

LICHFIELDS

Lichfields is the pre-eminent planning and development consultancy in the UK

We've been helping create great places
for over 50 years.

lichfields.uk

© 2020 Nathaniel Lichfield & Partners Ltd, trading as Lichfields. All Rights Reserved. Registered in England, no. 2778116. 14 Regent's Wharf, All Saints Street, London N1 9RL
Formatted for double sided printing.
Plans based upon Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
© Crown Copyright reserved. Licence number AL50684A
60724/01/JW/DGg
18439998v1

Contents

| | | |
|------------|---|-----------|
| 1.0 | Introduction | 1 |
| | Scope of Study | 1 |
| | Structure of Report | 1 |
| 2.0 | Planning Policy Context | 2 |
| | National Planning Policy Framework | 2 |
| | Planning Practice Guidance | 2 |
| | The Adopted Development Plan | 3 |
| 3.0 | Methodology | 5 |
| | Centre Definitions | 5 |
| | Local Centre Definition | 5 |
| | Assessment Criteria | 5 |
| 4.0 | Review of Centres | 7 |
| | Zone 1: Middlesbrough Central | 7 |
| | Zone 2: Middlesbrough East | 12 |
| | Zone 3: Middlesbrough South | 16 |
| 5.0 | Summary of Recommendations | 18 |
| | District Centres | 18 |
| | Local Centres | 19 |
| | Other Neighbourhood Shopping Facilities | 21 |
| | Monitoring and Review | 22 |

1.0 **Introduction**

Scope of Study

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by Lichfields on behalf of Middlesbrough Borough Council. It forms part of a suite of three documents which, together, comprise the Middlesbrough Retail and Town Centre Uses Study. The purpose of the study is to:
- to support the Council in the determination of individual planning applications and, where necessary, planning appeals;
 - to support and inform the development of local planning policy; and
 - to inform the development of other strategies within the Council, including those relating to transport/infrastructure, the university and other investment within Middlesbrough Town Centre.
- 1.2 This element of the study comprises an assessment of the various district, local and neighbourhood centres in Middlesbrough. It takes into account a survey of existing centres, as defined in the adopted Local Plan, as well as relevant planning policy and guidance. It includes a quantitative and qualitative analysis of existing commercial and community uses within these centres, and the role and function that these centres perform. It also includes recommendations for the classification of local centres in Middlesbrough, for inclusion within the new Local Plan.
- 1.3 Along with the other two volumes mentioned above, this report was commissioned by Middlesbrough Borough Council in July 2019. As such, notwithstanding the date of publication, the research which underpins the various recommendations set out therein was undertaken prior to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as recent changes to the Use Classes Order.

Structure of Report

- 1.4 The report is structured as follows:
- Section 2.0 of this report summarises national and local planning policy and guidance relevant to the study;
 - Section 3.0 sets out the methodology for the assessment of existing defined district, local and neighbourhood centres;
 - Section 4.0 contains a review of the vitality and viability of existing district, local and neighbourhood centres, taking into account the criteria set out in Section 3.0; and
 - Section 5.0 sets out recommendations on the classification of district, local and neighbourhood centres in Middlesbrough, for inclusion within the new Local Plan, as well as proposed amendments to the centre boundaries.

2.0 **Planning Policy Context**

National Planning Policy Framework

2.1 A revised version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published in July 2018, with updates in February 2019, and replaces the previous version, which was published in March 2012. The document sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies for England.

2.2 The document confirms that planning policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning policies should:

- define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability – by allowing them to grow and diversify in a way that can respond to rapid changes in the retail and leisure industries, allows a suitable mix of uses (including housing) and reflects their distinctive characters;
- define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, and make clear the range of uses permitted in such locations, as part of a positive strategy for the future of each centre;
- retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones;
- allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed, looking at least ten years ahead. Meeting anticipated needs for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses over this period should not be compromised by limited site availability, so town centre boundaries should be kept under review where necessary;
- where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available for main town centre uses, allocate appropriate edge of centre sites that are well connected to the town centre. If sufficient edge of centre sites cannot be identified, policies should explain how identified needs can be met in other accessible locations that are well connected to the town centre; and
- recognise that residential development often plays an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres and encourage residential development on appropriate sites.

Planning Practice Guidance

2.3 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) was published in March 2014.

2.4 It states that local planning authorities can take a leading role in promoting a positive vision for town centres, bringing together stakeholders and supporting sustainable economic and employment growth, and that the key way to achieve this is through the development plan. It also states that any strategy should be based on evidence of the current state of town centres, and opportunities that exist to accommodate a range of suitable development needs and support their viability and vitality. Strategies should consider, inter alia:

- the realistic role, function and hierarchy of town centres. Given the uncertainty in forecasting long-term retail trends and consumer behaviour, this assessment may need to focus on a limited period (such as the next five years) but will also need to take the lifetime of the plan into account and be regularly reviewed;
- the vision for the future of each centre, including the most appropriate mix of uses to enhance overall vitality and viability;

- the ability of the town centre to accommodate the scale of assessed need for main town centre uses; and
- what complementary strategies are necessary or appropriate to enhance the town centre and help deliver the vision for its future, and how can these be planned and delivered. For example, this may include consideration of how parking charges and enforcement can be made proportionate.

2.5 The PPG states that the following indicators, and their changes over time, may be relevant in assessing the health of town centres and planning for their future:

- diversity of uses;
- proportion of vacant street level property;
- commercial yields on non-domestic property;
- customers' experience and behaviour;
- retailer representation and intentions to change representation;
- commercial rents;
- pedestrian flows;
- accessibility;
- perception of safety and occurrence of crime; and
- state of town centre environmental quality;
- balance between independent and multiple stores;
- extent to which there is evidence of barriers to new businesses opening and existing businesses expanding; and
- opening hours/availability/extent to which there is an evening and night time economy offer.

The Adopted Development Plan

2.6 The Middlesbrough Core Strategy was adopted February 2008 and sets out the principal elements of the planning framework for Middlesbrough. Policy CS13 seeks to protect and enhance the hierarchy of vital and viable town, district, local and neighbourhood centres in Middlesbrough. The various centres included as part of this policy, in addition to Middlesbrough Town Centre, are illustrated in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 District, Local and Neighbourhood Centres in Middlesbrough

| District Centre | Medium-Scale Local Centre | Small-Scale Local Centre | Neighbourhood Centre |
|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Berwick Hills | Acklam Road/Cambridge Road | Beresford Buildings, Thorntree | Cargo Fleet Lane/Fulbeck Road |
| Coulby Newham | Acklam Road/Mandale Road | Broughton Avenue, Easterside | Hall Drive |
| | Belle Vue, Marton Road | Marshall Avenue, Brambles Farm | Hollowfield, Coulby Newham |
| | Eastbourne Road | Ormesby High Street | Vaughan Centre |
| | Lealholme Crescent | Penrith Road | Westerdale Road |
| | Linthorpe Village | Roman Road | Whitfield Buildings |

| District Centre | Medium-Scale Local Centre | Small-Scale Local Centre | Neighbourhood Centre |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| | Longlands/Marton Road | Saltersgill Avenue | |
| | Marton Road/Gypsy Lane | Shelton Court, Thorntree | |
| | North Ormesby | The Avenue, Nunthorpe | |
| | Parliament Road | Trimdon Avenue | |
| | Viewley Centre, Hemlington | | |

Source: Middlesbrough Core Strategy (2008)

- 2.7 Policy CS13 also sets out a range of means by which the above will be protected and enhanced. These include encouraging retail, commercial, leisure and cultural development, safeguarding the retail character and function of centres, and encouraging convenient and accessible, district, local and neighbourhood shopping facilities.

3.0 Methodology

Centre Definitions

Local Centre Definition

3.1 The Glossary provided at Annex 2 to the NPPF includes the following text:

*“Town centre: Area defined on the local authority’s proposal map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but **exclude small parades of shops of purely neighbourhood significance [Lichfields emphasis]**. Unless they are identified as centres in Local Plans, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.”*

3.2 The NPPF does not refer to neighbourhood centres or include such centres within the overarching umbrella of ‘town centres’. The NPPF also does not include a definition of district or local centres, nor does the accompanying Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). However, Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (which was superseded by the NPPF) did contain the following definitions at Annex B:

“District centres will usually comprise 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 local public facilities such as a library.”

“Local centres include 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 takeaway and launderette. In rural areas, large villages may perform the role of a local centre.”

3.3 Whilst PPS4 is no longer in force, and the make-up of district and local centres nationally has changed as the retail and leisure industry evolves – and will continue to change over the lifetime of the new Local Plan - the above definition provides a helpful starting point for determining the future status of centres in Middlesbrough.

Assessment Criteria

3.4 The methodology for assessing each of the currently defined district, local and neighbourhood centres takes into account all of the above. It includes a number of criteria, which are set out in the table below.

Table 3.1 Assessment Criteria

| Criteria | Key Considerations |
|----------------|---|
| Floorspace | The total quantum of floorspace provided by the centre, with the larger the amount the more likely it can be classified as a local centre or above. |
| Number of Uses | The number of ground floor commercial and community uses in the centre, again, with a larger number reflective of a broader role and function in meeting local needs. |
| Range of Uses | The existence of a small supermarket/convenience store, as well as other retail and service uses, and community facilities. |

| Criteria | Key Considerations |
|--------------------------|--|
| | As well as a convenience store/newsagent, local centres could include a sub-post office, pharmacy, hot-food takeaway and/or hairdressers. They may also include other specialist convenience and comparison retailers, a public house and/or community facility, such as a doctor’s surgery, church or community centre. District Centres could comprise all of the above, as well as a supermarket or superstore, other retailers, and a broader range of range of non-retail services and community facilities. |
| Role and Function | Including the nature of the needs met by the centre, whether predominantly top-up food shopping, service and/or comparison retailing, as well the nature and extent of the catchment area. Small parades of purely neighbourhood significance are unlikely to comprise local centres. |
| Accessibility | Levels of accessibility from their catchment area by a choice of means of transport, including on foot, by cycle and public transport, as well as availability of car parking. |
| Recent/Future Investment | Any recent or future planned investment, which could impact upon the centre’s role/function and catchment area, and the scope for future development. |

- 3.5 An initial assessment has been made of all of the centres, in order to establish which ones clearly do not function as a local centre. This has then been followed by a more detailed analysis of those centres which have more significant potential to be classed as a local centre or district centre, by virtue of the range/scale of uses they contain, or any of the other criteria set out above.
- 3.6 This more detailed analysis takes into account all of the criteria and has allowed a balanced judgement to be arrived at in relation to each centre, which does not hinge on any individual factor. For example, there may be some centres which have a relatively small number of uses, but include one or more larger stores, which help to ensure that they function as a genuine focal point for the local community and meet a range of needs. Such centres could reasonably be classed as a local centre.
- 3.7 Conversely, some centres may comprise a larger number of uses and/or quantum of floorspace than others but include facilities which are not aimed at meeting local needs – for example specialist comparison retailers, such as a furniture or DIY store. Such centres may not include a sufficiently broad range of local facilities as to warrant classification as a district or local centre.
- 3.8 It is important to take into account the extent to which there is a strategic need for district or local level provision in a particular geographic area, including where there is a significant distance to the next nearest centre and/or an obvious geographic deficiency. Regard has been had to this factor where a centre has been judged to be marginal as to whether it merits local centre status, taking into account the other factors set out above. Consideration has also been given to any recent or future planned investment in centres which could impact upon their future role.
- 3.9 Where they do not warrant either District or Local Centre status, recommendations have been provided on how the remaining centres (currently identified as Neighbourhood Centres in the adopted plan) should be treated in planning policy terms.

4.0 Review of Centres

Zone 1: Middlesbrough Central

Linthorpe Village

- 4.1 Linthorpe Village Local Centre is located 1.5 km to the south of the core areas within Middlesbrough Town Centre (although the boundaries of the two are only c. 200m apart at their closest point, as defined in the adopted Local Plan). The centre comprises a range of uses located along both sides of Linthorpe Road, which is a main arterial route connecting areas to the south with the town centre, including both smaller terraced units and larger free-standing buildings, as well as some of the adjoining side streets.
- 4.2 Linthorpe Village is significantly larger than the other currently defined local centres within the Borough, comprising 82 active units in total and around 13,100 sqm gross floorspace. Whilst it contains a number of national multiple retailers (including the Co-op, Heron, One Stop, Greggs and Boots Pharmacy), there is a high proportion of independent operators. The centre has 11 cafés/ restaurants and a number of pubs/bars, along with various hair and beauty salons, a funeral directors, pharmacies and Post Office. It also contains two medical centres/surgeries, a church/church hall, community centre and public house.
- 4.3 As well as serving the residential areas immediately to the east and west, the centre also attracts passing trade, as a result of its location on a busy arterial route. It therefore had high levels of footfall on the basis of recent site visits, with on-street parking being available at various points, along with a free surface car park at Binks Street. There are various bus stops along Linthorpe Road and, whilst busy traffic can act as a barrier to movement between the two sides of the centre, there are various crossing points provided for pedestrians. Although the quality of the shopping environment varies, the northern part of the centre is included within the Albert Park and Linthorpe Road Conservation Area.
- 4.4 **Although currently defined as a local centre, the range and number of uses provided within Linthorpe Village is such that it should be classified as a district centre.** There may also be scope to update the boundaries, in order to take into account other uses which are not currently classified as falling within the centre. This could include some immediately adjoining commercial uses which are located on side streets, other surrounding areas where there could be potential for redevelopment (including industrial/commercial uses on Stonehouse/Emmerson Streets), as well as other adjacent facilities, such as the Dorman Museum. **Given the need to try and ensure that the centre is focused upon Linthorpe Road itself, however, and avoid excessive sprawl which could be detrimental to retaining a strong core, on balance, it is not recommended that these uses be included.**

Roman Road

- 4.5 Roman Road Local Centre is located approximately 2.1 km to the south of Middlesbrough Town Centre and 600m to the south-west of Linthorpe Village Local Centre. The centre comprises a range of terraced shop units on both sides of Roman Road, around its junction with Oxford Road/The Crescent, as well as on Oxford Road itself. The majority of the centre lies within the Linthorpe Conservation Area.
- 4.6 The centre is anchored by Tesco Express convenience store, which is situated adjacent to the above junction, and contains 39 different uses in total, with a significant proportion of service uses - including large number of hair/beauty and tanning salons. There are also a number of

independent comparison goods retailers - including those selling gifts, bicycles, furniture, art supplies, bridalwear and an optician – as well as a Subway sandwich shop, two pubs/bars, a café, a restaurant and a number of hot food takeaways.

- 4.7 In the context of the above, the centre clearly contains a wide range of uses which meet the day to day needs of local residents, as well as catering for some niche comparison retail needs. **It should therefore be retained as a local centre.**

Acklam Road/Mandale Road

- 4.8 Acklam Road/Mandale Road Local Centre is located around 3.6 km to the south of Middlesbrough Town Centre and around 900m to the south of Acklam Road/Cambridge Road Local Centre. The centre contains 31 commercial/community uses in total, which stretch between the junctions of Acklam Road with Ullswater Avenue in the north and Lodore Grove in the south.
- 4.9 The centre comprises several free-standing buildings, including the Coronation Public House, Coral betting office and a relatively new Tesco store, which helps to anchor the centre. Acklam Car Centre, the Esso petrol filling station and a dental practice are situated at the junction between Acklam and Mandale Roads. There also is a parade of shops on the eastern side of Acklam Road, which includes a Post Office, a Spar convenience store, two bakeries, a butcher, a dry cleaners and hot food takeaways, as well as a funeral directors, florist and dog grooming business on Ullswater Avenue, just to the north.
- 4.10 Dedicated off-street car parking is provided immediately outside this parade of shops, and there are also bus stops and pedestrian crossings which facilitate movement between the different parts of the centre. **As with Acklam Road/Cambridge Road, the centre contains a range of uses which help to meet the local-level needs of residents in the areas to either side of Acklam Road and, on this basis, should be retained as a local centre.**

Eastbourne Road

- 4.11 Eastbourne Road Local Centre is located around 2 km to the south of Middlesbrough Town Centre, around 700m to the west of Belle Vue (Marton Road) Local Centre. The centre contains 28 commercial/community uses, the majority of which are situated in two parades of terraced shop units, located on the north and side sides of Eastbourne Road, to the west of its junction with Valley Road and Marton Burn Road, with flats also being provided above the shops on the southern side.
- 4.12 These parades include national multiple convenience retail operators (comprising Heron Foods, Lifestyle Express and One Stop), as well as a number of independent comparison retailers (a card shop, florists, pharmacy and two children's boutiques). There is also a community support/resource centre, as well as a large number of hot food takeaways, hair/beauty salons, a café, a hand car wash, and a former public house, which has been converted to residential use. Dedicated off-street car parking is provided in front of the parades on the north and south sides of the Eastbourne Road.
- 4.13 Whilst the vast majority of uses are small in scale, the centre contains a range of provision which meets the day to day needs of in the neighbouring residential areas. The centre will also perform a role in serving any new residential development on the vacant land to the east and south of the centre. **On this basis, it should be retained as a Local Centre.**

Parliament Road

- 4.14 Parliament Road Local Centre is located around 1 km to the south west of Middlesbrough Town Centre and primarily serves the surrounding residential areas of Gresham. The centre comprises a range of terraced of shops along both sides of this road, in between Kildare Street and Costa Street, as well as those within a converted for public house.
- 4.15 The centre has 28 uses and is anchored by the Tesco Express store which abuts its western boundary. It also contains a range of other smaller/independent retail and service uses. These include a number of other general/convenience stores, a jeweller, pharmacy, hardware and gifts shops, several hair salons, two bookmakers and three hot food takeaways, along with a small number of vacant units. Although on-street parking is available, a significant proportion of the centre's trade is generated by residents of the surrounding terraced streets.
- 4.16 There are also a number of shops and services located outside of the current centre boundary, to the east and west of the centre. However, there is scope to redefine the centre boundary, it is also important that the centre retains a strong core and avoid further sprawl which would both detract from this core and impact upon residential amenity. **As such, whilst the centre should remain as a local centre, it is recommended that the centre boundary be retained as defined in the adopted local plan.**

Acklam Road/Cambridge Road

- 4.17 Acklam Road/Cambridge Road Local Centre is located just under 3 km to the south west of Middlesbrough Town Centre. The centre comprises predominantly small-scale terraced units shop units dispersed along the eastern side of Acklam Road, including 22 active commercial/community uses in total. Whilst designated as one centre, it is split into two parts by open space in between Stainsby Road and Fairfield Avenue.
- 4.18 The centre includes a Sainsbury's Local at the southern end, which helps to anchor that part of the centre. It also comprises a mix of other uses, including a Heron Foods, a Best One Convenience Store, hairdressers and beauty/tanning salons, a pharmacy, the Cambridge Hotel, William Hill bookmakers and six hot food takeaways. There are a number of independent comparison retailers, including various charity shops, as well as a number of vacant units, most of which were located towards the northern end of the centre.
- 4.19 Immediately across the road from (but outside the existing boundary of) the centre is the Acklam Green Centre, which is located adjacent to Stainsby Road and provides office space and meeting rooms/ conference facilities. Free car parking is available on the street outside the shops and on neighbouring residential streets. The centre is also serviced by buses and there are pedestrian crossings over Acklam Road.
- 4.20 **The centre clearly performs an important role in meeting the day to day retail and service needs of residents in the immediate surrounding area, as well as catering for passing trade, and should be retained a as local centre. Given that the Acklam Green Centre is located immediately opposite the centre, clearly visible and in close proximity to a pedestrian crossing, it is recommended that the centre's boundary be extended to include this building (although not the adjacent playing pitches).**

Belle Vue (Marton Road)

- 4.21 Belle Vue (Marton Road) Local Centre is located round 2.2 km to the south east of Middlesbrough Town Centre and primarily serves residents of the Grove Hill area.

4.22 The centre contains 17 uses in total and is anchored by Tesco Express store (comprising around 260 sqm net floorspace), which lies on the eastern side of the road, adjacent to Grove Hill Methodist Church. The remainder of the centre comprises two terraces of smaller units, located to either side of the junction of Marton Road with Belle Vue/Marton Burn Road, which include a veterinary practice, a Post Office, two charity shops, a convenience store, a coffee shop and three hot food takeaways. There is a customer car park adjacent to the Tesco Express store.

4.23 **Given that the centre contains a reasonably good range of uses which meet local needs, including an anchor convenience store, and other retail and service uses (including a post office), it should be retained as a local centre.** There is also an Aldi store and the Priory Social Club located a short distance (around 150m) to the north of the centre as currently defined, as well as a charity shop immediately adjacent to the centre, on the northern side of Farndale Road. **However**, whilst the charity shop lies adjacent to the existing centre and could reasonably be included within a revised boundary, **as the other uses are separated from the centre by other uses (including residential) and do not have visual relationship with facilities in the centre - it is not considered that the boundary should be extended any further.**

Saltersgill Avenue

4.24 Saltersgill Avenue Local Centre is located approximately 2.6 km to the south of Middlesbrough Town Centre and 800m south of Eastbourne Road Local Centre. The centre contains 15 uses in total in two separate clusters, which are situated around the junctions of this road with Beverley Road/Sutton Way and Saltersgill Close respectively, and which serve the immediate surrounding residential areas.

4.25 There are Sainsbury's Local and Premier convenience stores, as well as a number of other shops and services, such as a hairdressers/salon, hot food takeaways, a betting office, a bakery and a day nursery. There is also a public house and an elderly care home which, along with some vacant land, acts to separate the two different clusters of shops and services within the centre. **However, although it has limited significance beyond the immediate surrounding area, the two parts of the centre, together, contain a range of uses which meet local needs and should therefore continue to be designated as a local centre.**

Trimdon Avenue

4.26 Trimdon Avenue Local Centre is located around 4.4 km to the south-west of Middlesbrough Town Centre. The focal point to the centre comprises a purpose-built shopping parade on the eastern side of the road, containing eleven different commercial uses, with dedicated off-street parking to the front. This parade includes Spar and Premier convenience stores, as well as a bakery, a home improvements shop, two hairdressers, an estate agent, a betting office and three hot food takeaways.

4.27 Immediately outside the currently defined centre boundary (to the north) are the Grenadier public house, a Salvation Army church and the Bluebell Medical Centre, all of which help to reinforce the centre's role as a focal point for the local community, and its role in meeting local needs. **Given the range of uses contained within the centre, it is considered that the centre should continue to be designated as a local centre. It is also recommended that the boundary be extended to the north, in order to include these additional commercial/community uses.**

Broughton Avenue, Easterside

- 4.28 Broughton Avenue Local Centre is located around 2.6 km south of Middlesbrough Town Centre, to either side of the road of the same name, and it serves residents in the Easterside area. The centre contains 9 uses in total and comprises a purpose-built parade of shops, which includes a Sainsbury's Local, newsagent, bakery, hair/beauty salon, a hot food takeaway and a betting office. The centre also contains a number of freestanding community facilities, including the Easterside Library and Community Hub (opposite the shopping parade) and the Viking Public House, to the other side of Broughton Avenue itself.
- 4.29 Whilst it contains a relatively limited number of uses, together, they provide a range of facilities which represents a hub for the local community, meeting the day to day needs of residents on the surrounding estate. **It is therefore recommended that Broughton Avenue be retained as a local centre.**

Longlands/Marton Road

- 4.30 Longlands/Marton Road is a relatively small local centre one of the smallest local centres, containing just seven units within the boundary currently defined in the plan, and having a total gross floor space of less than 500 sqm. It is located just over 1 km to the south-east of Middlesbrough Town Centre.
- 4.31 The centre comprises the Marland Buildings at the junction of Longlands and Marton Roads, which include a Lifestyle Express Convenience store, three hot food takeaways, a barbers, a tattoo studio and one vacant unit. In addition, however, and immediately to the other (western) side of Marton Road, is a social club and hotel. There are also a number of uses around the corner, on Longlands Road (around 200m to the east), which include a Tesco Express store and pizza takeaway on the northern side, and a parade of seven other small shops/services (including a convenience store) on the south side.
- 4.32 **Based on its current definition, given the small number and limited range of uses there, which only meet the basic needs of the surrounding area, Longlands/Marton Road is on the margins on what could be classed as a local centre and, as such, could be declassified. Furthermore, the Tesco Express store is separated from the various other uses, both on Marton Road and Longlands Road main part of the centre by both other, intervening uses (including a car repairs garage and vacant land) and busy roads. On this basis, even taking into account these other uses, it is not considered that Longlands/Marton Road functions as a Local Centre.**

Whitfield Buildings

- 4.33 Whitfield Buildings Neighbourhood Centre is located on Marton Road, around 1.75 km from Middlesbrough Town Centre, and 400m to the north of Longlands/Marton Road Local Centre. It comprises a row of seven terraced shop units at the junction between Marton Road and Park Vale Road, including a small convenience store, a hair salon, sandwich bar, hot food takeaway, taxi office, visa and immigration advice office and a personal injury specialist. **Although helping to meet some local needs, the centre does not contain a range of shops and services commensurate with that of a local centre and should not be designated as such.**

Hall Drive

- 4.34 Hall Drive Neighbourhood Centre is actually located on Rievaulx Drive, around 3.2 km to the south of Middlesbrough Town Centre. The centre, also known as Newbridge Court, comprises the Endeavour Hotel Public House and a small parade of six units, all of which are now vacant.
- 4.35 Although there are proposals for the redevelopment of this parade, the new scheme would include just three commercial units which, whilst meeting some local needs, would not be sufficient to provide a focal point for the local community. On this basis, **it should not be defined as a centre in the new local plan.**

Zone 2: Middlesbrough East

Berwick Hills District Centre

- 4.36 Berwick Hills District Centre is located around 2.5 km to the south east of Middlesbrough Town Centre, and to the western side of Ormesby Road. The centre is anchored by a Morrisons superstore of around 4,600 sqm net floorspace, to the north of which lies the Neptune hub/library/leisure centre, health centre and pharmacy, and vacant offices.
- 4.37 To the other (northern side of) Crossfell Road are a public house and a separate shopping parade (Norfolk Place), including various smaller terraced shop units, primarily occupied by independent traders. These include two small convenience stores, two bakeries, a post office, charity shop, hair/beauty salons, some small/specialist comparison retail operators (including a pharmacy), and a number of hot food takeaways. A modern shopping parade has also recently been developed, further to the north of Norfolk Place, and includes uses now occupied by Greggs, Domino's Pizza and Heron Foods.
- 4.38 Excluding this new development (which has opened since the original surveys were undertaken), the centre comprises 26 no. different commercial/community in total and around 13,200 sqm gross retail and commercial floorspace and, set out above, contains a good mix of uses which meet the day to day needs of residents in the immediate surrounding areas. The Morrisons superstore also attracts residents from across the eastern side of Middlesbrough, as does the Neptune leisure centre and other community facilities. **In this context, given the scale of the centre and its wider role in meeting local needs, it should be retained as a district centre.**
- 4.39 Consideration has also been given as to whether to include the TAD Centre - a business/conference centre, which also includes a day nursery, and lies immediately to the south of the Morrisons car park - within an expanded centre boundary. However, based on site visits, it is not considered that this use makes any significant contribution to the vitality and viability of, or generates significant numbers of linked trips with, the wider centre, particularly given the significant distance to the shopping parade to the other side of Crossfell Road. **On this basis and given the need to avoid giving encouragement to new development/redevelopment which could be harmful to either this or other centres in the Borough, it is not recommended that this be included.**

North Ormesby

- 4.40 North Ormesby Local Centre is located approximately 1.7 km to the east of Middlesbrough Town Centre and 1.2 km north of Berwick Hills District Centre. It is the second largest local centre in the Borough, containing approximately 6,300 sqm gross floorspace, and serves the area of the same name, on the north-western side of the Borough, to the south of the A66.

- 4.41 The centre, which contains 56 different uses in total, comprises generally small, terraced shop units along the northern part of Kings Road – which runs north-south through the centre – as well as around the bottom of Market Place. It also includes a number of larger and/or free-standing units further south on Kings Road, including a Poundstretcher discount store (which comprises just over 500 sqm net) and a social club, both of which provide off-street car parking.
- 4.42 The centre contains a range of other retail, service and other commercial and community uses, including a small number of national multiples, such as Boots, Greggs, William Hill. Whilst there are no large or medium-sized supermarkets in the centre, there are three small convenience stores, as well as a selection of primarily independent comparison retailers. There are also several hair dressers, a number of hot food takeaways, and a number of other facilities, such as the community hub, a day centre and a deaf centre.
- 4.43 Just beyond the boundary are a number of other uses, including a church (to the east of the market place), as well as two adjoining modern shop units and the North Ormesby Health Village (to the west). It will be important not to provide encouragement for the redevelopment of sites in this area for new uses which could harm the vitality and viability of this or other centres. **On balance, however, given the important community role that the above facilities play, it is recommended that the centre boundary be extended to include the health village, market place, Holy Trinity Church (and the adjoining community centre) and these other shops units.**
- 4.44 The inclusion of these uses would also re-enforce the wider role and function of the centre, in meeting needs across a wider area in north-west Middlesbrough. **In this context and given the large number and wide range of uses within the wider centre, it could be appropriate to re-classify North Ormesby as a district centre.**

Lealholme Crescent

- 4.45 Lealholme Crescent is located just over 4 km to the south-east of Middlesbrough Town Centre and around 1.5 km south east of Berwick Hills District Centre. It contains a total of 12 commercial/community uses and helps to meet the day to day needs of residents of the areas immediately to the east and west, on the south-eastern side of Middlesbrough, as well as attracting passing trade, given its location on a busy north/south route.
- 4.46 The centre consists of a small parade of shops on the eastern side of Ormesby Road (Lealholme Crescent itself), with a car repairs/MOT centre to the north, and a building containing Asda and Iceland supermarkets (c. 700 sqm net and 300 sqm net respectively), and a car accessories shop, on the west side of Ormesby Road. The shopping parade itself includes a small convenience store/newsagent, along with a Boots pharmacy, a butcher, hair salon, a funeral director, and three hot food takeaways. Although the road is relatively busy, a pedestrian crossing allows for movement between the two side of the centre, with off-street parking is provided in the supermarkets' car parks and in front of the parade.
- 4.47 **Although the range of uses the centre contains is relatively limited, the presence of two supermarkets helps to ensure that it performs an important role meeting local needs and, in this context, it should be retained as a local centre.** Immediately outside the centre boundary, on the western side of Ormesby Road, are the North Ormesby Institute and a William Hill betting office. **Given the nature of these uses, and particularly the role of the social club as a focal point for the local community, it is recommended that the centre boundary should be extended to include them.**

Beresford Buildings, Thorntree

- 4.48 Beresford Buildings Local Centre is located around 3.5 km to the east of Middlesbrough Town Centre and 700 m south east of Marshall Avenue Local Centre (see below), less than 500m from the boundary with Redcar and Cleveland. It comprises ten different uses in total, including a number of uses on the ground floor of the Beresford Business Centre, as well as a jobcentre at upper floor level and the adjacent Thorntree Hotel Public House to the south. These uses include a Premier convenience store, as well as various independent retail and service uses, comprising a newsagent, off license, pharmacy, delicatessen, doctor's surgery, hair salon and two hot food takeaways.
- 4.49 Although the centre contains a relatively limited number of uses, they help to meet a range of local needs and, together with the jobcentre and adjacent pub – and Thorntree Community Hub and Library which lies outside of the centre to the south-west – perform a focal point for the local community in Thorntree. **It is therefore recommended that it be retained as a local centre and the boundary extended to include the community centre/library.**

Marshall Avenue, Brambles Farm

- 4.50 Marshalls Avenue Local Centre is located around 3 km to the east of Middlesbrough Town Centre and 1.1 km north east of Berwick Hills District Centre. The centre comprises a small parade of shops on the northern side of the road of the same name which serve the surrounding Brambles Farm residential area in east Middlesbrough.
- 4.51 The centre has eight ground floor uses, including a Premier Express convenience store, as well as a newsagent/post office, two charity shops, snack bar, hot food takeaway and the community/learning centre. Although the total number of uses is relatively low, and it has limited significance beyond the immediate surrounding area, there is a reasonably good mix of uses which help to meet the day to day needs of local residents. **It should therefore be retained as a local centre.**

Shelton Court, Thorntree

- 4.52 Shelton Court Local Centre is located 3.9 km south east of Middlesbrough Town Centre and c. 1.5 km to the east of Berwick Hills District Centre. It comprises three separate buildings, the central (and largest) one of which is the now vacant Erimus Housing Office, with off-street car parking provided to the front. The adjacent buildings contain a mini-market convenience store, two hair/tanning salons, a craft shop, a furniture shop and a café. Outside of the centre boundary as currently defined, just to the east, is a community centre, with the Bramthorn Business Centre (which also include a pet shop) being just to the north-west.
- 4.53 Whilst the centre meets only the basic needs of those living in the surrounding residential estate, with only one small convenience retail uses, and no national multiples, it nevertheless performs an important strategic role and, taking into account these additional uses, acts as a focal point for the community. **On this basis, it is recommended that Shelton Court be retained as a local centre and boundary extended to include the community centre (although not the business centre, which has less functional linkages with the wider centre).**

Ormesby High Street

- 4.54 Ormesby High Street Local Centre is located 4.5 km to the south-east of Middlesbrough Town Centre and approximately 600m to the east of Lealholme Crescent Local Centre, on the northern side of the High Street itself. It meets the needs of residents of the Ormesby area, which straddles the boundary between Middlesbrough and Redcar and Cleveland (which is in

turn marked by the High Street), as well as attracting a proportion of passing trade, given its location on a busy east/west route through the southern part of Middlesbrough.

- 4.55 The centre includes Heron and Farmfoods supermarkets (comprising around 200 sqm and 500 sqm net respectively), as well as an off-license, a pharmacy, betting office and the Fountain Hotel public house. Immediately adjacent to the boundary, to the west, is the Ormesby Club and Institute. Although it has a relatively strong convenience retail function, it therefore comprises a total of just six uses, and meets a narrow range of needs.
- 4.56 Notwithstanding this, the centre has sufficient critical mass of floorspace to ensure that it acts as a focal point for the provision of retail and, to an extent, service uses serving the local area. **As such, it is considered that the centre should remain a local centre and, in addition, should be extended to include the above social club.**

Penrith Road

- 4.57 Penrith Road Local Centre is located around 3.5 km to the south east of Middlesbrough Town Centre and 800m south of Berwick Hills District Centre. It comprises six shopping units in a purpose-built, modern development on the eastern side of the road, with a small amount of off-street car parking. These uses include a convenience store (including a Post Office), two hair/tanning salons, a sandwich bar, betting office and one currently vacant unit.
- 4.58 The centre is located at the heart of a residential area and meets the basic needs of local residents. **As such, it is considered that the centre should remain a local centre. However, the current centre boundary also includes residential properties immediately to the north which should be excluded from any future definition of the centre.**

Cargo Fleet Lane/Fulbeck Road

- 4.59 Cargo Fleet Lane Neighbourhood Centre, as defined in the existing Local Plan, contains seven terraced shop units in a small parade, along with off-street car parking. It is located on the western side of that road, in the Netherfields area, east Middlesbrough, around 4.3 km from the town centre. Uses there include a small general store, a newsagent, sandwich bar, hot food takeaway and three hair salons. There is also a vacant site immediately to the north, adjacent to the junction of Cargo Fleet Lane with Bournemouth Avenue.
- 4.60 Although it meets some of the basic needs of residents in the immediate surrounding estates and picks up some pass-by trade from those travelling along Cargo Fleet Lane, it has limited significance beyond this area. It is busier than the other currently defined neighbourhood centres (see below), but it is considered that the number and range of uses falls short of what could be classed as a local centre. **On this basis and given that it lies a relatively short distance from Ormesby High Street, it is not recommended that it be classed as such.**

Vaughan Centre

- 4.61 The Vaughan Centre is located 1.6 km to the south-east of Berwick Hills District Centre and around 300m to the north-east of Cargo Fleet Lane/Fulbeck Road Neighbourhood Centre, at the centre of a residential estate in east Middlesbrough. The centre has four active uses in total and consists of a small purpose-built shopping precinct with dedicated parking, anchored by a Sainsbury's Local convenience store. Other uses include a delicatessen, two hot food takeaways and a vacant unit that was previously a betting office. An elderly care home is adjacent to the centre boundary.

- 4.62 Although these uses help to meet some of the basic needs of the immediate surrounding residential estates, it is a small centre with a narrow range of provision, which has limited significance beyond this area. **It is not considered that this centre can be classified as a local centre.**

Westerdale Road

- 4.63 This centre has been demolished and therefore has not been assessed for this study.

Zone 3: Middlesbrough South

Coulby Newham District Centre

- 4.64 Coulby Newham District Centre is located 6 km to the south of Middlesbrough and is the second largest centre in the Borough, both in terms of the total number of uses and floorspace.

- 4.65 It primarily comprises the Parkway Centre, a covered mall which comprises a Tesco Extra superstore of around 7,600 sqm net) anchoring the centre, along with a variety of other retail and service uses. Such uses include national multiple retail and leisure operators, such as Iceland, Peacocks, Boyes, Specsavers, Boots, Superdrug, Tui, Greggs, Burger King and Subway. They also include a Post Office, some smaller/independent retailers on the periphery (including a number of hot food takeaways), and the Rainbow Leisure Centre. There are extensive areas of free car parking available around the centre, along with bus stands just off Dalby Way and dedicated pedestrian links (including footbridges and underpasses) from the neighbouring residential areas.

- 4.66 In addition to the Parkway Centre itself, there are also a number of free-standing uses located around the edge (but within the boundary) of the centre. These include B&M Bargains and Halfords stores, a Bannantynes Health Club, a drive-thru McDonalds, a public house, a medical centre, day nursery, a veterinary surgery and a number of three office buildings (two of which are vacant). Also, on the fringe of the centre, but beyond the boundary as currently defined in the adopted plan, are an Aldi supermarket and drive-thru KFC (opened in the last few years), as well as a number of churches and care homes.

- 4.67 **Given the scale of this centre, and the strategic role it performs in meeting retail and service needs on the south side of Middlesbrough, it should continue to be defined as a district centre.** Consideration could also be given to expanding the centre boundary to include surrounding facilities, including an Aldi and KFC, for consistency – not least as the McDonalds (which is further from the Parkway Centre itself) lies within this boundary.

- 4.68 Care will be needed to ensure that this does not lead to unplanned growth which could have an adverse impact upon centres elsewhere in the Borough. **However, given that these additional uses are relatively new, and play an important role in attracting people to the centre – not least the Aldi store which, on the basis of recent household surveys, appears to be trading strongly and functioning as part of the wider centre – it is recommended that they be included within a revised centre boundary.**

Marton Shops Local Centre

- 4.69 This is located around 1.4 km to the north east of Coulby Newham District Centre. It comprises two purpose-built shopping parades on the eastern side of Stokesley Road, to either side of its junction with Laurel Road, providing 28 uses in total and dedicated off-street parking to the front.

- 4.70 These uses including several convenience retail uses (including Spar, Budgens and Greggs), as well as a pharmacy, opticians and a small number of independent, specialist, comparison goods retailers. It also has various service uses, including hair and beauty salons, a funeral director, two betting offices (William Hill and Ladbrokes), two small bars, a bistro and a restaurant. **The centre contains a range of uses which serve both residents in the surrounding residential areas and passing trade, and its continued designation as a local centre is clearly appropriate.**

Viewley Centre, Hemlington

- 4.71 The Viewley Centre Local Centre is located just over 1.5 km to the west of Coulby Newham District Centre, in the Hemlington area of south-east Middlesbrough, which lies to the south of the A174. It is a purpose-built shopping centre in a parkland setting, with uses provided over two floors, albeit many units on the upper level are residential or vacant.
- 4.72 The centre comprises 24 active uses (totalling c. 4,700 sqm gross floorspace) and contains a small number of national multiple retailers, including Boots and One Stop, along with a post office, and various independent retail and services operators. These include a number of hair and beauty salons, along with various community facilities, such as a community hub and library, a nursery, medical centre, social club and Providence Baptist Church. There are also two further churches just outside of the currently defined boundary.
- 4.73 The range of commercial uses provided is consistent with that of a local centre, and these other facilities help to reinforce the Viewley Centre's role as a focal point for the local community. **It should be retained as a local centre, although there is not considered to be any pressing need to include the two additional churches within any revised boundary.** The existing centre boundary is already relatively wide, encompassing adjacent areas of car parking, and it will be important not to encourage for new development of a more significant scale which could have a harmful impact upon this or other centres in the surrounding area.

The Avenue, Nunthorpe

- 4.74 The Avenue Local Centre is located in Nunthorpe, around 2.5 km to the east of Coulby Newham District Centre. The centre comprises a small purpose-built shopping parade, with associated car parking, on the eastern side of that road.
- 4.75 Although the number of units is comparatively small (eight in total), as is the total quantum of floorspace there (c. 530 sqm gross), there is a reasonable mix of uses. These include a Premier convenience store, which helps to anchor the centre, along with a veterinary surgery, two hot food takeaways, three hair/beauty salons and a dog grooming studio. **As such, whilst small in terms of both floorspace and the number of uses, given the nature of the facilities present, it is recommended that be retained as a local centre.**

Hollowfield, Coulby Newham

- 4.76 Hollowfield Neighbourhood Centre is located adjacent to Sunnyside Primary School, around 700 m to the north-west of Coulby Newham District Centre, in south Middlesbrough. It consists of a purpose-built shopping parade, with four different uses, comprising a hair salon, an independent comparison goods retailer, a medical practice and a day nursery. The centre does not contain any uses which would meet the day to day convenience retail needs of local residents, nor does it contain many of the other shops or services which are typically found in a local centre or would help it act as a more of a focal point for the local community. **As such, the centre should not be designated as a local centre.**

5.0 Summary of Recommendations

5.1 This section summarises the recommendations made as part of this study, taking into account the analysis carried out in Section 4.0, which is, in turn, based on the methodology included at Section 3.0. In particular, it sets the recommended hierarchy of defined centres for the Borough as well as any implications for proposed new policies in replacement new Local Plan for Middlesbrough.

District Centres

5.2 Policy CS13 of the adopted Core Strategy currently defines Berwick Hills and Coulby Newham as District Centres. Based on the analysis set out in Section 4.0 of this study, both of these centres should continue to be defined as district centres in the new Local Plan. This reflects the fact that:

- both centres contain a significant quantum of active commercial and community floorspace (c. 13,200 sqm gross in Berwick Hills and 34,000 sqm gross in Coulby Newham), which helps to provide a critical mass of attraction to local residents in the eastern and southern parts of Middlesbrough respectively;
- this floorspace includes large foodstores, comprising Morrisons at Berwick Hills (c. 4,600 sqm net floorspace) and Tesco Extra at Coulby Newham (c. 7,600 sqm net), which anchor these centres, and draw significant proportions of residents from across Zones 2 and 3 respectively (and beyond); and
- although Coulby Newham provides a more significant quantum of comparison retail floorspace, and the total number of active uses in Berwick Hills is much lower (26 as opposed to 55), they both contain a range of other retail and service uses, as well as other community facilities (including a leisure centre), to which people in eastern and southern Middlesbrough look to, to meet many of their needs.

5.3 As part of the analysis set out in Section 4.0, it has also been identified that the currently defined North Ormesby Local Centre contains a scale and range of retail, service and other commercial/community uses which are consistent with that of a district centre. This reflects the significant number of active uses it contains (56 no.) – including a number of community facilities - the quantum of floorspace it provides (around 6,300 sqm gross) and the fact that it also holds a twice weekly market, with a range of stalls, which help to draw people in on a regular basis. It is therefore recommended that North Ormesby be re-classified as a District Centre in the replacement new Local Plan.

5.4 Linthorpe Village Local Centre, as currently defined, includes a total of 82 units and over 13,000 sqm gross floorspace. Whilst the majority of uses located here are small in scale, and it does not contain any medium or large-sized foodstores, it nevertheless contains a critical mass of facilities which help to draw people from beyond the immediate surrounding areas. It is therefore considered that it also should be re-classified as a district centre.

5.5 It will be necessary to consider any re-classification of this particular centre in the context of the boundary of Middlesbrough Town Centre – which currently extends a significant way southwards along Linthorpe Road, to its junction with Parliament Road. As set out in the corresponding Stage Two report, however, whilst the area in between Clifton Street and Parliament Road has a slightly different character to more northern parts of Linthorpe Road – and could potentially sit outside of the town centre boundary and/or be classed as a separate district or local centre – it is considered, on balance, that it should be included within town centre as defined within the new local plan.

5.6 In addition to the above re-classifications, we would recommend that a policy be included in the new Local Plan which seeks to ensure that any proposals which come forward in the above district centres in future do not have any significant adverse impact upon other centres. This would help to ensure that investment is not diverted away from Middlesbrough Town Centre in particular. We would therefore propose the following wording:

“Proposed new retail and leisure uses within Berwick Hills, Coulby Newham, Linthorpe Village and North Ormesby District Centres will only be permitted where they would not have a significant adverse impact upon:

- existing, committed and planned public and private investment in other existing centres;*
 - the vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in other existing centres.*
- “

5.7 We would also recommend that a criteria-based policy be introduced which applies to proposals for changes of use of units within both district and local centres to food and beverage outlets. Such criteria could seek to, amongst other things:

- minimise any potential impact upon the overall vitality and viability of the centre, including its retail character;
- maintain live frontages as far as possible; and
- protect local amenity (having regard to potential impacts in terms of noise, fumes/odour and traffic).

5.8 The above criteria would help the Council manage the mix of uses within the centre, although there are other approaches which could help to prevent further increases in hot food takeaway uses. As with Middlesbrough Town Centre, these approaches relate to both the number/proportion of uses within a centre and the potential impact upon levels of obesity.

5.9 However, hot food takeaways play a more significant role in maintaining the vitality and viability of district and local centres and, as such, the Council may wish to adopt a less restrictive approach. The use of a 6% maximum threshold for such uses in any centre (which is based upon the Goad national average for all centres) could have an unintended consequence in this regard. Furthermore, any criteria related to the proximity to schools and/or prevalence of obesity could also preclude any new facilities being brought forward within centres (on the basis that many will be situated within 400m of a school entry point). It may therefore be appropriate to avoid adopting any percentage-based restrictions or application of obesity related criteria, and simply use the more general criteria set out in the first three bullets set out earlier.

Local Centres

5.10 Based on the analysis set out in Section 4.0, it is proposed that eighteen local centres be defined in the replacement new Local Plan. These centres are set out in Table 5.1, below, along with the total number of units and floorspace in each.

Table 5.1 Summary of Proposed Local Centres

| Centre | Total Units (no.) | Total Active Floorspace (sqm gross) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Zone 1 – Middlesbrough Central | | |
| Roman Road | 39 | 3,229 |
| Acklam Road/Mandale Road | 31 | 4,370 |
| Eastbourne Road | 28 | 3,725 |
| Parliament Road | 28 | 2,484 |
| Acklam Road/Cambridge Road | 22 | 3,561 |
| Belle Vue, Marton | 17 | 2,571 |
| Saltergill Avenue | 15 | 2,364 |
| Trimdon Avenue | 11 | 972 |
| Broughton Road, Easterside | 9 | 2,346 |
| Zone 2 – Middlesbrough East | | |
| Lealholme Crescent | 12 | 2,864 |
| Beresford Buildings, Thorntree | 10 | 1,373 |
| Marshall Avenue, Brambles Farm | 8 | 545 |
| Shelton Court, Thorntree | 7 | 682 |
| Ormesby High Street | 6 | 1,929 |
| Penrith Road | 5 | 467 |
| Zone 3 – Middlesbrough South | | |
| Stokesley Road/Gypsy Lane | 28 | 1,966 |
| Viewley Centre, Hemlington | 24 | 4,671 |
| The Avenue, Nunthorpe | 8 | 528 |

- 5.11 Whilst the total number of units and floorspace in each of the proposed Local Centres varies significantly, this reflects the differing roles and functions of these centres, and the scale and nature of the catchment areas they serve. They all contain a range of uses which meet the day to day needs of residents in the surrounding area including, as a minimum, a small supermarket or convenience store/newsagent.
- 5.12 Although six of the above centres contain less than ten active commercial/community uses (excluding vacant units), they all contain a good spread of uses across different sectors which both meet a variety of needs and re-enforce their role as a focal point for the community. In addition to a convenience store for example, these are likely to include a pharmacy, post office, hair salon, hot food takeaway, public house, doctor's surgery and/or community centre.
- 5.13 Ormesby High Street, in particular, only contains a total of six active uses (or seven if the social club immediately to the west is included). However, within this total are two supermarkets (Farmfoods and Heron) which help to anchor the centre, as well as a pharmacy and public house. All of these uses help to meet local needs and ensure the centre performs an important role at the heart of the community in the Ormesby area.
- 5.14 In addition, Shelton Court only contains seven active uses within the currently defined centre boundary. However, these uses include a mini-market convenience store, a number of other retail and service uses, and it is also proposed that the adjacent community centre be included.

Although relatively limited in terms of both the number and range of uses, it is considered that it contains sufficient a critical mass to function as a centre.

- 5.15 Although the above local centres vary significantly in terms of the total number of uses and quantum of floorspace, it is not considered that there is any merit in defining different types of local centre, as is found in the existing Core Strategy). Although such a categorisation would more closely reflect the sizes of the different centres, it would be more difficult to take into account the role and function that they perform in serving their respective catchment areas. As set out in the Stage Two report, it is not recommended that such categories be used for determining when an impact assessment would be required for new proposals, as the likely impact of new development is more likely to be influenced by other factors – including its scale, nature and the likely catchment area served.

Other Neighbourhood Shopping Facilities

- 5.16 Table 5.2, below, summarises those locations which are not proposed to be defined as Local Centres (i.e. those not listed in Tables 5.1 above), which comprise seven in total.

Table 5.2 Other Neighbourhood Shopping Facilities

| Centre | Total Units (no.) | Total Active Floorspace (sqm gross) |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Zone 1 – Middlesbrough Central | | |
| Whitfield Buildings | 7 | 373 |
| Longlands/Marton Road | 6 | 405 |
| Hall Drive | 1 | 258 |
| | | |
| Zone 2 – Middlesbrough East | | |
| Cargo Fleet Lane/Fulbeck Road | 7 | 392 |
| | | |
| Vaughan Centre | 4 | 604 |
| Westerdale Road | N/A | N/A |
| Zone 3 – Middlesbrough South | | |
| Hollowfield | 4 | 601 |

- 5.17 These centres all have less than 10 commercial or community uses (excluding vacant units), as well as a relatively narrow range of facilities, and some do not benefit from any anchor convenience store. Whilst some – for example, Whitfield Buildings, Longlands Road/Marton Road and Cargo Fleet Lane – have a similar number of active uses to others recommended to be retained as local centres above, they lack the critical mass of facilities needed to perform a role as a meaningful focal point for the surrounding residential areas.
- 5.18 Although the adopted Local Plan contains six no. defined Neighbourhood Centres, as set out in Section 2.0, such centres have no status, or indeed protection, in terms of national planning policy. Whilst there is considered to be some merit in seeking to protect against the loss of shops and services, where they meet an important local need, we do not therefore consider that Neighbourhood Centre status should be retained within the replacement plan. This is not least given that there are also other clusters of shops and services not considered as part of this study which may perform such a function, and it is clearly impractical to consider every individual shop unit as part of this study and/or define them as part of the new Local Plan.

Monitoring and Review

- 5.19 It will be important to keep the vitality and viability of the local centres defined within the new Local Plan, and particularly their mix of uses, under review. Changes to their mix of uses could affect their ability to properly function as a centre and focus as the local community and the Council will need to consider whether there are any such centres requiring intervention in order to bolster this role.
- 5.20 Equally, there may be centres which are currently only considered to be of neighbourhood significance now but, with further investment, may in future warrant re-classification to local centre status. We would therefore recommend that the surveys of each centre be updated at least every year, so that they can be effectively monitored and managed by the Council.
- 5.21 It is possible that planning permissions will be granted for new significant new housing development in Middlesbrough which include new retail/commercial uses. It is recommended that such developments are monitored, as and when they come forward, and an assessment made alongside any further reviews of the Local Plan, as to whether they warrant Local Centres status.
- 5.22 A masterplan was prepared in 2018 by the Council, in order to inform the residential-led development of land at Stainsby, on the western side of Middlesbrough, which is allocated for such development (totalling 1670 dwellings) in under Policy H21 the adopted development plan. As part of this master plan, an area has been designated for a new local centre and primary school (which Policy H21 indicates are to be provided by the need arises). It would therefore be appropriate to refer to this proposed new local centre within the relevant policy in any new draft replacement plan.
- 5.23 New housing development is also taking place in south Middlesbrough, at Hemlington Grange and Newham Hall. As these sites lie a relatively short distance from Coulby Newham District Centre, it is not envisaged that a need for significant new retail/commercial floorspace will be generated by these schemes. However, it will nevertheless be important to consider the extent to which more basic, day to day needs of the new residents will be met by existing provision and whether there is any outstanding need for new, local-level, facilities.
- 5.24 In planning to bring forward new centres or other retail/commercial uses as part of (or in order to serve) new housing developments, it will be important to consider the nature and scale of facilities required in order to meet the day to day needs of these communities – and whether there is any need to restrict the scale and number of units propose in particular. It will also be important to take into account the extent to which existing centres and other provision is able to meet these needs, having regard to its location and that of planned new residential development.

Birmingham
0121 713 1530
birmingham@lichfields.uk

Edinburgh
0131 285 0670
edinburgh@lichfields.uk

Manchester
0161 837 6130
manchester@lichfields.uk

Bristol
0117 403 1980
bristol@lichfields.uk

Leeds
0113 397 1397
leeds@lichfields.uk

Newcastle
0191 261 5685
newcastle@lichfields.uk

Cardiff
029 2043 5880
cardiff@lichfields.uk

London
020 7837 4477
london@lichfields.uk

Thames Valley
0118 334 1920
thamesvalley@lichfields.uk