



WARDS AFFECTED: ALL WARDS

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval of the District, Local and Neighbourhood Centre Review (2014) which will be used to inform future documents produced for the Local Plan.
- 1.2 Copies of the District, Local and Neighbourhood Centre Review (2014) are available via email upon request.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 That Executive approve the District, Local and Neighbourhood Centre Review to be used as part of the evidence base for future reviews of the Local Plan.

3. BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

- 3.1 The aim of the District, Local and Neighbourhood Centre Review 2014 is to provide an up-to-date and relevant evidence base about retail provision within both the urban and rural areas, excluding Hinckley Town Centre. This evidence base reflects the priorities of the adopted Core Strategy and supports the allocation of District, Local and Neighbourhood Centres and the formulation of development management policies in the emerging Site Allocations and Development Management Policies Development Plan Document.
- 3.2 The Review is designed to serve as an update on the findings of the 2012 Review and ensure all relevant shopping provision of local importance is identified and any changes reflected.

Methodology

- 3.3 The Review examined local shopping provision through the following three-stage process:

3.4 Stage 1- Data collection and Desktop Review

- Review existing data from the District, Local and Neighbourhood Centre Review 2012;
- Review planning applications through a planning history search of applications within and directly adjacent to identified centres from February 2012 to August 2014;
- Identify any additional centres based on local knowledge and an assessment of aerial photography;
- Identify potential impacts on the District, Local and Neighbourhood Centres i.e. Sustainable Urban Extensions.

3.5 Stage 2- On-Site Surveys

- 3.6 These were undertaken between 19th August 2014 and 15th September 2014 during standard retail opening hours of between 9am and 5pm.

3.7 During the on-site appraisals the following information was checked against records from the 2012 review and any changes noted:

- The address, Use Class and business name (where available) of each unit;
- The overall number of units on-site;
- The number of vacant units on-site;
- Approximate number and location of parking including disabled spaces;
- The number and siting of cycle storage;
- Number and siting of ATMs.

3.8 Premises adjacent to the existing Centre boundaries were also examined to establish the relevance of boundaries and to identify any potential amendments.

3.9 Stage 3- Evaluation

3.10 Each centre has been assessed against a scoring system to determine whether it falls within the District, Local or Neighbourhood Centre Classification which are defined below:

- District Centres - usually comprising groups of shops often containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and a range of non-retail services, such as banks, building societies and restaurants, as well as public facilities such as a library.
- Local Centres - a range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment. Typically, local centres might include, amongst other shops, a small supermarket, a newsagent, a sub-post office and a pharmacy. Other facilities could include a hot food take-away and laundrette.
- Neighbourhood Centres - Those centres which do not qualify as District or Local Centres and are considered to be of neighbourhood significance with smaller catchment areas than those above.

3.11 Where the on-site appraisal has identified a contraction or expansion of a centre from those previously identified in the 2008, 2010 and 2012 surveys and the Local Plan (2001) adopted proposals map, this will be assessed and reflected in the revised maps and boundaries where appropriate.

3.12 A Centre's classification has informed its catchment area which in turn determines the extent in which the Centre meets the shopping and everyday needs of local residents. Catchment areas are defined as:

- 2000 metres for District Centres
- 800 metres for Local Centres
- 400 metres for Neighbourhood Centres

3.13 Results of the 2014 Review

3.14 The Borough contains three District Centres, ten Local Centres, 16 Neighbourhood Centres and one Out of Centre Retail Park.

Classification	Number	Location
District Centres	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wood Street, High Street and The Hollow (Earl Shilton) • High Street and Chapel Street (Barwell) • Market Place (Market

		Bosworth)
Local Centres	10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clifton Way (Hinckley) • Rugby Road (Hinckley) • Barwell Lane (Hinckley) • Hawley Road (Hinckley) • Boyslade Road and Tilton Road (Burbage) • Groby Village Centre • Ratby Village Centre • Main Street (Markfield) • Main Street and Arnold's Crescent (Newbold Verdon) • Barlestone Village Centre
Neighbourhood Centres	16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coventry Road and Northfield Road (Hinckley) • Coventry Road and Strathmore Road (Hinckley) • Trent Road (Hinckley) • Tudor Road (Hinckley) • Windsor Street (Burbage) • Church Street (Burbage) • Brookside (Burbage) • Atkins Way (Burbage) • Upper and Middle High Street (Earl Shilton) • Belle Vue Road and Moore Road (Earl Shilton) • Lawnwood (Groby) • Laundon Way (Groby) • Chitterman Way (Markfield) • High Street (Desford) • St Martin's Drive (Desford) • High Street and Station Road (Stoke Golding)
Out of Centre Retail Park	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perimeter Road and Stoke Road (Hinckley)
Total	30	

3.15 The urban areas including Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell and Earl Shilton are well served by local shopping areas with access to both a range of everyday conveniences, non-retail services, as well as community facilities. These centres also have public transport links.

- 3.16 Positively, the vacancy rates across the Borough have largely reduced, with Windsor and Church Street, Burbage, Lawnwood Drive, Groby, the Village Centre of Ratby, and Main St, Markfield all reporting reductions in vacancy rates. The only Centres reporting increases in vacancy rates are Clifton Way and Rugby Road located on the fringes of Hinckley town centre.
- 3.17 The district centres of Earl Shilton and Barwell were identified as having high vacancy rates over the 2010 and 2012 review periods. The 2014 review period has identified a marked decline in the number of vacant units within both centres with Earl Shilton seeing the largest percentage reduction. The vacancy rates for Earl Shilton and Barwell stand at 14.4% and 11.6% respectively. Despite these being the highest rates across the Borough they compare favourably with the 2012 figures of 17.9% and 13.9%.
- 3.18 The Market Bosworth District Centre retains its 0% vacancy rate. A small number of retailers have relocated within the immediate centre, typically to larger premises suggesting a level of maturity not seen in other centres of this size.
- 3.19 The Burbage Neighbourhood Centres of Windsor Street and Church Street are sizeable with a range of retail and non-retail services. Despite their relative size there remains a distinct lack of convenience shopping and parking provision which has been identified both through this review and Policy 4 of the Core Strategy.
- 3.20 The 2010 and 2012 reviews identified a number of pubs as either vacant, demolished, or which have changed their use. This review reports similar findings with the Markfield Main St Local Centre, Boyslade & Tilton Road Local Centre, and the Windsor Street Neighbourhood Centre located within Burbage all seeing the loss of their public houses.
- 3.21 The New Galaxy Pub within the Boyslade & Tilton Road local centre was identified as vacant during the 2012 review with permission granted for the change of use to house a Co-operative convenience store which has since been completed. The Butlers House pub within the Windsor Street Neighbourhood Centre has undertaken a new function as a restaurant and cocktail bar, whilst Markfield has seen the single largest loss of public houses within this review period. The vacant George Inn, as per the 2012 review, has since been converted into a Co-operative food store with 6 dwellings adjacent, in addition the Red Lion pub within Markfield is now functioning as an Indian restaurant.
- 3.22 Despite the Core Strategy supporting the expansion of convenience shopping and parking within Markfield, the continued loss of public houses across the Borough may require policy intervention to reflect paragraph 28 of the NPPF which requires Local Plans to promote the retention of local services and community facilities including public houses.
- 3.23 The rural villages are generally isolated settlements within the countryside with the exception of Witherley which stands in close proximity to Atherstone and would most likely fall under Atherstone Town Centre catchment area. The facilities within the rural villages are limited to a public house, and or a small local shop. Due to the isolated nature of these settlements, poor accessibility and limited service provision the retention and expansion of these facilities is considered important and supports Core Strategy Policy 12.
- 3.24 Since the 2012 review, an additional classification of an Out of Centre Retail Parks has been introduced for one centre within Hinckley. The Perimeter Road and Stoke Road centre technically falls within the Neighbourhood Centre classification when applying the methodology strictly. It is however acknowledged that due to the size

and nature of the stores in this location, it cannot rightly be classed as a small parade of shops of purely neighbourhood significance. Due to the location of the park, on the northern perimeter road and remote from Hinckley town centre, it would not be preferable for this site to be classed as ‘in-centre’ in terms of the sequential test as this could lead to the potential for large scale retail development within and adjacent to the boundary of the park. It is therefore considered appropriate to classify the site as an Out of Centre Retail Park which is defined within the National Planning Policy Framework as “a location which is not in or on the edge of a centre but not necessarily outside the urban area”.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS (SJE)

None arising directly as a result of this report

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS (MR)

None

6. CORPORATE PLAN IMPLICATIONS

- Thriving Economy
- Safer & Healthier Borough
- Strong & Distinctive communities

7. CONSULTATION

This document will form part of the evidence base for allocations and policies in future reviews of the Local Plan which will undergo extensive public consultation in due course.

8. RISK IMPLICATIONS

It is the Council’s policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer’s opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

The following significant risks associated with this report / decisions were identified from this assessment:

Management of significant (Net Red) Risks		
Risk Description	Mitigating actions	Owner
Failure to publish the Report would result in the Borough Council having no evidence to support relevant policies or allocations. Without an up-to-date evidence base, documents are at risk of being found unsound.	Publication of the report	Sally Smith

9. KNOWING YOUR COMMUNITY – EQUALITY AND RURAL IMPLICATIONS

This document contains centre classifications in rural areas.

10. CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS

By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Planning Implications

Background papers: The District, Local and Neighbourhood Centre Review (2014)

Contact Officer: Andy Killip, ext: 5732

Executive Member: Cllr SL Bray