

Tenterden Shop Frontage Background Document

This document reviews the existing shopping frontage policy for Tenterden town centre contained within the Ashford Borough Local Plan (2000).

Introduction

Historically, Town Centres have been the focus for trading and markets, providing the local population with opportunities to purchase different types of goods in an accessible, often central, location. Over time, this role has been enhanced.

Government guidance 'PPS 6 Town Centres' encourages retail uses within existing town centres, to build on its existing role and utilise their highly sustainable location. Retail uses help to provide for the needs of the local population; preserve the character of traditional town centres, create an attractive shopping destination; and attract greater footfall movement, sustaining the vitality and viability of the overall Town Centre. This is particularly important in rural town centres where the retail offer is pivotal to supporting and sustaining the local community.

Government Guidance allows a planning authority to identify primary shopping areas, which can be a useful tool when seeking to concentrate retail presence in specific areas within a Town Centre.

The Local Plan took this approach forward and identified a primary shopping frontage area within Tenterden, which promoted a concentration of A1 retail uses in key locations on the high street. A1 retail uses are desirable in a town centre, as they are often made up of major multiple retailers, include prominent high street chains, contain large retail facades and draw high pedestrian movements to an area.

The Local Plan approach for the Tenterden primary shopping frontage area is to control the amount of A2 uses in the core shopping area of the town. The plan limits A2 uses in the primary shopping frontage to a maximum of 20% of the total frontage.

Tenterden currently contains a strong retail presence and maintains a good balance between A1 offer and complimentary non A1 uses such as banks, cafes and restaurants. Due to the success of the current use class mix the new policy sets out to retain A1 at the current levels.

As well as serving the rural community, the importance of continuing to focus A1 use in the traditional town centre is reinforced in Tenterden due to the towns unique character and attractiveness as a tourist destination. Much of the appeal of the town is in the specialist retail offer and traditional shopping characteristics that draw visitors to the area. Tenterden's attractive shopping facilities are set within attractive countryside and an affluent catchment area and contain many high quality retailers rather than a significant number of major multiple retailers of a larger town centre.

Methodology

The survey work was undertaken in May 2009 and was conducted by walking around the Town Centre and noting the use classes, name of business and location of property, on the survey day.

The main shopping areas of Tenterden Town Centre were surveyed, see below. This approach sought to determine how effective the existing policy has been on those frontages identified in the Local Plan. As well as looking at frontages subject to

existing policy, frontages in the main shopping areas were also surveyed to ascertain if a policy was needed to support or enhance other areas in the Town Centre.

The areas of the town centre surveyed are as follows:

- Frontage 1- Existing Local Plan Frontage
- Frontage 2- Existing Local Plan Frontage
- Frontage 3- Frontage 2 extended to Bridewell Lane
- Frontage 4- High Street/ West Cross South
- Frontage 5- High Street/ West Cross North

For the purposes of this report the findings have been split into A1 use and all other uses. Maps have been prepared below to spatially represent the findings. The units which were vacant at the time of survey, have been categorised by the most recent use.

Each frontage has the total A1 and non A1 frontage measured using GIS software. This measurement is given in metres and as a percentage of the total frontage.

Findings

Current primacy shopping frontage policy

The current shop frontage policy outlined in the Local Plan 2000, applies to **Frontage 1 and 2**. Policy SH5 allows for A1 uses to be changed to A2 uses on the condition that that A2 uses would not cumulatively amount to more than 20% of the frontage. This policy has been successfully implemented as A2 uses on Frontages 1 and 2 are 5% and 17% of the frontage, respectively.

Despite the 2 existing frontages being compliant with current policy it is not felt that this policy is addressing the issue of maintaining high A1 uses in the central shopping area of the town. Further to this including a policy in the DPD that seeks to control A2 uses in this way is not appropriate as the existing policy is unenforceable. A3, A4 and A5 retail uses have the ability to move to A2 use, as a permitted change, without the need for an application for change of use. This renders the policies ability to control A2 uses in this way as redundant.

Additional Policy Coverage

When reviewing the town frontages that have not previously been subject to policy it is clear that increasing Frontage 2 to incorporate the units up to Bridewell Lane will enable the policy to include units that are potentially vulnerable to change of use, in an area that is a part of the traditional town centre. This extension will also cover the vacant library site. This policy extension means the new frontage will cover one of the main pedestrian entrances to Tenterden High Street from public car parks and Tesco's.

Recommendations

- 1. It is recommended that the existing policy Frontage 2 be extended to reflect the length shown in Frontage 3**
- 2. It is recommended that the existing policy SH5 be removed.**

- 3. It is recommended that a policy be implemented on Frontages 1 and 3 to attempt to retain and increase A1.**

Tenterden Shop Frontage North



	% of Length	Length m	% of Number	Number
A1	63%	235.7	65%	30
Non A1	37%	140.6	35%	16

1	The Bathroom Shop	A1
2	Travelux Travel Agents	A1
3	Potters Home Digital	A1
4	Dental Surgery	D1
5	Swaines	A1
6	Honeymoon Chinese Restaurant	A3
7	County Clothes	A1
8	Norman Holmes Silversmith	A1
9	Boots	A1
10	Tackle and Gun Shop	A1
11	Master Cutters Hairdressers	A1
12	Lloyds TSB	A2
13	Clinton Cards	A1
14	WHSmiths	A1
15	Julian Graves	A1
16	Oxfam	A1
17	Ashton Burkinshaw Estate Agents	A2
18	Adin Coates	A1
19	Viyella	A1
20	Fat Face	A1
21	Town Hall	D1
22	Woolpack Hotel	A4
23	Vacant	A1
24	Crew Clothing	A1
25	Abbey	A2
26	Monsoon	A1
27	Femme Fatale	A1
28	Vacant	A2
29	Ward and Partners	A2
30	Kent Police	D1
31	Orvis	A1

32	Barclays	A2
33	William Charles	A2
34	Vacant	A1
35	Prezzos	A3
36	Natwest	A2
37	Paydens Chemist	A1
38	Barry Jones Florist	A1
39	Tenterden Antiques Centre	A1
40	Tenterden Antiques and Silver Vault	A1
41	The Antiques Centre of Tenterden	A1
42	Sue Ryder Care	A1
43	Kensal and Gretel	A1
44	Batemans Opticians	D1
45	Memories Antiques	A1
46	The Vine Inn	A4

Tenterden Shop Frontage South



1	Caffe Nero	A3
2	Phase Eight	A1
3	M& Co	A1
4	Cook Ready Meals	A1
5	Indulgence Café	A3
6	Wilson Hancock Opticians	D1
7	Vacant	A1
8	Brasserie Gerard	A3
9	Cancer Research	A1
10	The Jeans Store	A1
11	Laura Ashley	A1
12	Sketchley Cleaners	A1
13	SC Franklin Ltd	A1
14	CC Womens Fashion	A1
15	The lemon Tree	A3
16	East	A1
17	Avars Bakery	A3
18	Whitehead Monkton	A2
19	Peter Newman Shoes	A1
20	Nationwide	A2
21	Café Rouge	A3
22	Webbs of Tenterden	A1
23	Waterstones	A1
24	Webbs of Tenterden	A1
25	Webbs of Tenterden	A1

	% of Length	Length m
A1	59%	113
Non A1	41%	77

Additional Frontage Survey Work

Area 1- Frontage South extended to Bridewell Lane



	% of Length	Length m
A1	55	142
Non A1	45	117
Residential	0	0

Area 2- High Street/ West Cross South



	% of Length	Length m
A1	0	0
Non A1	11.2%	31.6
Residential	88.8%	250.9

Area 3- High Street/ West Cross North



	% of Length	Length m
A1	40.8%	132
Non A1	27.9%	91.3
Residential	31.3%	100