

# The Economy

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## 4. The Economy

### 4.1 INTRODUCTION

**4.1.1** The attractive Green Belt and riverside environment of the Borough, and its excellent communication links with London, international airports and the rest of the South East have made it a long-standing focus for new commercial development. In common with neighbouring authorities it has experienced substantial employment growth, particularly in office based employment, and has contributed significantly to the buoyant economy of the South East.

**4.1.2** An analysis of the Census of Employment (see Table 4.1 below) indicates that, following the recession of the early 1980's, an additional 9,350 jobs were created in the Borough between 1984 and 1987, representing an increase of almost 20%. This was largely as a result of the growth in the services sector by 36%. The number of people employed in banking, finance and business services (including computer related industries) has shown the greatest increase, 49% between 1984 and 1989 although employment in the distribution and retail trades, hotels/catering and other services has also risen considerably. In 1991 service industries provided 78.5% of all employment in the Borough, compared with 76.2% in Berkshire and 71.1% nationally.

**4.1.3** The Borough is likely to remain under considerable pressure for further development arising out of its attractive location within the M4 corridor close to Heathrow Airport, Central London and the M25. The Borough's attractiveness is likely to be further enhanced in future years as a result of the Crossrail project, the Channel Tunnel and further developments at Heathrow. In the shorter term, outstanding business and industrial commitments alone are likely to result in an extra 4,000-4,400 new jobs in the Borough. While a number of these jobs will result from the expansion of existing local businesses, the relocation of new businesses to the Borough will exacerbate congestion and increase pressure for further housing development within the Borough.

**4.1.4** A high rate of employment growth associated with new business development is not considered to be sustainable in view of the capacity limits of land, housing, labour supply and infrastructure. The Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006 has highlighted the scale of imbalance between housing and employment provision in the County and the need for a cautious approach towards further employment generating development. The danger of too much growth is that the resulting worsening congestion, environmental conditions and pressure on the Green Belt may well make the area less attractive

**Table 4.1 Change in employment structure for industrial division: Windsor and Maidenhead**

Division	1984	1987	1989	1991	% change 1984-91
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, energy and water supply	1,400	1,200	1,300	1,300	-7.1%
Manufacturing	12,500	10,700	10,500	9,000	-28%
Construction	1,900	1,800	2,300	2,200	+15.8%
Distribution	12,000	15,700	15,700	16,400	+36.7%
Transport and communications	1,500	2,100	2,200	}	}
Banking, finance, insurance and business services	6,500	10,300	9,700	}12,900	+61.2%
Public services	}	}	}	1,600	}
Other services	}	}	}	14,600	}
<b>Total</b>	<b>47,700</b>	<b>57,100</b>	<b>56,400</b>	<b>58,000</b>	<b>+21.6%</b>

Source: Census of Employment, 1984-91

Note: All figures are rounded to the nearest 100.

as a business location, thereby threatening its future prosperity. Such growth would also seriously undermine regional policy which aims to shift growth to the east of the region and inner city areas.

**4.1.5** The Local Plan, therefore, will apply selective restraint policies whilst continuing to support the local economy. The Local Plan will foster the development of a diverse local economy which can provide a wide range of full and part-time job opportunities and will allow for restructuring within the industrial base, particularly where this will facilitate the expansion of local firms or provide accommodation for small businesses. It will, however, seek to control the scale and type of employment generating development in order to resist additional pressure on the labour market, land supply and the environment.

**4.1.6** The Local Plan provides a policy framework for the future development of the local economy under three main headings.

- 'Business and industrial development'
- 'Shopping and the role of centres'
- 'Tourism development and associated facilities'

## **4.2 BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT**

### **4.2.1 Key objectives**

- (i) To restrain the growth in employment generating development in order to reduce pressure on land, housing, the labour market and infrastructure, while providing limited scope for appropriate new investment in town centres and established employment areas,
- (ii) To maintain a balance of employment generating uses within the Borough in order to provide an appropriate range of job opportunities for the local workforce
- (iii) To enable the limited provision of a variety of types and sizes of premises within redevelopment schemes in order to satisfy the wide range of requirements of local business, including small and newly established firms.
- (iv) To ensure that new development makes all appropriate contribution to the physical and social infrastructure of the Borough and

enhances the quality of its environment.

**4.2.2** The Replacement Structure Plan 1988, made provision for approximately 13 hectares of land for industry, warehousing and associated uses and for 63,000 m<sup>2</sup> of office development within the Borough during the period 1984-1996. This scale of provision was considered appropriate to meet the need for development in the interests of the local, regional and national economies. At April 1991 both these guidelines had been exceeded, with the level of office development almost 67% above the guideline. Overall, however, the interpretation under the new Use Classes Order has allowed development well above the provisions of the approved plan.

### **Changes in the nature of employment areas**

**4.2.3** The introduction of the Business Use Class has given individual firms greater flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances, but has also contributed to the general trend within the Borough for higher density business uses to replace older industrial sites and premises. Between 1984 and 1991, floorspace within the recognised employment areas has increased by over 26,000 m<sup>2</sup> and the nature of the redevelopment schemes has changed the character of some areas significantly.

**4.2.4** Between 1987 and 1990 the amount of general industrial floorspace (B2) has decreased by over 56,000 m<sup>2</sup>. Over the same period there has been a corresponding increase of 72,000 m<sup>2</sup> in office, light industrial, research and development and other uses falling within the Business Use Class, B1. The most marked trend in the Borough since 1987 has been towards General B1 consents and approvals for change from light industrial use to the new Business Use Class. A total of 39,000 m<sup>2</sup> of light industrial floorspace has been the subject of permission for B1 use.

### **The amount of further development**

**4.2.5** In view of the need for a cautious approach towards further employment development, the current Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006 does not propose any major new employment areas.

**4.2.6** The Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006 states that additional employment development will only be allowed where planning benefits are

provided in accordance with other policies of the Structure Plan and where it does not prejudice the housing, transport and environmental objectives of the overall strategy. The Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006 also places great emphasis on the need to maintain a balanced local economy and to provide a wide range of job opportunities.

**4.2.7** In accordance with the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006 the Local Plan does not make any major new land allocations up to 2006 but identifies a number of sites which are suitable for redevelopment. These sites will provide a further 3,450 m<sup>2</sup> of business floorspace over commitments existing at March 1991. The Plan will allow for further small scale schemes within town centres and other developments appropriate to the needs of the local economy or to facilitate the expansion of local firms.

**4.2.8** The overall emphasis within the Local Plan is towards encouraging investment within the existing employment areas, but restricting development opportunities, particularly within the main town centres, to those sites or locations which would provide associated infrastructure, environmental or other planning benefits. The Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006 does not intend to prevent development proposals which provide appropriate planning benefits and accord with Local Plan policies. Proposals will be considered on their merits provided they do not lead to an overall level of development likely to lead to significant additional employment generation. The Council will, however, strongly resist proposals which conflict with the Green Belt, environmental and other objectives of the Local Plan.



**Location of development**

**POLICY E1**

**BUSINESS INDUSTRIAL AND WAREHOUSING**

**DEVELOPMENT WILL USUALLY BE RESTRICTED TO THE EMPLOYMENT AREAS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, THE TOWN CENTRE COMMERCIAL AREAS OF WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD, AND SMALL SETTLEMENT COMMERCIAL AREAS. IN OTHER AREAS OUTSIDE THE GREEN BELT PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GIVEN FOR SUCH USES EXCEPT WHERE THE PROPOSAL:**

- 1) RELATES TO A SITE IN AN EXISTING BUSINESS, INDUSTRIAL OR WAREHOUSING USE; OR**
- 2) INVOLVES SMALL SCALE DEVELOPMENT OF LESS THAN 100 SQ METRES ON ANY ONE SITE WITHIN THE PERIOD OF THE PLAN; OR**
- 3) IS NECESSARY TO SECURE THE FUTURE OF A LISTED BUILDING.**

**4.2.9** The Local Plan seeks to restrict new development, redevelopment, extensions or change of use to business and industrial uses to existing centres of employment. This will ensure continued investment in these areas, and help the Council to secure significant improvements to the environment and the highway or public transport infrastructure. For the purposes of the Local Plan, business and industrial uses are deemed as all business, industrial, distribution or storage uses [BI to B8 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended 1993 and similar Sui Generis uses].

**4.2.10** Proposals relating to sites in an existing business, industrial or warehousing use need to be considered against the other relevant policies in this section. In particular, development or redevelopment proposals for established sites not falling within deemed commercial centres or employment areas, and not in the Green Belt, need to be considered against Policy E6. Business proposals for sites within the deemed town centres of Windsor and Maidenhead need to be considered against Policies E8 and E9, and also WTC2 and MTC2 respectively. With regards to small settlement centres, business proposals need to be considered solely against the relevant area-based policies set out in Chapter 7.

**4.2.11** Outside the Green Belt, proposals for small scale business and industrial development of less than 100m<sup>2</sup> will generally be acceptable on sites not

in an existing business or industrial use, provided that the proposals do not conflict with other policies of the Plan. In particular, proposals would need to comply with file provisions of Policies EI0 and DGI, relating to design and development standards. Both these policies provide safeguards to protect residential areas from the adverse affects of business development. Consecutive developments on the same site will not be allowed within the Plan period.

**4.2.12** Policies relating to listed buildings are contained in the Environment Section of the Plan A business use may be appropriate to a listed building provided that it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that this use and the scale of development proposed is essential to secure the future of a particular building. A detailed financial appraisal in support of this use will be required.

### **Industrial and warehousing development**

#### **POLICY E2**

**THE EMPLOYMENT AREAS LISTED BELOW AND IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP ARE ALLOCATED PRIMARILY FOR INDUSTRIAL AND SMALL SCALE DISTRIBUTION AND STORAGE USES:**

- a. FURZE PLATT INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, MAIDENHEAD;**
- b. CORDWALLIS INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, MAIDENHEAD;**
- c. REFORM ROAD/OLDFIELD ROAD INDUSTRIAL AREA, MAIDENHEAD;**
- d. HOWARTH ROAD INDUSTRIAL AREA, MAIDENHEAD;**
- e. BOYN VALLEY ROAD INDUSTRIAL AREA MAIDENHEAD;**
- f. PRIOR'S WAY INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, MAIDENHEAD;**
- g. VANSITTART ROAD INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, WINDSOR;**
- h. SHIRLEY AVENUE/VALE ROAD INDUSTRIAL AREA, WINDSOR;**

- i. FAIRACRES INDUSTRIAL ESTATE, WINDSOR;**
- j. LYNDRURST ROAD INDUSTRIAL AREA, SOUTH ASCOT;**
- k. QUEENS ROAD INDUSTRIAL AREA SUNNINGHILL.**

**DEVELOPMENT WHICH WOULD RESULT IN AN OVERALL INTENSIFICATION OF ACTIVITY TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AND ROAD SAFETY WILL NOT BE: APPROVED. FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS TO ACCESS TO THE AREAS IDENTIFIED ABOVE WILL BE REQUIRED AS PART OF DEVELOPMENT SCHEMES WHERE EXISTING PROBLEMS OCCUR AT APPROACHES TO OR ON HIGHWAYS ADJACENT TO THE EMPLOYMENT AREAS.**

**WITHIN REDEVELOPMENT SCHEMES, THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL REQUIRE THE PROVISION OF A VARIETY OF TYPES AND SIZES OF ACCOMMODATION, INCLUDING SMALL UNITS IN A RANGE OF SIZES UP TO 300 SQ.M.**

**4.2.13** In order to help to support a diverse local economy and to maintain a local manufacturing base, the Local Planning Authority will restrict new development to Classes B1(c), B2 and B8 of the 1987 Use Classes Order (as amended) within the employment areas identified above. In view of the recent losses in B2 and B1(c) floorspace, this is considered essential in order to ensure that a wide range of job opportunities and a variety of industrial premises are available within the Borough. Small Units of accommodation are particularly valuable to help small firms to become established or to expand.

**4.2.14** These employment areas have been identified on the basis that they are characterised by a more traditional industrial/warehousing character, or are particularly well located in relation to the road network to allow development for distribution/storage uses. The Council will seek to prevent new business development which would reduce the variety of types and sizes of premises within these areas

**4.2.15** Existing highway arrangements for access to the Cordwallis Estate via Cordwallis Road are

unsatisfactory, and detrimental to the amenity of local residents. Access to the Vansittart Industrial Estate, Windsor is also unsatisfactory. A new access/egress point along Arthur Road would relieve residential streets of a substantial amount of through traffic and result in a safer and more pleasant environment. Access improvements will therefore be required as part of redevelopment schemes.

### **Business uses within Employment Areas**

#### **POLICY E3**

**DEVELOPMENT FOR BUSINESS USE WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE REMAINING EMPLOYMENT AREAS IDENTIFIED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP PROVIDED THAT WHERE APPROPRIATE THE NEW BUILDINGS ARE DESIGNED TO ACCOMMODATE A RANGE OF OFFICE, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AND LIGHT INDUSTRIAL USES.**

**4.2.16** in accordance with Policy BU1 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991 2006, particular attention will be given to proposals for major additional floorspace which, for the Royal Borough is defined as a net increase in floorspace of 300 sq.m. and over. The 1987 Use Classes Order (as amended) has provided greater flexibility in the use of commercial buildings. It is therefore important that buildings are designed to allow a range of uses especially between the light industrial, office and research and development uses where appropriate. It is also important to ensure that the density, scale, height and form of redevelopment is in keeping with the character of the area, the limitations of the highway network and is consistent with the employment objectives of the Plan.

### **Extensions to Employment Areas**

#### **POLICY E4**

**EXTENSIONS TO THE IDENTIFIED EMPLOYMENT AREAS WILL NOT BE PERMITTED EXCEPT WHERE THE PROPOSAL IS SMALL IN SCALE COMPARED TO EXISTING DEVELOPMENT AND WOULD NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITIES OF ANY ADJACENT OCCUPIERS.**

**4.2.17** In view of the strategic policies to restrain employment growth and the prevailing land use pattern in the Borough, the Council will generally

oppose the expansion of existing employment areas. Small-scale extensions may be acceptable, however, where additional accommodation is to be provided to support the local economy. All proposals must comply with Policy P4 and should not conflict with other Local Plan policies.

### **Loss of Land in Employment Areas**

#### **POLICY E5**

**WITHIN THE EMPLOYMENT AREAS SHOWN ON THE PROPOSALS MAP, THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL NOT PERMIT DEVELOPMENT, REDEVELOPMENT OR CHANGE OF USE FOR RETAIL OR ANY PURPOSE OTHER THAN A BUSINESS, INDUSTRIAL OR WAREHOUSING USE.**

**4.2.18** With the limited supply of industrial land available within the Borough, and the physical and environmental constraints on new development, the Council will resist the encroachment of retail or any other uses within the identified employment areas. The Local Planning Authority will not permit the establishment of retail warehouses other than where specifically identified under Policy S6 of the Plan.

### **Other Sites in Business and Industrial Uses**

#### **POLICY E6**

**PROPOSALS FOR DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT FOR BUSINESS, INDUSTRIAL OR WAREHOUSING USES OUTSIDE THE GREEN BELT WILL BE ACCEPTABLE ON SITES ALREADY IN SUCH USE SUBJECT TO NORMAL DEVELOPMENT CONTROL CRITERIA AND PROVIDED THAT PROPOSALS WOULD NOT LEAD TO AN UNDESIRABLE INTENSIFICATION OF ACTIVITY TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT, OR TO THE AMENITIES OF NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES.**

**PROPOSALS INVOLVING THE PROVISION OF SMALL BUSINESS/INDUSTRIAL UNITS OR THE PROVISION OF A MIX OF USES APPROPRIATE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA WILL GENERALLY BE ENCOURAGED.**

**PROPOSALS FOR REDEVELOPMENT OR CHANGE OF USE OF PREMISES, NOT COVERED BY POLICY E5, TO OTHER USES WILL BE SUPPORTED IN APPROPRIATE CIRCUMSTANCES.**

**4.2.19** Scattered throughout the Borough are a large number of isolated sites in business or industrial use which do not fall within the identified employment areas, the town centre commercial areas of Windsor and Maidenhead and other defined commercial centres. In general, redevelopment or small scale building extensions within these sites will be considered acceptable where this would not lead to new activities or an intensification of the existing activities to the detriment of the environment or neighbouring residents.

**4.2.20** Redevelopment proposals which provide clear planning benefits in terms of the provision of small industrial starter or nursery units, or a mix of uses will be particularly encouraged.

**4.2.21** Outside of identified employment areas, the Borough Council will generally support proposals for the redevelopment of sites in existing business/industrial use to alternative uses such as housing, recreation, social or community development. This is subject to the proposals having no unacceptable adverse impact on locally available employment opportunities and their compatibility with other policies in the Local Plan. This accords with the provisions of Policy BU3 of the Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006.

**Inappropriately Located Uses**

**POLICY E7**

**WHERE INDUSTRIAL FIRMS ARE CONSIDERED TO BE INAPPROPRIATELY LOCATED IN RELATION TO THE ADJACENT LAND USES THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL FAVOUR THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THESE SITES FOR ALTERNATIVE USES MORE CONSISTENT WITH THEIR SURROUNDINGS.**

**4.2.22** Where Industrial sites are located in residential areas they can cause Unacceptable disturbance to neighbouring properties through, for example, noise, smell, or traffic generation. Should these sites become available for redevelopment the Local Planning Authority will favour development for alternative uses.

~~**Business Use in Town Centres**~~

~~**POLICY E8**~~

~~**MAJOR BUSINESS USE PROPOSALS INVOLVING A NET INCREASE IN FLOORSPACE OF GREATER THAN 300 SQUARE METRES, OTHER THAN ON SITES SPECIFICALLY ALLOCATED WITHIN THE COMMERCIAL AREAS OF MAIDENHEAD AND WINDSOR TOWN CENTRES, WILL NOT BE PERMITTED.**~~



~~**POLICY E9**~~

~~**SCHEMES FOR BUSINESS USE ON SITES WHERE THERE IS NO PREVIOUS PLANNING COMMITMENT FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND INVOLVING A NET FLOORSPACE INCREASE OF LESS THAN 300 SQUARE METRES WILL BE PERMITTED WITHIN THE COMMERCIAL AREAS OF MAIDENHEAD AND WINDSOR TOWN CENTRES WHERE THIS INVOLVES:**~~

- ~~**1) THE EXTENSION OF EXISTING PREMISES; OR**~~
- ~~**2) THE REPLACEMENT OF EXISTING FLOORSPACE**~~

~~**WITHIN REDEVELOPMENT SCHEMES THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL ENCOURAGE THE PROVISION OF NEW OFFICE UNITS, INCLUDING SERVICED ACCOMMODATION, OF LESS THAN 300 SQUARE METRES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF LOCAL FIRMS. SUBJECT TO POLICY H11 REDEVELOPMENT SCHEMES WILL BE REQUIRED TO INCORPORATE THE REPLACEMENT OF ANY EXISTING RESIDENTIAL ACCOMMODATION.**~~

**~~PERMISSIONS WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR  
PIECEMEAL FORMS OF DEVELOPMENT.~~**

~~4.2.23 These Policies are primarily concerned with meeting local needs through the provision of small units while meeting the strategic requirements for restraint of such development. This will be achieved by precluding major employment generating development, except through identified schemes which offer significant planning and other benefits and on sites already in existing business use. Whilst some forms of business use may be appropriate within the existing employment areas, the town centres of Maidenhead and Windsor will remain the main focus for any office development. The sites identified for major new development, i.e. involving an increase in office floorspace of greater than 300 m<sup>2</sup> are shown on the town centre insets and referred to in the sections relating to Maidenhead and Windsor town centres. They will all provide significant planning benefits in terms of the provision of essential infrastructure, town centre housing and overall townscape improvements.~~

~~4.2.24 In view of the high level of outstanding commitments for new office developments, the need to balance employment growth with the provision of housing within the Borough and the implications for future traffic generation, the Council will resist additional proposals for major schemes. Schemes will only be permitted in exceptional circumstances where there are particular planning benefits to be achieved. Major developments will not be permitted, however, where the scale of development proposed and the likely employment generation would seriously conflict with the restraint policies of the Local Plan and the Structure Plan. Small scale schemes, however, will generally be acceptable.~~

~~4.2.25 The definition of small office schemes, i.e. 300 m<sup>2</sup> floorspace or less, has been consistently applied in the Borough and was originally the average size of accommodation in Maidenhead and Windsor. Such schemes are also generally compatible with environmental considerations. The Local Planning Authority will normally permit small scale extensions to existing premises and schemes which provide specific planning benefits, such as the provision of additional town centre uses. They would however resist piecemeal development which would restrict the beneficial development of a wider area. All schemes will be judged on their merits in relation to normal development control criteria. The Local Planning Authority will also require that new office suites within small scale developments have a floorspace of no more than 300 m<sup>2</sup> in order to maintain a supply of modern premises for local businesses.~~

**Design and Development Guidelines**

**POLICY E10**

**IN CONSIDERING PLANNING APPLICATIONS FOR BUSINESS AND INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL HAVE REGARD TO THE FOLLOWING GUIDELINES:-**

- 1) THE LAYOUT OF ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE SITE, THE DESIGN AND SCALE OF THE BUILDINGS AND THE MATERIALS USED ARE APPROPRIATE FOR THE AREA IN WHICH THEY ARE LOCATED AND WOULD NOT RESULT IN AN UNNEIGHBOURLY DEVELOPMENT OR AN UNDESIRABLE INTENSIFICATION OF AN EXISTING USE; AND**
- 2) THE PROVISION OF THE FOLLOWING, WHERE APPROPRIATE AND RELATED:**
  - (i) ON SITE ENVIRONMENTAL OR TOWNSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS;**
  - (ii) THE PROVISION OF A MIX OF USES APPROPRIATE TO THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA, FOR EXAMPLE AN INCREASED AMOUNT OF RETAIL, RESIDENTIAL, LEISURE OR COMMUNITY FACILITIES.**
- 3) ADEQUATE LOCAL SERVICES (WATER, SEWERAGE DRAINAGE, PUBLIC TRANSPORT ETC) ARE AVAILABLE OR CAPABLE OF PROVISION AS NECESSARY;**

**WHERE NECESSARY AND DIRECTLY RELATED TO THE DEVELOPMENT, THE COUNCIL WILL SEEK IMPROVEMENTS TO THE LOCAL HIGHWAY INFRASTRUCTURE AND CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE PROVISION OF ESSENTIAL SERVICES OR FACILITIES, INCLUDING PUBLIC TRANSPORT FACILITIES.**

**4.2.26** The Council wishes to encourage the highest standards of design, layout and landscaping within new development schemes, which provide an overall improvement to the environment. New developments should incorporate appropriate levels of open space within the design of the scheme. It also wishes to ensure that adequate arrangements are made for service vehicles and servicing within new developments to allow buildings, particularly B1 premises, to be used for a wide range of purposes.

**4.2.27** The Council will require that all the infrastructure, services and other facilities made necessary by a development are provided, or will be provided. In relation to public transport the highway authority will determine whether any public transport provision is warranted as part of a business or industrial development at the planning application stage. Clearly the need for, and level of any such provision, would be highly dependant upon the particular circumstances relating to the proposal, such as the location, type and scale of development, The Council will seek, as appropriate, contributions towards these provisions in association with other relevant service agencies. Proposals will also need to comply with policies DG I, NAP 3 and NAP 4.

### **4.3 SHOPPING**

**4.3.1** Retailing has been one of the fastest growing sectors of the local economy during the past decade and accounts for approximately 10% of all employment within the Borough. As well as being a major employer and providing an essential service to the local community, shopping also has a key role to play in maintaining the historic fabric of the town centres.

#### **The regional and strategic framework**

**4.3.2** Revised regional planning guidance on retail development contained in RPG9 was published in March 1994. This has subsequently been followed by updated national planning policy guidance in revised PPG6 'Town Centres and Retail Developments.' This PPG, published in June 1996, emphasises the role of town centres as the focus for new retail development, and is aimed at sustaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of town centres. Re PPG also places emphasis on the planned approach to promoting development in town centres, both through policies and the identification of sites for development, and sets out a sequential approach for the selection of sites for development. This reaffirms the earlier advice set out in PPG13 'Transport', and RPG9 which seek to promote sustainable forms of development that are readily accessible and can be served by a variety of means of transport.

**4.3.3** RPG9 (Regional Planning Guidance for the South East) reflects the approach toward new retail development promulgated in PPG6. The regional guideline confirms the social and economic importance of town and district centres. These centres should provide the focus of new shopping activity. Only where scope is limited should additional shopping outside existing centres be promoted preferably on edge of town centre sites with good access to public transport or if this is not possible, at alternative locations within the urban area on sites accessible by a choice of means of transport. Against

this background the regional advice says that development plans should not need to provide for further regional out-of-town shopping centres.

**4.3.4** The Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006 takes account of the regional planning advice. It acknowledges the benefits of locating new shopping development within town centres in terms of the existing substantial investment in infrastructure which it makes sense to maintain and build upon to sustain vitality and viability, and also through the encouragement of use of public transport and minimising the need for travel. In this way new development can meet the objectives of sustainability set out in the Structure Plan. It also concludes that the amount of retail development already committed in the County will provide a range of shopping facilities to meet most of the anticipated needs and a cautious approach will be required towards further development, particularly towards large scale retail development outside existing shopping centres.

**4.3.5** The policies in the Structure Plan aim to maintain the existing hierarchy of shopping centres and to ensure that new development should generally be consistent with the role of each centre (Policy S3). In conjunction with other policies relating to limiting the impact of development, the Structure Plan applies the following 'tests' in the consideration of proposals for new shopping development:

1. Retail Impact - whether by themselves or cumulatively the proposals would have a serious effect on the vitality and viability of existing shopping centres, (Policy S3);
2. Traffic Impact - whether the proposals give rise to serious problems of access, parking, road safety or traffic congestion, (Policy LD5);
3. Environmental Impact - whether the proposals give rise to serious harm to the character or appearance of all areas, or the amenities of neighbouring land uses, (Policy LD3).

**4.3.6** Policies in the Structure Plan also seek to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of existing shopping centres through improvements to the range and quality of shops, improvements to parking and accessibility, and also improvements to the shopping environment. Additionally, in relation to the location of major shopping development, Policy S4 incorporates the 'sequential test' as promoted in the South East Regional Guidance and more recently in PPG6, whereby new developments should be located within existing centres or located close to the edge of one of those centres where they cannot be accommodated within a centre. Exceptionally, where such developments cannot be accommodated on sites within or at the edge of centres, they may be acceptable within the existing urban areas of

Maidenhead or Windsor.

### **New Shopping Provision in The Borough**

**4.3.7** The Local Plan area contains a wide variety of shopping provision. The local hierarchy of shopping centres is set out below:

SUB-REGIONAL CENTRE: WINDSOR

MAIN TOWN CENTRE: MAIDENHEAD

DISTRICT CENTRES: ASCOT,  
SUNNINGDALE

LOCAL CENTRES: SUNNINGHILL,  
DATCHET,  
COOKHAM RISE,  
ETON,  
ST LEONARDS ROAD

These centres vary widely in their role and function, from Windsor which draws trade from a wide catchment area to local centres serving their immediately surrounding areas. There are also a large number of local shopping parades and stores providing for day to day requirements close to people's homes.

**4.3.8** The range and quality of the shopping provision in the Borough has improved considerably in recent years through a number of new developments, including the refurbishment of Nicholson's Walk, the completion of King Edward Court and the new Waitrose stores in Maidenhead and Sunningdale. However for existing centres to retain their vitality and viability it is essential they remain attractive to both shoppers and new investment in the face of increasing competition from other retail centres and developments.

**4.3.9** In March 1993, the Borough Council commissioned a retail study to examine the parterres of retail provision and expenditure in the catchments of Windsor and Maidenhead and to assess the scope for further improvements to the level and quality of shopping facilities in these areas. Tills study, ~prepared by Erdman~ Lewis, identified fairly well defined compact catchment areas reflecting the influence of other nearby competing centres. Specific surveys were undertaken to identify shopping habits of householders and also to obtain shoppers' attitudes

towards the two main centres in the Borough. In addition, a survey was undertaken to establish visitors' spending patterns in Windsor.

**4.3.10** The Study revealed significant outflows of expenditure from the primary catchment areas, for both food and non food goods Growth in expenditure 1991 - 2001 was estimated, with increased expenditure on comparison goods forecast to be considerably more than growth in expenditure on convenience goods. This results largely from increased expenditure per capita on retail goods rather than any growth in the population of the catchment areas which is likely to remain static. The growth in retail expenditure provided an indication of the scope for additional shopping development, and this was supplemented by a reconnaissance of retailer requirements to provide a balanced appraisal of the development potential in each of the main towns.

**4.3.11** Both towns were judged to be trading well with a good representation of multiple retailers and smaller specialist shops. The prospects for future growth or expansion, however, differed between centres. The outflow of convenience expenditure from both catchments highlighted the scope for improvements in this sector. In the case of Maidenhead, despite a strong convenience base, the study revealed a large outflow of expenditure to stores outside the catchment. The absence of a large free-standing foodstore was regarded as the main reason for this outflow. The study concluded that there was a strong case for locating such a store to serve the town of Maidenhead to arrest the outflow of expenditure, and also to provide a qualitative improvement in retail facilities providing a wider range and choice of goods,

**4.3.12** In Windsor's case, the convenience base was not as strong, with the influence of nearby foodstores in Slough drawing a substantial proportion of expenditure from the Windsor catchment. Some of this expenditure has been recovered by the provision of the new Tesco Store in Dedworth Road with some diversion likely from stores in Windsor town centre. On the basis of a relatively small growth in convenience expenditure and some continuing outflow of expenditure, there was not considered to be a need for a further site for a large new food store.

**4.3.13** The Study also addressed the scope for further comparison goods shopping in both towns. Forecast expenditure provided some support for additional floorspace serving both towns with the expected increase in spending in Maidenhead being approximately double that for Windsor. This, combined with the survey of retailer's requirements, provided a justification for expansion of comparison shopping floorspace. The main demand identified was from the multiple retailers with some variety store interest, particularly in Maidenhead. With regard to non-food retail warehousing, demand was mainly confined to the DIY sector with an identified demand for Maidenhead only.

**4.3.14** The Study concluded that there was not currently scope for a significant expansion of Windsor's shopping function. Some modest increase through redevelopment would cater for Windsor's identified needs. For Maidenhead, the extension to Nicholson's Walk would cater for much of the identified demand for unit shops whilst there still remained the demand for variety stores but not the larger department stores. Some demand for retail warehousing was identified for Maidenhead. It is notable that the Study found that both towns occupied similar positions in the shopping hierarchy as opposed to SERPLAN'S view that Windsor provides a wider sub-regional role. However, the Study noted the additional importance of tourism to the shopping role of Windsor.

**4.3.15** Additional information gained from the retail study relates to the shoppers' perception of the two towns shopping environment and facilities and their respective strengths and weaknesses. Some perceived problems in respect of car parking and servicing facilities within the towns, particularly Windsor, were noted. In Windsor, the overall shopping environment was criticised whilst in Maidenhead the majority of respondents felt the town centre had improved with few identified dislikes. Pedestrianisation in Windsor was supported whilst in Maidenhead there was little support for additional pedestrian areas.

**4.3.16** Generally, the Study endorsed the strategy contained in the earlier consultation draft of the Local Plan. The emphasis within the Local Plan, therefore,

will continue to be towards improving the general shopping environment and accessibility and promoting new development opportunities which will consolidate and where appropriate strengthen, the position of existing centres within the shopping hierarchy. It is particularly important that further improvements are made to the shopping provision in Windsor and Maidenhead consistent with their respective roles, and in accordance with the overall conclusions of the Council's Retail Study.

### **Controlling Land Uses in Shopping Areas**

**4.3.17** The vitality and viability of existing shopping areas is also influenced by the mix of retail and non-retail uses. Three classes of development (1987 Use Classes Order as amended) are normally associated with shopping areas.

#### **Shops (Class A1)**

This class includes retail shops, pet shops, showrooms, domestic hire shops, sandwich bars, post offices, travel agencies and hairdressers.

#### **Financial and Professional Services (Class A2)**

This class includes banks, building societies, estate agents, employment agencies, insurance brokers and other business uses where there is a substantial element of direct service to the general public justifying a shopping street location.

#### **Food and Drink (Class A3)**

This class covers a wide range of restaurant and other catering uses including hot food shops, cafes, snack bars and public houses.

**4.3.18** The Local Plan provides an opportunity to consider the most appropriate locations for these uses and services, and to resist future changes of use which would be detrimental to the role, character and diversity of particular streets or centres. It is vital to strike the right balance between providing a diversity of supporting uses (e.g. pubs, restaurants) and breaking up the coherence of shopping frontages with 'dead' uses promoting little activity or visual appeal.



**4.3.19** Chapter 7 considers each identified centre comprehensively in terms of its future development, enhancement and mix of uses.

**4.3.20 Key objectives**

- (i) To maintain and enhance the existing shopping hierarchy in order to provide a full range of high quality shopping facilities within the Borough.
- (ii) To improve the convenience, safety and attractiveness of the main shopping centres through pedestrian priority schemes, environmental enhancement measures, improvements to their accessibility, especially for the disabled, and by controlling the location of non-retail uses.
- (iii) To identify opportunities for additional development which will overcome local deficiencies in retail provision, and which will complement the existing shopping hierarchy

**Location of shopping development**

**POLICY S1**

**NEW RETAIL DEVELOPMENT WILL BE PERMITTED WHERE THIS WOULD ENHANCE THE ATTRACTIVENESS AND VIABILITY OF EXISTING CENTRES PROVIDED THAT THE PROPOSAL:**

- 1) IS OF A SCALE COMMENSURATE WITH THE SIZE, CHARACTER AND ROLE OF THE CENTRE;**
- 2) CAN BE INTEGRATED INTO THE**

**EXISTING SHOPPING CENTRE AREA AND PROVIDES APPROPRIATE PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE LINKS;**

- 3) MEETS THE REQUIREMENTS FOR PARKING, SERVICING AND ACCESS INCLUDED IN APPENDIX 7, AND CAN BE ACCOMMODATED SATISFACTORILY WITHIN THE LOCAL HIGHWAY NETWORK**

**4.3.21** The Borough Council wishes to maintain the existing shopping hierarchy in order to ensure that a wide range of shops and services are available to all sections of the community including the elderly, the infirm or disabled and mothers with young children who may rely on public transport or walking to the shops. New retail investment will also help to preserve the historic character of existing centres and ensure they remain a focus for the economic and social life of the community.

**4.3.22** The majority of new floorspace should be provided within the town centres of Windsor and Maidenhead and should be well located in relation to existing shops. It is important that both centres continue to expand, either through redevelopment or the refurbishment of existing floorspace, in order to retain their viability and status within their catchment areas.

**4.3.23** Retail proposals within district and local centres will generally be related to more localised shopping needs consistent with the role of each centre within the hierarchy.

**POLICY S2**

**THE FOLLOWING SITES LISTED BELOW ARE ALLOCATED FOR ADDITIONAL RETAIL DEVELOPMENT:**

**MAIDENHEAD TOWN CENTRE**

- **EXTENSION TO NICHOLSON'S WALK TO REAR OF 53-57 HIGH STREET**
- **KING STREET / BROADWAY MULTI-STOREY CAR PARK**

**WINDSOR TOWN CENTRE**

- **R/O 131-133 PEASCOD STREET**

- WINDSOR AND ETON CENTRAL STATION

### ST LEONARDS ROAD

- LIBRARY SITE AND ADJOINING LAND

4.3.24 These sites will provide logical extensions to the existing shopping areas. Detailed development guidelines are contained in Chapter 7 dealing with the town centres and settlement areas, and are identified on the inset maps.

### Improving the attractiveness of shopping areas

#### ~~POLICY S3~~

~~WHERE PRACTICABLE AND RELATED TO DEVELOPMENT OR REDEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS, THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL SEEK TO ACHIEVE IMPROVEMENTS TO THE ENVIRONMENT OF THE BOROUGH'S SHOPPING AREAS THROUGH THE FOLLOWING MEASURES:~~

- ~~1) ADDITIONAL PEDESTRIANISATION AND PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY SCHEMES;~~
- ~~2) FOOTWAY WIDENING AND VARIATIONS IN SURFACE MATERIALS;~~
- ~~3) PROVISION OF NEW AND IMPROVED STREET FURNITURE, LIGHTING AND LANDSCAPING;~~
- ~~4) IMPROVED ACCESS FOR PEDESTRIANS AND CYCLISTS, AND THE PROVISION OF PARKING;~~
- ~~5) IMPROVED ACCESS TO AND WITHIN THE SHOPPING ENVIRONMENT FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES;~~
- ~~6) OPPORTUNITIES FOR TODDLERS PLAY.~~

~~4.3.25 There is considerable scope for improving the shopping areas within the Borough in order to create a more convenient, safer and pleasing environment. The following principles will apply to traffic management and access within areas of the town centres to provide for:~~

- ~~• Primary shopping core -- no cars or cycles~~
- ~~• Adjoining shopping areas -- cycle and pedestrian priority~~
- ~~• Peripheral areas -- cars on calmed streets, pedestrians and cycles~~

~~The Borough Council will investigate possible improvement measures and appropriate schemes will be implemented following consultation with local retailers and other interested parties. New developments will be expected to provide a major financial contribution towards such improvements as well as through their scheme design.~~

~~4.3.26 Traffic management and environmental enhancement proposals for those centres identified in the local shopping hierarchy are outlined in Chapter 7, together with policies to limit the level of non-retail uses and to maintain the diversity of these areas. These centres are considered the most important for comprehensive treatment. More modest improvements may also be sought to other local shopping parades.~~

### ~~Major Retail Development~~

#### ~~POLICY S4~~

~~PLANNING PERMISSION WILL NOT BE GRANTED FOR ANY NEW FREE-STANDING REGIONAL OR SUB-REGIONAL SHOPPING CENTRE IN THE BOROUGH.~~

~~4.3.27 In view of the major environmental and land use constraints within the Borough, the Local Planning Authority will strongly resist proposals for a new regional or sub-regional shopping centre in the Borough. PPG6 (Revised) 'Town Centres and Retail Developments', states that such developments of more than 50,000m<sup>2</sup> floorspace can have a substantial impact over a wide area. Although the guidance acknowledges that there may be circumstances where such centres could fulfil an important retail need, these will be limited. Amongst several factors there should be an existing deficiency of higher order shopping centres, there should be no loss of Green Belt, or important open space, habitats or countryside, and the effect on the road network and overall car use would be acceptable. Whilst the scope for such developments should be assessed in regional planning guidance, it is likely that this level of development would seriously affect the vitality and viability of existing shopping centres in the Borough.~~

#### ~~POLICY S5~~

~~THE COUNCIL WILL EXPECT DEVELOPMENT FOR NEW MAJOR RETAIL USES TO BE LOCATED WITHIN THE CENTRES OF WINDSOR, MAIDENHEAD, SUNNINGDALE AND ASCOT, OR IF SUITABLE SITES ARE NOT AVAILABLE, CLOSE TO THE EDGE OF THOSE CENTRES.~~

~~PLANNING PERMISSION WILL ONLY BE GRANTED FOR SUCH DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE CENTRES WHERE THERE ARE NO~~

**SUITABLE SITES AVAILABLE EITHER IN THE CENTRE OR AT THE EDGE OF THOSE CENTRES IF IT:-**

- 1) IS SHOWN THAT THERE IS A NEED FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENTS; AND**
- 2) IS LOCATED WITHIN THE URBAN AREAS OF EITHER WINDSOR OR MAIDENHEAD; AND**
- 3) WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE OVERALL VITALITY AND VIABILITY OF AN EXISTING SHOPPING CENTRE; AND**
- 4) IS OR CAN BE MADE ACCESSIBLE BY A CHOICE OF MEANS OF TRANSPORT, INCLUDING PUBLIC TRANSPORT, AND THE HIGHWAY NETWORK IS CAPABLE OF ACCOMMODATING THE TRAFFIC GENERATED; AND**
- 5) WOULD NOT ADD SIGNIFICANTLY TO THE OVERALL NUMBER AND LENGTH OF CAR TRIPS FOR SHOPPING PURPOSES;AND**
- 6) CAN PROVIDE GOOD PEDESTRIAN AND CYCLE LINKS WITH ADJACENT RESIDENTIAL AREAS; AND**
- 7) WILL NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE AMENITIES OF ADJOINING LAND USES.**

**THE COUNCIL WILL ALSO EXPECT ANY IMPROVEMENTS TO INFRASTRUCTURE WHICH ARE MADE NECESSARY BY A DEVELOPMENT, AND DIRECTLY RELATED TO IT, TO BE PROVIDED IN ACCORDANCE WITH POLICY IMP1.**

**4.3.28** The Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006 defines major shopping development as involving schemes of 500m<sup>2</sup> floorspace or more. In accordance with latest national, regional and strategic planning guidance on the location of new shopping development, major new shopping proposals should, where possible, be located within existing town or district centres. Where this is not possible then locations close to the edge of one of those centres should be sought. These will continue to provide the preferred location for new retail development in accordance with Policy S4 of the Berkshire Structure Plan. Only exceptionally, where there are no suitable sites within or close to the edge of one of these centres, and where there is a clearly defined need for the facilities, will development be acceptable in out of centre locations, but within the urban areas of either Windsor or Maidenhead. Such locations will need to meet the criteria set out in Policy S5 above and, in the

case of access to public transport, ensure good links to residential areas. In addition, any major development located outside existing centres will be expected to make appropriate provision for recycling facilities in accordance with Policy LD2 of the Berkshire Structure Plan.

**4.3.29** The objective of maintaining and enhancing the vitality and viability of existing centres means that, wherever possible, new development should be located within the existing retail hierarchy. In order to achieve more sustainable patterns of development and to ensure that new facilities meet the needs of most of the community, new shopping development should also be located where there is a choice of means of transport and in order to reduce the need to travel. In practice this means locating major new development for food or non-food 'comparison' type shopping close to town centre shopping areas which serve as a focus for a variety of means of transport. Government advice in PPG 13 'Transport' encourages such an approach aimed at reducing the reliance on the private car.

**4.3.30** It is recognised that car-borne shopping for either bulk purchase of goods or the larger bulkier items has become an established part of the shopping scene, offering a wider range and choice of goods. These types of retail facility, including large foodstores or retail 'warehouse' units, by their nature require extensive adjacent parking areas and good road access. Where development of this nature cannot be accommodated on sites within an existing centre due to constraints on availability of sites or transport considerations, edge of town centre sites will provide the preferred location for such facilities which will complement the retail function of existing centres. The limited land supply within the urban areas and the need to protect and make additional provision for residential, recreational and industrial activities mean the potential for retail warehousing and other forms of large scale retail development outside existing shopping centres will be very limited.

**4.3.31** Other more recent types of retailing such as 'warehouse clubs' and 'factory outlet' retail units will be assessed according to the same criteria as other retail proposals. Out of town or greenfield locations will not be acceptable where these conflict with Green Belt policy. Small scale facilities providing essentially a local convenience facility such as farm shops may be appropriate Outside urban areas where these are an ancillary activity to the farming enterprise and thus have a role in diversifying established farm business. As such, farm shops may be permitted in appropriate circumstances where they are not likely to cause conflict with the objectives or the purposes of including land within Green Belts. Goods sold in such shops should be predominantly produced on the associated farm. A small proportion of produce not

produced locally may be acceptable in order to provide continuity of availability.

**4.3.32** The Council's Retail Study has identified the scope for a large new foodstore to meet a quantitative and qualitative deficiency in the Maidenhead area. The study has also identified scope for contemporary forms of retail warehousing to meet demands in the Maidenhead area. In considering the study's findings, the Council has been concerned that the identification of a possible site for a new foodstore and also the location of other retail development should not prejudice the town centre strategy and associated investment in the centre. It is also concerned that new development should not adversely affect the viability and vitality of the town centre.

**4.3.33** Following the publication of revised PPG6 in June 1996, and the Inspector's report into the Local Plan Inquiry in February 1997, the Council has decided to examine the feasibility of alternative options for the provision of a large new foodstore which may accord more closely with national and strategic planning objectives regarding town centres. A more central or edge of centre location for such a foodstore would be more likely to bring about the benefits for the town centre as a whole through encouraging 'linked trips', and the associated spin off trade for other town centre retailers and businesses, in a more accessible

location for all transport users. In looking at such alternative locations rather than promoting an out of centre foodstore, the Council acknowledges the scope to draw back some of the expenditure which currently 'leaks' from the Maidenhead catchment to other stores and centres beyond the catchment area. The Council has, therefore, decided to withdraw the previous proposal for a large new foodstore on land to the south of Stafferton Way, Maidenhead.

#### ~~POLICY S6~~

~~THE FOLLOWING SITE IS ALLOCATED FOR RETAIL WAREHOUSE DEVELOPMENT:~~

#### ~~LAND AT STAFFERTON WAY, MAIDENHEAD~~

~~4.3.34 With the identified demand for retail warehousing in Maidenhead, and the limited scope for accommodating the space requirements for this type of retail activity catering for bulky goods, either close to the town centre or in accessible locations outside the town centre of Maidenhead, there will be limited opportunity for such development over the Plan period. The only location which has been identified for some limited retail warehousing is land at Stafferton Way included as site M12 under Policy MTC7. This area, situated close to the edge of the town centre, is located prominently alongside the~~

~~proposed Stafferton Way link between Braywick Road and Oldfield Road. Once the link is completed this site will provide a suitable non-food retailing opportunity on a major route close to Maidenhead town centre, accessible by a choice of means of transport.~~

### Local Shopping Parades and Stores

#### POLICY S7

**PROPOSALS FOR ADDITIONAL FLOORSPACE WITHIN LOCAL SHOPPING PARADES SHOULD BE OF A SCALE AND NATURE IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA AND SHOULD ENHANCE LOCAL FACILITIES.**

**A CHANGE OF USE TO USES WITHIN CLASS A2 FINANCIAL AND PROFESSIONAL SERVICES OR CLASS A3 FOOD AND DRINK WILL BE ALLOWED WHERE THIS WOULD HELP TO MAINTAIN THE VITALITY OF THE SHOPPING PARADE, PROVIDING THAT IT WOULD:**

- 1) NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE LEVEL AND STANDARD OF LOCAL RETAIL PROVISION; AND**
- 2) NOT ADVERSELY AFFECT THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA OR THE AMENITIES OF NEIGHBOURING RESIDENTS; AND**
- 3) PROVIDE ADEQUATE CAR AND CYCLE PARKING PROVISION.**

**OTHER PROPOSALS WHICH WOULD RESULT IN THE LOSS OF EXISTING SHOPS WILL BE RESISTED.**

**4.3.35** The role of local shopping parades in providing a range of convenience goods close to residential areas is acknowledged. The provision of additional retail units in these areas will be supported in principle provided that the development is consistent with the character of the area, would not lead to any difficulties relating to access, servicing, car parking and design, and would not conflict with any other policies in this Plan.

**4.3.36** The change of use of shops to non-retail uses, including uses within the A2 (Financial and Professional Services) and A3 (Food and Drink) classes, will be resisted where this would adversely affect the level and standard of local shopping provision. The Local Planning Authority would be particularly concerned about the loss of important local shops, such as the only grocers shop or post office available locally.

**4.3.37** A2 and A3 uses, however, can help to maintain the vitality of shopping parades, particularly where shop vacancy levels may be increasing. Such proposals may be acceptable provided that normal development control criteria are satisfied, particularly in relation to neighbouring residential properties.

## **POLICY S8**

**THE CHANGE OF USE OF SHOPS (A1) OUTSIDE OF A SHOPPING PARADE TO A NON-RETAIL USE WILL NOT BE PERMITTED EXCEPT WHERE IT CAN BE DEMONSTRATED TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY THAT A RETAIL USE CAN NO LONGER BE SUSTAINED.**

**4.3.38** Corner shops and village stores provide an important local service. It is important that the needs of the elderly and the less mobile continue to be catered for by easily accessible shops, especially those smaller shops that cater for a wide range of day-to-day needs among all sections of the community. A change of use will only be permitted where it can be shown that there is no longer a demand for the retail use, for example that a thorough marketing exercise has been undertaken, and that the shop is no longer economically viable.

## **4.4 TOURISM**

**4.4.1** The third element in maintaining a healthy economy in the Borough is that contributed by the visitor trade. This is particularly important in Windsor, Ascot and in association with the River Thames. The management of visitor activity will greatly influence

the future quality of life within the Borough. It is therefore important that the Boroughwide Local Plan considers the land use and other implications of making additional provision.

**4.4.2** The number of visitors to the whole Borough totals approximately 3.7 million per annum. Windsor is by far the main visitor destination in the Borough with around 3.0 million visitors per annum, of which around 85 % are day trippers, staying on average only 4 hours. The single most important charging attraction was Legoland with over 1.4 million visitors in 1997. Town centre attractions take second place with 1.2 million visiting the Castle (state apartments). Outside of Windsor the main attractions were Eton College (26,360 visitors), Maidenhead's Shire Horse Centre (7,300 visitors), which is open in the summer months only and Cookham's Stanley Spencer Gallery (11,026 visitors).

**4.4.3** In 1980 the Borough Council adopted a 'Strategy for the Management of Tourism' aimed at minimising the adverse impact of a large number of visitors to Windsor whilst seeking to realise the potential of visitor expenditure in strengthening the local economy and improving facilities for the resident population. One of the main aims of the strategy has been to encourage visitors to stay longer and visit other attractions in the area. A new Visitor Strategy was published by the Council during 1997.

**4.4.4** Central Government advice stresses the importance of making adequate provision for tourism in local plans taking into account local constraints, including the effect on the local environment. PPG21 on Tourism continues to support the tourism industry while stressing that tourism must not damage the environmental

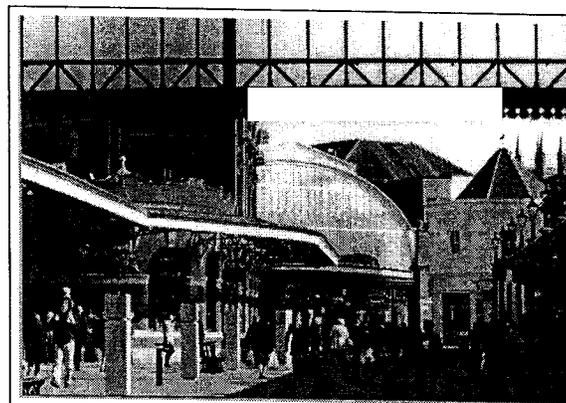
qualities that not only attract it but have a far wider and enduring value. The general presumption against inappropriate development in the Green Belt is also restated. In historic town centres the primary objective must be that of securing the preservation or enhancement of the character or appearance of areas of special architectural or historic interest. The Berkshire Structure Plan 1991-2006 reflects this approach by supporting provision for visitors on a scale and in a form commensurate with maintaining the character of the County's assets, and which does not give rise to conflicts of interest between visitors and residents. The Plan encourages making provision for spreading or diverting visitor pressure away from those locations subject to intense visitor pressure - most notably Windsor town centre. In addition, visitor management measures including special signing, access and parking measures are encouraged.

**4.4.5** In seeking to encourage visitors to stay longer, proposals are included in the Local Plan to provide additional accommodation and facilities for tourists. However, the level of additional provision will be limited by other objectives of the Plan, notably those concerning the protection of the historic fabric, traffic movement and maintaining the character of the Green Belt.

**4.4.6** Within the Green Belt, Policy GB1 contains a strong presumption against all types of development except those specifically referred to in the policy. This strong presumption against development includes commercial visitor developments like hotels or restaurants. Camping and touring caravan sites have previously been accepted as an appropriate use provided they are of a modest scale and do not have an adverse impact on their surroundings. Potential locations are identified which could in principle be used to provide these facilities, subject to the scale and nature of the scheme not conflicting with Policy GB2 and other proposals of the Plan relating to landscape conservation. In particular, such facilities will only be acceptable where they will be unobtrusive and do not have an unacceptable impact on environmental interests.

**4.4.7** An important aspect of visitor management in Windsor is the need to manage visitor movement and parking in order to reduce traffic congestion and pressure on central car parks, while enhancing the quality of the town centre's environment. The proposals in this section should therefore be read in conjunction with the other proposals of the Local Plan relating to car parking, transportation and movement. The Windsor Tourism Survey (1985) showed that approximately 55% of visitors arrived by private car;

and 19% came by coach. In July 1986 the Borough Council opened the new Coach Park and Visitor Reception Centre at Goswell Road providing parking for 76 coaches, restaurant and shopping facilities and a pedestrian link to the town centre. Combined with traffic management measures the Coach Park has been provided to manage more positively the movement and parking of coach traffic in Windsor in order to reduce traffic congestion, parking conflict and the impact of large vehicles on the historic fabric of the town.



#### **4.4.8 Key Objectives**

- (i) To promote appropriate management initiatives and to secure a balance in the level and location of visitor facilities and infrastructure in order to enhance the quality of life for both residents and visitors to the Borough.
- (ii) To identify opportunities for additional tourism related development throughout the Borough and to encourage new investment which will help to maintain the contribution of the tourism industry to the local economy, manage the concentration of visitors in certain parts of the Borough and provide benefits to the community.

#### **Visitor Accommodation**

##### **POLICY TM1**

**THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL ALLOCATE THE FOLLOWING SITE FOR A NEW HOTEL DEVELOPMENT PROVIDING APPROXIMATELY 150 BEDSPACES AS PART OF A MIXED DEVELOPMENT SCHEME SUBJECT TO THE SATISFACTORY RELOCATION OF THE**

**EXISTING PUBLIC CAR PARKING PROVISION:**

- RIVER STREET, WINDSOR

**POLICY TM2**

**OUTSIDE THE GREEN BELT, THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL PERMIT ADDITIONAL VISITOR BED-SPACES THROUGH NEW HOTEL DEVELOPMENT, THE CONVERSION OF EXISTING NON-RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS OR EXTENSIONS TO EXISTING HOTEL OR GUEST HOUSE ACCOMMODATION, WHERE THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA ARE MET:**

- 1) NO SUBSTANTIAL LOSS OF RESIDENTIAL AMENITY TO NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES WOULD RESULT; AND**
- 2) SUITABLE ARRANGEMENTS ARE MADE FOR ACCESS AND CAR PARKING TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WITHOUT DETRIMENT TO ADJOINING PROPERTIES; AND**
- 3) ANY DEVELOPMENT AND EXTENSIONS ARE OF A SCALE AND DESIGN IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA; AND**
- 4) APPROPRIATE PROVISION IS MADE FOR THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED IN THE SCHEME'S DESIGN; AND**
- 5) A SATISFACTORY LANDSCAPING SCHEME SHALL BE SUBMITTED WITH THE APPLICATION, SHOWING:**
  - (i) ADEQUATE SCREENING BETWEEN CAR PARKING AREAS, THE HIGHWAY, AND ADJACENT PROPERTIES; AND**
  - (ii) THAT AN ACCEPTABLE AMOUNT OF AMENITY SPACE WILL BE PROVIDED FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF GUESTS AND RESIDENTS.**

**POLICY TM3**

**PROPOSALS FOR BED AND BREAKFAST**

**ACCOMMODATION WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTABLE WHERE ALL THE REQUIREMENTS OF POLICY TM2 ARE MET, AND WHICH SATISFY THE FOLLOWING ADDITIONAL CRITERIA**

- 1) THE PROPERTY MUST BE OF SUBSTANTIAL SIZE AND CLEARLY SEPARATED FROM NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES; AND**
- 2) THE BED AND BREAKFAST USE MUST BE ANCILLARY TO THE MAIN USE OF THE DWELLING AS A RESIDENCE; AND**
- 3) BED AND BREAKFAST USES SHOULD NOT BE ESTABLISHED IN ADJACENT PROPERTIES OR RESULT IN THE PROLIFERATION OF SUCH USES WITHIN ANY AREA, WHERE THIS WOULD RESULT IN A MATERIAL CHANGE IN THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA OR A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN TRAFFIC WITHIN A RESIDENTIAL AREA; AND**
- 4) EXTENSIONS TO A PROPERTY FOR BED AND BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION WILL ONLY BE PERMITTED WHERE THIS WOULD NOT RESULT IN MATERIAL HARM TO THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA OR TO THE AMENITIES OF NEIGHBOURING PROPERTIES.**

**4.4.9** The Borough's tourism strategy encourages longer stay visits through the provision of additional bed spaces. Jennings Yard, River Street, Windsor currently has permission for a mixed development of offices, hotel and museum but now appears unlikely to proceed. This area provides an important link between the river and the Castle but its attractiveness for tourism is reduced by the area's domination by traffic movements. Policy WTC6 proposes a major redevelopment scheme for this area which would include a larger hotel scheme with improved pedestrian access between the river and the Castle while providing an opportunity for other visitor-related riverside facilities. A hotel in this location would also provide a facility for the local community. Any development will be dependent upon the satisfactory replacement/relocation of the public car parking provision on the site and compliance with the various other criteria listed under Policy WTC6.

**4.4.10** In Maidenhead the main focus of visitor activity is the Thames between Boulters Lock and Maidenhead Bridge. This area already has a number of hotels and guest houses and, in addition, a small 20 bed hotel has received planning permission adjacent to the Chef Peking restaurant. However, the growth in Maidenhead's commercial function and its location within easy reach of Heathrow Airport, the M4, M25, M3 and M40 makes it an ideal location for conference venues and business meetings. In seeking to improve facilities for both tourists and business visitors there is a need for additional hotel accommodation in Maidenhead in the form of a medium-sized hotel of up to 200 bed spaces which includes conference facilities. This should be located close to the town centre with good access to the station and major road network.

**4.4.11** In Ascot permission has been agreed in principle for a 120 bed space hotel adjacent to the A329/A332 roundabout and close to the racecourse.

**4.4.12** Extensions to existing hotels and guest houses outside the Green Belt will normally be acceptable in principle, subject to standard development control issues such as effect on adjoining properties; access and car parking; effect on the character of the area and landscaping. In addition, schemes will be expected to make provision for disabled access and use.

**4.4.13** Bed and breakfast establishments are also important in widening the choice, price and supply of visitor accommodation. Whilst acknowledging their role, it is important that the conversion of private dwellings for bed and breakfast use does not have a detrimental effect on the amenities of adjoining dwellings or result in the loss of a residential unit. A large number of such uses in a small area can cause material change to the character of that area to the detriment of its residents by way of increased traffic and disturbance. The cumulative impact of any proposal will therefore need to be assessed. The impact of additional parking will be an important consideration. The provision of parking areas in the rear gardens of properties will generally be unacceptable.

**4.4.14** Within the Green Belt the general presumption against inappropriate development will apply. Proposals for the change of use of existing buildings to use as a hotel, hostel or guest house will normally be resisted on the grounds that such proposals would introduce a commercial use out of character with a rural area.

## **Visitor Facilities**

### **POLICY TM4**

**NEW, PURPOSE-BUILT VISITOR FACILITIES WILL BE RESTRICTED TO THE TOWN CENTRES. OUTSIDE THESE AREAS NEW PURPOSE BUILT VISITOR FACILITIES WILL ONLY BE ACCEPTABLE WHERE THEY:**

- 1) ARE SMALL SCALE; AND**
- 2) WILL NOT DAMAGE THE CHARACTER OF THE AREA; AND**
- 3) WILL BENEFIT THE LOCAL POPULATION; AND**
- 4) ARE NOT SITED IN PROMINENT LOCATIONS; AND**
- 5) WOULD NOT RESULT IN A PROLIFERATION OF VISITOR DEVELOPMENT IN AN AREA.**

### **POLICY TM5**

~~**THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL NORMALLY PERMIT THE PROVISION OF MUSEUM/HERITAGE CENTRES IN WINDSOR AND MAIDENHEAD.**~~

### **POLICY TM6**

**THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL PERMIT THE CONVERSION OF THE RAILWAY ARCHES UNDER WINDSOR AND ETON CENTRAL STATION AS DEFINED ON THE PROPOSALS MAP TO USES ASSOCIATED WITH TOURISM SUCH AS CRAFT WORKSHOPS, SMALL RETAIL UNITS, RESTAURANTS, OR OTHER FOOD AND DRINK USES.**

**4.4.15** The scope for future visitor development, particularly in Windsor, is limited by the constraints of the Green Belt, the need to protect the amenities of local residents and the environment, and the ability of Windsor to cope with congestion created through its function as a major visitor centre. Within the town centres additional visitor facilities may be appropriate subject to their being sympathetic with other objectives of the Plan, in particular those relating to the environment, conservation and transport. The Borough Council will also require all new proposals for visitor facilities to provide benefits to

the local community, including the provision of infrastructure improvements, in accordance with and to enhance the visual quality of centres within the Borough. The Borough Council considers that a need exists for good quality museums or heritage centres in both Maidenhead and Windsor and will encourage the provision of these in appropriate locations (See Chapter 8: Implementation).

**4.4.16** There is also potential for additional visitor related facilities through the refurbishment and change of use of the railway arches underneath Windsor and Eton Central Station. A survey of these in July 1991 showed 3 arches to be vacant and a further 4 to be in non-visitor related uses (offices, warehouse, car repair yard and double-glazing company). There is also a need for environmental enhancement of Goswell Hill, particularly at the upper end, to improve the attractiveness of this area adjacent to the car park and service area for the King Edward Court Shopping Centre. This issue is addressed in Policy WTC17.

**4.4.17** One of the objectives of the Borough's tourism strategy is to encourage wider visitor interest and movement throughout the Borough to relieve pressure on the main centres of attraction in Windsor. To achieve this the Borough Council will encourage appropriate small scale facilities throughout the Borough which aid visitors' movement and interpretation, and improve the quality and attractiveness of the Borough's urban and rural environment and enhance its enjoyment by both local residents and visitors. These small scale facilities may include seating, signs, information boards, toilets, kiosks, picnic tables, small rural car parks, town trails or nature trails. Careful regard will be had to the siting and size of such facilities. There is also the need to consider additional outdoor seating, where appropriate, to accommodate visitor and resident demand during the summer months. The Borough Council will encourage the provision of such additional outdoor seating related to public houses, cafes or restaurants so long as there is no conflict with any other policies or objectives of the Plan and subject to the satisfactory design and colour of any furniture provided.

**4.4.18** Policies relating to the Thames, encouraging countryside access and the retention and enhancement of the recreational value of the Thames Path National Trail and other riverside paths are contained within the Recreation Section of this Plan.

## **Windsor Racecourse and Legoland**

### **POLICY TM7**

**THE BOROUGH COUNCIL WILL LOOK FAVOURABLY ON THE DIVERSIFICATION OF THE RECREATIONAL USE OF WINDSOR RACECOURSE AND LEGOLAND FOR ACTIVITIES WHICH ARE COMPATIBLE WITH THEIR DESIGNATION AS AREAS OF GREEN BELT. SUCH FUTURE USES SHOULD NOT LEAD TO AN OVER-INTENSIFICATION OF BUILT DEVELOPMENT OR, IN THE CASE OF THE RACECOURSE, CONFLICT WITH POLICIES ON DEVELOPMENT IN THE FLOOD PLAIN.**

**THE LOCATION, SITING AND DESIGN OF SUCH FACILITIES WILL REQUIRE DETAILED CONSIDERATION IN ORDER TO MINIMISE THEIR IMPACT ON THE GREEN BELT AND TO PROTECT THE SETTING OF THE THAMES AND OTHER DESIGNATED AREAS OF LANDSCAPE PROTECTION.**

**4.4.19** The Borough Council has identified Windsor Racecourse as a suitable location for providing additional facilities for visitors. Any future development must be compatible with its location in the Green Belt and the "Setting of the Thames". Policies in the Green Belt and Natural Environment sections of this plan deal with development in these areas. In particular proposals likely to result in an over-intensification of built development will be resisted. Consideration will also need to be given to any nature conservation impacts. It is also important that any development or re-use of Windsor Racecourse should make adequate provision for the traffic needs arising as a consequence of any scheme. The Borough Council consider appropriate uses could be the siting of a small scale camping and touring caravan site or, in the longer term, a park-and-cruise facility forming part of a future car parking strategy. The success of this would depend upon the promotion of the cruise element as part of a visitor's overall experience of Windsor. In addition to bringing benefits to the local community by enhancing the environment of the town centre through reducing the number of vehicles entering the central area, such a scheme would serve the objective of securing an appropriate balance in the level and location of visitor facilities and infrastructure.

## **Tourism on Farms**

### **POLICY TM8**

**VISITOR FACILITIES MAY BE ACCEPTABLE AS PART OF A FARM DIVERSIFICATION SCHEME. THE FOLLOWING TYPES OF SCHEME WILL BE ACCEPTABLE IN PRINCIPLE, SUBJECT TO COMPLIANCE WITH POLICY GB2 AND GB8, AND WHERE CAR PARKING AND ACCESS IS PROVIDED TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE BOROUGH COUNCIL AND THE HIGHWAY AUTHORITY:**

- 1) BED AND BREAKFAST ACCOMMODATION;**
- 2) SELF-CATERING ACCOMMODATION;**
- 3) SMALL SCALE SEASONAL CAMPING AND TOURING CARAVAN PITCHES INVOLVING A MAXIMUM OF 5 PITCHES;**
- 4) PICK-YOUR-OWN ENTERPRISES AND FARM SHOPS INVOLVING NO SALE OF GOODS NOT PRODUCED ON THE FARM HOLDING;**
- 5) HORSE RIDING SUBJECT TO POLICY GB6;**
- 6) FISHING;**
- 7) FARM TRAILS;**
- 8) SMALL SCALE, UNOBTRUSIVE PICNIC AREAS;**
- 9) SMALL SCALE FARM MUSEUMS AND CRAFT WORKSHOPS.**

**4.4.20** Since the second world war farmers have been encouraged to increase production by the use of machinery, artificial fertilisers and factory farming techniques. These policies have produced a current

food surplus. This, coupled with EU regulations and quota systems, has prompted the Government into encouraging a reduction in agricultural output. To maintain viability, grants are being made available to enable farms to diversify. One suggested new use is tourism. One of the objectives of the Green Belt section is to encourage appropriate farm diversification schemes. Policy TM10 sets out those visitor-related activities which the Borough Council considers to be appropriate in the Green Belt while Policies GB2 and GB8 set out the Green Belt criteria against which any scheme will be assessed. The Borough Council will require an overall farm management plan to be submitted where new buildings are proposed and, in addition, an ADAS farm appraisal for any diversification scheme involving the re-use of agricultural buildings or land. Diversification schemes should be small scale and require a minimum amount of built facilities. Existing buildings should be re-used wherever possible. The following types of farm diversification scheme will be acceptable in principle by the Borough Council:-

- 1) Bed and breakfast accommodation;
- 2) Self catering accommodation;
- 3) Small scale seasonal camping and touring caravan pitches involving a maximum of 5 pitches;
- 4) Pick your own enterprises and farm shops (subject to Policies GB1 and GB8);
- 5) Horse riding subject to policy GB6;
- 6) Fishing;
- 7) Farm trails;
- 8) Small scale unobtrusive picnic areas;
- 9) Small scale farm museums and craft workshops.