

APPENDIX 3

SUMMARY OF TOWN CENTRE HEALTHCHECKS UNDERTAKEN BY COLLIERS INTERNATIONAL

Armley is a centre which appears to operate well locally providing a good focus for local residents. The centre has a range of facilities, with a new sport and leisure centre being recently completed. While it does not, at present, contain a large foodstore, there is a planning permission for such a store on a site at Carr Crofts. The development of this site would represent a significant improvement to the retail offer available and bring it to a level comparable with most other town centres.

The policy aspiration of accommodating a modern scale foodstore is longstanding and it is not considered that this should change. It is considered that the Council will need to consider options for attracting a comparable but alternative scheme if the permitted scheme is not delivered within a reasonable timescale.

Boston Spa is defined as a town centre in the UDP and in the CSPA. While Boston Spa is a sizable settlement, and there is a range and mix of retail units and other services in the centre, it is concluded that it does not meet the definition of a town centre. The household survey supports this view with no store in the centre attracting a significant share of total spend on convenience goods. It also reflects the commercial assessment of the centre. This report subsequently suggests a two-tier approach to local centres and it is suggested that Boston Spa should be re-categorised.

Bramley town centre is based on a purpose built scheme which incorporates a range of retail outlets, supplemented by more recent development to its north east. The Centre as defined suffers from changes in levels and the orientation of the purpose built scheme which backs onto areas at a lower level and consequently integration of the different areas is difficult. Further development within the existing boundaries at the lower level to the north east should not be ruled out but it will be difficult to integrate the different areas and uses. The boundary might be extended to reflect existing uses south west of Town Street and north east of Waterloo Lane. The main scheme owners have investigated various ways of improving both the environment and overall offer and it is considered that such suggestions should be encouraged and supported as far as possible

There is land within the existing centre boundary which could accommodate further new development. Some might be small scale development integrated with the existing centre, but the larger opportunities lie to the north east of the main development. Further growth should be supported.

Chapel Allerton is another historic suburban centre which is limited in terms of its physical capability to meet major foodstore or other larger footprint shopping requirements. The centre has a relatively small foodstore (Somerville on Stainbeck Lane/School Lane), with a limited number of other convenience units. However, the centre has a wide range of other facilities and provides a good facility for its community.

The commercial view is that the centre could support additional development and the estimates of need would support this. However, physical constraints have precluded expansion over many years and unless early investigations of any potential sites throw up development opportunities it is considered more likely that the centre will maintain its current level.

The nearby Montreal Avenue local centre has had some recent development, including a Lidl supermarket and it is likely that the town and local centre complement one another to some extent for the local community.

Cross Gates centre has been and remains based on the Arndale Centre. While there are a number of small foodstores in the centre, it lacks a major supermarket or superstore, but has strong comparison goods offer as demonstrated by the household survey results. Outside the Arndale Centre there are a number of smaller parades although the roads running through the centre are busy and so limit integration. Nonetheless it attracts a significant number of visitors and is an important focus for its community.

Dewsbury Road is a centre located within an area of Leeds within which easy access to major foodstores would normally be considered particularly important. The centre in many regards falls short of the offer that would be expected from a town centre, although it has a range of retail and service units, together offering a variety of employment opportunities. In commercial terms, it is perceived as declining. However, its future as a town centre serving both its immediate residential area and an appropriate wider catchment is a key issue going forward because of the relatively low level of provision and limited current opportunities for addressing this issue.

Farsley is a traditional centre within an area which has been absorbed by the growth of the main urban area. Its topography, the pattern of development with residential and mill space closely mixed in has traditionally constrained the scope for any large footplate retail development. Moreover, it is a centre which is away from major routes. Consequently, while it provides a focus service for the immediate local community, it is not a main centre for major weekly shopping requirements.

In both commercial terms and in relation to expenditure, it is a centre which could be expanded. There are no apparent in-centre opportunities of any significance, but opportunities to expand the boundary to incorporate areas with development potential should be investigated.

Garforth town centre has always been constrained physically by development close to the back of Main Street. Residential development is the main constraint, rising up to the rear of retail and service properties and has never provided opportunities for any significant redevelopment. It is for this reason that planning permission was granted for the out of centre store, now Tesco, which is not related to the centre.

The town centre has a range of facilities which enable it to function as a service centre for Garforth, but it is not the main shopping destination and its future place in the hierarchy and the role it will be able to play, particularly taking into account

potential growth in this area, may need significant reassessment and opportunities to expand the centre assessed.

Guiseley centre, running along Otley Road, has been significantly extended by the Morrisons superstore and Guiseley retail park. Indeed, it was these developments that raised Guiseley to town centre status. The general area has a strong retail offer which is supplemented by a range of other services and facilities. There is expenditure capacity and this is a sustainable location, with rail as well as bus access. The scope to extend the boundaries should be investigated.

Halton has expanded and its role has been emphasised by development of a significant comparison goods outlet, together with a small supermarket. It has a range of other small units providing comparison and service uses as well as a variety of service and employment opportunities. While its catchment area is relatively restrictive, it performs a town centre role for its immediate community.

The commercial view is that expansion could be supported. No further opportunities are apparent within the centre while residential development seems to constrain the boundaries. However, there is merit in investigating whether there is any further scope for extending the boundaries.

Harehills Lane is a centre identified in the Core Strategy Preferred Options as a potential new town centre. While it has many of the characteristics of Harehills Corner in terms of constraints posed by residential development, it is far less divided by traffic. Moreover, while it is an extensive linear centre, there seems to be reasonable levels of pedestrian movement through it and associated with various sporting facilities. Perhaps most significantly, the centre has had new supermarket developments at both its north and south edges.. This not only consolidates the centre itself, but as discussed later, goes a significant way to replacing the role originally envisaged for Harehills Corner in terms of meeting convenience shopping needs.

While the commercial view has been that the centre will not grow, the Morrisons and Netto developments have run counter to this, demonstrating convenience operator view of the local demand. The quantitative analysis supports this and, particularly given views on Harehills Corner centre, it is considered this status is merited. The relative newness of the supermarkets suggests that there is a time for the centre to consolidate and adjust to what will be a new role within the hierarchy. Consideration should be given to redrawing the centre boundaries to reflect these new developments.

Harehills Corner has been identified as a town centre to serve the inner north east/east suburbs of Leeds since the original development plan. It had been envisaged that the centre, along with other similar centres in other parts of Leeds would be the subject of comprehensive redevelopment during the 1960's to provide "modern" shopping centres. However, this never proceeded but the centre retained its status into the UDP.

While there had been aspirations that it might be expanded to accommodate a relatively large convenience goods store, no such proposals emerged. This is not

surprising given that it is another centre which is heavily constrained by close knit residential development around it. It is also constrained by the fact that the main Roundhay Road runs directly through it with a number of junctions for cross town traffic which serve to increase vehicular congestion and inevitably detract from environmental quality. Recognising this, the city council have granted a series of planning permissions for stores designed to meet the needs of this part of the city: the Tesco within an expanded Oakwood, ASDA at Killingbeck as part of a mixed use development and more recently Morrisons and Netto at Harehills Lane. At the same time, retail and other facilities at Harehills Corner have been less and less able to meet more than day to day needs of the local community. It has nonetheless retained its nominal status within the hierarchy.

It is suggested that it is now appropriate to redefine Harehills Corner as a large local centre, still encouraging and providing policy protection for the independent outlets and specialist offer which dominate the centre to continue and hopefully thrive. The support to alternative and independent retailers in this location is particularly appropriate as both Oakwood and, increasingly, Harehills Lane provide the range of retail and other facilities which meet town centre status, serving needs in this part of Leeds.

Headingley is a centre which appears to have adjusted to a particular role with a strong local community base, as well as significant presence of students in the area whose shopping habits will be rather different to main family groupings. It is a centre with a good range of employment uses and a variety of service and leisure facilities. There does not appear to be room for expansion, but it appears to have consolidated its position in this part of the City.

The commercial view is that additional development could be supported, although the requirements are leisure orientated. It is not considered that there are further opportunities for physical extension. The Waitrose development at Meanwood and Morrisons at Kirkstall Lane, to some extent, addressed the large convenience store issue with the Sainsburys in Headingley Arndale, providing a good quality local facility.

Holt Park centre was developed to meet particular needs and new development in that sector of north west Leeds. However, over the years the nature of the centre has changed with the ASDA store occupying a number of the smaller units, the remaining small units becoming marginal and employment uses declining. The leisure centre and school combine with the store to make it a strong community focus, but it is somewhat tired and unwelcoming and does not have the range and number of units of many of the historic suburban centres. While it is considered to play an important town centre role, its limitations are clear, and its town centre shopping role is limited. The ASDA site however clearly serves an important function.

There would appear scope to extend and/or reconfigure the centre and it is considered that this should be investigated further given capacity in this area. LCC will wish to consider its position as land owner.

Horsforth was once a freestanding town centre with a wide range of shops and service uses. It contains a Morrisons superstore, albeit in a relatively out dated and limited store fabric, but clearly from the household survey plays an important function in the community. It plays an important role within the hierarchy, it is seen as positive in commercial terms and is within a sector with convenience capacity. However, the centre appears wholly constrained by established residential areas and so expansion does not seem practical. There may be scope for redevelopment within the centre, but this would be brought forward by a commercial developer. It is suggested that Church Road could form the north western boundary of the centre.

Hunslet centre is the major centre in south Leeds and this is reflected by the level of use. The purpose built centre anchored on a superstore has been added to by a number of fringe developments. The retail offer plus a number of community elements make this an important centre in south Leeds.

A major ASDA superstore at Middleton has planning permission and this will inevitably result in changing shopping patterns in south Leeds, although the town centre role and function of Hunslet should remain unchanged.

Kippax town centre is limited essentially in terms of its retail offer. The household survey shows that it performs a relatively limited function. However, its historic character and the range of services and facilities therein suggest that it maintains a role of something of a focus for the local community, albeit it is not seen significantly as a significant shopping centre.

It is not considered that it meets the PPS4 criteria for a town centre in its current form, notwithstanding its historic importance as a village” centre and it is consequently recommended that it should be re-categorised.

Kirkstall had historically been a centre of a traditional character and relatively small units based around the Commercial Road/Kirkstall Lane/Bridge Road. It became a more significant centre with the development of a supermarket with a post office and other small units through the development east of Commercial Road and south of Kirkstall Lane. However, the size of the main store was not able to compete with larger stores being developed and the development began to decline. This was subsequently accelerated by the development of Morrisons and associated development at Savins Mill Way.

In recent years the redevelopment of the original centre and adjoining land has been explored and planning applications submitted in 2005. No scheme has yet been progressed by the developer. The defined centre is extensive, including units in the ‘island’ site between Bridge Road and Savins Mill Way, the leisure centre in the north east sector of the main junction and smaller units further east. Most significantly within the town centre is the former Clover and then Alders Department store, currently BHS, to the north of Bridge Road. This property has the benefit of a planning permission to increase the floorspace to increase retail and food and drink provision and also to aim to integrate better with the other parts of the defined centre.

It is a very dispersed centre with no strong focus. Pedestrian flows around it appear limited and it appears to be a centre which, if it does function as such, does so through reliance on private vehicle movements. In considering applications for parts of the defined Town Centre it does appear that the City Council has recognised the need to attempt to address these issues and increase integration. The scope for any new development or redevelopment to assist in improving pedestrian linkages around the centre should be explored. We would also advise that any redevelopment proposals of land or premises should be assessed very carefully in relation to implications for the place of Kirkstall within the hierarchy. We would advise that any applications should be required to address this specifically and to consider possible individual and cumulative impacts.

Meanwood town centre has very recently been changed significantly by the introduction of the Waitrose supermarket replacing a smaller Co-Op store with a number of small units. The centre has an outdated 1960's precinct which adds to the range of services and facilities and also includes a retail park with a range of retail units. If anything, the role of Meanwood serving north west Leeds has increased over the years and the effect on its role of the Waitrose development will need to be assessed. The centre is generally constrained by residential development which seems likely to limit the scope for further growth.

Middleton centre has been the subject of two recent planning applications for superstores. The City Council has resolved to grant permission to one of these to meet identified needs and deficiencies which were set out in the UDP. It is understood that the development is considered highly likely to proceed and this will have a significant effect on the district centre and the role it is able to play.

Moor Allerton town centre has a relatively short history but has nonetheless changed significantly. The original relatively modest supermarket has now been replaced by a major Sainsburys store with limited other retailing but including large comparison units, Homebase and Comet. To the south of the ring road is a major leisure facility which is not within the boundary. Moor Allerton is relatively limited in the range of facilities normally required to justify town centre designation though it does include a library and dental facilities. However, it functions as a major retail destination, but the smaller units and other services are limited and the location is not perceived as attractive to independent retailers.

Moortown Corner was an identified district centre to be the focus for significant expansion during the 1960's, but this was not delivered and the Moor Allerton centre emerged as a consequence to meet needs in this part of the City. However, it has consolidated much of its function in terms of services and supporting retail while the development and extension of the Marks and Spencer Simply Food provides a foodstore. It does not meet weekly shopping needs with this function having been taken by Moor Allerton notably, but its range of facilities, noting shoppers perception of the importance of its financial services, may justify it taking on a town centre definition. However, it is considered here, and noting our views on the scope for sub-division of local centre status, that town centre definition is not appropriate.

Morley town centre was traditionally one of the largest freestanding town centres in Leeds. It has a traditional core with a thriving privately owned market with a good

superstore acting as anchor. It has continued to function and survive, within an area of significant apparent local loyalty, despite an out of centre Asda of long standing and more recently the White Rose development. However, it seems clear that these developments, and particularly the latter, have constrained growth which might otherwise have taken place in Morley town centre. However, it is a strong town centre performing an important function to a very distinctive community.

Oakwood centre is one whose role has been changed significantly as a consequence of edge of centre development, in this case both convenience and comparison goods development initially on the site immediately to the south of this historic centre. The traditional centre contained a range of retail and service uses, while the major superstore, albeit not maximising the physical linkages for encouraging linked trips, thus enables the centre to play a significant role. This centre over recent years, together with the new development at Harehills Lane, has in effect served to meet requirements which had been expected originally to be met at Harehills Corner.

Otley town centre is one of the historic freestanding towns with a very distinctive character. It has a recent medium sized Sainsbury supermarket within the defined town centre, an edge of centre Waitrose and out of centre Netto. The centre itself is constrained by its historic character and the consequent relatively small unit sizes which have restricted the interest in the centre of national multiples. Otley has a good street market and a range of supporting community facilities, including a new library.

The historic form and character of the town centre constrains redevelopment, but there are opportunities behind the Kirkgate and Westgate frontages and to the north of Westgate which might accommodate retail development more suited to modern requirements and it is considered that the principle of these should continue to be supported. The town centre boundary should be re-assessed to reflect the current extent of retail and other town centre uses.

Pudsey shares a history of development with other outlying towns, it is more constrained by its setting and has never had the extent of retail offer of most of those towns. There does not appear to be significant opportunity for this position to change, but its historic range of functions means that it will continue to play this role. It is not a major location for convenience shopping, but has continued to consolidate its current role, despite a number of freestanding developments in the sector of the City. Consequently, there is considered to be scope for further development, but no physical scope for significant development is apparent.

Rothwell is a freestanding town and is one which has been anchored for many years by a Morrisons superstore. A replacement store has recently been developed and this development has improved the centre. This investment appears to have increased shopper and commercial confidence. It is suggested that the effect of this on commercial perceptions over the short term should be assessed and this may, as the economy generally improves, provide a catalyst for the investigation of further redevelopment opportunities.

Seacroft town centre has been the subject of whole scale redevelopment. In retail terms, the centre has the appearance of a retail park with a large Tesco store with a number of supporting retail units. The configuration of the redevelopment has resulted in the community facilities being located behind and so not ideally integrated with the retail units.

Wetherby town centre identified in the UDP as one where opportunities for new retail development, and particularly a new foodstore, were to be sought. In-centre opportunities were limited by the historic character of the town while the scope to extend was limited by the River Wharfe and existing development and uses. Consequently the UDP suggested the then apparently nearest opportunity on a redundant site immediately south of the town centre beyond the river. This site was not brought forward for development and indeed was redeveloped for housing, the retail need having been met by the redevelopment and extension of the former Co-op store to provide premises for Morrisons. This store now provides a strong anchor to the town centre.

The commercial view is of a strong centre, but where the historic character limits in-centre redevelopment and the constraints of surrounding development limit expansion opportunities.

Yeadon town centre is one of the outlying centres which grew to meet its own community needs. Its retail offer has modernised, together with a good range of services, it continues to perform this role. The current town centre definition includes edge of centre elements along Town Street that would provide an appropriate opportunity for redevelopment. The local topography provides challenges in terms of integration for easy pedestrian links with the High Street which would need to be considered in the context of the scale and function of the centre.