be granted for new shops on sites beyond development limited where all of the following criteria are met:

- the proposals is of a size compatible with the catchment area it is intended to serve;
- the site is well related to the village and has the potential to reduce the need for travel by car;
- there would be no adverse impact on the character and amenity of the area including visual intrusion, noise, and traffic generation; and
- there are no suitable alternative sites within development limits.

Neighbourhood Planning

2.59 Neighbourhood Planning is a concept introduced through the Localism Act 2011 that allows communities to shape development in their areas through the production of Neighbourhood Development Plans.

2.60 All four main centres have been designated as Neighbourhood Planning Areas and have started to undertake progress on the development on a Neighbourhood Plan.

Great Dunmow

2.61 Since the preparation of the 2016 Study, the Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Development Plan has been through examination by the Sectary of State and a referendum, and has formally 'made'. The Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan includes a chapter on the High Street and Town Centre, with the primary objective to provide a vibrant town centre and a variety of shopping experiences, products and range of facilities. The Neighbourhood Plan Position HSTC-A outlines their Neighbourhood Plan Policy regarding High Street Retail Character. The Policy states that the Town Council will seek to ensure that the character of the High Street is maintained as that of a 'genuine market town', supporting a range of high quality independent shops and services for the prosperity of the town and the convenience of its population. Visiting the town should not become 'amalgamated-shopping-mall' experience with national High Street chains dominating the retail landscape, but will continue to offer real opportunities for new innovative and interesting shops and start-up retail or service businesses.

2.62 Within the Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Development Plan, the objective for the retaining high street vitality seeks to place a focus on retail development in the town centre through protecting existing retail sites and ensuring that the centre is well connected to the rest of the town.

Thaxted

2.63 The Thaxted Neighbourhood Development Plan has recently completed the pre-submission consultation on 28th February 2018 and is now awaiting being put forward for examination. The Thaxted Neighbourhood Development Plan pre-submission version includes three draft policies relating to retail uses and the buildings which they occupy. The emerging Policies propose the retention of shopfronts (HC5) and the protection of retail uses (HC6) and provide guidance on changes that would be deemed acceptable to shopfronts (HC7). Where proposals aim to provide new employment development, emerging Policy TLE3 will support small scale development which contributes to the local economy provided the proposals would not generate additional HGV movements through the village or conflict with other policies in the plan.

Saffron Walden and Stansted Mountfitchet

2.64 The Neighbourhood Development Plans for Saffron Walden and Stansted Mountfitchet remain at early stages and there are no draft Policies to review at present.

Uttlesford Economic Development Strategy (2016-2018)

2.65 The Economic Development Strategy (published in March 2016) provides insights into the strengths, opportunities and challenges facing the Uttlesford economy through the use of existing research and discussions with local businesses, business groups and partners. The evidence supporting the Economic Development Strategy and the conclusions reached remain the same. Therefore a summary of this document is provided for completeness.

2.66 The report identifies that town and village centres are facing challenges from out-of-town competition, the emergence of special forms of trading (SFT) such as on line retail and click and collect, and slow recovery from recession. It states that work has begun on improving the vitality and viability of the District's market towns and key villages through the creation of private sector led and run Town Teams in Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow and Economic Development Working Group in Stansted Mountfitchet.

2.67 The report identifies that there are a large proportion of independent and well established retailers and other businesses in each town and village centre, stating that the four centres have the opportunity and potential to significantly improve their performance.

2.68 The report states the aim of building footfall and average customer expenditure in Uttlesford's two town centres and two largest key villages.

2.69 A number of opportunities to support the centres are identified including:

- Funding opportunities including the South East LEP and the Greater Cambridge and Greater Peterborough LEP, ECC, European Funding
- Support for Saffron Walden / Great Dunmow Town Teams and Stansted Mountfitchet Economic Development Working Group.
- The potential for Business Improvement Districts in both Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow.

Duty to Cooperate

2.70 The Localism Act 2011 introduced a Duty to Cooperate It places a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils in England and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.

2.71 The duty to cooperate is not a duty to agree. However, local planning authorities should make every effort to secure the necessary cooperation on strategic cross boundary matters before they submit their Local Plans for examination.

2.72 This study examines retail influences/hierarchy that lie beyond the District boundaries including identifying:

- Retail centres/major stores outside the District;
- Spending flows to stores and centres outside of the District
- Position of Uttlesford District Council within the wider retail hierarchy
- Impacts on sustainability
- Appropriate study area and sub zones that embrace relevant shopping patterns

2.73 There are a number of large town centres located close to the District including Bishop’s Stortford, Braintree, Cambridge, Chelmsford, Haverhill and Royston all of which are likely to have a potential influence on expenditure retention in the District and the outflow of expenditure from the District. The impact of these factors is considered in full as part of the assessment of expenditure capacity for the District.

Developing the Retail Strategy

2.74 This Study seeks to inform the retail strategy for the District. There are two potential options which will impact on the strategic direction for the allocation of land or sites for new retail development comprising:

- The provision of additional retail floorspace in the existing town centres; and/ or
- The provision of a District or Local Centre as part of a large urban extension or new settlement.

2.75 The rural nature of the district reinforces the existing retail hierarchy. The retail study examines retail capacity on a constant market share basis – i.e. that shopping patterns established by the household survey are maintained through to 2033. Nevertheless the potential retail effects of the proposed garden communities set out in draft Policy SP3 of the draft Regulation 18 Local Plan have been examined. These have been provided to the Council by way of supplementary advice to this Retail Study Update (**Appendix 9**).

Summary

2.76 The capacity assessment is heavily influenced by the policy background in that the need for different types of retail floorspace and their location are conditioned by the planning, retail planning and sustainability objectives of the various policy documents.

2.77 National Planning Policy Guidance promotes the Viability of Town Centres stating that Local Authorities should assess and plan to meet the needs of main town centres uses in full, adapting a 'town centre first' approach. This meets key sustainability objectives such as reducing the need to travel providing accessible economic and social opportunities.

2.78 The saved policies of the Plan set a framework for the two main centres of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow as well as the smaller centres of Stansted Mountfitchet and Thaxted. Policy RS2 of the Local Plan allows for retail, commercial and other uses in Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Stansted Mountfitchet and Thaxted subject to a number of criteria including the maintenance or enhancement of their role as retail and service centres and contribution to the diversity of retail and other commercial activity.

2.79 The two main centres of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow and the smaller centres of Stansted Mountfitchet and Thaxted have been designated as Neighbourhood Planning areas. Of the four neighbourhood plans being progressed for the main town centres, the Great Dunmow Neighbourhood Plan is made and the Thaxted Neighbourhood Development Plan is well advanced.

2.80 The Uttlesford Economic Development strategy identifies that town and village centres are facing challenges from out-of-town competition, the growth of special forms of trading (SFT) such as on line (internet) sales and click and collect and recovery from recession. However it also identifies opportunities for achieving its aim of building footfall and average customer expenditure in Uttlesford's two town centres and two largest key villages.

3. Study Area and Retail Zones

3.1 For the purposes of assessing the retail needs of the Uttlesford area a wide ranging household survey was undertaken by NEMS to gauge existing flows of different types of shopping expenditure, why they took place and the likelihood of change as part of meeting future requirements. The analysis of the nature and location of the shopping facilities assisted in the consideration of this study. A key consideration in securing a full appreciation of these factors as they bear upon the local shopping facilities at Uttlesford is to define a Study Area which embraces all, or most, of the shopping patterns generated by these centres. In undertaking this exercise regard was had to the advice contained in Appendix B of the Practice Guidance which is concerned with the appropriate definition of the Study Area. The conclusions of this section of the report remain unchanged, nevertheless it is provided for completeness.

The Uttlesford Area

3.2 **Appendix 1** summarises the main content of shopping facilities both within Uttlesford and over the wider sub-region. Plans showing the location of the shopping centres including the main supermarkets, convenience and comparison floorspace and the main retail warehouse facilities are provided at **Appendix 2 and 3**. Floorspace schedules are also included in Tables 4 (convenience) and 8 (comparison) of **Appendix 7** which provide the floorspace of the main retail facilities and town centres.

Convenience Shopping

3.3 All the main centres have major supermarket representation - Saffron Walden (4), Great Dunmow (1), Bishops Stortford (5), Cambridge (5), Chelmsford (5), Harlow (5), Braintree (4) and Haverhill (3).

3.4 It is an accepted phenomenon of convenience shopping, and one referred to in the Practice Guidance (Appendix B), that customers will generally gravitate to facilities closest to home to meet their main food shopping needs and do so more intensively if there are a range of supermarkets in a particular centre providing increased choice. However, long distance "irrational" trips take place either because of the desire to shop at a particular retailer, perhaps in association with employment in the area, or other regular visits for another purpose. By far the greater proportion of such expenditure, however, would be drawn from the immediate catchment zone.

3.5 The major supermarkets identified above and the review of expenditure patterns, suggest that Uttlesford would be largely served by the facilities in Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow and beyond the District to the immediate south-west Bishop's Stortford / to a lesser extent Harlow. Chelmsford and Braintree would be expected to attract expenditure from the south-east of the District, and Cambridge from the north and west via the M11 motorway link and Haverhill form the north east of the District.

Comparison Shopping

3.6 It is apparent from the preliminary review of the shopping facilities that the Uttlesford area is dominated to a degree by the major comparison centres of Cambridge and to a lesser extent Chlemsford, Harlow and Bishop's Stortford which lie outside the study area. These centres have a wide representation of national traders and include a number of large retail warehouse parks.

3.7 Saffron Walden is a much smaller centre with a reasonably wide representation of comparison traders, most of which are independent. Great Dunmow is considerably smaller with a limited range of comparison outlets, mainly independent traders.

3.8 The location of these facilities and their shopping characteristics led us to conclude that the main centres were likely to extend their sphere of influence over much of the District with the sub-regional centre of Cambridge drawing from across the whole of the area. The adjoining centres of Chelmsford, Harlow and Bishop's Stortford will also have a significant bearing on the shopping patterns. Within this trading framework Saffron Walden was likely to attract lower order sales from its immediate catchment area and its wide rural hinterland.

The Study Area and Catchment Zones Defined

3.9 The analyses of the previous section were used to begin to plot the extent of the Study Area, the main purpose of which was to ensure that the catchment areas of the main towns of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow were largely embraced by those boundaries. Subsequent retail assessments could then be undertaken in the knowledge that practically all expenditure flows had been captured. The Study Area Plans are shown in **Appendix 1**.

Convenience Expenditure

3.10 Given the strong tendency for main food shopping to gravitate to the nearest large supermarket facilities, catchment zones were constructed based upon journey time isochrones relating to main foodstores situated within and immediately adjoining the District. These primarily focused on the towns of Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Stansted Mountfitchet, Haverhill, Bishops Stortford / Harlow, Cambridge and Chelmsford.

3.11 We have also reviewed the previous studies undertaken by Savills and the population zones. We have adjusted the Zone so to create Zones that are delineated to best reflect these within the District boundary and those additional zones adjoining it. They include the following postcode sector boundaries.

Table 3.1: Uttlesford Survey Zones

ZONE	POSTCODES
1a	CB10 1, CB22 4, CB11 4, CB11 3, CB10 2
1b	SG8 7, SG8 8
2a	CM6 1, CM6 2, CM6 3
2b	CM7 4, CM7 5, CM77 6, CM3 1, CM1 4

3	CM2 6, CM2 7, CM3 1, CM4 1, CM4 8
4	CB21 4, CB21 6, CB22 3, CB22 4, CB9 0, CB9 7, CB9 8, CB9 9

3.12 The household survey undertaken by NEMS in March 2016 (see **Appendix 5 and 6**) provides the most recent expenditure patterns and Section 5 of this Study and related appendices show that within the particular zones, a substantial proportion of potential expenditure is captured by those nearby facilities but falls away very rapidly beyond. This pattern can be graphically demonstrated using the Combined Main Food data in Table 3.2 below.

Table 3.2: Retained Main Food Expenditure within Uttlesford

Zone	**Retained Main Food Expenditure by Main Supermarkets within Uttlesford** **%**	**Retained Main Food Expenditure by Other Convenience Stores within Uttlesford** **%**
Zone 1a	94.61	0.57
Zone 1b	8.40	0.00
Zone 2a	77.71	5.6
Zone 2b	13.02	0.56
Zone 3	14.58	2.03
Zone 4	5.67	1.64

3.13 The survey results also demonstrate that a significant proportion of main food convenience expenditure – some 5.67% - is attracted into the Saffron Walden supermarkets from zone 4, which is to the immediate north of zone 1a / Saffron Walden home zone. These survey zones are shown in **Appendix 2**.

3.14.1 The surveys confirms in our view that the Study Area – embracing all four zones takes into account virtually all the main food expenditure flows affecting the main towns in the district. However, zone 4 reveals a more complex pattern of expenditure movements with the trade flowing into Cambridge (13.89), Haverhill (71.6%)

and Saffron Walden (5.67%). Such patterns reflect the zone's location at the point of overlapping spheres of influence although there are stores within the zone itself, specifically Haverhill.

Comparison Expenditure

3.16 Our earlier analyses suggest that much of the comparison expenditure in the Study Area leaks to Cambridge and, to a lesser extent, Bishops Stortford and Chelmsford, with more modest proportions of such sales being retained by the two local centres of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow.

3.17 The comparison sales retained within the District are as a result of the comparison facilities in the main towns in the District which have a high proportion of small independent traders. Notably the non-food retail units under construction at Granite Retail Park in Saffron Walden are not yet occupied and therefore there is the potential for them to increase retention, albeit to a limited degree.

3.18 The subsequent survey conducted by NEMS confirmed that virtually all comparison expenditure finding its way into Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow was derived from within the Study Area.

3.19.1 The Study Area Plan shown in **Appendix 1** is, therefore, considered a reliable platform for assessing the comparison shopping requirements of the district.

The Household Survey

3.20 The household survey was undertaken in late March / early April 2016 by NEMS, a specialist survey company with substantial experience of conducting investigations of this nature.

Methodology

3.21 The purpose of the survey was to capture a representative sample of residents in and around the Uttlesford District Council area to assess their convenience and comparison goods shopping habits and, to some extent, their use of services. Respondents' demographic details were also captured.

3.22 A total of 1,000 telephone interviews were conducted between 29th March 2016 and 20th April 2016. Interviews were conducted using NEMS' in-house CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) unit. Respondents were contacted during the day and in the evening. All respondents were the main shopping householder, determined using a preliminary filter question.

3.23 A random sample of live interviews were listened in to and assessed by the company's CATI Team Leaders to verify that the quality of interviewing was being maintained.

3.24 Selection was done using random stratified sampling from all available telephone numbers within the defined survey area.

3.25 The survey area was segmented into six postcode areas shown on the plan in **Appendix 1**.

3.26 The sample selection was random within each zone to make it as representative as possible of the overall survey area and each individual zone. To achieve appropriate population weightings the area surveyed was segmented into four primary survey zones, two zones being split into two in order to demonstrate the sphere of influence of the main town centres in the home zones that are most closely aligned with the District boundary. These were defined by postcode sectors. The zones were not sampled in proportion to the population within those zones and as such it was necessary to apply weightings to give appropriate weight to the responses from each of the six zones, in other words to make the responses representative of the population of the total survey zone. Where a zone had more interviews as a proportion of the total interviews done than it had proportion of the population, it was necessary to decrease the value of each interview. The reverse is also true.

3.27 As with any data collection, where a sample is being drawn to represent a population, there is potentially a difference between the response from the sample and the true situation in the population as a whole. Many steps have been taken to help minimise this difference (e.g. random sample selection, questionnaire construction, etc.) but there is always potentially a difference between the sample of population - this is known as the "standard error". With a total sample of 1,000 interviews the survey results would normally be regarded as robust enough to allow sufficient investigation into typical subsamples, with a 95% confidence interval of ±3.6%.

The Questionnaire

3.28 A copy of the Questionnaire is attached at **Appendix 5**.

3.29 In broad terms the objective of the household survey is to determine the expenditure flows across the Study Area and thereby the sales of various types of merchandise going into particular centres / facilities and the reasons why shoppers behave in this way. The former information provides a platform for assessing future retail requirements by combining the outputs with other data relating to the status and content of the centre and possible changes thereto to reflect more efficient and sustainable retail structures.

3.30 To assist with the understanding of shopping behaviour, interviewees were specifically asked why they visited a particular retail facility for the purchase of convenience and comparison goods. The answers provide clues as to what drives customers to shop in the way they do and the extent to which quality of facility – as opposed to proximity – affects choice. Such information assists in assessing the extent to which patterns might change as a consequence of improvements to facilities.

3.31 Specific questions are directed to the use of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow town centres and what improvements might encourage customers to use the facilities more often or intensively, or at all. The

Questionnaire considers this issue in terms of two broad responses, whether improvements to the shopping content of the centre would promote greater use, e.g. more clothes and fashion shops, and / or if the infrastructure supporting the centre might be improved to provide a more attractive and user-friendly environment, e.g. better / more car parking and reduced congestion. In association with the town centre health check data, the outputs assist in resolving the issue as to whether the centre is capable of raising its profile relative to competing facilities.

3.32 Further socio-economic data has been collected by the survey relating to employment status and occupation, family size and car ownership. In association with other information drawn from the Council's District Profile: A Summary Profile of Uttlesford, published in 2016, it feeds into growth rate considerations examined in Section 5 and an understanding of expenditure flows.

3.33 The results of the household survey are key to the quantitative and qualitative needs assessments conducted in Section 6. The public's perception of the deficiencies of particular facilities and how centres might be improved are important considerations in deciding whether additional floorspace is justified going beyond that emerging from the quantitative need exercise. It is particularly important in relation to the role of Saffron Walden as a comparison shopping facility.

4. The Existing Patterns of Retail Spending

4.1 Shopping patterns represent a highly complex aspect of human behaviour based upon many individual decisions, but broad patterns can be discerned from the household survey. Those patterns are clearly dependent upon the nature and location of shopping facilities serving the support population, but also the socio-economic profile of that population and the transportation infrastructure providing access to the centres. It is, therefore, relevant to appraise that context and possible changes which might alter the shopping behaviour.

The Character of the Area

4.2 The District of Uttlesford occupies the north-west sector of the County of Essex, flanked to the north by South Cambridgeshire District Council and to the west by East Herts District Council. The District of Braintree abuts the area to the east, and to the south lies Chelmsford Borough Council.

4.3 Except for the market towns of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow, the area is mainly rural in character with an undulating, agricultural landscape dotted with villages, small hamlets and occasional individual houses. However, to the south it accommodates Stansted Airport, an extensive complex comprising the airport itself and support facilities. Saffron Walden (population 14,659 in 2007 with it rising to 15,504 in 2011) dominates this structure in the northern part of the District (Zone 1a) and the smaller town of Great Dunmow (population 8,007 in 2007) occupies a similar position in the south-east of the District (Zone 2a). Zone 3 is situated to the west of the catchment area and is heavily influenced by facilities outside of the District due to its close proximity to Bishops Stortford and Harlow.

4.4 There are a number of larger villages with shopping facilities at Stansted Mountfitchet (population 5,883 in 2007 rising to 6,011 in 2011), Felsted (population 4,735 in 2007, which has been split into Felsted (population of 3,051 in 2011) and Flitch Green Parish (population of 2,190 in 2011)), Thaxted (population 3,257 in 2007 which reduced to 2,845 in 2011) and Newport (population 3,214 in 2007, increasing to 3,443 in 2011).

4.5 In addition to the main shopping facilities located within the District, Stansted Airport also has a considerable retail offer including retailers such as Clarkes Shoes, WH Smith, La Senza, Monsoon, Clare's Accessories and Accessorize. However, the household survey reveals no expenditure flows into the airport, shoppers probably being dissuaded by the relatively high parking costs. The centre would appear to operate as an independent retail offer based upon sales generated by airport passengers.

The Transportation Network

Highways

4.6 The rural nature of the area is reflected in its limited transportation infrastructure, particularly Zone 1 but accessibility improves as a consequence of the road network serving Bishops Stortford / Harlow, Cambridge and Chelmsford.

4.7 The M11 motorway runs north/south along the western flank of the District, junction 8 providing direct access into Bishops Stortford and junctions 9 and 9A to the north-west of the District linking with the B1383 and B184. The latter provides access to Saffron Walden some 7.5 km to the south-east. Saffron Walden is served by a radial network of B roads and minor roads across the whole of Zone 1. The B1052 and B1383 provide a fairly direct route into Bishops Stortford.

4.8 Great Dunmow is located off the A120 running between Bishops Stortford and Braintree to the east. It is a dual carriageway, primary route providing speedy access across Zones 2 and 3, and just south of Great Dunmow the A130 diverts south-east towards Chelmsford. The southern extremity of Zones 2 and 3 are crossed by the A1060 Bishops Stortford to Chelmsford road, the B183 providing a link to Harlow.

4.9 The south-western sector of the Study Area, Zone 3, encircles and abuts the north and east side of Bishops Stortford. The B1383 and B1051 give direct access to the ring road surrounding the town and the town centre.

4.10 Enquiries have been made of Essex County Highways to ascertain whether there have been any significant changes to this route network. They have advised not and there is therefore, no justification for disturbing the expenditure patterns revealed by the Household Survey.

4.11 Data from the household survey shows that over the whole of the Study Area, 78% of main food shopping customers travel by car to their normal supermarket (10% as passengers), Zone 3 showing the highest dependence at 89%. This compares to 89% of the main food customers travelling by car in the 2010 Study with the highest car dependence (93%) from Zone 2.

4.12 As a measure of the use of the car for undertaking non-food shopping trips, some 85% of customers from the Study Area travel by car on trips to buy comparison goods compared to 71% in 2010. There are marginal differences between zones and between expeditions for different types of comparison goods.

4.13 The use of taxis, motorcycles and bicycles for shopping trips collectively amount to less than 0.5% of shopping trips.

Public Transport

4.14 Reliance upon the bus for shopping trips is limited. Throughout the Study Area less than 2% of customers travel by this means for main food shopping (including minibus or coach).

Bus Services

4.15 The bus services provided within the District are considered important as they demonstrate the ability of those who are less mobile (young people, those without access to a car and the elderly) to move between centres within the District to other larger settlement beyond.

Saffron Walden

4.16 In addition to the bus services serving the town itself, Saffron Walden town centre also offers a number of services providing links to nearby settlements. The main services are summarised below.

4.17 The No 6 Service provides hourly services between Stansted Airport and Saffron Walden. The route includes stops at Debden, Thaxted, Broxted, Stansted Airport, Takeley and Hatfield Health. The service operates from the early morning until late evening Monday to Saturday. In addition to servicing the town centre, it also calls at the Tesco supermarket. A more limited service is operated on Sundays.

4.18 The Citi7 Service also provides a similar service as the above during peak hours Monday to Saturday between Saffron Walden and Cambridge via Little Chesterford, Great Chesterford, Sawston, Great Shelford and Addenbrookes, Again, this service, also operates from early morning to late evening and on a hourly basis. A more limited service is operated on Sundays.

4.19 The 301 Service offers a public transport link between Saffron Walden and Bishop's Stortford. The hourly service calls at Audley End, Newport, Widdington, Quendon, Stansted Mountfitchet, Birchanger and the Tesco supermarket. This service runs Mondays through to Saturdays. There is no service on Sunday.

4.20 Bus service no.510 provides a hourly service between Stansted Airport and Harlow which lies beyond Uttlesford District to the south. This service calls at Stansted Mountfitchet.

4.21 In addition to the above routes, there are also a number of other less frequent services to various hamlets within the District and beyond which run every 2 hours on average during peak hours.

Great Dunmow

4.22 The main bus routes serving Great Dunmow is the 313 and 133 Service which calls at Great and Little Easton, Duton Hill, Thaxted, Debden, Carver Barracks and Saffron Walden (313) and Braintree, Great Dunmow and Stansted Airport (133). In addition to these services, the 315 service offers a more localised service to the immediate surrounding villages. The 133 and 313 services runs hourly and two hourly respectively during peak times. The 42A Service between Stansted Airport and Chelmsford which calls at Great Dunmow also offers an hourly service to Chelmsford for the residents of Great Dunmow.

4.23 This is a relatively poor service for a centre the size of Great Dunmow. The services do not provide residents with a realistic alternative to the car and do not provide good transport links to other larger settlements outside the District.

Stansted Mountfitchet

4.24 The bus services within Stansted Mountfitchet are considered to be good for a centre of this size. During peak hours Monday to Saturday, the 301 bus provides a frequent service between Bishops Stortford and Saffron Walden calling at Stansted Mountfitchet. Services to other nearby centres are more limited.

4.25 For further information on the bus services, see **Appendix 4**.

Thaxted

4.26 The bus services within Thaxted are considered to be good for a centre of this size. During peak hours Monday to Saturday, there are hourly services linking Thaxted with Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Stansted airport and Bishops Stortford.

4.27 For further information on the bus services, see **Appendix 4**.

Railway

4.28 The London / Bishops Stortford / Cambridge railway runs along the western boundary of the Study Area. Within the study area, there are stations at Great Chesterford, Audley End, Newport, Elsenham, Stansted Mountfitchet, and Stansted Airport. These stations provide rail links to Cambridge to the north and Bishops Stortford, Harlow and London to the south.

4.29 The household survey barely registers this mode of travel for any type of shopping trip (0.0% of main food and 0.92% for non-food).

Walking

4.30 Given the nature of main food shopping, it is unsurprising that only 6.36% of shoppers in the Study Area used this mode of travel for their trip although a small increase on 5% in 2010. Some 3.9% of expenditure for the purchase of clothes, footwear and fashion goods were undertaken on foot compared to 2% in 2010. Some of the stores also have significant amounts of walking as a mode of travel. For example 4.47% of the respondents undertake their main foodshopping at Aldi, Saffron Walden. The most popular form of transport to this store is by car as the main driver or passenger which accounts for 9.23% of the respondents followed by walking which accounts 3.2% of the respondents.

The Retail Structure and Expenditure Flows

4.31 The detailed appraisal of the shopping centres is contained in **Appendix 1**, but in order to better understand the expenditure flows from the various parts of the Study Area to those centres, this section reviews the key elements of those facilities. For convenience shopping the analysis is conducted in terms of the catchment areas represented by Zones 1a, 1b, 2a, 2b, 3 and 4, but the review of comparison shopping is based upon the Study Area.

The Surrounding Shopping Centres outside the Study Area

4.32 Over the wider area the District is surrounded by major convenience and comparison shopping facilities which both serve to constrain the sphere of influence of the centres within the Study Area and attract expenditure away from local facilities. **Appendix 2** contains plans and schedules illustrating the location and content of those centres.

Major Convenience Shopping Facilities

4.33 The main centres of Cambridge, Bishops Stortford / Harlow and Chelmsford are all located within twenty minutes' drive time of that part of the Study Area closest to them and thus within reasonable travel time.

4.34 Bishops Stortford has five major supermarket outlets – Sainsbury's, Jackson Square [1,657 m^2 sales], Sainsbury's, The Thorley Centre [2,315 m^2 sales], Tesco, Lancaster Way [3,311 m^2 sales], Waitrose, Northgate End [1,672 m^2 sales] and Marks & Spencer [1,700 m^2 sales]. The Tesco and Sainsbury's are located within the western suburbs of the town close to the ring road.

4.35 Chelmsford accommodates five major stores – Tesco, Springfield Road [3,032 m^2 sales], Asda, Chelmer Village [3,209 m^2 sales], Morrisons, North Melbourne [2,081 m^2 sales], Sainsbury's, White Hart Lane [5,600 m^2 sales] and Tesco, Princes Road [4,667 m^2 sales].

4.36 There are four large supermarkets in Cambridge – Asda, Coldhams Lane [3,716 m^2 sales], Sainsbury's, Brooks Road [4,265 m^2 sales], Tesco, Cheddars Lane [4,995 m^2 sales], and Waitrose, Trumpington [2,976 m^2 sales]. In addition to these, there are also a number of smaller stores including a Sainsbury's and M&S. Apart from the Waitrose, all the outlets are embedded in the suburbs of the city, away from the southern access points closest to the Study Area.

4.37 Large supermarkets are also situated in Royston – Tesco [3,956 m2 sales], Haverhill – Sainsbury's [4,621 m^2 sales], Haverhill Tesco [3,948 m^2 sales] and Braintree – Tesco Market Place [4,318 m^2 sales]. In addition to the Tesco, Braintree also accommodates several smaller stores including Sainsbury's, Tofts Walk [2,485 m^2 sales], Tesco, Great Notley [1,667 m^2 sales] and Tesco, Coggelshall Road, [2,219 m^2 sales].

4.38 Within Harlow there are a number of large supermarkets comprising of Asda, Watergardens, [6,725 m^2 sales], Tesco, Edinburgh Way [3,840 m^2 sales]. Sainsbury's, Fifth Avenue [4,748 m^2 sales], Tesco, Charles Langley Centre, [3,434 m^2 sales] and Tesco, Harvey Centre [1,870 m^2 sales].

Major Comparison Shopping Facilities

4.39 It will be appreciated from **Appendix 2e** that the sub-regional shopping centre of Cambridge dominates the comparison shopping structure, with town centre sales floorspace devoted to such traders amounting to approximately 92,500 m^2 sales. The centre has a very wide range of national retail outlets and multiples. The retail attraction of the city is supplemented by the Cambridge and Beehive Retail Parks collectively comprising approximately 28,000 m^2.

4.40 Chelmsford and Bishops Stortford are smaller in scale with approximately 41,000 m^2 sales and 19,000 m^2 sales of comparison floorspace respectively, occupied by a comparatively wide representation of national traders. The Riverside Retail Park adds to the attraction of Chelmsford for comparison shopping.

4.41 London and the Lakeside Retail Park are long distance attractions but on a very substantial scale and exert influence over the Study Area.

4.42 There is a large shopping outlet, Braintree Freeport, located on Charter Way in Braintree which comprises 85 stores with a mixture of convenience, comparison and service tenants. Despite Braintree Freeport being located within a 25 minute drive of the south east extent of the Study Area, the sphere of influence of the shopping outlet is limited and recorded only minimal comparison expenditure leakage from the Study Area – approximately 2.7% of comparison expenditure for clothes, footwear and fashion goods.

Expenditure Flows to Shopping Centres within the Study Area

4.43 The household survey provides information as to the flows of different types of expenditure into the existing shopping facilities and in doing so demonstrates the sphere of influence of the particular outlets and centres. These are set out in Tables 5a and 5b of **Appendix 7**.

Combined Main Food Expenditure

Zone 1

4.44 Zone 1 is split into 1a and 1b. Zone 1a comprises the primary catchment area for Saffron Walden and lies predominantly within the District boundary and Zone 1b expands to the west into the Zone's wider study area. For the purpose of this section we focus on the data collected in Zone 1a.

<u>The Shopping Facilities</u>

<u>Saffron Walden</u>

4.45 The area is dominated by Saffron Walden, a market town located centrally to Zone 1a. Its historic nature is reflected in an incoherent but nonetheless compact and attractive town centre where many of the retail units are in relatively small premises, many of which are Listed, the whole being embraced by a Conservation Area (see **Appendix 5**).

4.46 Saffron Walden contains a wide range of shopping floorspace and is summarised in the table below.

Category	Number of Outlets	Net Sales Floorspace m^2	Total Floorspace %
Convenience	14	2,313	12.8
Comparison	105	8,912	49.3
Service	62	5,693	31.5
Vacant	13	1,171	6.5
Totals	**194**	**18,089**	**100**

Source: Uttlesford Retail Study 2014 based on GOAD Town Centre Report date Nov 09

Calculated by using a gross to net ratio of 75% to the GOAD floorspace figures.

4.47 The convenience provision is dominated by a Waitrose supermarket (2,129 m^2 sales – planning application reference: UTT/2012/10/FUL) together with other local / largely independent food shops for example Londis etc. Since the previous report the Waitrose Store sales area has increased by 602 m^2. The comparison offer is extensive, but with only a limited representation of national retailers including New Look, Laura Ashley, W H Smith, Boots, Monsoon, Phase Eight and Clarks. A high proportion of comparison traders are fashion outlets including M&Co, Crew Clothing, Fat Face, New look as well as speciality beverage and food retailers such as Adnams. The independent traders account for the majority of the comparison goods shops. It is notable that Saffron Walden has twice the comparison floorspace of Royston which has a similar population and as much as Haverhill which has almost twice its population.

4.48 Saffron Walden also has an extensive service offer comprising banks / building societies, financial and other services, with a wide range of restaurants, cafes and public houses. The vacancy rate at the time of the survey in May 2016 was 6.5% compared with a national average of 10.9%. At the time of writing the 2016 Study the vacancy rate has remained low and vacant units are largely pepper potted across the town. The highest concentration of vacant units (7) are concentrated in Lime Tree Court. These units are very small floor areas and have limited footfall.

4.49 There is also a street market selling a wide range of food and non-food goods twice a week.

4.50 A town centre use class plan is provided at **Appendix 8**. The predominant use in Saffron Walden is A1 retail which accounts for 130 units or approximately 53% of town centre units. A2 uses providing professional services occupy 22 units or approximately 11% of the units in the town centre. Cafes, restaurants, bars, public houses and take-a-ways (A3, A4 and A5 uses) account for 31 units which equates to 8% of town centre units. The remaining 62 units within the town centre comprise a mixture of uses including residential (19 units), vacant units (16 units), offices (6 units), hotels (2 units), leisure (2 units), health care services (10 units) and Sui Generis uses (7 units).

4.51 The centre is supported by five car parks, including one adjacent to the Waitrose supermarket, with a combined capacity of 873 spaces. Four of these car parks are pay and display.

4.52 Within the suburbs of Saffron Walden is a large Tesco supermarket of 2,330 m^2 sales supported by a petrol filling station and 378 parking spaces. This had planning permission for an extension but this has expired. There is a large Homebase unit with a gross floor area of now 1,267 m^2 and a Ridgeons extending to some 2,100 m^2.

4.53 Since the previous report new retail park known as Granite Retail Park is currently under construction at the Civic Amenity Site in Saffron Walden. A further Section 73 application (reference: UTT/17/1782/FUL) to vary the layout of the floorspace following pre-lets to Pets at Home and B&M was submitted to approved by the Council on 19 December 2017. The Aldi associated with the planning permissions on this site has been built and is now open on Thaxted Road, however the additional retail units are yet to have commenced. Granite Retail Park will also provide 3 retail warehousing units comprising 3,250 m^2 and a garden centre (approximately 650 m^2) as well as the Aldi store. This planning permission also includes an A3 use class café accounting for approximately 167m2.

Newport

4.54 Newport is a large village situated on the B1383 between Saffron Walden and Stansted Mountfitchet. The village offers a limited number of retail units situated sporadically along the linear High Street. The retail offer includes a Doringtons bakery and convenience store selling local fresh produce including meats and fresh fruit and vegetables, a small Nisa Local convenience store, post office, pharmacy, Indian restaurant, petrol filling station, health and beauty shop, public house, barbers, home interiors, carpets shops and garden store.

4.55 Although the centre would principally serve its immediate hinterland, there are some more specialised shops which may draw from a wider area such as the bakery, home interiors and carpet shops. The limited convenience offer would serve a grocery top up function only.

Expenditure Flows

4.56 The household survey provides information as to the flows of different types of expenditure into the existing shopping facilities and in doing so demonstrates the sphere of influence of the particular outlets and centres.

Main Food Expenditure

4.57 By far the most important centre in Zone 1a is Saffron Walden, and close by to the south-west is the large village of Newport with a range of local facilities. The Convenience Goods Expenditure Flows are set out in Table 5a at **Appendix 7**.

4.58 The table shows that the two Saffron Walden stores – Tesco and Waitrose – account for 30.93% and 35.40% respectively of combined Main Food expenditure from the zone. The new Aldi accounts for 26.10% of the zone 1a combined Main Food expenditure. Thereafter the trade draw tails off dramatically, Tesco attracting 1.55% of the sales of zone 2a and 2b combined and Waitrose 2.77%. However, it is to be noted that the Tesco and Waitrose attract 2.18% and 1.70% respectively from Zone 4 to the immediate north. Since the

2014 Retail Study, the Tesco, Waitrose and Aldi stores have significantly increased their market share and accounts for 92.43% of the overall combined main food expenditure in Saffron Walden, up from 57.39% bearing in mind Aldi was not trading at the time.

4.59 The Sainsbury's, Haverhill supermarket lying on the edge of the zone attracts 1.09% of potential sales and the new Tesco store in Haverhill attracts 0.34% from Zone 1a. The Cambridge stores collectively account for 2.01% of the expenditure, of which Sainsbury’s Brooks Road, attracts 1.04%.

4.60 The only store in Bishop’s Stortford which attracts expenditure from zone 1a is the Sainsbury's in Jackson Square which accounts for 0.78% of expenditure. Stores in Harlow as well as local shops in Zone 1b attract no custom from Zone 1a.

4.61 Zone 1b, lies to the north west and predominantly outside of the District but Saffron Walden attracts 8.4% of major food expenditure from the zone. The most attractive store to zone 1b residents is however the Tesco Extra store at Royston, attracting 63.17% of expenditure.

4.62 Zone 4 lies to the immediate north of Zones 1a and 1b, and largely falls outside of the District area it is an area where, because of the distribution of supermarkets facilities, there is no dominant discernible main attractors for the type of shopping, save perhaps the Sainsbury’s in Haverhill and the Tesco Superstore which account for 34.33% and 16.19% of expenditure from that Zone respectively.

4.63 Collectively the Cambridge stores draw 13.89% of such expenditure from Zone 4. The Tesco, Yarrow Road attracts 3.2%.

4.64 Chelmsford attracts no custom however, internet and home delivery sales equate to 9.49% of purchases.

4.65 Zone 1 is broadly centred on Saffron Walden and, as might be expected, the Tesco store at 30.93% and the Waitrose supermarket at 35.40% dominate combined main food sales. The Sainsbury's, Haverhill accounts for 1.09% of expenditure showing limited influence in Saffron Walden inner catchment area. The Cambridge stores represent 2.02% respectively of the custom. The Tesco, Great Dunmow supermarket draws no sales from this Zone.

Top-up Expenditure

4.66 It is to be noted that across the whole of the Study Area 12.11% of respondents' state that they do not undertake top-up shopping compared to 26.5% in the 2010 Study.

4.67 The convenience goods expenditure flows in **Appendix 7** Table 3a illustrates the flow of expenditure relating to small scale / top-up food and grocery purchases. It is apparent that this type of shopping gives rise to a more diffused pattern of trips than for main food shopping.

4.68 Retention of top-up expenditure within the study area amounts to 58% of top-up expenditure. Within the District i.e. within Zones 1a, 2a and 3 this is much higher at 81%.

4.69 Within Zone 1a there is still a comparatively high retention rate for this type of expenditure of 85.18% in the shops in Saffron Walden. The main supermarkets in Saffron Walden – Tesco, Waitrose and Aldi – remain important for this type of shopping, collectively accounting for 62.35% of expenditure.

4.70 Interestingly a large proportion of small amounts of expenditure from Zone 1a and 1b find their way into the main supermarkets in Royston and, to a lesser extent, Bishop's Stortford, Cambridge and Trumpington. A significant 42% of top-up expenditure takes place outside the survey area. Other influences other than proximity appear to be at work.

Zone 2

4.71 Zone 2 is split into 2a and 2b. Zone 2a comprises baseline data for the district and Zone 2b expands into the wider study area. For the purpose of this section we focus on the data collection in Zone 2a.

The Shopping Facilities

Great Dunmow

4.72 Lying just north of the A120 Bishop's Stortford to Braintree road is the historic market town of Great Dunmow. Its linear form is set by the spine of High Street between Market Place and Chelmsford Road. Much of the fabric is historic in nature, many of the buildings are Listed and the entire centre is within a Conservation Area.

4.73 The centre comprises the following mix of outlets:-

Category	Number of Outlets	Net Sales Floorspace m^2	Total Floorspace %
Convenience	9	1,239	22.8
Comparison	34	2,021	33.4
Service	49	2,341	40.3
Vacant	4	207	3.6
Totals	**96**	**5808**	**100**

Source: Uttlesford Retail Study 2014 based on Savills Town Centre Survey Feb 2010 & Update 2011.

4.74 The 2016 survey identified that within the town centre is a small Co-operative supermarket of 804 m^2 sales and a small number of convenience outlets including a butcher, baker, newsagent, wine merchant and grocer. There are no national retailers. There is a weekly street market selling a range of food and non-food goods.

4.75 A large Tesco supermarket with associated petrol filling station and surface level car park provides a sales floor area of 2,330 m^2 and is located on Bishop's Stortford Road to the south-west of the town. It received planning permission in September 2013 for an extension comprising 1134 m^2 net (663 m^2 net comparison floorspace and 447 m^2 net convenience floorspace), however this has not been implemented.

4.76 The comparison offer in the town centre comprises a mix of mainly lower order outlets including, inter alia, pharmacies, furniture, jewellery shops, shoe shops, household goods / hardware stores and bookshops. The shops are all independent traders. The town is an important leisure / service centre which is reflected in those facilities being by far the largest sector in floorspace terms.

4.77 There are four car parks supporting the centre, the largest of which is centrally located next to the Co-operative supermarket, with a combined capacity of 285 spaces. They are subject to a pay and display charging regime.

4.78 The combined offer of the Tesco and town centre convenience shops suggests the town's primary function is to meet the convenience needs of the population of the catchment area. The range of comparison shopping is very limited and it is apparent that the town provides for day to day lower order needs with the great majority of expenditure leaking to more distant major centres.

4.79 There is only one vacant unit at the north extent of the town centre in Market Place which demonstrates that the town centre is in good health.

Thaxted

4.80 The village of Thaxted lies midway between Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow. The 2016 survey confirmed that the centre consists of 24 retail units of which 5 are convenience traders including a Nisa convenience store of 170 m^2 sales and 8 comparison outlets. The high proportion of service outlets – 11 – representing 49% of the overall floorspace reflects the tourism focus of the village as a historic centre.

4.81 The centre is largely historic and contains a number of residential properties which are interspersed between the retail units. There is one vacant unit at the southern extent of the centre at Watling Street. This unit can be said to be divorced from the centre

Expenditure Flows

Main Food Expenditure

4.82 Central to Zone 2 is the market town of Great Dunmow and further to the north, on the boundary between Zones 1a and 2a, is the village of Thaxted with a limited range of retail outlets. The Tesco supermarket on the edge of Great Dunmow dominates the shopping patterns, accounting for 75.88% of main food expenditure from Zone 2a, with the Co-op attracting only 3.22% of main food sales. The main supermarkets in Saffron Walden draw 1.83% of expenditure, the Waitrose being the most important at 1.11%.

4.83 Whilst some distance from Bishop's Stortford, Braintree and Chelmsford, the stores in these towns exert a considerable influence on shopping patterns, in all probability because of the good road access corridor of the A120 and A130, combined with just the single store facility in the town. The Bishop's Stortford supermarkets account for 4.84% of expenditure, the Waitrose, Northgate End, at 2.64% being the most influential.

4.84 Braintree attracts 7.63% of sales with the Lidl in Rayne Road at 4.90% the most significant.

4.85 The Waitrose, Cambridge attracting 0.54% is the only Cambridge outlet to register, and the Sainsbury's in Haverhill attracts just 0.93%. The only store in Harlow drawing from this zone is the Tesco superstore on East Road attracting 0.57%.

4.86 The Tesco in Great Dunmow attracts some 9.78% of main food sales from Zone 2b and 10.94% of sales from Zone 3.

4.87 Other stores outside the Study Area collectively draw a significant amount (86%) of trade from Zone 2b. Stores in Braintree attract 38.37% of main food expenditure with the most significant directed to the Tesco Superstore in Great Notley which attracts 20.53%. Chelmsford attracts 28.45% of the main food expenditure from Zone 2b. The most significant being directed to the Tesco Superstore on Springfield Road which attracts 10.43%.

4.88 Other stores exert very limited influence, although 2.19% of expenditure is drawn to facilities outside of the District (Zone 2a) and 9.58% of expenditure is drawn to facilities outside the Study Area (Zone 2b).

Top-up Expenditure

4.89 Retention of top-up expenditure within Zone 2a i.e. within the shops in Great Dunmow, amounts to 60.1%

4.90 The Co-operative supermarket and Tesco Superstore in Great Dunmow provide the most important focus of this type of shopping in the Zone, accounting for 29.58% and 21.51% of expenditure respectively. Local shops within the same Zone account for a further 8.92%. A significant number of top-up expenditure trips takes place in Braintree and Chelmsford.

Zone 3

The Shopping Facilities

4.91 This Zone is dominated by the stores Bishop's Stortford and Harlow which lie outside the district and whose facilities were reviewed earlier in the Study. There is only one shopping centre of any significance in this Zone.

Stansted Mountfitchet

4.92 The large village of Stansted Mountfitchet is located in the west of the District on the B1383 close by, and to the north-east of Bishop's Stortford.

4.93 The centre is made up of two distinct parts, Cambridge Road and Lower Street, and comprises a limited mix of traders:-

Category	Number of Outlets	Net Sales Floorspace sq m	Total Floorspace %
Convenience	8	487	15.5
Comparison	11	886	28.2
Service	22	1384	44.1
Vacant	2	380	12.1
Totals	**43**	**3137**	**100**

Source: Savills Town Centre Survey Feb 2010 & update 2011 & update 2016

4.94 The 2016 Study noted that there are several small supermarkets in Stansted Mountfitchet. A Tesco Express of approximately 195 m^2 sales opened in 2014. Since the 2016 Study a Co-operative at Lower Street opened in November 2014. In addition to the above is a Budgens convenience store of about 160 m^2 sales located within a petrol filling station to the north of Cambridge Road outside the defined town centre boundary. The convenience offer is supported by a number of independent traders including a bakery, butcher, newsagent and grocer.

4.95 With the exception of a Boots pharmacy, comparison shopping in the centre is very limited, and is somewhat specialised with shops selling antique, mirrors, furniture and soft furnishings.

4.96 Service outlets, and particularly cafes and restaurants, are a disproportionate element of the shopping offer, possibly because of the tourism attraction of the area based upon Mountfitchet Castle.

4.97 Two car parks support the centre together with limited street parking.

4.98 The retail content of the centre suggests that it meets the day to day largely top-up convenience needs of the immediate population and a very limited range of lower order comparison goods.

4.99 A survey of the two parts of the centre on 15 June 2014 revealed two vacant premises comprising a public house on the east side of Cambridge Road. A development that was under construction was observed at the junction between Chapel Hill and Church Road which was granted planning permission in 2012 (reference: UTT/1522/12/FUL) and comprises 953 m^2 A1 retail. The development is now complete and the main A1 retail unit is occupied by a Co-operative convenience food store.

Combined Main Food Expenditure

4.100 Zone 3 encircles the western and northern suburbs of Bishop's Stortford and with its six major supermarkets it is not unexpected that they would account for the greater part of main food expenditure in this area. Between them the stores attract 77.218% of such expenditure, which has risen since the 70% figure of the 2014 Study. The rise in expenditure leakage from the Zone to stores in Bishop's Stortford is largely due to the increase in sales taken by the Aldi on London Road which is the second most significant for expenditure in the Zone, attracting 21.13%. The Tesco, Lancaster Way, dominates the zone at 28.97%, with the Aldi on London Road and the Sainsbury's in Jackson Square accounting for 21.13% and 9.54%. The Waitrose store in the town centre attracts 7.46% of main food expenditure in the Zone.

4.101 The neighbouring town of Harlow is also closely related to the zone and the four main supermarkets in the town attract 4.26% of sales. The Tesco in Great Dunmow accounts for 10.94% of expenditure with the Co-operative in Stansted Mountfitchet and the Aldi, Saffron Walden accounting for 2.03% and 3.63%, respectively.

4.102 The Tesco and Waitrose in Saffron Walden do not exert any influence in this Zone.

Top-up Expenditure

4.103 As with the 2014 Study by far the most important centre facility in Zone 3 for top-up shopping is Stansted Mountfitchet, which attracts 24.38% of such expenditure.

4.104 All the main supermarkets derive top-up expenditure from the zone, the Aldi on London Road in Bishop's' Stortford, accounting for 5.86%, Sainsbury's in Jackson Square accounting for 8.84%, the Tesco Superstore, Lancaster Way, accounting for 9.59% and the Waitrose, Northgate End 8.88%. Limited trade finds its way into the Harlow stores.

Zone 4

The shopping facilities

4.105 Haverhill lies within Zone 4 together with a number of small villages offering a limited convenience and top-up function. These include the rural villages of Linton, Horseheath, Abington, Babraham and Pampisford.

4.106 Haverhill lies outside of Uttlesford District and has a population of 27,041 in 2011. The town centre comprises 2,053 m^2 net convenience floorspace. Stores include Boots, Lidl, Peacocks, Clarks and Poundland, as well as a relatively new Tesco store which opened in September 2009. The largest store remains the out-of-centre Sainsbury's store and there is also a refurbished and extended Aldi store in the town (2009).

4.107 Of the smaller villages, Linton (population of 4,525 in 2011) is by far the largest with shopping facilities situated sporadically along a linear shopping street. The centre comprises approximately 26 retail and service uses including a gift shop, art gallery/photo and picture framing, opticians, pharmacy, a Co-operative (approx 288 m^2 gross) selling a good range of foods suitable for top up shopping, newsagents, bakers, public houses, Chinese restaurant and takeaway, hairdressers and a barbers amongst others. In addition to its convenience function, the centre also includes a number of uses which would attract shoppers from further afield.

Expenditure Flows

Main Food Expenditure

4.108 This Zone has been incorporated into the analysis because both the Retail Vision, Indigo Planning and more recent Savills Retail studies demonstrate that some main food expenditure from this area flows into Zone 1a. Our subsequent NEMS Survey confirmed this trend as the following analysis illustrates it is located at the point where a number of facilities have comparable trading influence. Whilst the area for Zone 4 has been increased in size from the 2014 Retail Study to include Haverhill, the results have not significantly changed. The main food expenditure flow in to Zone 1a, demonstrates that Saffron Walden retains some influence on main food expenditure patterns in Zone 4, but Haverhill is the most attractive location.

4.109 The convenience goods expenditure flows table in **Appendix 7** table 3a shows that the large Sainsbury's store in Haverhill is the most important facility, accounting for 34.33% of expenditure from within the Zone: this falls away to just 1.09% in zone 1. The new Tesco store in Haverhill exhibits a similar pattern accounting for 16.19% of Zone 4 expenditure whilst the Aldi Store in Haverhill accounts for 19.84%. Collectively the Cambridge stores attract 10.9% of such expenditure from the Zone, the most important being the Waitrose representing 3.39% of the sales.

4.110 Some expenditure finds its way into Saffron Walden, the Tesco accounting for 2.18% of sales and the Waitrose and Aldi accounting for 1.70% and 1.79% respectively.

Top-up Expenditure

4.111 A significant proportion of top-up expenditure is accounted for by the facilities in Haverhill and Sawston which, between them, claim 59.4% of which Haverhill accounts for 49.03%. Another 5.8% is represented by the Cambridge supermarkets with Waitrose accounting for over half the expenditure at 3.18% of sales. Saffron Walden attracts only 2.06% of top up shopping expenditure from Zone 4.

4.112 A significant 22.15% of expenditure goes to other facilities outside the survey area, and one must assume these trips are dispersed over a wide area, possibly in association with employment.

Comparison Goods Expenditure

4.113 Comparison shopping tends to be a more diffuse behaviour and very much reliant upon the particular merchandise being sought. It is, therefore, considered more analytically useful to examine expenditure flows largely in terms of movements across the Study Area and the various categories of comparison expenditure.

4.114 Table 9 in **Appendix 7** sets out the expenditure flows in the Study Area relating to the seven comparison goods groupings used in the survey.

4.115 It is notable that the main centres attract trade from across all four zones, but especially from the Zone within which they lie. This is reflected in the reasons for people choosing the centre they most like for shopping and leisure purposes (Question 13), where near/convenience is the most common reason (46.35%).

4.116 The schedule demonstrates that Cambridge is by far the most important centre within and beyond the Study Area boundary for these types of expenditure, attracting about 30.8% of expenditure over the four zones. Bishop's Stortford accounts for some 6% of sales, Harlow 6.1% and Chelmsford 16.2%. Saffron Walden draws approximately 9.7% of comparison expenditure from the Study Area.

4.117 The expenditure patterns vary dramatically depending upon the type of comparison merchandise.

Clothes, Footwear and Fashion Goods

4.118 For clothing, footwear and fashion goods Cambridge accounts for 35.4% of overall sales within the Study Area, and the sales travelling from Zone 1a constitute 48.21% of the expenditure of that area. Bishop's Stortford, Braintree and Chelmsford attract 7.6%, 5.2%, and 23.3% of overall sales from the Study Area respectively. Trade leaking to outside the Study Area represents 89% of the available expenditure.

4.119 Saffron Walden expenditure retention for this goods type has dropped by 2/3 since the 2014 Study and attracts 5.9%. The home zone (Zone 1a) for Saffron Walden attracts the most significant expenditure at 23.81%, less than 1% from Zone 2 and 3.06% from Zone 4, it does not draw trade from Zone 3. The Great Dunmow trade draw at 0.86% is confined to Zone 2a.

4.120 The retail Parks have a more significant impact in this sector, with Beehive Centre Retail Park, Cambridge attracting 0.83% of expenditure from the study area and making a particular impact in Zone 4 (2.29%). There are other stores which within the Beehive Centre Retail Park such as TK Maxx which have registered individually in the NEMs household survey for this goods type which has increased the level of expenditure in this Retail Park.

Personal / luxury goods including books, jewellery, china, glass, cosmetics and medical goods

4.121 Expenditure on luxury and health items is more locally based. Cambridge accounts for 31% of sales from the study area but Saffron Walden at 12.5% of sales remains important.

4.122 Within Zone 1a Saffron Walden and Cambridge are exerting much greater emphasis on in this sector than the 2014 Study identified and they attract 50.14% and 42.28% of expenditure respectively. Chelmsford draws 23.45% of such expenditure from Zone 2, and Braintree 2.87%. Zone 3 is dominated by Bishop's Stortford, which accounts for 54.50% of sales, and Cambridge 1.73%.

Recreational goods including toys, bicycles, games, sports and camping equipment

4.123 Recreational goods are most significant for Cambridge, which attracts 29.74% of such expenditure from the Study Area, a decrease from the 2014 figure of 34.65%. Saffron Walden and Chelmsford account for 9.7% and 15.7% respectively. Harlow at 11.4% is lower than the 2014 figure of 13.24%

4.124 Within Zone 1 Cambridge draws 42.91% of such expenditure from Zone 1 and Saffron Walden 44.47%. Chelmsford attracts nearly half of the sales for Zone 2 and accounts for 48.85% of expenditure, and 9.14% is drawn to Braintree.

4.125 Predictably the trade draw pattern in Zone 3 is dominated by Bishop's Stortford and Harlow who, between them, account for 37.68% of sales from the Zone.

TV, Hi Fi, radio, photographic and computer equipment

4.126 Over the Study Area, 84% of this type of expenditure is leaking from the Study Area. 38.3% finds its way into Cambridge, 18.7% into Chelmsford and 10.9% into Harlow, Haverhill accounts for 10.6%. Saffron Walden retains 5.2% of this expenditure from the Study Area.

4.127 In Zone 1a Cambridge assumes greater importance, attracting 54.27% of such sales, followed by Saffron Walden at 41.30%. Within Zone 2, Chelmsford is of greatest importance and attracts 37.3% of sales, and Braintree 6.61%. Bishop's Stortford attracts 42.49% of expenditure from Zone 3.

4.128 John Lewis in Cambridge is by far the most important retailer for this type of expenditure, accounting for 11.84% of sales from the Study Area. Approximately 18.04% of such sales took place through retail warehouses.

Domestic Appliances such as Washing Machines, Fridges, Dishwashers, Microwaves, Kettles and Ovens

4.129 Leakage from the Study Area for this type of expenditure amounts to 74.4%. 29.3% of expenditure of this type in the Study Area is directed to Cambridge, representing a decrease from the 2014 figure of 35.87%. Saffron Walden attracts 9.5% and Haverhill attracts 13.9% of this expenditure.

4.130 Saffron Walden accounts for 41.3% of such sales in Zone 1a and Cambridge 54.28%. Chelmsford dominates expenditure for this goods type in zone 2a and attracts 37.3% of sales followed by Braintree which attracts 6.61%. Bishop's Stortford represents 42.49% of expenditure from Zone 3.

4.131 The John Lewis store in Cambridge attracts 8.6% of trade from the Study Area, and the Curry's outlet in the Cambridge Retail Park a further 3.3%. About 21.04% of such expenditure from the Study Area finds its way into retail warehouses.

4.132 Within Zone 1a the attraction of the John Lewis store rises to 10.06% and the Curry's outlet to 7.23%. Some 17.71% of expenditure from Zone 2 finds its way into the Currys PC World, Chelmer Village Retail Park, Chelmsford, and the Currys PC world on the Queensgate Retail Park, Harlow accounts for 13.71% of sales from Zone 3.

Furniture, Floor Coverings and household textiles

4.133 Leakage from the study area amounts to 80.8% of this type of expenditure. Cambridge accounts for the greater proportion of such expenditure in the Study Area, attracting 32.3% of expenditure. Some 9% is drawn to Saffron Walden.

4.134 Within Zone 1a 47.32% of sales is attributed to Cambridge and 37.71% to Saffron Walden. In Zone 2a Chelmsford accounts for 17.69% and Cambridge 15.76%. Zone 3 is dominated by Bishop's Stortford which takes 33.47% of the potential sales, and Cambridge and Harlow which account for 11.82% and 36.21% expenditure.

4.135 Sales through retail warehouses account for 16.99% of expenditure

4.136 One particular store dominates the shopping patterns, John Lewis accounting for 3.8% of expenditure from the Study Area, and within zone 1 that attraction rises to 5.64% of expenditure.

DIY, Decorating, Gardening Equipment

4.137 Although there is still 61.4% of this type of expenditure leaking from the Study Area, Saffron Walden attracts a total of 19% of expenditure from the Study Area, closely followed by Haverhill on 18% and Braintree on 16.2%.

4.138 The retail warehouses dominate this type of expenditure, those outlets both within and beyond the Study Area accounting for 72% of expenditure. The data indicates the sales are heavily focused within the local area.

4.139 There are four dominant outlets. The Homebase in Saffron Walden which accounts for 12.6% of overall Study Area expenditure and the Homebase unit in Fitzroy Park, Bishop's Stortford, accounting for 10.7%. The B&Q in the Chapel Retail Park, Braintree, draws 14.4% of expenditure. The Focus unit on the Cambridge Road Retail Park in Haverhill attracts 13.8%.

4.140 Within Zone 1a Saffron Walden attracts 80.24% of potential sales, followed by Bishop's Stortford on 7.48%, Cambridge on 4.98% and Haverhill on 4.53%. Zone 2a sees Braintree as the principal attraction for this type of expenditure at 48.54% of the total: Bishop's Stortford draws 13.05% and Chelmsford 16.06%. In Zone 3, 73.88% of sales are attracted to Bishop's Stortford and 22.25% to Harlow.

4.141 Predictably the stores closest to Zone 1 have increased attractiveness to the residents of that area, with the Homebase in Saffron Walden accounting for 53.82% of expenditure. Other stores in Saffron Walden attract a further 24.83% of this expenditure from Zone 1. The Homebase in Bishop's Stortford accounts for 5.07% of sales from this Zone.

4.142 The main attraction in Zone 2 is the B&Q in Braintree, which represents 44.60% of such expenditure from that area. The B&Q on the Homelands Retail Park in Chelmsford draws 12.87% of sales from that area, and the Homebase in Bishop's Stortford 10.83%. Proximity of Zone 3 to Bishop's Stortford leads to the Homebase at Fitzroy Park attracting 59.24% of expenditure from the area.

Reasons for using the particular centres

4.143 The household survey provides a numerical breakdown of visitors to the various shopping centres and the reason for their travelling to that particular centre (see **Appendix 7**, Table 3d).

4.144 Over the Study Area the main influence upon travel patterns for shopping and leisure trips is near / convenient, which accounts for 39.59 % of visits, closely followed by selection / choice of multiple shops (38.29%) and by selection / choice of independent shops (17.72%). Pedestrian friendly environment accounts for 5.97% of visits and easy parking for 5.29%.

4.145 There are considerable differences between the various centres used for the purchase of non-food merchandise, and these distinctions are most clearly illustrated as between the main centres of Cambridge, Chelmsford, Bishop's Stortford, Braintree and Harlow as well as Saffron Walden and other smaller centres. Shoppers using those centres cite the choice of shops as the most important determinant of their visits.

	Saffron Walden %	**Cambridge %**	**Chelmsford %**	**Harlow %**	**Bishop's Stortford %**	**Braintree %**
Convenience to home	42.75%	20.4%	37.75%	28.1%	57.54%	49.3%
Selection / choice of multiple shops	30.91%	50.95%	54.8%	68.87%	16.6%	23.59%
Selection / choice of independent shops	24.8%	24.26%	22.01%	31.5%	4.0%	6.51%

4.146 Bishop's Stortford appears to be out of alignment but the convenience to home figure is likely to be heavily inflated because of the close proximity of parts of the Study Area population to the town, particularly Zone 3 and to a lesser extent Zone 2a.

4.147 The attraction of the other smaller centres is far more reliant upon convenience to home and less upon range of non-food products and quality of goods. Saffron Walden at 42.75% in respect of convenience to home emphasises this functional difference, and similar relationships apply at Braintree, 49.3%, Great Dunmow, 38.83%, Royston 77% and Haverhill, 71.56%. In the light of the earlier analysis of expenditure flows upon different types of non-food merchandise, the largest centres with their wide range of goods derive their attraction from this factor and customers are relatively less influenced by travel times and distance where choice is critical. The differences in expenditure patterns relating to the other centres is also a reflection of the type of sales that they attract. It is generally recognised that expenditure for clothes, footwear and fashion goods are especially dependent upon the range of products which only a large centre can offer. Across the Study Area trips of this nature are shown to depend upon the choice of multiple shops and advice of independent shops which is 38.29% and 17.72% respectively. In the light of these considerations one would expect trips for the purchase of those products where standardised products are far more common, such as chemist goods, would be far more heavily influenced by convenience to home, and that is a conclusion which emerged from the earlier analysis.

4.148 The variations in shopping behaviour applying to the different types of shopping trip combined with the proximity or otherwise of the centres will influence the prospect of particular centres raising their comparison shopping status.

4.149 These considerations will be examined further in Section 6 when evaluating whether the main centres, particularly Saffron Walden, have the potential to increase their retention levels for comparison goods expenditure

5. Retail Trends

RETAIL TRENDS

5.1 There are a number of retail trends affecting expenditure and retail trading which, collectively, can have significant implications for the assessment of shopping requirements over the medium to longer term. These inputs tend to vary year to year and over prolonged periods can exhibit marked changes, so it is important to secure a tolerably reliable fix on such parameters.

Expenditure Rates – Nationally and Locally

5.2 This Study relies upon expenditure data compiled by Oxford Economics in association with Pitney Bowes Business Insight Corporation, both recognised economic research companies producing information and analysis for retail and market planners. The most recent Retail Expenditure Guide is that for 2017 / 2018 embracing the 2017 official ONS estimates of consumer spending in the United Kingdom.

5.3 Consumer retail spending estimates are available for several hundred individual categories, but the Retail Study employs the main categories based upon the COI COP classification, one based upon consumption by purpose, used by ONS and internationally. The broad classifications are:

Convenience Goods

To include food and non-alcoholic beverages, off-licence alcoholic drink, tobacco, non-durable household goods and newspapers and magazines.

Comparison Goods

To include, inter alia, books, clothing and footwear, furniture, audio-visual equipment and other durable goods, hardware, chemists, jewellery, watches and clocks, bicycles and recreational goods.

5.4 All estimates are inclusive of VAT and Special Forms of Trading.

5.5 It will be noted from Section 4 of the Study that the comparison categories used in the Uttlesford Retail Study vary slightly from the above listings because it was considered that our groupings better reflected the different ways in which shoppers went about these types of purchases.

5.6 Regional expenditure can be markedly different from the national pattern as a consequence of age, economic status, occupation and different income levels. Local Area Expenditure Estimates based upon these differences have, therefore, been obtained for the Study Area broken down into Zones 1 – 4. Zones 1 and 2 have been split to reflect that part of each zone (Zones 1a and 1b) in the District area and that part outside of Study Area (1b and 2b).

5.7 The expenditure data reflects the comparison groupings used in the Retail Study. These groupings are used for the purposes of analysing expenditure flows for given types of goods but the quantitative and qualitative forecast exercises rely upon combined comparison sales, although separating out sales in stores, retail warehouses and Special Forms of Trading.

5.8 The price base used in the Retail Study is 2015 prices.

Growth in Retail Expenditure

5.9 The Oxford Economics Forecast model is a means of calculating growth in retail expenditure which is based upon spend per head at constant prices. The Retail Expenditure Guide explains that these forecasts are consistent with past trends based upon expected changes in variables considered to be drivers of consumer spending.

5.10 The UK economy showed signs of slowing in 2016 with its GDP growing by 1.8%, down from 2.2% the year before. In light of the UK's decision to leave the European Union, as well as rising inflation and ongoing fiscal austerity, Oxford Economics forecast UK's GDP growth to slow further to 1.7% in 2017 and 1.5% in 2018. For the purposes of the forecast Oxford Economics assume that after the UK leaves the EU in early-2019 there are transitional arrangements lasting three years, with trade and immigration policies close to the status quo. This allows time to agree a free-trade agreement, which comes into force once the transitional agreements end in 2022.

5.11 The Oxford Economics Forecast expect household spending power to strengthen in the short term. The CPI inflation has accelerated from below 1% to close to 3%, due to the impact of rising oil prices and the pass-through of last year's depreciation of sterling. With nominal wage growth remaining subdued, consumers are enduring a severe squeeze on their spending power, which is likely to have lasted for the remainder of 2017. Inflation should cool as we move into 2018, but household spending power will remain under pressure from the governments welfare reforms. And with the savings ratio already very low, Oxford Economics see little scope for households to lean against these pressures by borrowing more. Oxford Economics expect total consumer spending growth to slow to 1.7% in 2017 and just 0.6% in 2018, before recovering to 1.7-2% in the following years.

Table 5.1: UK per capita retail expenditure on convenience and comparison goods (constant 2013 prices) Growth Rates in Convenience and Comparison Goods 2011-2033

	Growth rates (%) Convenience Goods	Growth rates (%) Comparison Goods
2011	-3.2	-0.2
2012	0.2	2.1
2013	0.0	3.3
2014	-0.1	3.8
2015	-0.6	5.4
2016	1.5	5.1
2017	-0.2	2.5
2018	-0.9	0.8
2019	-0.2	1.6
2020	0.4	2.5

2021	0.8	3.4
2022	0.9	3.5
2023	0.7	3.2
2024	0.5	2.7
2025	0.4	2.4
2026	0.5	2.3
2027	0.5	2.3
2028	0.5	2.2
2029	0.6	2.1
2030	0.6	2.1
2031	0.6	2.1
2032	0.6	2.1
2033	0.6	2.1

5.12 In the same way that local retail expenditure data varies from the national figures, it is to be questioned whether the socio-economic profile of Uttlesford is better placed or not to resist these economic constraints.

5.13 There is no guidance from Pitney Bowes on the predictions for expenditure growth rates for the post 2030 period and for projections beyond that date to 2033 we have, therefore, adopted the rate for the year 2030 of 3.0% per annum for convenience goods and 23.3% per annum for comparison goods. As can be seen from table 5.1 this is broadly in line with Pitney Bowes Forecasts beyond 2020.

Special Forms of Trading

5.14 In essence Special Forms of Trading (SFT) is that part of retail expenditure which does not pass through shops and/or create a need for retail floorspace. It has long been an adjustment in retail studies to reflect markets, door-to-door sales etc, but in recent years the introduction of the internet and other IT communications has considerably expanded the opportunity for this type of shopping. It is obviously essential that this Retail Capacity Study is confined to the need for actual floorspace.

5.15 SFT has been particularly volatile in recent years and as the latest Pitney Bowes study demonstrates (2016 based data) is complex because of many different ways people shop and the overlapping data sources. The Pitney Bowes report highlights a number of these issues.

Table 6.2: Shortcomings of Retail Data Sources

Measurement	**Shortcomings**
ONS non store retail sales	• Includes only sales by wholly internet companies, e.g. Amazon, and no internet sales by companies also operating conventional stores, e.g. Tesco and John Lewis. • This means the ONS based figures hugely underestimate the impact of the growth of internet sales. • This database is called the 'Narrow Definition' of non retail sales. • The ONS also produce a second set of figures – Internet Sales – which covers all internet sales including those already included in the non store sales, e.g. Amazon and internet sales by predominately store based operations e.g. John Lewis. The resolution of this issue is not straight-forward as the two data series overlap.

Source	**Compatibility**
ONS internet Sales	• Includes sales of wholly internet based stores. • Internet sales of companies also operating conventional stores.
Narrow Definition	• Wholly internet based stores.

5.16 The Pitney Bowes report notes that there are no official estimates of the extent of this overlap, but a statistical modelling exercise carried out by Oxford Economics indicates that approximately 51% of all internet sales are already included in the ONS Narrow Definition of Non Store Retail Sales. The adoption of this approach allows the report to construct a 'Broad Definition' of Non Store Retail Sales in 2015, illustrated in Figure 3.12 of that report.

5.17 Over the 10 years to 2016, the Broad Definition of market share has increased more slowly than that of the ONS Internet Sales estimate, because the former contains the non internet elements of retail stores – mail order, door-to-door selling etc – that have suffered from the growth of the internet. The ONS internet sales estimate increased its share of total sales from 3.4% in 2007 to 12.5% in 2015, while the Oxford Economics Broad Definition of Non Store Retail Sales increased from 6.3% in 2007 to 14.5% in 2015. Figure 3.4 of that report illustrates.

5.18 Using ONS data and additional data from Datamonitor (UK E.Retail 2011) the report estimates that in 2016 the 16.7% of market share of the Broad Measure breaks down into 8.8% market share for convenience goods and 21.1% for comparison goods.

5.19 Projecting such figures into the future is a problematic exercise. At present the UK exhibits higher internet sales than either Europe or the USA, but there is no indication of the saturation point. The recent rapid growth in such sales makes it very difficult to gauge the levelling off point, although recognising that it will happen in due course. In the Central Case option it is assumed there will be a gradual slowdown in the rate of increase of the Broad Measure of the Non Store Retail Sales market share, resulting in the market share for comparison goods gradually start slowing and reach 31.2% by 2030. We expect the non-store share of convenience goods to start levelling off sooner, reaching 13.6% by 2030.

5.20 The projected market shares of the Broad Definition – Non Store Retail Sales – over the period to 2011 – 2023 are forecast as:

Table 5.3: Projected Market Shares of Non Store Retail Sales (Broad OE Definition) 2011-2033

	% of Total Spending Convenience	% of Total Spending Comparison
2011	5.6	13.0
2012	5.9	14.4
2013	6.5	16.3
2014	7.9	16.9
2015	7.6	18.7
2016	8.8	21.1
2017	9.6	22.4
2018	10.3	23.6
2019	10.9	24.7
2020	11.4	25.6
2021	11.8	26.5
2022	12.1	27.2
2023	12.5	27.9
2024	12.7	28.6
2025	12.9	29.1
2026	13.1	29.6
2027	13.3	30.1
2028	13.4	30.5
2029	13.5	30.8
2030	13.6	31.2
2031	13.6	31.2
2032	13.6	31.2
2033	13.6	31.2

5.21 The above figures conceal the fact that many operators, particularly the food retailers, service their online sales from their physical supermarkets e.g. Tesco, and the report estimates that the difference between the

Broad and Narrow estimates of convenience sales erred in favour of the former. The adjustment for this phenomenon is contained in Table 3.5 of the report, as shown in table 5.4 below.

Table 5.4: Non Store Convenience goods adjusted market share and percentage of total spending on goods 2011 - 2033

	Non Store Convenience Goods – Adjusted Market Share Non Store Sales of Convenience Goods (% of total spending on goods)	
	Total	**Adjusted**
2011	5.6	2.5
2012	5.9	2.4
2013	6.5	2.6
2014	7.9	3.6
2015	7.6	2.7
2016	8.8	2.9
2017	9.6	3.1
2018	10.3	3.2
2019	10.9	3.3
2020	11.4	3.4
2021	11.8	3.5
2022	12.1	3.6
2023	12.5	3.6
2024	12.7	3.7
2025	12.9	3.8
2026	13.1	3.8
2027	13.3	3.9
2028	13.4	3.9
2029	13.5	4.0
2030	13.6	4.0
2031	13.6	4.0

2032	13.6	4.0
2033	13.6	4.0

5.22 The Pitney Bowes Report includes no comparable information relating to sales of comparison goods. The following table (Table 5.5) provides the percentage deduction recommended by Pitney Bowes for Non Store Comparison goods sales, which reflects predominantly internet sales.

Table 5.5 Non Store Comparison Retail Sales – Projected Market Share goods percentage of total spending on goods 2011 - 2033

	Non Store Comparison Sales – Projected Market Share Non Store Sales of Comparison Goods – Narrow (ONS) Definition (% of total spending on goods)
2011	8.6
2012	9.3
2013	10.6
2014	10.8
2015	12.1
2016	13.6
2017	14.9
2018	16.0
2019	17.1
2020	18.0
2021	18.8
2022	19.6
2023	20.2
2024	20.8
2025	21.3
2026	21.8
2027	22.3
2028	22.6

2029	23.0
2030	23.3
2031	23.3
2032	23.3
2033	23.3

5.23 There is clearly a decline in the rate of growth of Special Forms of Trading for both convenience and comparison goods sales. However, projections at these distances must be viewed with caution and whilst permitting current floorspace assessments, as we have pointed out elsewhere in this study, the volatility of these figures demands regular reviews to ensure floorspace targets are based upon up to date analysis of spending patterns.

Sales Density Growth

5.21 Increasing sales density on retail floorspace increases the trading capacity of that floorspace to accommodate turnover and, therefore, the application of such an efficiency ratio reduces the need for floorspace.

5.22 There is no information upon this issue in the Retail Expenditure Guide, but the draft Briefing Note contains an explanatory analysis and advice on future trends.

5.23 The authors of the report took the view that the forecasting exercise should be based upon the growth rates over the period 1987 to 2000 rather than the unsustainable boom conditions of more recent years, with the result of sales densities of 0.6% per annum for convenience goods and 2.2% per annum for comparison goods. However, these were considered an over-estimate if used in local needs assessments, partly because of the "one-off" effect of Sunday trading and partly because of the use made of the weighting effect. In the light of these considerations the brief took the view that projected sales density increases could be justified at 0.4% per annum for convenience goods and 1.8% per annum for comparison goods.

5.24 The Study shows that within the main centres of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow there are several relatively modern supermarkets where increases in efficiency might be anticipated. However, the centres of those towns, which accommodate practically the whole of the existing comparison floorspace in the district, are characterised by old, historic fabric, many listed buildings and embraced by Conservation Areas. The ability of such units to increase their efficiency is considered to be very limited. For the purposes of the existing retail capacity exercise a growth rate of 1.4% has been adopted for comparison goods floorspace.

6. Retail Floorspace Need

6.1 This section of the Study examines the need for shopping floorspace in the Uttlesford District over the period 2011 to 2033. The analysis is conducted in terms of expenditure upon and sales of combined main food, top-up food, comparison goods. The latter is broken into detailed expenditure categories and then, in terms of capacity, looks at the need for town centre and out-of-centre (retail warehousing) floorspace. The detailed convenience and comparison capacity assessment are included in the Capacity Tables in **Appendix 7**.

6.2 Whilst this study is obliged to carry the floorspace calculations through to 2033 to accord with the horizon of the Local Plan, the ability to accurately predict the various inputs beyond 2030 is heavily constrained, and we would, therefore, caution against using the projected requirements other than as a very broad indication of floorspace need.

6.3 The household survey reveals patterns of expenditure across the Study Area reflecting the influence of the existing shopping facilities of varying scale, content and quality in relation to the size and distribution of the Study Area population. The quality of the transportation links serving these movements, especially roads, clearly has a part to play in the shape of the patterns.

6.4 The review of policy objectives point to the importance of the planning system being able to influence the distribution, inter alia, of shopping facilities to achieve sustainable planning and transportation objectives, particularly in relation to journeys by car.

6.5 In the light of these considerations it is appropriate to question whether the shopping patterns exhibited by the household survey should be maintained as a basis of future retail planning and whether the scale and distribution of retail floorspace should be manipulated to better achieve sustainable planning objectives. As part of that analysis, market and other considerations (dealt with later in the report) come into play in determining the appropriate strategies.

6.6 Markedly different considerations apply to food and comparison expenditure and, therefore, the retail floorspace needs for these types of shopping are conducted separately.

Retail Floorspace Changes and Commitments

6.7 A measure of the relative functional positions of the shopping centres is to examine the growth (or contraction) of the comparison shopping facilities in recent years and establish the extent of major retail commitments. Such movements provide a clue to the relative growth or decline of a centre and, thereby, the need for remedial measures to restore its status. Such movements are, of course, taking place continuously so that, at any one time, a centre will be ahead of or behind the norm. It is when those floorspace movements depart seriously from what might be generally anticipated by growth in comparison expenditure that significant floorspace additions may be called for in order to maintain the centre's appropriate position in the hierarchy. A comparative analysis is, therefore, required showing the extent of these changes in Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow as compared with the major competing centres of Cambridge, Bishop's Stortford, and Chelmsford.

6.8 Details of new retail floorspace commitments have been obtained from the various neighbouring planning authorities relating to increases over the past 2 years and development commitments within the town centres. Although the material could not be provided over consistent periods, an appreciation can be gained of the relative potential growth rates in the recent past. The figures presented in Table 6.1 relate only to planning permissions and exclude any allocations that are being advanced through either the adopted or emerging Local Plan. The figures have been obtained from the Uttlesford Retail Study 2016 unless otherwise stated.

Table 6.1: Retail Floorspace Changes and Commitments

Shopping Centres		**Existing Retail Floorspace** m^2 **(Net)**	**Commitments (including permissions not built) between June 2014 or the date of the Council's Retail Study to March 2018, whichever is earlier.** m^2 **(Net)**
Saffron Walden In Centre	Convenience	3,300	1,248[1]
	Comparison	11,066	254
Saffron Walden Out of Centre	Convenience	4,713[2]	1,578
	Comparison	4,797[3]	3,250
Great Dunmow In Centre	Convenience	1,890	0
	Comparison	2,461	0
Great Dunmow Out of Centre	Convenience	3,997	0
	Comparison	452	0
Cambridge In Centre	Convenience	5,206	0
	Comparison	109,596	0
Cambridge Out of Centre	Convenience	22,306	8,401[4]
	Comparison	48,035	3,781[5]
Bishop's Stortford In Centre	Convenience	7,350	0
	Comparison	18,399	16,113
Bishop's Stortford Out of Centre	Convenience	0[6]	0
	Comparison	0[7]	0
Chelmsford In Centre	Convenience	6,151	5,249
	Comparison	40,950	26,217
Chelmsford Out of Centre	Convenience	0	0
	Comparison	0	0

Source: Savills Retail Capacity Study 2014.

[1] Figures correct following a review of Uttlesford District Council's online planning application register.
[2] Figures calculated for the main convenience stores referred to in the NEMs survey results.

[4] Review of planning applications on Cambridge City Council's online application register
[5] Review of planning applications on Cambridge City Council's online application register
[6] No immediate data available.
[7] No immediate data available.

6.9 The floorspace figures in Table 6.1 illustrate that the town centres of Saffron Walden and Bishop's Stortford have experienced growth that is commensurate to the size of the centre when considered in the context of growth profiles with the main centres of Cambridge, Bishop's Stortford, Chelmsford and Haverhill. Behind the figures are a number of important considerations:-

- Sub-regional centres at Cambridge and Chelmsford have seen considerable increases in comparison floorspace in recent years with further floorspace in the pipeline. There has been a tendency for the major centres to attract an increasing share of the comparison sales market. Despite the historic nature of the central areas of these cities they provide a wide range of comparison shopping outlets including a large John Lewis department store in Cambridge,
- There has also been significant growth in Chelmsford, including the grant of planning permission for a town centre scheme comprising 27,037 m^2 of new retail floorspace at land to the east of High Street which has helped the centre to keep pace with the increase in comparison goods expenditure by its catchment populations.
- Saffron Walden has experienced growth in convenience and comparison goods floorspace in the past ten years but this has been predominantly in edge or out of centre locations i.e. Granite Retail Park has seen the delivery of a Aldi, however the permitted comparison floorspace, including the Section 73 permission which resulted in an minimal increase of 277 m^2 to a total provision of 3,250 m^2 A1 retail floorsapce, is yet to be completed. Evidence from our town centre appraisal demonstrates that Saffron Walden has a preponderance of small units, a reflection of the historic nature of the town centre.

Main Food Requirements

6.10 The analyses of the expenditure flows in Section 4, based upon the six survey zones, demonstrates that Zones 1 to 3 represent the core catchment areas for the main centres of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow. Since the boundaries of those Zones broadly represent equal journey time break points between the centres, the expenditure flows confirm the accepted phenomenon that main food shopping is heavily influenced by the "closest to home" facilities.

6.11 The current retention rates for main food shopping confirm support for this conclusion:-

Table 6.2: Retention Rates for Main Food Shopping

	Zone 1a	Zone 1b	Zone 2a	Zone 2b	Zone 3	Zone 4
Retained Combined Main Food Expenditure	95.18%	0.0%[8]	81.32%	0.00%[9]	2.03%	74.50%

6.12 Given the level of main food expenditure leakage, examination is required to establish whether the basis of the core catchment zones is flawed or whether the explanation supports the case for using those zones for assessing future requirements.

6.13 The relatively high retention rate in Saffron Walden is a reflection of the choice provided by the three major supermarkets serving that catchment area, although there is some leakage from Zone 1a to Cambridge (2.02%), Bishop's Stortford (0.78%) and Haverhill with its large Sainsbury's supermarket and Tesco store attracts a total of 1.43% of expenditure from Zone 1a.

6.14 Zone 2a with the town of Great Dunmow at its heart retains just 79.49% of its main food expenditure. There is considerable leakage to Bishop's Stortford (4.84%) and Braintree (7.63%). The Co-operative store in the town centre barely registers as a main food shopping facility. We remain of the view that the single store provision in the town is not sufficient to compete with the combined attraction of the major facilities in Bishop's Stortford and Chelmsford assisted by the good road links between these two towns and Great Dunmow.

[8] There are no main foodstores in this area and it experiences 100% expenditure leakage to other towns including Saffron Walden, Royston and Cambridge.

[9] There are no main foodstores in this area and it experiences 100% expenditure leakage to other towns including Saffron Walden, Great Dumnow, Haverhill, Braintree and Bishop's Stortford.

Despite its lack of facilities, Great Dunmow still manages to retain a considerable proportion of its main food expenditure.

6.15 Further evidence is brought to bear by the shopping patterns in Zone 3. The population of that zone is located abutting the eastern flanks of Bishop's Stortford and Harlow, which between them offer shoppers over ten major supermarkets. Given this interrelationship, it is unsurprising that this Zone exhibits such a high level of expenditure leakage to the neighbouring towns. It is to be noted that the Zone does not include any part of the built up areas of Bishop's Stortford or Harlow and were it to do so the retention rate within the Zone itself would certainly be higher.

6.16 Zone 4 is dominated by the supermarkets in Haverhill which accounts for 71.60% of convenience sales. A high percentage of expenditure leakage (10.9%) finds its way to supermarkets in Cambridge.

6.17 This assessment leads us to the conclusion that the six zones provide a sound basis for assessing future floorspace convenience needs. At present the retention rate is heavily influenced by the number, size and quality of the major supermarkets serving the area, in descending order of attraction depending upon the number of stores. Given that analysis, it would seem likely that the provision of additional supermarket facilities would create greater attraction for customers within the particular zones and increase the local retention rate. Such a change would represent a greater concentration of main shopping trips locally with considerable sustainable planning benefits. Indeed, since our last Retail Study in 2016, the Waitrose store has been extended and an Aldi store has been developed in Saffron Walden, in line with our recommendations, and has increased expenditure retention which is likely to have consolidated further as trading patterns have stabilised. Furthermore, the Co-operative in Stansted Mountfitchet opened towards the end of 2016 which will have increased expenditure for this settlement. However, as the latest sections of the report demonstrates, the potential for increasing the retention rate in any particular zone is constrained by the minimum floorspace required to support a main food offer. The conclusions of the floorspace capacity exercises are that the floorspace need is well short of that which would support such an outlet until the latter stages of the plan period.

The Appropriate Retention Rates

6.18 A key consideration is the retention level which might be appropriate. A strong guide in this respect is the fact that within the Study Area there is marginally improved facilities at Standsted Mountfitchet and the interrelationship between the supermarkets in Bishop's Stortford / Harlow and the support population in Zone 3. A further consideration is the outflow of the population to their place of work. The Uttlesford Economic Study indicates that nearly 50% of the population of the District travel outside the area to their employment, and against this background we consider that the maximum retention level for main food shopping which might be anticipated in Zone 2a is that currently experienced, namely 2%.

6.19 The retention rate for retail expenditure in Zone 1a has experienced a significant increase since the 2014 Study to over 95%. Notably, the Waitrose in Saffron Walden has been extended and now includes a larger sales floorspace and the Aldi store has commenced trading, both of which are likely to be key factors in the increased retention of convenience expenditure.

6.20 Similar principles apply to the assessment and analysis of Zone 2a and Great Dunmow, however this Zone has seen an increase in retention of convenience expenditure since the 2014 Study to 81.32%. As mentioned in the 2014 Study and subsequent 2016 Study, a previous commitment associated with an extension to the Tesco at Great Dunmow was not implemented and has now lapsed. We remain of the view that renewing the planning permission and implementing a consent for additional floorspace at the Tesco would not deliver customer choice through the introduction of a different trader. Accordingly, we consider that renewing the consent would prejudice a more sustainable strategy of seeking to maximise the retention of expenditure within the area thereby reducing the extent and length of shopping trips. We therefore consider that any floorspace requirement for Great Dunmow is best delivered through the development of a new store rather than an extension to Tesco.

6.21 It is very unlikely that retention could be increased in Zone 1a and Zones 1b, 2b, 3 and 4 do not include significant existing centres within the District i.e. within the Council's control. We are therefore of the view that it is not realistic or feasible for the Council to plan for increased retention rates in these Zones. While Zone 2a does have the potential to increase its retention rate there is already capacity in Great Dunmow based on its existing unmet share and this will be challenging to plan for and ultimately satisfy.

Top-up Shopping Requirements

6.22 The previous section has examined main food and top-up expenditure through supermarkets and there remains a balance of expenditure comprising residual main food turnover and top-up sales through conventional shops. We have assumed that throughout the Study Area as a whole this expenditure counts for 25% of overall convenience sales and is an element which requires consideration as part of floorspace requirements.

6.23 The pattern of expenditure for this type of purchase is diffuse with perhaps, surprisingly, lesser allegiance to the local zone in terms of retention rates than for main food shopping. These flows would suggest that a significant influence upon shopping habits for this type of trip are employment and other activities taking the shopper away from the home zone during which such expenditure takes place. Predictably, some of the smaller outlets which did not register for main food shopping appear in the analysis, with the local facilities in Stansted Mountfitchet and the Other Shops in Zones 1a and 2a assuming relatively greater importance. Given the inherent nature of this type of shopping, there is no obvious locational strategy for determining floorspace requirements and we take the view that the pattern of expenditure revealed by the household survey is a reliable basis for defining the future growth and distribution of retail floorspace for supporting this type of shopping. Accordingly, the assessment for each of the zones incorporates the retained top-up expenditure and the inflows and outflows from those zones in determining the shopping floorspace to be accommodated by local shops to meet those requirements.

Methodology

6.24 The translation of the strategy for main food and top-up expenditure into floorspace requirements is undertaken in relation to the six zones which best define the shopping patterns of the support population. The methodology comprises the following steps:-

- Assessing the potential main food expenditure by reference to the population in a particular zone, multiplied by the expenditure per head figure. For 2016 – 2033 these inputs are uplifted by the population figures in Table 1 (**Appendix 7**) and the expenditure levels raised to reflect the growth multiplier advised in Section 5.
- Adoption of the expenditure retention rare for each zone as determined by the latest household survey undertaken in 2016.
- The retained expenditure is converted into equivalent floorspace by applying a benchmark turnover to the sales floorspace figures. The benchmark figures are regarded as a proxy for neither under- or over-trading levels. They are adjusted in accord with the increasing efficiency ratios for retail floorspace set out by the analysis in Section 5 in the assessments for 2016, 2021, 2026, 2031 and 2033.
- The requirement for additional supermarket floorspace is calculated by deducting the existing floorspace from the overall retail need based on benchmark turnover to that floorspace. This exercise is undertaken for 2016, 2021, 2026, 2031 and 2033, the existing benchmark levels being increased to reflect the efficiency ratios within those calculations.
- Where floorspace commitments have been identified these are located at the appropriate time horizons and deducted from the calculated need for additional facilities.

Requirements by Town

6.25 The floorspace requirements for each town reflect the methodology highlighted above.

Saffron Walden

6.26 Table 13 (**Appendix 7**) provides an assessment of the need for convenience goods floorspace (i.e. additional supermarket floorspace) over the period 2011 – 2033. It shows for 2016 a total spend going into Saffron Walden's supermarkets is £83.45 mpa. Deduction of the benchmark turnovers of the existing supermarkets of £72.72 mpa leaves residual sales capacity of £10.73 mpa. This includes the Aldi store and there is no further committed new convenience floorspace in Saffron Walden.

6.27 Table 13 illustrates the convenience floorspace capacity in 5 year intervals through to 2033. Assuming the existing shopping facilities maintain their current market shares, there will be a need for new retail floorspace amounting to 872 m^2 net arises in 2016 which is greater than 438 m^2 reported in the 2016 Study. By 2033 a medium sized foodstore could be supported when convenience capacity will have reached £28.24 mpa. At a typical benchmark turnover level this (£12,000 per m^2 in 2011) equates to 2,109 m^2 net floorspace which again is greater than the 1,559 m^2 forecast in the 2016 Study. This will be sufficient to support a medium size store or a combination of smaller stores.

Saffron Walden convenience floorspace capacity of the plan period 2016-2033

	2016	2021	2026	2031	2033
Convenience Goods Expenditure Capacity	£10.73	£14.28	£20.13	£25.99	£28.24
Floorspace Requirement	872	1,132	1,557	1,960	2,109

Great Dunmow

6.28 The supermarket floorspace requirement for Great Dunmow is also illustrated in Table 7 (**Appendix 7**).

6.29 In 2016 it shows that the existing supermarkets in Great Dunmow are trading significantly above benchmark. This trend has increased further since the 2016 Study. Beyond 2016 and on to the end of the plan period at 2033, expenditure capacity rises to £41.25 mpa which equates to a floorspace requirement of 3,080 m^2. This could be delivered through a large foodstore or a series of smaller stores.

6.30 By 2033 we anticipate that a large foodstore or a discount store could be accommodated. Whatever proposal comes forward, its location should be within Great Dunmow, preferably in or on the edge of the town centre.

Great Dunmow convenience floorspace capacity of the plan period 2016-2033

	2016	2021	2026	2031	2033
Convenience Goods Expenditure Capacity	£27.86	£30.72	£34.37	£39.53	£41.25
Floorspace Requirement	2,264	2,436	2,658	2,982	3,080

Comparison Shopping Requirements

The Catchment Area

6.31 It is apparent from the expenditure analyses conducted in Section 4 that shopping for comparison goods is made up of a far more complex series of decisions as compared with convenience trips. The patterns are a series of overlays of spheres of influence which are derived from proximity to a particular centre or facility, the nature of the merchandise being sought and the scale and content of the shopping centres and, thereby, their ability to meet the demands of the shopper. Generally, the larger the centre with its extensive range of trading outlets, the greater its relative importance in accommodating the requirements of those merchandise lines where extensive range of choice is critical. The example most commonly used is fashion (clothing and shoes).

6.32 Where choice is less critical because products are more standardised, proximity i.e. convenience becomes more important. For the same reason, the trading areas of the smaller centres are able to meet the needs of a more localised support population. A much used example of this type of shopping is chemists and personal care.

6.33 The review of the comparison expenditure patterns in Section 4 demonstrates this complex pattern with the larger centres such as Cambridge exerting their trading influence over the whole of the Study Area for certain types of comparison goods, but with far less penetration in respect of what are normally defined as lower order comparison merchandise. Conversely, the smaller centres of Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow are relatively more important for meeting the shopping needs for certain types of comparison goods over a more local area.

6.34 For the purposes of assessing retail floorspace requirements in the local centres, therefore, one cannot employ self-contained zones but must conduct the analysis in terms of the extent of penetration over an area which wholly or largely embraces the entirety of the sphere of influence of those centres. We are aware from the results of the household survey that the Study Area represents an area from which Saffron Walden and

Great Dunmow draw almost the entirety, if not the whole, of their comparison expenditure. It is the Study Area which the Retail Study, therefore, uses for its assessment of potential sales and comparison floorspace requirements.

6.35 This section incorporates the assumption that the trade draw pattern into the centres, as revealed by the household survey, is maintained over the plan period to 2033.

6.36 The quantitative assessment is based upon the combined comparison sales generated in the Study Area. Apart from the illusory accuracy of a sector by sector analysis, the planning system cannot control what trader occupies a particular unit. **Appendix 7** illustrates the pattern of comparison expenditure and the draw of such goods into Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Stansted Mountfitchet, and Thaxted from the Study Area. The figures for Cambridge, Bishop's Stortford, Harlow, Chelmsford and Braintree are included to provide context.

Table 6.3 Main centres market share of comparison expenditure from the Study Area (incl out of centre retail facilities)

Centres	**Total** **%**
Saffron Walden	10.56
Great Dunmow	1.75
Stansted Mountfitchet	0.06
Thaxted	0.00
Cambridge	30.67
Bishop's Stortford	7.83
Harlow	5.08

Chelmsford	16.18
Braintree	5.56

6.37 The application of the Local Expenditure Data to the percentage draw figures for Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow reveals the extent of comparison sales drawn into those centres in 2016.

Table 6.4 Town centre market share and turnover of comparison expenditure from the Study Area 2016

Centres	**Comparison Turnover in 2016** **% Retention of Potential Expenditure**	**£mpa**
Saffron Walden	9.27	£57.04
Great Dunmow	1.75	£10.72
Stansted Mountfitchet	0.06	£0.34

6.38 For the purposes of the preliminary quantitative assessment of floorspace requirements the assumption is made that the retention rates of the various centres over the period to 2033 remain the same (constant market share). We will return to this issue when considering any potential qualitative changes. Over the plan period the expenditure figures need to be adjusted to reflect the population changes and the real increases in comparison expenditure examined in Section 4. Similarly, the projected expenditure has been adjusted at 2016, 2021, 2026, 2031 and 2033 to take into account the increasing proportion of SFT within that expenditure to ensure the resultant capacities represent sales through shops (i.e. physical retail floorspace). We have also allowed for inflow to the respective town centres. Those exercises are set out in Table 11 (**Appendix 7**) and are summarised in Table 6.5 below:-

Table 6.5: Comparison goods turnover forecasts for main town centres 2016-2033

Centre	Turnover 2016 £mpa	Turnover 2021 £mpa	Turnover 2026 £mpa	Turnover 2031 £mpa	Turnover 2033 £mpa
Saffron Walden	£57.04	£63.92	£75.03	£85.95	£91.11
Great Dunmow	£10.72	£11.99	£14.07	£16.12	£17.09
Stansted Moutfitchet	£0.34	£0.38	£0.45	£0.51	£0.54

6.39 The turnover forecasts are subject to several further adjustments in order to quantify floorspace requirements. The 2016 turnover figure is translated into floorspace by the application of a benchmark sales factor for that year, representing what might be regarded as an equilibrium situation i.e. neither under nor over trading. Those benchmarks vary, being based upon the average for the comparison floorspace in the particular centre but in respect of certain individual outlets below company average where appreciation of its trading profile suggests appropriate. This is particularly relevant for Saffron Walden which is regarded as trading somewhat over benchmark levels. The resultant floorspace requirements for 2011 are then compared with the existing comparison floorspace, the differences indicating whether there is currently an over or under provision of retail floorspace.

6.40 The benchmark figures have been projected forward to 2016, 2021, 2026, 2031 and 2033 adjusted to reflect the increasing floorspace efficiency ratios from Section 4, and the above process repeated to determine retail sales requirements.

6.41 Shopping scheme commitments are included within the turnover of each centre at the appropriate stage of the evaluation process depending on the likely date for them to begin trading. Tables 9, 10 and 11 (**Appendix 7**) provide the detailed analysis of the above processes. The results for each of the centres is summarised in Table 6.6 below:-

Table 6.6 Projected comparison floorspace capacity in town centres 2016 - 2033

Centre	Floorspace need 2016 sq m	Floorspace need 2021 sq m	Floorspace need 2026 sq m	Floorspace need 2031 sq m	Floorspace need 2033 sq m
Saffron Walden	2,010	2,450	3,410	4,170	4,537
Great Dunmow	414	493	673	816	885
Stansted Mountfitchet	-426	-423	-417	-413	-411

Thaxted has not been considered due to its present retention rate equating to a negligible floorspace requirement.

Summary of Qualitative Considerations and Retail Floorspace Requirements

6.42 The purpose of the qualitative considerations is to establish whether, collectively, there is justification for making any changes to the retention level for this type of expenditure and, thereby, the need for retail floorspace.

6.43 In relation to Great Dunmow we consider the circumstances do not warrant any modification to the level of attraction revealed by the household survey. Whilst the town centre comparison offer has reduced over the past eight years and the centre is constrained by its historic fabric, none of the factors represent a strong argument for reviewing the retention levels. Several sites within the town centre have been available for a considerable time without generating action, when real increases in comparison expenditure of the support population within the last decade has been considerable. This suggests the market has come to its own conclusions about the status of Great Dunmow for this type of shopping and it would be unrealistic to plan for additional floorspace beyond that level established by the household survey.

6.44 Saffron Walden is an important centre for this type of shopping, particularly in its immediate catchment area, and whilst it will never dislodge Cambridge as the focus for purchases requiring wider choice, it already attracts significant sales of lower order merchandise. The loss of expenditure is compounded by the lack of sites to accommodate the increasing need for comparison floorspace.

6.45 However, since our last study the Granite Retail Park has been granted planning permission and Phase 1, comprising a discount food store operated by Aldi, has been completed. Phase 2, which comprises three retail warehouse units and a garden centre, has not yet been constructed. The retail warehouse units are intended for bulky goods retailing and specifically exclude these units which comprise 3,250 m^2 gross plus a garden centre of 650 m^2 gross. We have allowed for this floorspace as a commitment in Saffron Walden and having done so, concluded that there is no capacity for retail warehousing. Indeed, there is negative capacity which effectively reduces overall comparison floorspace capacity in Saffron Walden.

6.46 In the absence of a strategic objective to expand Saffron Walden significantly we consider that bearing in mind the physical constraints of the town centre and availability of floorspace at the Granite Retail Park, there is no planning rational for modifying the level of attraction revealed by the household survey so as to, in effect, plan for increased levels of retention.

Table 6.7: Comparison turnover in Saffron Walden's Retail Warehouse units 2011-2033

Centre	Turnover 2016 (£mpa)	Turnover 2021 (£mpa)	Turnover 2026 (£mpa)	Turnover 2031 (£mpa)	Turnover 2033 (£mpa)
Existing Turnover £m	7.93	9.06	10.63	12.18	12.91
Surplus Expenditure £m	-5.97	-5.85	-5.35	-4.95	-4.70
Floorspace requirement (sq m)	-2,228	-2,035	-1,736	-1,499	-1,384

6.47 The turnover forecasts are subject to several further adjustments in order to quantify retail warehouse floorspace requirements. The 2011 turnover figure is compared with the benchmark turnover for the existing comparison floorspace, derived from Table 8, the differences indicating whether there is currently an over or under provision of retail warehouse floorspace.

6.48 Although there are non-food retail sales in the existing food stores, many of which are out-of-centre, we have not included these in the benchmark turnover for existing floorspace as these sales are not significant enough to register in the household survey results. They do, however, represent significant levels of floorspace as set out in table 6.8 below:

Table 6.8 Benchmark turnover of non food floorspace in main foodstores 2011 - 2033

Centre	Turnover 2016 (£mpa)	Turnover 2021 (£mpa)	Turnover 2026 (£mpa)	Turnover 2031 (£mpa)	Turnover 2033 (£mpa)
Saffron Walden	7.40	7.93	8.51	9.12	9.38
Great Dunmow	4.41	4.72	5.06	5.43	5.58
Stansted Mountfitchet	1.00	1.07	1.15	1.23	1.26

6.49 The benchmark figures are projected forward to 2016, 2021, 2026, 2031 and 2033 adjusted to reflect the increase in floorspace efficiency ratios from Section 4, the above process is repeated to determine retail floorspace requirements.

6.50 Out of town retail commitments are then normally deducted from the floorspace targets at the appropriate stage of the evaluation process depending on the likely date for them to begin trading. Other than Granite Retail Park there are currently no non-food retail warehouse commitments and therefore other than that no adjustments are made for commitments in this study. The resulting out of centre floorspace requirement are set out in Table 6.9, as follows:

Table 6.9: Comparison floorspace capacity in Uttlesford's retail warehousing 2011 – 2033

Centre	Floorspace need 2016 (£mpa)	Floorspace need 2021 (£mpa)	Floorspace need 2026 (£mpa)	Floorspace need 2031 (£mpa)	Floorspace need 2033 (£mpa)
Saffron Walden	-2,228	-2,035	-1,736	-1,499	-1,384
Great Dunmow	0	0	0	0	0

Quantitative Assessment

6.51 The quantitative assessment is based upon the current attractions of the main comparison goods retail centres.

6.52 The Local Plan allows for retail and commercial development in Saffron Walden, Great Dunmow, Stansted Mountfitchet and Thaxted, to maintain or enhance their role as retail and service centres and contribute to the diversity of retail and other commercial activity. **Appendix 9** includes an assessment of the reallocated floorspace capacity across the Plan Period to 2033 and beyond to 2036 from the town centres (Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow) to the garden communities proposed in the Spatial Strategy in draft Policy SP2 and the housing numbers for the proposed garden communities set out in draft Policy SP3 of the emerging Regulation 19 Local Plan.

6.53 Saffron Walden is a principal shopping centre which Policy seeks to sustain and enhance. The household survey shows it performing a main food shopping role and attracting a significant proportion of comparison expenditure.

6.54 Great Dunmow has a similar role, albeit classified by the Local Plan as a town centre, although its comparison goods function is more limited and to some extent reflects its role as a tourist / visitor attraction.

6.55 Stansted Mountfitchet is described in the Local Plan as a local centre and the household survey reveals it has a very limited role as a comparison facility. We consider it is unrealistic for the centre to significantly expand its comparison sales function. Thaxted is also a local centre and as such any floorspace requirement is negligible in floorspace terms.

6.56 Table 6.10 combines the surplus town centre expenditure with the surplus out of centre expenditure as well as deducting the non-food expenditure that is likely to be undertaken in supermarkets as set out in table 6.9 above, revealing the overall expenditure surplus relative to benchmark turnover. This is an important exercise it would not be appropriate to plan for capacity identified in centres when there is unaccounted for floorspace in foodstores that has, in effect, not registered on the household survey.

Table 6.10: Surplus comparison expenditure in Town Centres 2016 - 2033

Centre		2016 £mpa	2021 £mpa	2026 £mpa	2031 £mpa	2033 £mpa
Saffron Walden	In Centre	£11.85	£15.48	£23.11	£30.29	£33.88
	Out of Centre	-£5.97	-£5.85	-£5.35	-£4.95	-£4.70
	Benchmark non food turnover in supermarkets	£7.40	£7.93	£8.51	£9.12	£9.38
	Overall Supply	-£1.52	£1.7	£9.25	£16.22	£19.80
Great Dunmow	In Centre	£2.44	£3.12	£4.56	£5.93	£6.61
	Out of Centre	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
	Benchmark non food turnover in supermarkets	£4.41	£4.72	£5.06	£5.43	£5.58
	Overall Supply	-£1.97	-£1.6	-£0.5	£0.5	£1.03
Stansted Mountfitchet	In Centre	-£2.51	-£2.67	-£2.83	-£3.00	-£3.07
	Out of Centre	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
	Benchmark non food turnover in supermarkets	£1.00	£1.07	£1.15	£1.23	£1.26
	Overall Supply	-£3.51	-£3.74	-£3.98	-£4.23	-£4.33

6.57 Saffron Walden experiences an overall deficit of -£1.52m in 2016. This increases to a marginal surplus of £1.7 by 2021, £9.25m in 2026, £16.22m by 2031 and £19.80m by 2033, showing a requirement of significant levels of comparison floorspace peaking at 3,410 m^2 net in 2026 and 4,537 m^2 net by 2033.

6.58 Great Dunmow is expected to have negative capacity in 2016 (-£1.97m), this remains the case until 2031 when there is negligible capacity of £0.5m and by 2033 this amounts to £1.03m.

6.59 There is therefore no need for additional comparison floorspace in Great Dunmow during the plan period.

6.60 Stansted Mountfitchet does not achieve any surplus expenditure over the plan period as expenditure capacity is negative in 2016 and this is expected to remain the case throughout the plan period.

6.61 Although Great Dunmow registers a need for additional comparison floorspace in 2031 it is a negligible amount. Saffron Walden is therefore the only town likely to have a requirement for additional comparison floorspace in the next decade.

6.62 Given the capacity for retail development in Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow emerges towards the end of the plan period it would be beneficial to re-assess the requirement in the future before committing to allocating sites for retail development.

Hierarchy of Town Centre

6.63 We have reviewed the hierarchy of the town centres within Uttlesford and assessed whether this has changed since the Study in 2016. The household survey in 2016 confirmed that Saffron Walden remains the most popular centre, catering for the needs of its catchment area for convenience goods, and also a reasonable proportion of its comparison shopping requirements, particularly in Zone 1a. Saffron Walden continues to serve a principal retail town centre in the District and most attractive to new retail investment. Great Dunmow is the second largest and most attractive town in the District and again, has high retention for convenience goods shopping, and provides a good variety of comparison shopping facilities. It therefore serves its local catchment area well. Between them Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow serve the day-to-day convenience shopping needs and comparison shopping for the District. There is however no regional centre within the District and therefore these town centres are effectively subservient so far as comparison shopping is concerned to the larger regional towns and city centres of Cambridge, Bishop’s Stortford and Chelmsford, which are within a reasonable travel distance from Uttlesford.

6.64 The smaller town centres of Stansted Mountfitchet and Thaxted serve a convenience shopping function for their local populations but provide very limited comparison shopping. These centres are subservient to Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow in these respects.

6.65 Draft Policy RET1 of the emerging Regulation 19 (Pre-Submission) Local Plan proposes that the status of the retail centres and sets a retail hierarchy for the four main town centres in the District. This includes Saffron Walden and Great Dunmow as a town centres, identifies local centres at Stansted Mountfitchet and Thaxted and proposes local centres in the three Garden Communities proposed in Draft Policies SP2 and SP3 of the emerging Regulation 19 (Pre-Submission) Local Plan.

6.66 We have reviewed the shopping hierarchy currently in the Local Plan in the context of the 2016 Health Check update visits to the town centres in Uttlesford and the Household Survey results and concluded that the centre status remains valid.

7. Conclusions and Recommendations

7.1 We set out below our conclusions in respect of the capacity for retail development in Uttlesford for the plan period 2016 – 2033.

7.2 The retail study examines retail capacity on a constant market share basis – i.e. that shopping patterns established by the household survey are maintained through to 2033. Our conclusions therefore identify capacity based on the attraction of the existing centres. Notwithstanding this, the potential retail effects of the proposed garden communities set out in draft Policy SP3 of the draft Regulation 18 Local Plan have been examined. These have been provided to the Council by way of supplementary advice to this Retail Study Update (**Appendix 9**) and effectively reallocate the capacity identified to the proposed garden communities on a pro-rata basis synonymous with their respective housing allocations.

Convenience Shopping

7.3 The Household Survey confirmed that the main town centres and their adjoining out-of-centre facilities within the district provide sufficient facilities in respect of food shopping to retain most of the expenditure from within the district. There is, therefore, little leakage to competing convenience shopping floorspace outside of the district and we, therefore, conclude that, taking into account the physical provision of shopping facilities, particularly main food stores in the respective towns, Uttlesford is relatively well served in terms of main food shopping facilities.

7.4 In this respect Saffron Walden is served by four main food stores including: Waitrose, Tesco, Tesco Express and an out of centre Aldi. Great Dunmow has a town centre Co-operative and an out of centre Tesco. Stansted Mountfitchet has a small Co-operative and Tesco Express which both act as ‘top-up’ convenience facilities only. Stansted Mountfitchet falls within Zone 3 of the Study Area and suffers a significant amount of expenditure leakage to other centres outside of the Zone, however not all expenditure leaves the District with 16.6% of the convenience expenditure from this Zone going to towns within the District. Thaxted is serviced by limited local convenience facilities.

7.5 In terms of capacity, with the exception of Great Dunmow, there is limited short term capacity for additional convenience floorspace within any of the towns in Uttlesford. At 2016 convenience capacity of £27.86m exists in Great Dunmow which rises to £41.25m by 2033, which is sufficient to support a large food store. We consider that the projections at the longer end of the timescale should be treated with caution. In addition, Great Dunmow is only served by two main food stores. The Co-operative in the town centre is likely to be affected by the presence of the Tesco which may in turn may affect the vitality and viability of the town centre. Any further foodstore provision should therefore be directed to the town centre.

7.6 Limited convenience capacity arises in Saffron Walden by 2016 and by the end of the plan period, in 2033, it will have risen to £28.24m which would support a small to medium sized food store.

7.7 By 2033 we anticipate that a large food store could be delivered at Great Dunmow and a small to medium sized food store could be supported in Saffron Walden. Whatever proposal comes forward, its location should preferably be in or on the edge of the town centre.

Comparison Shopping

7.8 The results of the Household Survey have been applied without any adjustments. However, having assessed these we consider that the capacity for comparison retail development should be considered in the round, including the town centres and out-of-town, to reflect cross-over between the two and the policy preference for retail development to be accommodated in town centres as a first principle.

7.9 In terms of capacity we have also made adjustments to the typical turnover levels that one might expect in the respective town centres, both to reflect their existing benchmark turnovers more accurately and also the format and offer of comparison retailing in the respective town centres. We have also made reductions from the overall comparison capacity in centres to take account of comparison sales in food stores.

7.10 We, therefore, conclude that the capacity for the town centres and any adjoining retail warehouses should be looked at in the round, in terms of the Council's strategy going forward. In respect of the main centres we comment as follows:

Saffron Walden

7.11 We consider that a benchmark turnover level around the national average is appropriate for Saffron Walden and, therefore, set that for capacity purposes at £5,500 per m^2 net.

7.12 This generates capacity within Saffron Walden for further development but taking a comprehensive approach, allowing for commitments and the deduction of benchmark turnover for non food floorspace in the supermarkets, there is overall deficit of -£1.52m in 2016. This increases to a marginal surplus of £1.7 by 2021, £2.5m in 2026, £16.22m by 2031 and £19.8m by 2033,

7.13 The need for additional floorspace is apparent with a requirement of 3,410 m^2 net in 2026 and 4,537 m^2 net by 2033.

7.14 Given the results of the Household Survey, and their employment in the analysis of need, it is anticipated that by far the greater proportion of floorspace will be in the nature of town centre facilities, although an element might be taken up by additional comparison shops in local centres. We recommend that this floorspace requirement is placed primarily in the town centre, albeit there are a limited number of potential sites which are available and in any event sequentially preferable and should be considered and fully assessed for development on a town centre first policy basis.

Great Dunmow

7.15 We have found that the comparison turnover for the town centre in 2016 is £10.72m which is above the benchmark for comparison shopping in the town centre. However, given that the town comprises a number of lower order retailers and independents we have set the benchmark turnover for Great Dunmow at a level of £5,500 m^2 net. Taking into account the turnover of non-food use in the existing supermarkets in Great

Dunmow there is negative capacity in 2016 (-£1.97m) and this remains the case until 2031 when there is negligible capacity of £0.5m and by 2033 this amounts to £1.03m.

7.16 There is therefore no need for additional comparison floorspace in Great Dunmow and no requirement to allocate land for development during the plan period.

Stansted Mountfitchet

7.17 Stansted Mountfitchet is primarily a convenience shopping destination with a Co-operative and Tesco express store in the town centre which largely serve the immediate population. There is a small range of independent convenience stores which again confirm its primary use as a convenience shopping centre,

7.18 The comparison floorspace in the town centre is trading below benchmark in 2016 and there is no capacity for additional non-food retail development in the town centre over the plan period. Again, taking a comprehensive approach, deducting the benchmark turnover for non food floorspace there is no capacity for non-food retail development in the plan period.

Thaxted

7.19 Thaxted is a small centre which serves a limited convenience and comparison shopping role. Again, taking a comprehensive approach, deducting the benchmark turnover for non food floorspace there is no capacity for non-food retail development in the plan period.

8. Monitoring

8.1 The shopping study embraces a lengthy period which implies that many of the assumptions relating to retail expenditure and shopping behaviour could well experience significant departures from those inputs. Accordingly, we would recommend the underlying retail data is examined annually over the next five years to ensure that the basic conclusions of the study maintain their integrity. Thereafter, the study should be reassessed every five years particularly in relation to the post 2030 period where current forecasts should be treated as estimates rather than precise requirements.

8.2 The lack of sufficient sites to meet the retail floorspace requirements demands a continuous research programme to identify locations appropriate to the particular shopping facility throughout the plan period and in accordance with policy.

Glossary of Terms

Town centre: Area defined on the local authority's proposal map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in Local Plans, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.

Edge of centre: For retail purposes, a location that is well connected and up to 300 metres of the primary shopping area. For all other main town centre uses, a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary. For office development, this includes locations outside the town centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange. In determining whether a site falls within the definition of edge of centre, account should be taken of local circumstances.

Primary shopping area: 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). Primary and secondary frontages: 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.

Out of centre: A location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area.

Out of town: A location out of centre that is outside the existing urban area.

Main town centre uses: Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the 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).

All above Source: National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012

Convenience shopping: Convenience retailing is the provision of everyday essential items, including food, drinks, newspapers/magazines and confectionery.

Supermarkets: Self-service stores selling mainly food, with a trading floorspace less than 2,500 square metres, often with car parking.

Superstores: Self-service stores selling mainly food, or food and non-food goods, usually with more than 2,500 square metres trading floorspace, with supporting car parking.

Comparison shopping: Comparison retailing is the provision of items not obtained on a frequent basis. These include clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods.

Retail warehouses: Large stores specialising in the sale of household goods (such as carpets, furniture and electrical goods), DIY items and other ranges of goods, catering mainly for car-borne customers (Source: PPS6). Retail Warehouses include all non-food retail units without restriction to size. Generally their construction shows a much greater visual similarity to warehousing than to that of standard shop units. Retail warehouses usually occupy a single floor, the majority of which is devoted to sales, with some ancillary storage and office use. They may be sited singly or grouped together, most frequently in fringe or out of town locations. The provision of car parking is often extensive - sometimes shared, as is the case at retail parks (Source: VOA Rating Manual).

Retail parks: An agglomeration of at least 3 retail warehouses.

Warehouse clubs: Large businesses specialising in volume sales of reduced priced goods. The operator may limit access to businesses, organisations or classes of individual.

Factory outlet centres: Groups of shops specialising in selling seconds and end-of-line goods at discounted prices.

Regional and sub-regional Out-of-centre: shopping centres which are generally over shopping centres 50,000 square metres gross retail area, typically comprising a wide variety of comparison goods stores.

All above Source: Annex A PPS 6, 2005

Population projections: Estimates of future population based on the most recent Census and/or ONS population estimates, and applying ONS population trends.
Plan-led population forecasts: Population projections adjusted to take account of extant planning permissions, and future housing growth estimates and housing land allocations in development plans.
Expenditure projections: Estimates of future expenditure obtained by projecting past trends in expenditure by means of a recognised statistical extrapolation technique.

Expenditure forecasts: Assessments of future expenditure based on applying stated growth rates which are not necessarily projections of past trends.

Convenience goods expenditure: Expenditure (including VAT as applicable) on goods in COICOP categories: Food and non alcoholic beverages, Tobacco, Alcoholic beverages (off-trade), Newspapers and periodicals, Non-durable household goods.

Comparison goods expenditure: Expenditure (including VAT as applicable) on goods in COICOP Categories: Clothing materials & garments, Shoes & other footwear, Materials for maintenance & repair of dwellings, Furniture & furnishings; carpets & other floor coverings, Household textiles, Major household appliances, whether electric or not, Small electric household appliances, Tools & miscellaneous accessories, Glassware, tableware & household utensils, Medical goods & other pharmaceutical products, Therapeutic appliances & equipment, Bicycles, Recording media, Games, toys & hobbies; sport & camping equipment; musical instruments, Gardens, plants & flowers, Pets & related products, Books & stationery, Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment, Appliances for personal care, Jewellery, watches & clocks, Other personal effects.

Special forms of trading: All retail sales not in shops and stores; including sales via the internet, mail order, TV shopping, party plan, vending machines, door-to-door and temporary open market stalls.

Gross ground floor footprint floorspace: The area shown on the Ordnance Survey map or other plans as being occupied by buildings and covered areas measured externally.

Gross retail floorspace: The total built floor area measured externally which is occupied exclusively by a retailer or retailers; excluding open areas used for the storage, display or sale of goods.

Net retail sales area: A new set of definitions for retail planning has been prepared by the National Retail Planning Forum (NRPF). The definition for all retail shops and stores other than foodstores was widely supported during initial consultations by the NRPF, and is as follows:
The area within the walls of the shop or store to which the public has access or from which sales are made, including display areas, fitting rooms, checkouts, the area in front of checkouts, serving counters and the area behind used by serving staff, areas occupied by retail concessionaires, customer services areas, and internal lobbies in which goods are displayed; but not including cafes and customer toilets.
For foodstores, an alternative definition of ‘net retail sales area’ has been put forward by the Competition Commission, and is supported by the majority of major foodstore operators.
This is as follows:
The sales area within a building (i.e. all internal areas accessible to the customer), but excluding checkouts, lobbies, concessions, restaurants, customer toilets and walkways behind the checkouts.

The NRPF's definition could be applied to all shops and stores including foodstores, but differs from the way in which the majority of major foodstore operators currently publish details of their store sizes. The Competition Commission's alternative definition is believed to reflect the latter more accurately.

For retail planning purposes, the main consideration is to ensure that comparisons of floorspace and published sales densities are on a like for like basis.

Net to gross ratio: The ratio of net retail sales area to gross retail floorspace in a stated retail location.

Retail sales density: Convenience goods, comparison goods or all goods retail sales (stated as including or excluding VAT) for a specified year on the price basis indicated, divided by the net retail sales area generating those sales.

Floorspace efficiency factor: The percentage by which a retail sales density is assumed to increase annually in real terms over a stated period.

All above Source: PRACTICE GUIDANCE ON NEED, IMPACT AND THE SEQUENTIAL APPROACH | APPENDIX A: Glossary of terms, December 2009

APPENDICES

1. Plan of Study Area and Zones

2. Location Plan: Non-food

3. Location Plan: Foodstores

4. Bus Services Schedules

5. Copy of NEMS Household Survey Questionnaire

6. NEMS Household Survey Results April 2015

7. Retail Capacity Tables

8. Main Town Centre Use Class Maps

9. Uttlesford Retail Study Addendum Note