

Policy CS28 – Retail Impact Assessments

Policy CS28 - Retail Town and Local Centre Impact Assessments

~~Proposals~~ Applications for new retail, office and leisure development floorspace, including new buildings, alterations, extensions and changes of use ~~and proposals~~ or to vary or remove conditions in respect of the range of goods sold or service provided, in edge or out-of-centre locations ~~outside the network~~ of within a likely catchment area that includes a centres identified in Policy CS25, will be required to submit an impact assessment where the following floorspace thresholds are exceeded:

Convenience goods retail floorspace:	200 square metres (gross)
Non-bulky comparison goods retail floorspace:	460 square meters (gross)
Bulky comparison goods retail floorspace:	929 square metres (gross)

Likely catchment area includes the Sub-Regional Centre

Birkenhead: 2,500 square metres (gross)

Likely catchment area includes a Town Centre

Liscard: 1,500 square metres (gross)
Heswall, Moreton and West Kirby: 1,000 square metres (gross)

Likely catchment area includes a District Centre

Bromborough Village and Woodchurch Road (Prenton): 1,000 square metres (gross)
Hoylake: 500 square metres (gross)

Likely catchment area includes a Local Centre

All Local Centres: 500 square metres (gross)

The floorspace thresholds identified in the adopted Local Plan of an adjoining authority will be applied to proposals likely to fall within the catchment of a centre in an adjoining authority.

21.23 National policy states that when assessing applications for retail, office and leisure development outside town centres which are not in accordance with an up-to-date local plan, local planning authorities should require an impact assessment if the development exceeds a proportionate, locally-set floorspace threshold or a default threshold of 2,500 square metres.

21.23A The Wirral Retail Study Update 2012 concluded that there was no quantitative requirement for additional convenience floorspace in the Borough over the period to 2030 and that capacity for additional comparison floorspace was limited (3,200 square metres (net) at 2030). A development of 2,500 square metres (gross) would account for a significant proportion of the projected need for retail floorspace in the Borough. Developments of less than the default national threshold of 2,500 square metres could therefore have an impact on existing centres outside Birkenhead.

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21.23B Policy CS28 therefore sets out the thresholds above which impact assessments will be required, based on a review of the information in the Council's retail evidence base and the hierarchy of retail centres set out in Policy CS25. Proposals below these thresholds will still have to comply with the other requirements of national policy, in particular the sequential approach.

21.23C Applicants will be required to demonstrate how the impact assessment will be addressed and provide justification for the extent of the catchment area for each particular proposal after taking account of the Council's retail and leisure evidence base. If the catchment area of a proposed development extends across a number of centres that are categorised differently in the local retail hierarchy and therefore have different thresholds for impact assessments, the lower of any impact threshold will be taken as the trigger for an impact assessment being required. Guidance on how to comply with Policy CS28 will be provided in a Supplementary Planning Document for Town Centre Uses.

21.23D The requirement to complete an impact assessment will also apply to centres in an adjoining Local Planning Authority. The national default threshold will be held to apply unless a locally set floorspace threshold has been identified in the adopted Local Plan of the adjoining authority.

~~21.24~~ Public consultation has shown ongoing concern about the impact of out-of-centre development on existing centres. In addition to larger scale facilities, there have been a number of proposals for edge-of-centre and out-of-centre local shops of up to and around 280 square metres (net). Individually and cumulatively, new local shops outside existing centres, particularly if concentrated within the catchment area of a Town, District or Local Centre, could potentially have a significantly adverse impact on the top-up function and vitality and viability of the relevant centre.

~~21.25~~ The Wirral Town Centres, Retail and Commercial Leisure Study did not identify any quantitative or qualitative deficiencies in terms of convenience floorspace in any Town, District or Local Centre. Policy CS28 therefore sets out a local impact assessment threshold for convenience retail development of 200 square metres or above which are either in out-of-centre locations or edge-of-centre locations in order to safeguard the retail function and wider vitality and viability of the centre hierarchy identified in Policy CS25.

~~21.26~~ Higher thresholds have been identified for non-food comparison floorspace, to reflect the typical size of retail warehouse proposals for bulky and non-bulky goods.

21.27 Policy CS28 will primarily be delivered in association with Policy CS29.