



Beyond the Town Centres

Policy TC3: Out of Centre Retail and Leisure

- A. Outside of the centres identified in Policy TC1 (and defined on the policies map) the Council will not support development of retail, leisure and other town centre uses, except where it can be demonstrated that the proposal satisfies the requirements of the sequential test.
- B. An Impact Assessment will be required for retail and leisure development proposed outside of identified town centres where:
 - vi. It would provide a gross floorspace in excess of 500 sqm; or
 - vii. The proposal is located within 800 metres of the boundary of a district or local centre and would provide a gross floorspace in excess of 200 sqm.
- C. The above thresholds apply to new floorspace (including mezzanine floorspace), extensions to existing floorspace, changes of use and applications seeking the variation of restrictive conditions.

Places for Everyone Links

JP-Strat12 and JP-P4

Relevant Strategic Objectives

SO6

- 7.35. This policy will direct new retail and leisure development to Trafford's defined centres, and such development should be of a size and scale to support the relevant centre.

Sequential Test

- 7.36. Where retail or leisure uses are proposed outside of a defined centre, the applicant will be required to demonstrate, in line with national policy, that no suitable sites are available firstly within the defined centre, or within an edge of centre location as defined in national planning policy.



Impact Assessment Thresholds

- 7.37. National policy states that it is appropriate to identify thresholds for the scale of edge of centre and out of centre retail and leisure development that should be the subject of an impact assessment.
- 7.38. The purpose of the policy in applying an impact threshold which deviates from the national threshold of 2,500 sqm is to allow the Council to retain appropriate control in respect of the potential for development to impact on the future health of defined centres within Trafford. By applying a lower threshold, applications for developments which could potentially have a harmful effect on the overall vitality and viability of a defined centre, will need to be supported by a proportionate impact assessment which will set out the potential trade diversion impact assumptions.
- 7.39. The Retail and Leisure Study (2019) considers that town centre anchor units will typically provide a minimum of 500 sqm of gross floorspace. A unit of this size could potentially accommodate an operator capable of attracting shoppers to a centre thus increasing the potential for linked trips. There are relatively limited numbers of units greater than 500 sqm in the four town centres and the vacancy rates vary across the centres. In this context it is considered that the impact threshold for the four town centres should be set at 500 sqm for both retail and leisure proposals. This threshold is the default to be applied borough wide (other than for proposals in proximity to district and local centres as set out below).

District and Local Centre Impact Assessment Thresholds

- 7.40. Due to the smaller scale of Trafford's district and local centres, and the relatively modest size of most of their commercial units, it is considered appropriate that a lower impact threshold of 200 sqm should be applied to potential developments proximate to these centres. This is in keeping with their more localised role and functions but demonstrates the potential implications out of centre developments could have on these centres. There are relatively few units substantially larger than 200 sqm in any of Trafford's district and local centres; as such to lose an occupier of this



magnitude could have a significant adverse impact on the centre as a whole.

The Trafford Centre

- 7.41. The Trafford Centre is one of the largest retail destinations in the UK and is a major shopping and leisure hub. It offers a wide selection of shops, restaurants, entertainment venues, and attractions. The area around the Trafford Centre also encompasses attractions like Chill Factore, iFly, Sea Life Manchester, LEGOLAND Discovery Centre, and Aerial Extreme. Together, these draw over 40 million visitors each year.
- 7.42. The Retail and Leisure Study (2019) recommends that careful consideration is given before granting planning permission for proposals that would further improve the offer at the Trafford Centre to the detriment of the four town centres

Retail Warehouse Parks

- 7.43. The Retail and Leisure Study (2019) concludes that overall Trafford is well served by out of centre retail parks through the provision of a range of operators who otherwise could not always occupy a unit within one of the four town centres. However, it is important for the Council to continue to monitor applications for the potential expansion of the retail parks or relaxation of use due to the potential implications such applications could have on the health of defined centres across Trafford. Proposals for out of centre development will be considered against the sequential test outlined in national policy.

Consultation Question 7-4

Do you support Policy TC3? Are there any changes required which would improve the policy? Please provide any supporting evidence which you think is relevant.