

5.4 Retail and Leisure Growth Options

There will always be a need for new shops and leisure facilities to accommodate increased demand or to replace outdated facilities. As shops adapt to the convenience of internet shopping, through innovation, experience and technology, it will become more important than ever that such developments are in the right locations. The NPPF and the Core Strategy state a preference for 'town centres' as locations for retail and leisure development, in order to support existing facilities and encourage the vitality of centres. They are also usually easily accessible by a choice of means of transport. The Sheffield Plan will retain the approach to supporting its town centres, which includes the City Centre, and district and local centres.

However, apart from the City Centre, few of Sheffield's centres have sites available for new development and most retail and leisure development in the city has occurred outside its town centres. Despite economic downturns, spending on retail and leisure is projected to increase by around 3% per head a year over the next 15 years.

Meadowhall Shopping Centre and retail parks serve important shopping and leisure functions. An option is that the Plan could identify Meadowhall and retail parks not as town centres but as commercial centres. To be consistent with the NPPF's sequential approach, the Plan should therefore make it clear that they follow edge-of-centre sites in terms of preference for new development.

Meadowhall and retail parks do not provide the range of community and residential uses usually found in town centres. They cannot be described as town centres and are therefore not preferred locations for retail and leisure development. However, they are accessible by public transport and provide the opportunity for linked trips. The NPPF allows that if sufficient in- and edge-of-centre sites cannot be identified to meet needs, other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre should be identified.

Consultation questions

Q22: Should areas such as Meadowhall Shopping Centre and retail parks be identified as commercial centres and preferred locations for retail and leisure development, if no in- or edge-of-centre sites are available?

Q23: If so what types of retail or leisure development should be acceptable under the sequential approach?

5.5 Housing Growth Options

The analysis by consultants URBED (see p. 40) has helped us to identify five broad spatial options for how Sheffield could grow. The options are not necessarily mutually exclusive but they are a way of describing how the city could develop in the future. Pursuing all

