

SR7 Local parades

Within local parades the change of use of existing Class A1 use shops to Class A2, A3, A4 or A5 uses will be permitted provided that all of the following criteria are met:

- a. **the number of units or frontages other than Class A1 in the parade would not exceed 50%;**
- b. **it has been adequately demonstrated that an A1 retail use is no longer economically viable in that particular unit or parade;**
- c. **the nature of the proposed use and the level of activity (particularly in the daytime) likely to be associated with it, would make a positive contribution to the vitality and viability of the parade; and**
- d. **the development would not be significantly detrimental to the amenities of occupiers of nearby residential properties or the general character of the area.**

Exceptions to (a) may be permitted if the parade in question is within easy walking distance of a local, district, town centre or the regional shopping centre and all other criteria are met.

In addition to Class A2, A3, A4 or A5 uses, some Class D1 community uses (e.g. doctors, dentists) may be permitted provided that a window display is maintained and it can be demonstrated that the proposed use would draw pedestrian activity into the centre.

Changes of use at ground floor to residential will not be permitted in local parades.

- 6.31 The term 'local parade' in this Policy refers to a cluster of three or more A1 retail units such as a newsagent, convenience store or off-licence, together with A2 uses, for example estate agents or A3, A4 or A5 uses, that function as a group and are capable of serving the convenience needs of a local residential catchment population. Participants in a focus group for 'Retail and Town Centres' were greatly concerned about the decline of local shopping parades.
- 6.32 It is important particularly for older people, people with disabilities and the very young who cannot easily travel far, that their convenience retail needs can be met within easy walking distance within their neighbourhood. In most cases, up to 300m is considered to be an 'easy walking distance' (PPS6 'Planning for Town Centres') to serve the local convenience needs of a neighbourhood. However a shorter distance may be deemed appropriate if, for example, it is necessary to walk up a hill or to cross a busy main road. It is also desirable from a sustainable point of view that the wider population is not dependant on use of the car for day to day retail needs. It may be unrealistic to expect more than 50% of retail units to be retained in such a parade but it is considered most important to protect these parades for the reasons stated above and to ensure that sufficient alternatives exist nearby.
- 6.33 If an exception to (a) is being considered then there should be substantive written evidence submitted with an application to meet the other criterion, particularly criterion (b).

- 6.34 Indicators affecting the economic viability of a unit which will be taken account of are:
- the characteristics of the unit;
 - its position within the parade;
 - the pedestrian flow associated with the unit and the parade as a whole;
 - the number of other vacancies in the parade; and
 - the length of time that the unit has been actively marketed on competitive terms.
- 6.35 It is important that proposed changes of use will still contribute to the activity in the parade particularly in the daytime. For example a Class A5 use with little or no seating, which operates mainly as a take-away, opening only later in the day would not, it is considered, fulfil this role. As with the other centres, a community use such as that falling within Class D1 (e.g. doctors, dentists) which attracts pedestrian activity and encourages combined visits to the parade could be favourably considered, provided that a window display is maintained. Residential uses are not considered appropriate for this reason and a residential use would not fulfil criteria (c) of this Policy.
- 6.36 The type of amenity issues that would be covered by criterion d) may include visual amenity, noise and disturbance, air pollution, litter and vehicle movements.
- 6.37 Other retail policies in this Plan, which are relevant to this policy include Policy SR6 and Policy SR8.

