

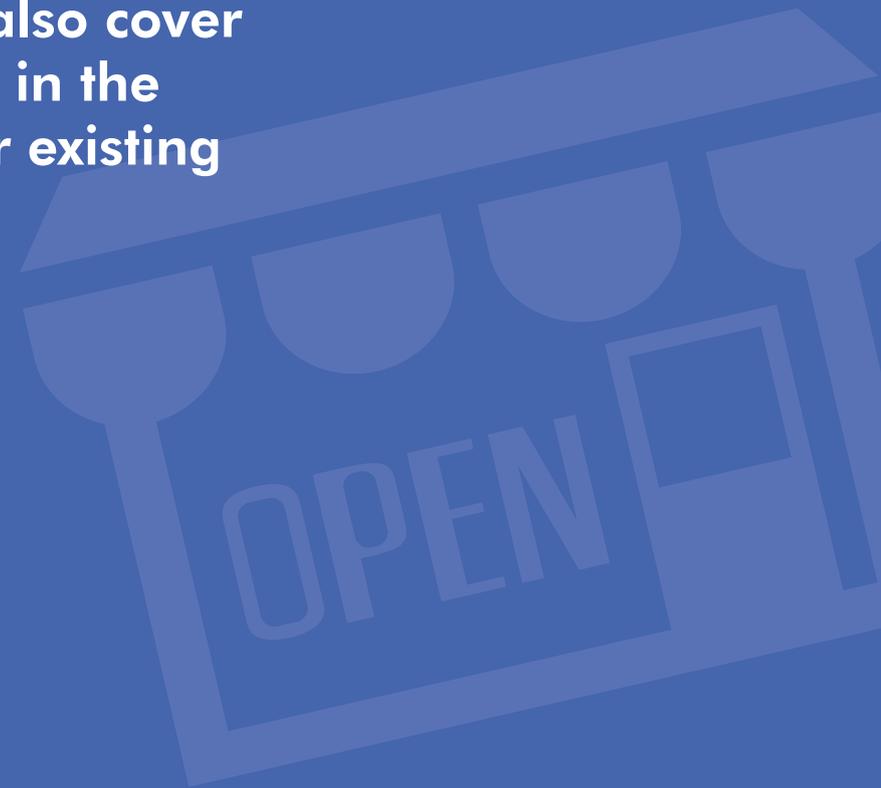


Economy



This suite of Economic policies sets out the distribution of economic development, outlines aims to support a sustainable economy, allocates land for economic development and seeks to protect allocated and existing employment sites.

The economic policies also cover economic development in the countryside and new or existing tourism development.





Economy

Policy E1 - Scale and Distribution of Economic Growth

This policy sets out the preferred distribution of economic growth to effectively meet the high growth scenario for Richmondshire.

The preferred policy reads

Policy E1 - Scale and Distribution of Economic Growth

1. The Council, its partners and service providers will work to bring forward 11.6 hectares of land for employment development (excluding military needs) up to 2039 in order to sustain the economy of the Plan Area.
2. Major employment development, either new or consolidating/improving existing employment areas, will be encouraged in the following locations
 - a) Colburn
 - b) Gallowfields Estate, Richmond
 - c) Gatherley Road, Brompton on Swale
 - d) Harmby Road, Leyburn
 - e) Stables around Middleham
 - f) Military related development within Catterick Garrison and Marne Barracks
 - g) Town centres for retail, business and tourism uses
3. Development at the motorway junctions of Catterick Central, Scotch Corner and Barton will be permitted subject to detailed independent appraisals demonstrating the need to connect to the strategic road network and showing no detrimental impacts on the economy of Richmond, Catterick Garrison and Leyburn town centres.
 - a) At the Scotch Corner A1(M)/A66 junction and Catterick Central proposals must
 - i. be within the identified 'Directions of Growth'
 - ii. comply with the Scotch Corner and Catterick Central Development Briefs
 - iii. prioritise the consolidation of existing and committed employment development
 - iv. prioritise sites adjacent to existing employment development.
4. The complete loss of existing employment sites will be resisted unless an alternative location can be suitably be provided within the district.



Justification

Scale of Economic Growth

The Employment Land Review (ELR) Update 2019 (addendum to the 2018 report) sets out three growth scenarios for Richmondshire - Low, Medium and High and how these translate in to overall employment land, providing the basis for the Scale of Economic Development. The scenarios are set below

- In the low scenario, overall employment is projected to contract by a total of 410 jobs over the period from 2014 to 2035 - this is equivalent to an annual average contraction of 20 jobs.
- In the medium scenario, overall employment is projected to expand by a total of 1,200 jobs over the period from 2014 to 2035 - this is equivalent to an annual average growth rate of 57 jobs.
- In the high scenario, overall employment is projected to expand by a total of 2,288 jobs over the period from 2014 to 2035 - this is equivalent to an annual average growth rate of 109 jobs.

The High growth scenario is the preferred approach which takes account of the potential positive impacts generated in the future by the three identified local economic drivers

- 1) Completion of the A1(M) upgrade
- 2) Expansion at Catterick Garrison
- 3) The development of the Designer Outlet at Scotch Corner.

In broad terms, this could also be considered to represent a 'policy on' environment with higher growth being achieved in specific sectors. In particular, this scenario assumes that the rate of decline in the manufacturing sector in Richmondshire is slower, and in line with the slower contraction forecast for the Yorkshire and Humber region as a whole. It also assumes modest growth in the Accommodation, Food Services and Recreation sector and the Information and Communications sector.

The High scenario indicates a gross employment land (B1 - Business Space, B2 - General Industrial and B8 - Storage & Distribution Uses) requirement up to 2035 of 11.6 ha outside of the Yorkshire Dales National Park (YDNP).

Distribution of Economic Growth

With regard to the distribution of economic growth, a number of options have been considered and explored, including through the previous Issues and Options consultation. The preferred policy is reflective of a combined approach, specifically seeking to consolidate existing employment areas as well as enable some growth at motorway junctions and in rural locations.

This approach to the distribution of economic growth enables all aspects of the economy and employment locations the opportunity to consolidate and/or expand. The preferred approach is balanced in ensuring economic development and associated opportunities can be spread across the Plan Area.



What you have told us?

National Planning Policy Framework

A strong economy is one of the tripartite elements of sustainable development as set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF

'Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives)

- a) an economic objective - to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure
- b) a social objective ...
- c) an environmental objective ...'

Paragraph 81 states that 'planning policies should

- a) set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration
- b) set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period
- c) seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment
- d) be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allow for new and flexible working practices (such as live-work accommodation), and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances.'

Furthermore, paragraph 82 highlights that planning policies and decisions 'should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries, and for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations'.

Paragraphs 83 and 83 also set out clear guidance with regards to supporting a prosperous rural economy.

Evidence Base

Employment Land Review (ELR) (2018)

The ELR (2018) suggested that future policies for employment and economic development be more specific, both in terms of identifying site allocations, and in terms of the criteria for safeguarding employment land, and promoting sustainable economic development.

The study focuses more on existing employment areas within the main centres of Richmond, Catterick Garrison and Leyburn but in general identified further opportunities for businesses outside the main areas including in locations such as at Aske, Skeeby and Melsonby with these areas providing a range of potential opportunities for rural diversification.



Employment Land Review (ELR) (Update 2019)

An update to the ELR was undertaken to take into account the change in the time period for the Local Plan (2018-2035) as well as consider new policy formation in local economic development policy and further proposed employment developments and existing commitments.

This update to the 2018 ELR report indicates a stronger trend in employment growth after taking into account more recent trend data and identifies a number of positive factors locally that are expected to support future economic growth in Richmondshire.

Richmondshire District Council Economic Action Plan (Draft)

The draft Richmondshire Economic Action Plan sets out the following five key priorities

- Enabling opportunities for growth
- Supporting Local Businesses
- Improving Connectivity
- Advocate for District economic growth
- Having the right labour force for present and future business needs

This aims to actively promote Richmondshire as a great business location, building on connectivity, accessibility and skilled workforce as well as encourage and support new developments within Richmondshire.

Issues and Options Consultation

Scale of Economic Growth

The options for the Scale of Economic Growth included

- o Low Growth - net additional jobs of -20 per annum
- o Medium Growth - net additional jobs of 57 per annum
- o High Growth - net additional jobs of 109 per annum

The High Growth option was the most supported option and is the preferred approach to the scale of economic development. Comments received included that the high growth option provided a proactive and positive response to potential future economic investment opportunities and also recent investments.

Distribution of Economic Growth

The options for the Distribution of Economic Growth included

- o The consolidation of existing employment locations
- o Development focused on the motorway junctions
- o A Combined Approach

The Combined Approach was the most supported option and is the preferred approach to the distribution of economic development. This would continue with the current Core Strategy approach which seeks to

- o Encourage major employment development in the Colburn area
- o Consolidate and improve existing key employment locations at Colburn Business Park, Walkerville Industrial Estate (Colburn), Gallowfields (Richmond), Harmby Road (Leyburn), Gatherley Road (Brompton on Swale) and the stables in Middleham
- o Enable appropriate economic development opportunities at the upgraded A1(M) junctions
- o Enable appropriate town centre development
- o Enable small scale development elsewhere to meet local employment needs.



Alternatives Considered

Scale of Economic Growth

Low Growth - net additional jobs of -20 per annum

An alternative option would be to adopt the low growth option for the scale and distribution of economic development. However this is not considered an appropriate option with the Employment Land Review (2019 Update) facilitating and supporting a higher growth scenario. Furthermore, adopting this negative low growth scenario would not align with national policy which seeks to positively and proactively encourage sustainable economic growth. For these reasons, this option has been discounted.

Medium Growth - net additional jobs of 57 per annum

Another alternative option to the scale of economic growth would be to adopt the medium growth option, which unlike the low growth option, projects a positive net additional growth in jobs per annum but is however lower than the preferred higher growth option. It is considered that, given the potential positive impacts that will be generated in the future by the economic drivers, a higher growth option can be adopted than that set out within the medium growth scenario. For these reasons, this option has been discounted.

Distribution of Economic Growth

Consolidation of existing employment locations

An alternative option would be to only consolidate and focus economic development growth towards existing employment locations. This would consolidate and improve these areas but then limit opportunities for any further development in other locations. A benefit with this approach would be that existing key employment locations in close proximity to the largest concentration of people will be given priority for consolidation and expansion.

However this approach would mean economic growth and access to new economic sectors created as a result of, for example, the A1(M) upgrade would be missed. Furthermore, focusing economic development only on existing employment locations would limit the flexibility to consider and potentially accommodate economic development proposals which may have specific locational requirements elsewhere, which would be contrary to national policy (NPPF, paragraph 82).

The preferred approach to the distribution of economic development is similar to this option in terms of consolidating existing employment locations, however also enables some growth at motorway junctions and in rural locations. It is considered that having this flexibility ensures that economic development and associated opportunities can be spread across the Plan Area. For these reasons, this option has been discounted.

Focus on motorway junctions

An alternative option would be to only focus economic development at motorway junctions. Specifically, this option would focus development at the upgraded A1(M) junctions at Scotch Corner, Catterick Central and Barton and with easy access to the upgraded A1(M) and Local Access Road. This option would limit any further development and consolidation of key existing employment locations.

A potential strength of this approach would be that economic growth and access to new economic sectors created as a result of the A1(M) upgrade may be realised. However, a potential weakness of this option is that they are not located within existing settlements in the hierarchy and are therefore less sustainably located than existing key employment locations.



The preferred approach to the distribution of economic development is similar to this option in terms of allowing some development at motorway junctions, however it also ensures the consolidation of existing employment locations and allows for some development in rural locations. It is considered that having this flexibility allows for economic development and associated opportunities to be spread across the Plan Area. For these reasons, this option has been discounted.

Motorway and existing employment locations

Another alternative option could be to focus development at motorway junctions and existing employment locations only. This option would focus development on the motorway junctions but also enable small scale consolidation and expansion of existing key employment locations. A potential strength of this option would be that economic growth and access to new economic sectors created as a result of the A1(M) upgrade may be realised. It would also ensure that existing key employment locations which are located in existing settlements, and in close proximity to the resident population, can consolidate and expand. However, a potential weakness of this option is that small scale development will not be encouraged outside the main employment areas and motorway junctions which may impact on the ability to maintain and encourage the sustainability of rural areas.

The preferred combined approach allows for the consolidation of existing employment locations as well as some development at motorway junctions similarly to this option. However the preferred approach also allows for some development in rural locations which is a requirement of national policy. For these reasons, this option has been discounted.

Focus on Catterick Garrison

An alternative option considered was to focus economic growth in Catterick Garrison only. This option is not considered appropriate and would be to the detriment of other existing employment locations outside of Catterick Garrison as well as limit opportunities at motorway junctions and other suitable rural locations. Furthermore this option would not conform with national planning policy and so has been discounted.

Focus on rural locations

Another alternative would be to focus economic growth only in rural locations. This option is not considered appropriate or sustainable and would be to the detriment of existing employment locations in less rural locations as well as limit opportunities elsewhere including at motorway junctions. This option is also not consistent with national planning policy and so has been discounted.



QUESTIONS

Do you agree with the preferred Scale of Economic Growth?

High Growth Scenario (109 jobs per annum) as per the recommendations in the Employment Land Review

Do you agree with the preferred Distribution of Economic Growth?

Combination of

- A1(M)/ Scotch Corner development
- Catterick Garrison expansion
- Consolidate existing sites

Are there any other considerations or options which should be taken into account?



Policy E2 - Supporting a Sustainable Economy

This policy outlines the aims for which economic development proposals should seek to enhance and contribute to supporting a sustainable economy.

The preferred policy reads

Policy E2 - Supporting a Sustainable Economy

1. To support a sustainable economy, employment proposals will be supported that
 - a. improve and diversify the economy of Richmondshire
 - b. capitalise on and/or enhance the skills of the resident population, particularly by increasing the number of Skill Level 3 or above roles (Standard Occupational Classification, 2020)
 - c. support small and medium sized enterprises including those in the digital, creative and cultural sectors
 - d. adopt good green, renewable and low carbon practices (or that are businesses in this sector)
 - e. provide education or training facilities to develop the skills base and provide services to encourage existing and new businesses to grow
 - f. strengthen and enhance the role and performance of Richmond, Catterick Garrison and Leyburn town centres with compatible uses
 - g. develop institutional and commercial links with Tees Valley and North East
 - h. create mixed use sites, with high quality layouts, landscaping and design
 - i. provide the necessary infrastructure (including broadband (Policy SD5)) to support the economic development.

Justification

Preferred policy E2 provides support and promotes development to ensure that the Richmondshire economy is able to develop sustainably. Whereas Policy E1 addresses the strategic growth and distribution of economic development, Policy E2 ensures that the development is sustainable and meets the economic needs of Richmondshire.

Economic Growth is one of the key aspirations of the Local Plan as well as a corporate priority identified within Richmondshire District Council's Council Plan.

The draft Economic Action Plan actively promotes Richmondshire as a great business location, building on connectivity, accessibility and a skilled workforce as well as encourages and supports new developments within Richmondshire. The preferred policy aligns with the Corporate and Economic aspirations of the Council and seeks to support and promote economic growth in a sustainable way.



Policy E2 supports the improvement and diversification of the local economy as well as strengthening the role and performance of Richmond, Catterick Garrison and Leyburn town centres with compatible uses. Furthermore, the economy continues to change and adapt with increased click and collect services, online retail/services and green standards. This preferred policy aims to support positive development now but also ensures that it remains sustainable across the plan period to 2039.

What you have told us?

National Planning Policy Framework

Achieving sustainable development is at the heart of the NPPF, with one of the three overarching objectives of the planning system being to 'help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity, and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure' (Paragraph 8a).

Paragraph 80 states that 'Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development. The approach taken should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future...'.

Paragraph 81 further sets out that 'planning policies should

- a) 'set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration
- b) set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period
- c) seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing, or a poor environment, and
- d) be flexible enough to accommodate needs not anticipated in the plan, allow for new and flexible working practices (such as live-work accommodation), and to enable a rapid response to changes in economic circumstances'.

Furthermore, paragraph 82 of the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions 'should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors. This includes making provision for clusters or networks of knowledge and data-driven, creative or high technology industries, and for storage and distribution operations at a variety of scales and in suitably accessible locations'.

Issues and Options Consultation

No comments were received which specifically relate to this preferred policy.

However, support was expressed for promoting wider employment opportunities, with respondents suggesting this coupled with new housing would help sustain the growth of communities and support local services and amenities.



Alternatives Considered

No policy for Supporting a Sustainable Economy

An alternative option would be to have no Local Plan policy on Supporting a Sustainable Economy and rely on national policy. This is not considered an appropriate option and that the proposed policy aligns with the corporate and economic aspirations of the Council as well as ensures that the development is sustainable and meets the economic needs of Richmondshire.

The preferred policy intends to work alongside national policy by setting out a positive and locally tailored approach to economic growth. For these reasons, this option of no policy has been discounted.



QUESTIONS

Do you agree to preferred policy E2 - Sustainable Economy?

If not, do you agree with the general approach to policy E2 but have any suggested changes?

Are there any other considerations or options which should be taken into account?



Policy E3 - Allocations for Economic Development

This policy sets out the proposed Allocations for economic development.

The preferred policy reads

Policy E3 - Allocations for Economic Development

1. In order to meet economic/employment requirements, 8 sites have been allocated for economic development

Site ID	Site Name	Type of Allocation	Site size (ha)
370	Shute Road	Mixed Use	5.19
339	Chartermark Way	Economic	4.79
388	Land North of Colburn Business Park	Economic	0.72
387	Land to Centre Colburn Business Park	Economic	1.07
366	Munster Barracks	Military	5.72
381	Ext Somme Barracks	Military	14.9
406	Extension to Marne Barracks	Military	25.8
377	Perone Lines	Healthcare	2.7

2. In Catterick Garrison, economic development will be delivered through the Allocated sites as set out above.
3. Where allocations in Catterick Garrison no longer come forward, employment development will be permitted subject to the following sequential test
 - a. Other non-allocated employment opportunities in Catterick Garrison (excluding areas designated for Town Centre uses in Policy E7)
 - b. Within Catterick Garrison development limits
 - c. Adjacent to Catterick Garrison developments limits
 - d. Employment areas elsewhere in the Plan Area as identified in Policy E1.

Justification

Preferred policy E1 sets out the proposed amount and location of economic development required within the Local Plan Area of Richmondshire outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park up to 2039. The Plan considers the need for economic development and jobs along with the infrastructure required to support sustainable growth.

Preferred policy E1 sets out that up to 11.6 hectares of land is required for employment development over the plan period across the Plan Area and refers to Colburn and Catterick Garrison Town Centre as suitable locations for economic development to be located to contribute towards this.

The Local Plan will identify sites in line with the spatial strategy for the Plan Area, providing greater certainty to developers, local people and infrastructure providers about where development will take place and the likely amount in a specific location.



To achieve this, preferred policy E3 identifies a number of sites for allocation within Catterick Garrison which is proposed to be the main focus for growth for residential, military and economic uses in the Richmondshire Plan Area.

The Site Allocations Assessment - Catterick Garrison (March 2021) report summarises how sites have been identified and considered for allocation, the Council's approach to site selection and how these sites have been subsequently assessed through a six-stage process. This policy sets out the sites that are suggested to be suitable for allocation.

A likely development capacity has been established for each of the sites as per the methodology established in the report. It is again reiterated that this figure is not a maximum requirement and is the likely capacity based on the information available through the allocations assessment process and it is acknowledged the actual amount delivered may be slightly less or more where more detailed assessments are undertaken as part of the planning application process.

It also seeks to support additional military related development at Catterick Garrison and Marne Barracks, Catterick Village as required by the MoD. The MoD has set out that up to three extra behind the wire sites will be required to support its planned expansion of the Garrison to provide further technical accommodation which includes buildings and facilities for storing/maintaining equipment and training purposes as well as to provide Single Living Accommodation for personnel living behind the wire and not in Service Families Accommodation.

What you have told us?

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF states (paragraph 23) that 'Broad locations for development should be indicated on a key diagram, and land use designations and allocations identified on a policies map. Strategic policies should provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward, and at a sufficient rate, to address objectively assessed needs over the plan period, in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This should include planning for and allocating sufficient sites to deliver the strategic priorities of the area (except insofar as these needs can be demonstrated to be met more appropriately through other mechanisms, such as brownfield registers or non-strategic policies)'.

Issues and Options Consultation

Some comments were received in relation to economic allocations, suggesting that the preferred combined approach to the distribution of economic development (consolidating existing employment areas and enabling some growth at motorways and rural locations), which includes allocations, would be necessary to maximise choice and as a result benefit the entire economy of the district.



Alternatives Considered

No Allocations

An alternative option to the preferred policy would be to have no economic allocations and therefore no specific policy. This is not considered an appropriate option because as per the NPPF, there is a requirement to set out allocations to bring forward enough land to meet the economic/employment need. Therefore, the inclusion of the policy is essential in meeting national policy requirements. For these reasons, this option has been discounted.

Alternative allocations to those proposed

Another alternative option could be to remove and/or include alternative sites to those identified within the preferred policy for allocation. An assessment of economic sites for allocation was undertaken and this assessment forms part of the evidence base of this plan review (Allocations Assessment 2021). The assessment follows a step by step methodology and ensures that the sites found suitable to allocated are the most appropriate, in a sustainable location, in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan, deliverable and developable. At each stage of the methodology sites which are not found to meet these criteria are discounted.

The preferred policy sets out the economic allocations found to meet these requirements and therefore is found to be robust in supporting the delivery of economic development and should be included within the new Local Plan. For these reasons, this option has been discounted.



QUESTIONS

Do you agree to preferred policy E3 - Allocations for Economic Development?

If not, do you agree with the general approach to policy E3 but have any suggested changes?

Do you agree with the allocations identified in policy E3?

Please provide any further comments.



Policy E4 - Protection of Allocated and Existing Employment Sites

This policy sets out the preferred approach to the protection of allocation and existing employment sites.

The preferred policy reads

Policy E4 - Protection of Allocated and Existing Employment Sites

1. The complete loss of existing employment sites will be resisted unless a suitable alternative location can be provided within the Plan Area.
2. Sites allocated for employment development (Policy E3) will only be supported for economic uses.
3. The use of existing or allocated employment land for alternative uses will only be permitted if
 - a. the site can be shown to be no longer deliverable for employment use and has been actively marketed for employment use for at least 12 consecutive months
 - b. the requirement for employment related land for the Plan period (as set out in Policy E1) is not compromised
 - c. there are no suitable alternative locations for the proposed development
 - d. priority is given to alternative uses such as leisure, community and housing in that order. The following sequential test for alternative uses should be applied, with sufficient evidence provided to show that the prioritised alternative use is not suitable/viable
 - i. a mixed scheme for community, leisure or recreational purposes which provide a complimentary benefit to the area.
 - ii. a mixed scheme for community, leisure or recreational purposes which may include some housing.
 - iii. a housing scheme will only be supported where it is clearly demonstrated that no other uses are viable. Any proposed housing scheme must conform to and be consistent with other policies and strategies of this plan.



Justification

The protection of allocated and existing employment sites is important, with any loss of these sites having a significant impact on the supply of employment opportunities. Any loss of allocated and existing employment sites also could undermine other policies and objectives within the Local Plan as well as any economic strategies prepared locally or on a district wide level. Furthermore, the protection of allocated sites is necessary to facilitate the high economic growth scenario as set out in preferred policy E1. The preferred High scenario for economic development (Policy E1) indicates a gross employment land (B1 - Business Space, B2 - General Industrial and B8 - Storage and Distribution Uses) requirement over the Plan period of 11.6ha outside the Yorkshire Dales National Park (YDNP). The Allocated Sites set out in Policy E3 contribute towards the requirement for employment related land for the Plan period and development on these allocated sites will only be supported for economic uses. Therefore such proposals for their loss will be resisted.

This preferred policy seeks to protect existing employment sites and support economic development on sites allocated for economic development. The approach to site protection set out in this policy applies equally to sites last in employment use but currently unused, as well as those that are allocated for employment use but not yet developed.

Policy E4 sets out the requirements and sequential test to be used when considering proposals for an alternative use on existing and/or allocated employment sites.

It is recognised that, although there is a general resistance to change of use, there may be some cases where it might be appropriate to allow re-development when this would create alternative employment opportunities. In considering such proposals the following will be considered

- The impact the change of use would have on the quality and quantity of the Employment Land Supply.
- The ability of the site to accommodate the proposed use, coupled with whether the proposed use could be provided on an alternative site.
- The overall viability and marketing of the site.

With regards to the viability and marketing of the site, proposals will be required to provide evidence that the existing employment use of the site is no longer viable through relevant marketing information, and feasibility or viability studies. The information will need to show that the property/site has been actively marketed for a period of at least 12 months at a value that reflects its existing use. Where there is evidence that a business has been allowed to run-down, an independent viability assessment may be required. Where there is discrepancy with regards to the value of the site, an independent surveyor may be required.

Only once these have been considered will an alternative use for the site be looked at, with the sequential test as set out in policy E4 paragraph 3d applied, with sufficient evidence provided to show that the prioritised alternative use is not suitable/viable.

What you have told us?

No comments were received in specific relation to the Protection of Allocated and Existing Employment sites.

As set out in previous economic policies, 'The Combined Approach' to the distribution of economic development was the most supported which involved the consolidation of existing employment locations as well as allowing for some development at motorway junctions and in more rural locations.



National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF states (paragraph 23) that 'Broad locations for development should be indicated on a key diagram, and land use designations and allocations identified on a policies map. Strategic policies should provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward, and at a sufficient rate, to address objectively assessed needs over the plan period, in line with the presumption in favour of sustainable development. This should include planning for and allocating sufficient sites to deliver the strategic priorities of the area (except insofar as these needs can be demonstrated to be met more appropriately through other mechanisms, such as brownfield registers or nonstrategic policies)'.

Paragraph 81 of the NPPF further states that planning policies should 'set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration' and 'set criteria, or identify strategic sites, for local and inward investment to match the strategy and to meet anticipated needs over the plan period'.

Alternatives Considered

No policy on the Protection of Allocated and Existing Employment Sites

An alternative option would be to have no policy on the protection of allocated and existing employment sites and rely only on the broad principles as set out in national policy. This is not considered an appropriate option as the preferred policy enables for a locally tailored approach to be set when considering applications for alternative uses on allocated and existing employment sites. The preferred policy clearly sets out the requirements and sequential test to be used ensuring any proposals for an alternative use are adequately assessed. For these reasons, this option for not having a specific policy has been discounted.

A policy setting out a very restrictive approach to the re-use of employment sites

Another alternative would be to adopt a very restrictive policy approach to the re-use of employment sites. This is not considered an appropriate option as it is acknowledged that there may be some cases where it might be appropriate to allow the re-development of employment sites when this would create alternative employment opportunities. Having this degree of flexibility allows for the consideration of such proposals and does not simply disregard proposals which may be acceptable. Furthermore, setting a very restrictive approach would not comply with national planning policy. For these reasons, this option has been discounted.



QUESTIONS

Do you agree to preferred policy E4 - Protecting Allocated and Existing Employment Sites?

If not, do you agree with the general approach to policy E4 but have any suggested changes?

Please provide any further comments.



Policy E5 - Economic Development in the Countryside

This policy sets out the approach to be taken in supporting economic development in the countryside.

The preferred policy reads

Policy E5 - Economic Development in the Countryside

1. Support will be given to proposals for the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses in rural areas which
 - a. Respect the character, appearance and amenity of the countryside and wider landscape setting.
 - b. Support the social and economic regeneration of rural areas and re-use previously developed land.
 - c. Are physically well-related to existing settlements, where suitable opportunities exist.
 - d. Do not propose to generate additional traffic movements that would have an unacceptable impact on the local road network and take the opportunity to make their location more sustainable by improving access by cycling, on foot or by public transport.
 - e. Are of a scale proportionate to the size and role of the settlement and/or location.
 - f. Reduce the need to travel by encouraging opportunities for remote/home working.
 - g. Facilitate the expansion of rural businesses and enable the development and diversification of agricultural and land-based businesses.
 - h. Are sensitive to their surroundings and compatible with neighbouring land uses.
 - i. Support the retention and development of local facilities, services and infrastructure such as shops, meeting places, pubs, open spaces, sports venues, broadband and mobile network coverage.

Re-use and Conversion of existing buildings

2. Where additional floorspace is required proposals should seek to re-use and re-purpose existing buildings first. The re-use and re-purposing of existing buildings will be supported where
 - a. traditional rural buildings are converted without substantial alteration, extension or reconstruction. Any extensions to a traditional rural building must be of a scale and design which are subservient and complementary to the existing building and not detrimentally affect the character and appearance of the traditional rural building.
 - b. The building being proposed for re-use and/or conversion is structurally sound and capable of accommodating the proposed use.



- c. Proposed alterations are of a high design quality, contributing positively to the character and appearance of the building and are in keeping with its surroundings, local building styles and materials, ensuring there is no adverse effect on the historic environment, the character of the local landscape or its immediate and wider setting.
- d. Any extensions to non-traditional rural buildings are of a scale and design which are complementary to that of the existing building and would not be overbearing and have a significant physical and/or visual landscape impact.

New and Replacement Buildings

- 3. Where existing buildings are unavailable or unsuitable for the specific proposed use and new and/or replacement buildings are required, proposals will be supported where
 - a. The building is sustainably and well designed and of a scale, form and general design which is in keeping with its surroundings, local building styles and materials, ensuring there is no adverse effect on the historic environment, the character of the local landscape or its immediate and wider setting.
 - b. The replacement building is of a similar scale and appropriate design which would achieve a more sustainable development than by conversion and would contribute positively to the character and appearance of the area.
- 4. All proposals should refer to Policy D1 in terms of specific design requirements.

Justification

The purpose of this preferred policy is to draw on the framework set out in policies E1 and E2 regarding economic development and Spatial Principle SP3 regarding rural sustainability to set out in more detail how these should be applied in relation to economic development in the countryside. The aim of this policy is to provide a clear and positive framework for sustainable economic growth.

Meeting the expansion requirements and needs of local businesses is of key importance in terms of supporting economic growth in Richmondshire. The district is rural in nature and this, coupled with its high quality varied characterful landscape, helps to create a place which is greatly valued by both residents and visitors. Agricultural and forestry activities have particularly influenced the character and appearance of the countryside and continue to do so. Despite growth in other sectors Agriculture and Forestry remain a significant part of the local economy Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (12.5%) being the second largest economic sector in terms of employment in Richmondshire (ONS Business Register and Employment Survey, 2018).

Changes in agricultural practices have resulted in the increasing need to diversify business models in order to ensure businesses as well as large parts of the district can continue to thrive, and this has resulted in significant growth in the Accommodation and Food economic sector in Richmondshire. The expansion and diversification of all types of businesses helps to support and contribute towards a more sustainable economy, potentially reducing the need for increased car travel to larger centres or out of the district when located within or on the edge of existing rural villages and hamlets or on existing main transport routes. On the other hand, diversification can bring some development pressures which, if not managed in a careful manner, can cause harmful impacts on the character and appearance of the countryside. Economic development should therefore, preferably, make use of previously developed land and be well located to an existing rural settlement (within or adjacent to) where opportunities exist.



However the expansion of existing businesses in the countryside outside settlements may be appropriate if there are no available sites suitable for expansion as a result of operational and locational requirements and it has been clearly demonstrated that there is a need for such development in the proposed location. Where this is the case it is important to ensure that the development is sensitive to its surroundings, the form and character of a settlement, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads, exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable and does not cause unacceptable impacts on biodiversity.

Economic development proposals in the countryside should seek to prioritise the re-use and re-purposing of existing buildings where available and practical to do so. Traditional rural buildings built of stone and brick with pantile or slate roofs contribute significantly to the character and appearance of the countryside and the conversion and re-use of these can ensure they can continue to do this for future years to come. It is however important that the existing character and appearance of these is retained so conversion must take place without substantial alteration, extension or reconstruction and any extensions to a traditional rural building must be of a scale and design which are subservient and complementary to the existing building.

Non-traditional buildings constructed of modern materials serve a purpose but can affect the character and appearance of the countryside where they are of a scale, and built of materials which are not in keeping with their surroundings. The re-use and re-purposing of these buildings can and should seek to enhance their design and appearance and improve the character of the wider landscape setting.

Permitted development rights may be withdrawn in some cases to ensure that any future alteration or extension does not have a detrimental effect on the character and appearance of the converted or new building or the wider area.

What you have told us?

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF places emphasis on supporting a prosperous rural economy and that planning policies and decisions should enable

- a) 'The sustainable growth and expansion of all types of business in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well-designed new buildings
- b) The development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses
- c) Sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside
- d) The retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship' (Paragraph 83).

Furthermore, the NPPF states that planning policies and decisions should 'recognise that sites to meet local business and community needs in rural areas may have to be found adjacent to or beyond existing settlements, and in locations that are not well served by public transport. In these circumstances it will be important to ensure that development is sensitive to its surroundings, does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads and exploits any opportunities to make a location more sustainable (for example by improving the scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport)' (paragraph 84). Emphasis is placed however on encouraging the use of previously developed land and sites that are physically well-related to existing settlements where suitable opportunities exist.



Issues and Options Consultation

Some comments were received which placed emphasis on the importance of sustaining a rural economy, ensuring that increased employment opportunities in rural areas needed to match with increased housing opportunities to create vibrant rural communities and sustainable places to live.

Alternatives Considered

No policy on Economic Development in the Countryside

An alternative option would be to have no policy on economic development in the countryside and rely only on the broad principles as set out in national policy. This option is not considered appropriate as this option does not allow for a locally tailored approach to be set taking into account local circumstances and considerations. Therefore this option for no policy has been discounted.

A policy setting out restrictive approach to economic development in the countryside

An alternative option would be to adopt a policy which sets out a restrictive approach to economic development in the countryside. This option is not considered appropriate given the fact that Richmondshire itself is predominantly rural and has an established Agriculture and Forestry industry which forms a significant part of the local economy. Furthermore, being overly restrictive to economic development in the countryside would not comply with national policy which seeks for planning policies to support a prosperous rural economy. For these reasons, this option has been discounted.

A policy setting out positive approach to economic development in the countryside without consideration of location and setting

Another alternative option would be to adopt a policy which sets out a positive approach to economic development in the countryside which does not consider the location and setting of proposals. This option is not considered appropriate because without consideration given to the location and setting of proposals there may potentially be harmful negative impacts caused on the character and appearance of the countryside. Adopting an overly positive approach does not allow for a locally tailored approach to be set which both promotes sustainable economic development in the countryside as well as protects and respects the special qualities of the countryside. For these reasons, this option has been discounted.



QUESTIONS

Do you agree to preferred policy E5 - Economic Development in the Countryside?

If not, do you agree with the general approach to policy E5 but have any suggested changes?

Please provide any further comments.



Policy E6 - Sustainable Tourism

This policy sets out the approach to be taken to new and existing tourism related proposals.

The preferred policy reads

Policy E6 - Sustainable Tourism

1. Tourist related activities will be encouraged where
 - a. They make a sustainable contribution to the local economy.
 - b. They would not cause unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenities of neighbouring occupiers or land-uses.
 - c. They would not generate levels of traffic that would have an adverse impact upon the operation of the highway network, highway safety or air quality.
 - d. They do not have a detrimental impact on and, where possible, enhance the local built, natural and historic environment and landscape.
2. Particular priority will be given to supporting improvements to the range and quality of facilities and to redevelopment and conversion schemes rather than new building.
3. Medium to large scale hotel accommodation within the larger settlements of the settlement hierarchy such as Richmond, Catterick Garrison and Leyburn will be supported where a need is identified and such a proposal does not adversely affect the character and appearance of the settlement. The provision of hotel accommodation at motorway service junctions will only be supported where it is clearly required and justified to support the needs of the strategic road network users.
4. In rural areas, new tourist attractions and accommodation, including the location of caravans (static and touring), chalet accommodation and camp sites, should be of an appropriate scale, low key and low impact, and will only be supported in the countryside if it does not adversely affect the character and appearance of the area, taking account of the capacity of the site and local area to absorb the development.

Justification

Tourism makes a significant contribution to the local economy in both terms of expenditure and creating jobs in the district. The Retail and Leisure Study (2019) found that Richmondshire attracts approximately 3.6 million visitors per annum and that the 'the tourism sector has an important role to play in Richmondshire's future prosperity and accordingly it is necessary to plan appropriately for this as part the forthcoming Local Plan'. This preferred policy therefore seeks to support and encourage tourism related activities where they make a sustainable contribution to the local economy with priority given to supporting improvements and/or the redevelopment of facilities.



The preferred policy seeks to support medium to large scale hotel accommodation within the larger settlements of the hierarchy where there is an identified need and where the proposal would not adversely impact on the character and appearance of the settlement. The policy also refers to hotel accommodation at motorway junctions, with this only being acceptable where there is a requirement for such facilities to support the needs of the strategic road network users. This is to ensure future development for hotel accommodation at motorway junctions does not hamper current and future provision within the more sustainable larger settlements.

The preferred policy also seeks to control the location, scale and type of tourism development within rural areas to encourage sustainable development that minimises its impact on the environment, local communities and the highway network. When considering tourism related proposals this preferred policy links closely with the preferred Sustainable Development policies, in particular SD2 (Amenity) and SD3 (Access), with regards to ensuring proposals do not cause unacceptable impacts on amenities of neighbouring occupiers or land-uses or the operation of the highway network.

What you have told us?

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF supports building a strong competitive economy and states that 'planning policies and decisions should specifically enable sustainable growth of all types of businesses in rural areas, development and diversification of agricultural/land based rural businesses, sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside, and the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities' (Paragraph 83).

Issues and Options Consultation

In summary, the following comments were received

- Emphasis should be placed on sustainable tourism
- Need to reduce dependency on tourism
- Emphasis on tourism all year round, not just in peak season
- Include reference to rural tourism
- Include reference to nature tourism.

Alternatives Considered

No Sustainable Tourism policy

An alternative option would be to not have a policy on sustainable tourism and rely only on the broad principles as set out in national policy. This is not considered an appropriate option as it does not allow for a locally tailored approach to be set when considering applications for tourism related purposes. The preferred policy clearly sets out the approach to be taken to new and existing tourism related proposals specifically in Richmondshire. For these reasons, this option has been discounted.



A policy setting out restrictive approach to tourism development especially in the countryside

An alternative option would be to adopt a policy which sets out a restrictive approach to tourism development, especially in the countryside. This is not considered an appropriate option as tourism makes a significant contribution to the local economy both in terms of expenditure and creating jobs in the district. Furthermore, being overly restrictive to sustainable tourism would not comply with national policy which seeks for planning policies to support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments which respect the character of the countryside (Paragraph 83c). For these reasons, this option has been discounted.

A policy setting out positive approach to tourism development especially in the countryside without consideration of location and setting

Another alternative option would be to adopt a policy which sets out a positive approach to tourism development especially in the countryside without consideration of location and setting. This option is not considered appropriate because without consideration given to the location and setting of proposals there may potentially be harmful negative impacts caused on the character and appearance of the countryside, local communities, amenities of neighbouring occupiers and the highway network. Adopting an overly positive approach does not allow for a locally tailored approach to be set which both promotes sustainable tourism as well as protects and respects the other considerations as listed above. For these reasons, this option has been discounted.



QUESTIONS

Do you agree to preferred policy E6 - Sustainable Tourism?

If not, do you agree with the general approach to policy E6 but have any suggested changes?

Please provide any further comments.



Policy E7 - Town and Local Centres

The purpose of this policy is to set out the Council's preferred strategy for the growth, management and adaptation of Town and Local Centres. It also sets out the Council's preferred approach to the amount and location of developments of town centre uses and the proposed strategy to protect and enhance the centres.

The preferred policy reads

Policy E7 - Town and Local Centres

1. Location of Town Centre Development

- a. Development proposals for main town centre uses will be focused within the defined town, district and local centres, and be of a scale that is appropriate to the centre in which they are located.
- b. Development Proposals for main town centre uses across the Plan Area should apply the sequential test set out in national planning policy by
 - i. firstly seeking to re-occupy vacant units and land within defined Primary Shopping Areas of the identified centres, then
 - ii. be located within the 'Priority Development Zone' (Shute Road Area) at Catterick Garrison Town Centre, then
 - iii. be located in the next most sequentially preferable location after this - Ypres Lines site to the north of Catterick Garrison town centre.

2. Retail Network and Hierarchy

Principal Town Centres - Serving the District

Richmond has an important retail, commercial and tourism role serving the District with opportunities for growth whilst limited by environmental and heritage constraints. Support will be given to development that

- a. maintains and enhances the existing role of the centre
- b. broadens the range of the restaurant and retail offer including improvements to existing convenience goods provision
- c. improves sustainable transport connections and car parking
- d. delivers environmental and public realm improvements
- e. makes the town centre more accessible, attractive and safe
- f. supports the evening economy, and leisure role of the town centre
- g. seeks to extend the 'dwell time' and spend of both residents and visitors
- h. enhances the independent offer and encourages town centre festivals and events
- i. re-uses and regenerates existing vacant floorspace in the town centre including upper floors
- j. improves and encourages the digitisation of the town centre, for example click and collect facilities and OMNI channelling



Catterick Garrison has an important role in meeting the district's retail and leisure needs. The area offers significant opportunities for redevelopment and expansion in the provision of town centre uses. Support will be given to development that

- k. redevelops and regenerates the Priority Development zone in the Shute Road area which creates a heart to the Town Centre
- l. in the most sequentially preferable locations identified in Part 1b, enhances the district's hotel, restaurant, leisure and retail (particularly clothing and footwear comparison offer) and enables the accommodation of large format retailers
- m. improves transport infrastructure, sustainable transport links, pedestrian routes and the connectivity between the three distinctive areas of Shute Road, Princes Gate and Richmondshire Walk
- n. delivers environmental and public realm improvements
- o. seeks to extend the 'dwell time' and spend of both residents and visitors
- p. enhances the independent offer and encourages markets, town centre festivals and events
- q. re-uses and regenerates existing vacant floorspace and sites in the town centre
- r. improves and encourages the digitisation of the town centre, for example click and collect facilities and OMNI channelling.

District Centre - Meeting day to day needs of surrounding rural areas

Leyburn has an important role in supporting a large rural catchment including part of the Yorkshire Dales National Park, providing a wide range of retail and commercial uses, and has a strong independent retail offer. Support will be given to development that

- s. maintains and enhances the existing range of services and retail offer
- t. improves sustainable transport connections and parking provision
- u. delivers environmental and public realm improvements
- v. seeks to extend the 'dwell time' and spend of both residents and visitors
- w. enhances the independent offer and encourages town centre festivals and events
- x. re-uses and regenerates existing vacant floorspace in the town centre including upper floors
- y. improve and encourage the digitisation of the town centre, for example click and collect facilities and OMNI channelling



Local Centres - meeting day to day needs of surrounding neighbourhoods

White Shops and The Broadway have an important role serving particularly the daily convenience retail and service needs of the localised catchments surrounding these centres. Support will be given to development that

- z. maintains and enhances the existing role of the centre
 - i. improves the condition and quality of existing buildings
 - ii. delivers environmental and public realm improvements
 - iii. re-uses and regenerates existing vacant floorspace in the town centre including upper floors.

3. Town, District and Local Centre Boundaries and Primary Shopping Areas

- a. The vitality and viability of the Town, District and Local centres of Richmond, Catterick Garrison, Leyburn, White Shops (Colburn) and The Broadway (Colburn) (defined in Figures 11, 12, 13, 14 and 15) will be maintained and enhanced by supporting proposals which help create, protect, retain or enhance retail and other main town centre uses within these centres where
 - i. development is of a scale appropriate to the role of these centres, provided that development respects the character of the environment, including any special architectural and historic interest and assists in maintaining and/or enhancing its existing function and filling qualitative gaps in provision
 - ii. an impact assessment has been undertaken for retail, leisure and office developments (over 500sqm in Richmond and Catterick Garrison, over 300sqm in Leyburn and over 200sqm at White Shops and The Broadway) which demonstrates that it will not adversely impact on the role, vitality and viability of the district's town centres or on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal.

4. Out of Town Centre Development

Proposals for main town centre uses not located within the boundary of a defined centre will only be supported where

- a. a sequential assessment has been undertaken (excluding small scale rural development including offices) and demonstrates that
 - i. there are no suitable and viable sites following application of the sequential approach set out in Part 1b and national planning policy which are available or expected to become available within a reasonable period
 - ii. flexibility has been applied regarding the format and scale
 - iii. the site is well connected to the town centre
 - iv. it would be accessible by a choice of means of transport, and the local transport system is capable of accommodating the potential traffic implications.



- b. an impact assessment has been undertaken for Retail, Leisure and Office developments where the proposal provides over 500 sqm gross floorspace or is located within 800 metres of the boundary of Leyburn Town Centre and is greater than 300 sqm gross, or the proposal is located within 800 metres of the boundary of White Shops or The Broadway local centres and is greater than 200 sqm and has demonstrated that
 - i. the proposal will not have an adverse impact on the vitality and viability of the district's defined centres including local consumer choice, trade and wider retail catchment
 - ii. the proposal will not have an adverse impact on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal.
- c. Small scale retail development of under 200 sqm serving residential neighbourhoods and villages will be supported where
 - i. it is only to serve the day to day needs of the immediate locality
 - ii. it is of a scale appropriate to the function of the settlement and where the development provides for the most sustainable option in villages or other locations that are remote from local services and would support the rural economy
- d. Proposals resulting in the loss of retail facilities outside of the defined centres will only be supported where
 - i. the use is no longer required and is redundant
 - ii. it is no longer, or cannot be made viable
 - iii. satisfactory alternative provision can be made that outweighs the loss.
- e. Proposals for farm, horticultural or similar shops will be supported where
 - i. The majority of goods sold have been grown or manufactured on site
 - ii. The development would support the local economy
 - iii. The business could not be reasonably expected to locate within an existing defined centre due to the nature of products sold.

Figure 11 - Catterick Garrison Town Centre Boundary

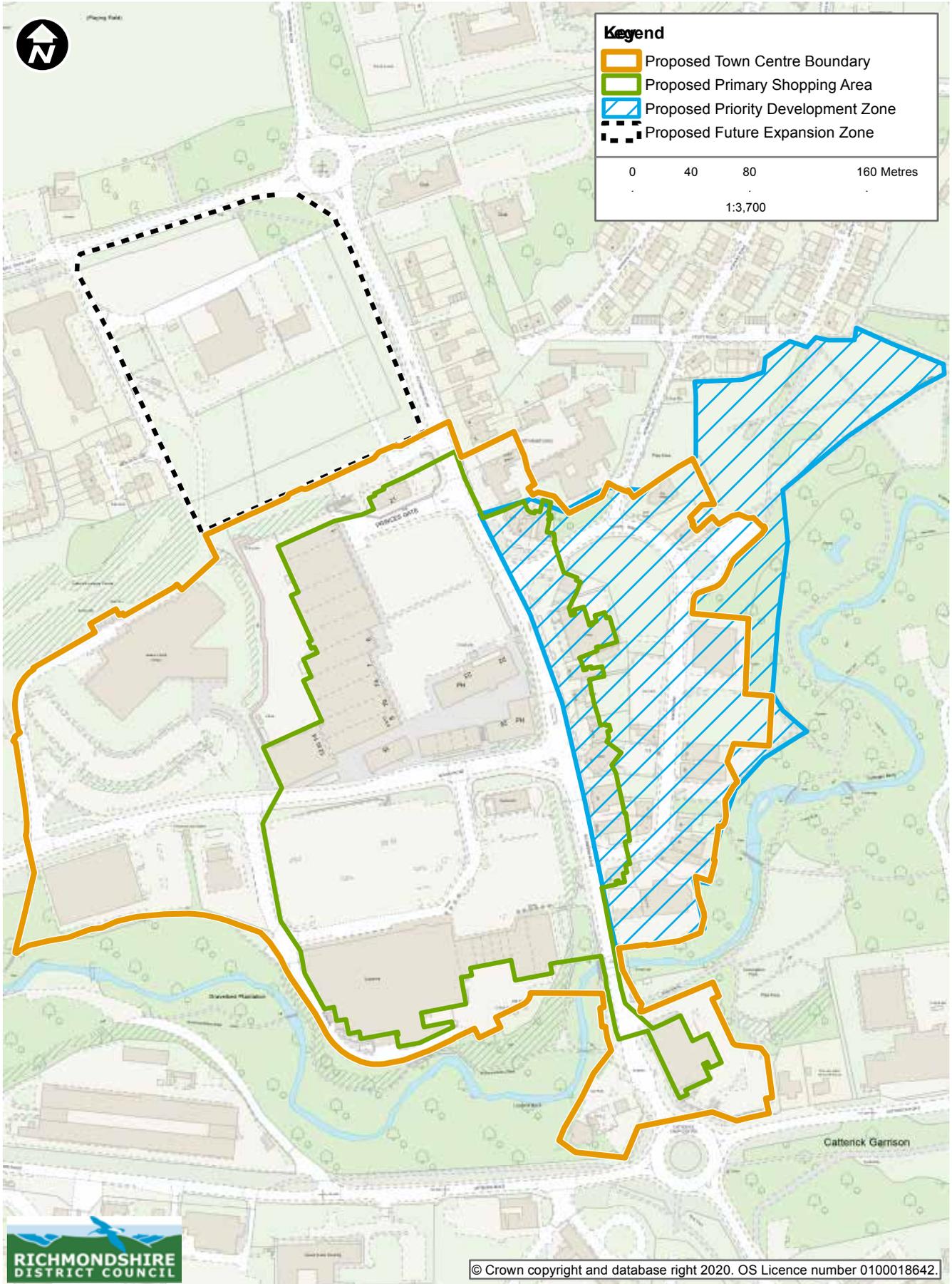


Figure 12 - Richmond Town Centre Boundary

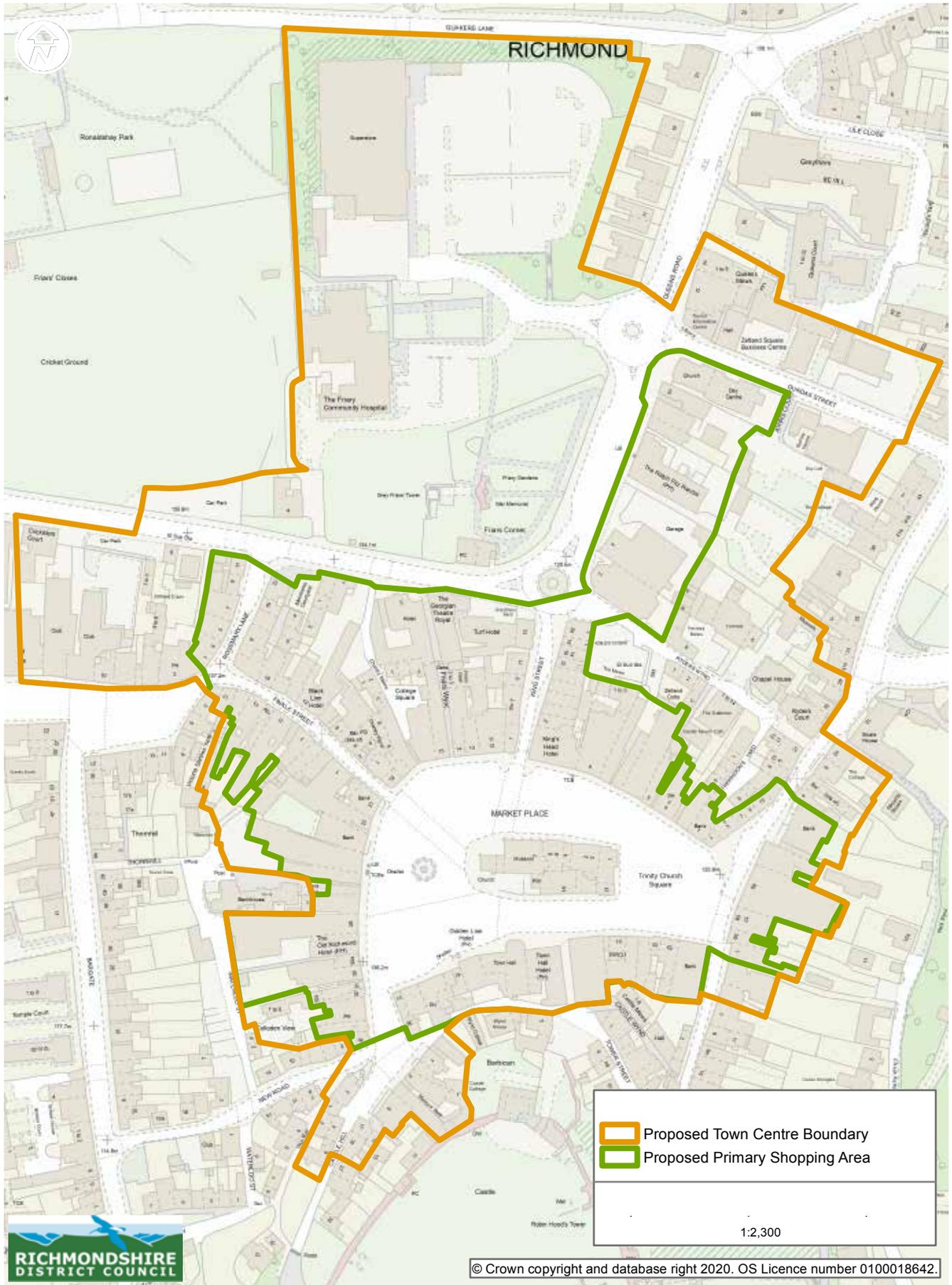


Figure 13 - Leyburn Town Centre Boundary



Figure 14 - White Shops Local Centre Boundary

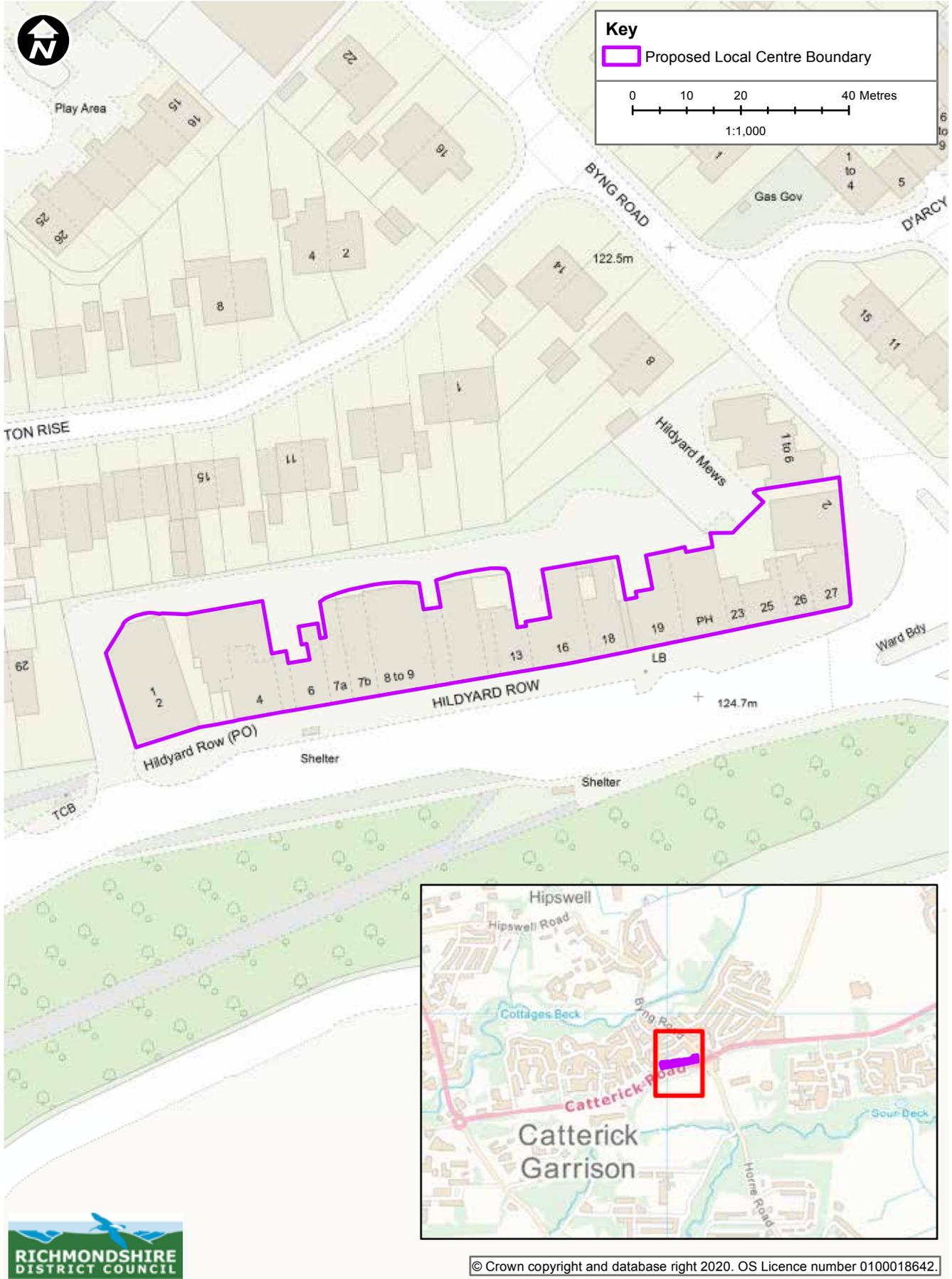
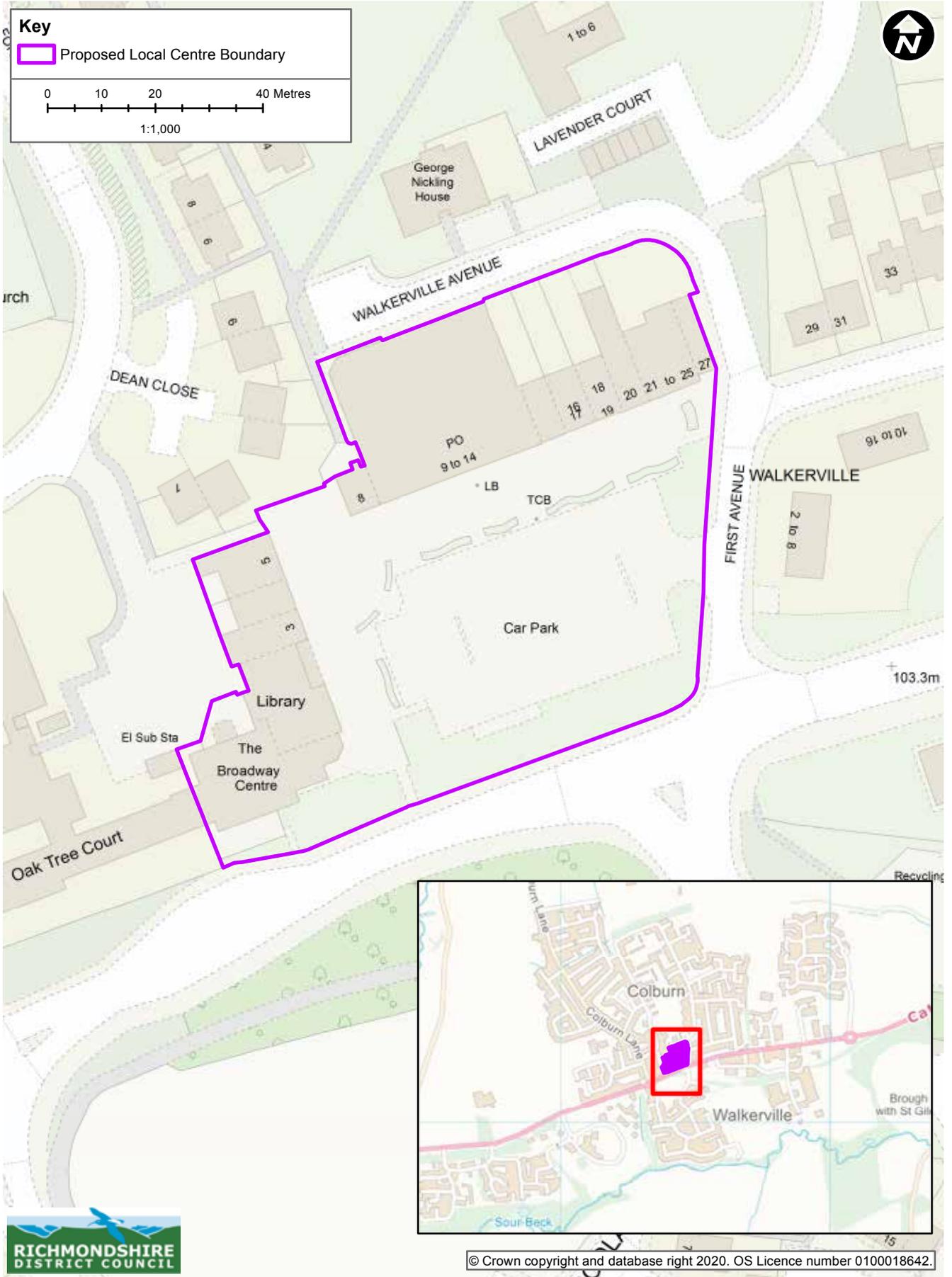


Figure 15 - Broadway Local Centre Boundary





Justification

Town, District and Local Centres are at the heart of communities in Richmondshire playing an essential social and economic role in day-to-day life. Spatial Principle SP2 identifies the proposed settlement hierarchy and establishes the role and function of the settlements within the hierarchy. The preferred policy E7 develops this and establishes the proposed retail network and hierarchy of town and local centres, their role and function and the approach to new development opportunities.

The future role and performance of town centres within the Plan Area continues to be critical to the economic fortune of the district given the service-based nature of the local economy highlighted in the Employment Land Review (Update 2019).

Further, it will be critical that the right balance of development is continued to be achieved in both Richmond and Catterick Garrison town centres to ensure that the roles of each centre are complementary and do not have a significant adverse impact on each other. It will also be critical to ensure that proposed Designer Outlet remains as proposed providing a distinct offer of discounted goods that is complimentary to the offer available in the district's defined centres and those within its wider catchment in neighbouring areas. The achievement of a complementary relationship between Richmond and Catterick Garrison town centres and sustainable transport links between all centres is an important strategic objective of the Preferred Local Plan.

The implementation of this complimentary approach has been successful in recent years with health checks undertaken through both the Council's Annual Monitoring Reports and Retail and Leisure Study (2019) illustrating that the recent development of the Princes Gate scheme at Catterick Garrison has not significantly affected the health of Richmond Town Centre, which remains a historic market town particularly popular with visitors. The Princes Gate development has begun to create an offer of the scale and type that one would expect within the town centre of a settlement of Catterick Garrison's size. It has also provided larger format comparison and convenience retailing along with a larger mid-market hotel and cinema, many of which are the first of their type to be provided in the district, and are used by residents of the whole district not just the military and civilian residents of Catterick Garrison. This means that expenditure leaking outside the district to locations where these facilities were previously only available has reduced.

Whilst Catterick Garrison Town Centre has grown in recent years, it remains in three distinct areas separated by roads with the two modern car dominant schemes Princes Gate, and Richmondshire Walk along with Shute Road, the original centre. A key aspiration and vision of the Local Plan and Catterick Garrison Masterplan as part of the continued civilian and military expansion of the Town is to further enhance and improve the Town Centre. Catterick Garrison Town Centre currently lacks clear pedestrian links, a 'heart' and an area where the community can congregate, interact and undertake activities such as a square or market area and community hub building. It is envisaged by the Council and MoD that this can be created through the redevelopment of the numerous vacant parcels of land and buildings within the priority development zone at Shute Road. A further future expansion zone is identified at Ypres Lines to the north of Princes Gate to accommodate further retail, leisure and hotel facilities should a need arise. It is essential that any further development retains the complimentary relationship with Richmond and Leyburn.

The retail hierarchy recognises the role Richmond town centre plays within the district. It has a retail, commercial and leisure role. There is a strong independent retail offer. However, a number of multiples are represented such as WH Smith, Boots, Lidl and the Co-operative and despite turbulent times in the wider retail sector nationally Richmond retains a low vacancy rate.



Historic and Environmental constraints means there is limited scope for expansion of Richmond Town Centre. However, there are still opportunities to enhance its role. In terms of retail development there is potential to develop the range and quality of retail offer including the development of specialist markets/destination shops and luxury goods, with some potential to attract further multiples, and the development of the evening economy, recognising its role for tourism. Enhanced convenience goods provision at existing sites has been linked to the ability to better retain expenditure and potential to increase linked trips to the town centre. Better quality provision is considered to reduce the impact of proposed development at Catterick Garrison. There is also potential to enhance the restaurant offer, which was identified as deficient in the Retail and Leisure Study (2019) which will help to enhance and support the evening economy. Improvements to sustainable transport connections and car parking and the delivery of environmental improvements including pedestrian routes and shop frontages schemes, and maintenance of its commercial function are also considered to assist in the protection and enhancement of the role of Richmond.

The digitisation of the town centre would also encourage additional visitors to it who may then stop longer in the centre to purchase other products and services. Click and Collect facilities will provide residents of Richmondshire access to operators or brands which may not be available in the local authority area in the form of a physical shop, rather than travelling further afield to access these products and services. Measures could also include encouraging businesses within the town centre, including independent retailers, to deliver OMNI channelling.

This preferred policy seeks to protect and enhance the role of each of the district's centres. Development proposals providing retail and town centre uses, including offices which support the commercial function of the town over 500m² in Richmond and Catterick Garrison, over 300m² in Leyburn and over 200m² at White Shops and The Broadway, will be expected to demonstrate therefore that they will not have an adverse impact on any centres within the catchment of the proposed development.

NPPF Annex 2 defines the range of Main Town Centre Uses. Town Centre boundaries encompassing these uses and including primary shopping areas are defined where relevant for Richmond, Catterick Garrison, Leyburn, White Shops and The Broadway in the previous maps. Health checks of these centres will continue to be incorporated in to the annual monitoring process to ensure that their vitality and viability can be closely monitored.

The sequential approach will be applied to the location of main town centre uses in accordance with national planning policy and as set out in Part 4a. Where retail and town centre uses are proposed outside of these defined centres (or the primary retail areas for retail uses) development where the proposal provides over 500 sqm gross floorspace or is located within 800 metres of the boundary of Leyburn Town Centre and is greater than 300 sqm gross, or the proposal is located within 800 metres of the boundary of White Shops or The Broadway local centres and is greater than 200 sqm over 500m² will only be supported in line with criteria in part 3b. The thresholds have been set taking into account the scale of current retail provision and size of unit typically found within the centres, and reflects the nature of shopping facilities in the district.

For the proposal to be supported impact assessments must provide clear evidence that the proposal will not lead to a significant adverse impact on existing or planned public and private investment in the centre or other centres in the catchment area of the proposal or on the vitality and viability of the centre, including local consumer choice and trade in the centre and wider area. The period to be considered will be up to five years from the time the application is made, or up to ten years for major schemes where the full impact will not be realised in five years.



The Council recognises the role that local services and amenities provide in supporting the overall economy and the function of the district's centres. Therefore, support will be given for proposals for small retail facilities up to 200m² that are of an appropriate scale to the function of the settlement, and where they provide the most sustainable option in villages that are remote from local services, serving the day to day needs of the immediate locality and would support the local economy. Additional facilities provided as part of new strategic developments such as Harley Hill will also be supported, providing the scale and nature of the new retail floorspace is directly related to the needs generated by the occupants of the associated residential development.

Existing retail facilities outside of the defined centres also play a significant role in satisfying the day to needs of their immediate locality and the local economy. Therefore proposals for the loss of existing retail facilities will be resisted and only supported where the criteria in part 4d (i-iii) have been satisfied.

Specialist forms of retailing will also be supported where the proposed use is intended to sell goods that are grown or manufactured on site. Proposals approved under the provisions of this element of the policy will be subject to a condition restricting the nature of goods sold.

What you have told us?

National Planning Policy Framework

The NPPF (2019) advises in paragraph 85 that planning policies should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation.

Paragraph 85 also states that planning policies should

- a) 'define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability - by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters
- b) define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, and make clear the range of uses permitted in such locations, as part of a positive strategy for the future of each centre
- c) retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones
- d) allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed, looking at least ten years ahead. Meeting anticipated 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 where necessary
- e) where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available for main town centre uses, allocate appropriate edge of centre sites that are well connected to the town centre. If sufficient edge of centre sites cannot be identified, policies should explain how identified needs can be met in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre
- f) recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites.'

Paragraph 86 states 'Local Planning Authorities should apply a sequential test to planning applications for main town centre uses so that they are located in town centres, then in edge of centre locations, and only if suitable sites are not available (or expected to become available within a reasonable period) should out of centre sites be considered.'



Paragraph 88 states that 'this sequential approach should not be applied to applications for small scale rural offices or other small scale rural development'.

Paragraph 89 sets out that 'When assessing applications for retail and leisure development outside town centres, which are not in accordance with an up-to-date plan, local planning authorities should require an impact assessment if the development is over a proportionate, locally set floorspace threshold (if there is no locally set threshold, the default threshold is 2,500m² of gross floorspace). This should include assessment of

- a) the impact of the proposal on existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal, and
- b) the impact of the proposal on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and the wider retail catchment (as applicable to the scale and nature of the scheme)'.

Finally paragraph 90 states that 'where an application fails to satisfy the sequential test or is likely to have significant adverse impact on one or more of the considerations in paragraph 89, it should be refused'.

Evidence Base

Retail Leisure and Town Centre Study (2019)

The Retail Leisure and Town Centre Study (2019) makes several recommendations which have been incorporated into the above preferred E7 policy. In summary, the study identifies and recommends the following

- The market could accommodate an additional 400-600 sqm (net) of convenience floorspace across the district over the plan period to 2039. Looking at the capacity within the three settlements, the study identifies a future requirement for additional floorspace across the plan period
 - o Catterick Garrison Town Centre - between 600 and 900 sqm (net)
 - o Richmond and Leyburn Town Centre - none.
- There is a need for between 2,500 and 3,600 sqm (net) comparison floorspace across the Plan period within the District. Across the three main settlements this translates as
 - o Richmond town centre - between 500 and 800 sqm (net)
 - o Catterick Garrison town centre - between 1,500 and 2,500 sqm (net)
 - o Leyburn town centre - 100 sqm (net)
- Looking ten years ahead (2029), in accordance with National Planning Policy the study has not identified a need for any further provision of convenience floorspace and only a small amount of comparison floorspace (700 sq.m - 1,200 sq.m) across the district. The study therefore recommends that the Council does not allocate any new large-scale sites within the district specifically for retail development over the short (five years) to medium term (ten years).
- The study identifies that beyond the re-occupation of vacant units and land within defined Primary Shopping Areas of the respective centres, the first priority to accommodate forecast long-term retail growth should be the 'Priority Development Zone' (Shute Road Area) within the town centre boundary of Catterick Garrison and the next most sequentially preferable location after this as the Ypres Lines site to the north of Catterick Garrison Town Centre.



- Convenience offer as a whole within the district appropriately meets the residents' needs. However, there is an overall deficiency in larger foodstores within Richmond but this is unlikely to be addressed due to a lack of substantial growth planned by the 'top four' convenience retailers and the current commercial market.
- Overall clothing and footwear offer within Richmondshire is generally limited and, as such, residents are choosing to shop at competing centres and 'out-of-centre' destinations located outside the Study Area in Darlington, Stockton and Northallerton. This is in part due to these being higher order centres, the rural nature of the study area and the fact that Richmondshire residents may work in these areas.
- There is no overriding justification to promote an increase in Richmondshire's comparison goods market share over the short to medium term in light of the significant improvements that have been witnessed in Richmondshire's comparison goods market share in recent years as a consequence of Princes Gate, and the fact that Scotch Corner Designer Outlet will inevitably act to further reduce expenditure leakage from the district once completed.
- In terms of 'traditional' commercial leisure uses (bingo halls, cinemas and ten-pin bowling facilities) the study has identified that there is a requirement for a ten-pin bowling facility, national multiple hotel operator and additional restaurants within the district. These are however dependent on the market and investment.
- Given prevailing demographic trends, which are skewed towards younger people in Catterick Garrison (army personnel and their dependents) as a result of the expansion plans from the MoD, the study considers that any future retail and leisure development in the town centre will need to be reflective of a younger demographic. This demographic comprises predominantly 20 to 40 year old military personnel, their young partners and children.
- Additional and a larger variety of leisure uses within the heart of Catterick Garrison town centre may be appropriate given this trend, and the Local Planning Authority should have careful regard to changes in market demand over the Plan period, given the dynamic nature of this industry.
- A key recommendation of the study is that the Council seeks to prioritise the delivery of proportionate overnight accommodation through appropriate policies in the forthcoming Local Plan. It is considered that not only is a quantitative improvement required but also a qualitative enhancement, with Richmondshire's limited 'serviced' stock (hotels, guest houses, et cetera.) typically of a modest size and not necessarily in-keeping with modern consumer expectations - particularly those of young families.
- The Council should look to promote the delivery of a further modern 'budget' hotel (Travelodge, Ibis, Premier Inn) in order to serve the Richmondshire area. This would complement the Premier Inn which currently serves Catterick Garrison.
- It recommends that policies and strategies should seek to extend 'dwell time' and spend of both residents and visitors to the town centres, which in turn will help to enhance the overall vitality and viability of the centres. It is important for the town centres within Richmondshire to provide a distinct offer which sets them apart from nearby higher order centres. Improvements to the digitalisation of the town and district centres' high streets may be one way to do this. For example, the provision of additional 'click and collect' facilities which could act to encourage additional visitors to these centres who may then stop longer in the centre to purchase other products and services. Measures could also include encouraging businesses within Richmondshire's town centres, including independent retailers, to deliver OMNI channelling, which basically supports all formats of trading platforms, from website, to smartphone, 'click and collect' to traditional bricks and mortar channels.



- The re-occupation and redevelopment of vacant floorspace should be seen as a priority in order to improve the vibrancy of the Richmondshire's town centres, and should be supported.
- Recommends the following town centre hierarchy for Richmondshire
 - Town Centres - Richmond and Catterick Garrison
 - District Centre - Leyburn
 - Local Centres - White Shops and The Broadway, Colburn
- It recommends that primary or secondary shopping frontages are not identified. This is because they are no longer a requirement of national planning policy and are considered too restrictive in development management terms which could be harmful given the need to adopt a more flexible approach.
- It recommends some changes are made to the current Town Centre Boundaries and Primary Shopping Areas (these being reflected in Figures 11, 12 and 13).
- It supports the imposition of a Local Impact Threshold and recommends that an impact assessment will be necessary for proposals (including the formation of mezzanine floors) for/ or which include retail, leisure and office developments which are not located within a defined centre where
 - The proposal provides a floorspace greater than 500 sqm gross, or
 - The proposal is located within 800 metres of the boundary of Leyburn and is greater than 300 sqm gross, or
 - The proposal is located within 800 metres of the boundary of White Shops or Colburn local centres and is greater than 200 sqm.

Issues and Options Consultation

Some comments were made regarding Town Centres in relation to proposed Strategic Issue B that made reference to the Scotch Corner Designer Outlet. Some concerns were raised with the inclusion of the Scotch Corner Designer Outlet within Strategic Issue B as it would potentially provide for further development out of town, which would be at odds with national and local policies. It was suggested that greater emphasis should be placed on existing town centres and questions were raised in relation to the 'complementarity' relationship between the Designer Outlet and existing town centres. In comparison it was also suggested that the retail park would not be in direct competition with existing town centres and had the potential to bring more visitors to the area. The importance of ensuring complementary uses with regards to the Designer Outlet and existing town centres was emphasised and stressed.



Alternatives Considered

No Town and Local Centres policy (and rely on national policy and don't identify town, local and neighbourhood centres or sequential locations or threshold)

An alternative option would be to have no policy relating to Town and Local Centres. This option would be to only rely on national policy and not identify any town, local or neighbourhood centres. This option would also mean that no sequentially preferable locations for retail development would be identified and that no Local Impact thresholds for assessing the impact of proposals on Town and Local Centres would be set. This is not considered an appropriate option as this option does not enable for a locally tailored approach to be set which clearly sets out the amount and location of developments of town centre uses and the proposed strategy to protect and enhance the existing centres. Town, District and Local Centres are at the heart of communities in Richmondshire and play an essential social and economic role in day-to-day life. Furthermore, it is a requirement of national policy to define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability and allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed. For these reasons this option has been discounted.

A policy which identifies town, local and neighbourhood centres along with sequentially preferable locations and no thresholds

Another alternative option would be to have a policy which identifies town, local or neighbourhood centres as well as sequentially preferable locations but does not set Local Impact thresholds for assessing the impact of proposals on Town and Local Centres. This is not considered an appropriate option and that defining Local Impact thresholds provides greater protection for Town, Local and Neighbourhood Centres. The threshold levels are set so that proposals for Retail, Leisure and Office developments outside defined centres are adequately assessed ensuring they would not have adverse impact on any centres within the catchment of the proposed development. Adopting such thresholds also allows for the right balance of development to be achieved in both Richmond and Catterick Garrison town centres, ensuring that the roles of each centre are complementary and do not have a significant adverse impact on each other. For these reasons, this option has been discounted.

A policy which identifies town and local centres as per Core Strategy along with sequentially preferable locations, thresholds of 200, 300 and 500sqm and approach to development

Another alternative option would be to identify town and local centres as per the currently adopted Core Strategy as well as sequentially preferable locations. This option also allows for the Local Impact thresholds of 200, 300 and 500sqm to be set. This option is very similar to the preferred E7 policy as set out above, however this option does not identify the Neighbourhood centres of White Shops and The Broadway both in Colburn. These neighbourhood centres have been identified in the Retail Leisure and Town Centre Study (2019) and serve the needs of a localised catchment, with a basic range of shopping and service facilities. For these reasons, this option has been discounted.



QUESTIONS

Do you agree to preferred policy E7 - Town and Local Centres?

If not, do you agree with the general approach to policy E7 but have any suggested changes?

Please provide any further comments.