



Portsmouth
CITY COUNCIL

Portsmouth City Council Planning Service

Student Information Sheet

RETAIL IN PORTSMOUTH

Introduction

This factsheet sets out the context for retail development in Portsmouth and incorporates the findings of the retail study conducted on behalf of the City Council by Colliers Erdman Lewis published in July 1998. There are five main shopping centres in the city and a number of local centres and retail parks as detailed below.

Background, 1980 - 1996

Since the 1980s the retail sector of the economy has seen considerable growth, with the increasing availability of credit, the booming housing market in the early eighties and increased consumer confidence and disposable income. This led to increased pressure on available space and higher rents. Out of centre shopping was the largest growth area, increasing massively between 1987 and 1996, in contrast to in-centre retail which saw very little growth.

The recession in the early 1990s led to a virtual standstill in retail growth. "Discount" retail operations low rent users (such as charity shops) proliferated as landowners tried to let vacant premises in shopping centres.

Current National Trends

Since 1996 consumer confidence and spending has again increased, along with rents for retail units. The principal demand is in the areas of young fashion, sportswear, multi-media and "lifestyle" goods. In particular, there is a greater demand for larger units (25% larger than a decade ago), especially in the larger town centres (sometimes referred to as "Super Prime" sites).

A growing trend is the convergence of retail and leisure. Shopping is increasingly seen as a leisure activity, particularly with the growth in "factory outlet" centres, which often combine the two. Alongside this has been the growth in retail service uses such as specialist coffee shops, bars and restaurants in areas previously dominated by shops.

The promotion of urban living, combined with an increase in single person households and the concept of the "24 hour" city has also led to a return to town centres of some major retail operations, which had moved out over previous years, such areas, such as Tesco's Metro and Sainsbury's Express stores. Accompanying this trend has been increased competition for out of town sites between retail and leisure uses.

These trends have been reinforced by new government policy. New guidance to Local Planning Authorities (contained in Planning Policy Statement 6 and Planning Policy Guidance Note 13), encourages the re-use of town centre sites, so reducing the length of journeys, before new retail developments are allowed on out of centre sites, developers and Local Authorities should first consider whether there are any appropriate sites within towns and cities.

PORTSMOUTH SHOPPING CENTRES

Portsmouth has a variety of types of shopping centres, including the city centre, which has a sub-regional role; district centres, serving significant parts of the city; local centres, serving the day to day needs of their immediate surroundings; and retail parks, mostly specialising in bulky comparison goods (such as furniture). A brief description of these centres and current proposals for them are set out below.

City Centre

The City Centre is a sub-regional centre supporting and benefiting from the City's role as a tourist centre. As the principal shopping centre serving Portsmouth and South East Hampshire it has an estimated catchment area of 500,000 people. The area is well served by public transport, including Portsmouth and Southsea railway station and major bus interchanges at either end of Commercial Road.

The centre consists mainly of commercial uses with many of the top name high street retailers including department stores (Debenhams and Marks & Spencer), banks, building societies, etc. and also includes pubs and fast-food take-aways/ restaurants (concentrated around Guildhall Walk) which remain open in to the evenings after many of the shops, etc. have stopped trading for the day. Sainsbury and Tesco both have large stores on the periphery of the city centre.

A strategy for the city centre "Towards 2000 and beyond" has been prepared outlining proposals and issues in the area. The former Tricorn shopping centre was demolished in 2004/5 to make way for redevelopment in the northern section of the city centre. Please see the City Centre North information sheet for more details of future development of the Tricorn site and surroundings.



Above, Arundel street in Portsmouth city centre, showing new pedestrian improvements.

Gunwharf Quays

In 1995 Portsmouth City Council prepared a development brief of the former HMS Vernon site to the west of the city centre. The development brief envisaged an attractive waterfront development with the provision of public open spaces and good public access and linkages to and from the site. The site was sold by the MoD to the Berkeley Group in 1996 who submitted an outline planning application in 1997. Berkeley commissioned an investigation into the retail market, which concluded that a mixture of speciality shopping, designer outlets and bars/restaurants would be popular in this location. Retail was one of the main features of the scheme taking up 17,000 sq.m (182,992 sq.ft.) of the site.

The original retail element of Gunwharf consisted of 72 units in a range of sizes from 50-500 sq.m. The shops are arranged around a central square and two parallel glazed routes, with leisure facilities on the upper floors overlooking the public space. In recent years retail provision within Gunwharf has expanded with shopping units now located either side of Market Square and along the Canalside.

Generally the Gunwharf development has been heralded as a success, attracting over 3 million visitors in the first 9 months of opening. Its proximity between major tourist attractions such as the Royal Naval Museums and The Camber of Old Portsmouth will ensure Gunwharf's popularity and Gunwharf is also a major attraction in its own right.

District Centres

Southsea Shopping Centre: This centre includes Palmerston Road along with the adjacent Osborne Road/Marmion Road local centres. Due to its location close to many of the tourist attractions it both supports and benefits from the designated Tourism Priority Area. This area is also well served by public transport main routes from all parts of the city.

The centre includes two department stores (Knight & Lee and Debenhams) and a Waitrose supermarket. In Palmerston Road within the pedestrianised area there are a number of "High Street" retailers as well as local, independent retailers. Outside the pedestrianised area, along Osborne Road and Marmion Road, there is a wider mix of uses, including restaurants, bars and clubs, in addition to a number of retailers of the independent single outlet type, many with residential uses on the floors above.

Cosham: This important District centre was part pedestrianised in 1989 at the northern end. Cosham serves a wide area due to its prominent location just north of Portsea Island. The area is well served by public transport, including Cosham railway station and close to one of the main routes onto Portsea Island. Many of the units house chains of major High Street retailers, including three major foodstores, along with a number of local independent traders as well. For a centre of its size, Cosham has a good range of stores and facilities, although there is a high turnover of tenants and some vacancies towards the area's periphery.

Fratton Road: This is a linear District centre at the heart of one of the main residential areas of the City. It lies on a major public transport link between the north and south of Portsea Island. The Bridge Centre acts as a focus for the area, containing an Asda supermarket, post office and other retail units within a covered shopping centre. The remainder of the retail uses which straddle both sides of the road are largely of a specialist nature, single outlets or part of chains of local businesses. This area suffers from problems of high vacancy rates, particularly

towards the fringes, and in some places poor physical fabric. This was one of the City Council's Partnership Improvement Areas where the Council and local traders were involved in projects to maintain and improve the area.

North End: This District Shopping Centre includes London Road, running along the same main distributor road as Fratton Road, and is also a major public transport route. The area runs through the heart of the city and abuts on all sides major residential areas. There is a mixture of shops, banks, building societies, pubs, restaurants/take-aways, a cinema and a night-club. The shops/restaurants tend to be mainly single outlet businesses with a few key major retailers such as Safeway & Woolworths. This mix of uses results in the area remaining busy throughout most of the day and night, even though the majority of shops close in the evening. The Kingston Road Local Shopping Centre lies immediately to the south. North End was also one of the City's Partnership Improvement Areas.

Local Centres

Kingston Road: South of the North End District Centre, along a major public transport route. Largely retail based with a number of restaurants/takeaways. Retailers are mostly independent and specialist in nature, although two large retail units, including an Aldi supermarket, opened to the north, along Kingston Crescent. The area suffers from some problems of units in poor physical condition. It was another of the City Council's Partnership Improvement Areas.

Fawcett Road: This is a local centre that meets the day-to-day needs of the area. The road is served by public transport links between Fratton & Southsea and contains a mixture of residential/shops (mostly independent single outlets although it does include a Co-op store), including a large number of second hand shops and take-aways. It is busy during the day and evening as people use it to travel to/from Albert Road and the Southsea area generally. It was another of the City Council's Partnership Improvement Areas.

Elm Grove: This is a local centre in Southsea which forms one of the City's Partnership Improvement Areas. Along with Albert Road and Highland Road to the east (see below), it forms an important east/west route through Southsea. Shops in this area tend to be specialist in nature, and include a number of antique and second hand shops, whilst a high proportion of restaurants and takeaways keep the area busy well into the evening. Key retailers in the area include Courts furniture, Co-op and Tesco supermarkets and an Alldays outlet. Like Albert Road to the East, this area tends to remain busy well into the evening.

Albert Road: This local centre forms part of a main east-west road route with Highland Road and Elm Grove. There is a mixture of uses on both sides of the road including banks and building societies along with Somerfield, and Tesco supermarkets, the remainder of shops tend to be local business specialist shops, particularly those aimed at a younger market. Places of entertainment include a theatre and a music venue for bands, along with a high proportion of public houses, take-aways and restaurants etc. making the area busy at most times of the day and night. The surrounding area is mainly residential in character.

Highland Road: To the east of Albert Road (see above), this area forms part of an east-west route through a major residential area. There are a number of shops which tend to be specialist in nature, usually of the single independent outlet type. There are a couple of public houses but there are no major chains.

Allaway Avenue, Paulsgrove: This centre provides services and acts as a focal point for the day-to-day needs of the housing estate which is not within easy access of a major district centre. Bus stops are adjacent to the shops and a new railway station for the area is allocated in the Local Plan. The parade includes shops/take-aways with flats on upper floors. There have been environmental improvements undertaken in the area to improve its appearance and to make it safer for pedestrians.

Havant Road, Drayton: This centre provides for the day-to-day needs of this largely residential area. The centre straddles the main distributor road between Cosham and Havant, well used during the day and evening, and is also a main public transport route in the north of the City. The parade contains shops (including a Co-op outlet), take-aways, a public house and petrol station.

Tangier Road: This local centre almost exclusively serves an area on the eastern side of the City. It includes one superstore and specialist independent retail outlets.

Copnor Road: A small centre to the north of Portsea Island, the shops are local independent businesses and tend to be specialist in nature.

Eastney Road: Serving the residential areas in the south-east of Portsea. Shops are on both sides of the road with two supermarkets and a number of local independent operators. There are also take-aways, public houses and yacht chandlers in this area.

Winter Road: This centre occupies a single rank of shops on the west side of Winter Road, between numbers 99 and 169. Consisting mostly of stores serving the everyday convenience goods requirements of the local area, the centre includes one pub, a take away, launderette, Co-Op supermarket and a small number of offices and specialist shops as well as convenience goods shops.

OUT OF CENTRE SHOPPING

Out of centre shopping in Portsmouth includes Retail Parks and major retail superstores outside of existing centres as follows. (*Italics refer to gross floorspace*).

Supermarkets

Tesco; Southampton Road (90,000 sq. ft.)

Sainsbury & Homebase; Farlington Industrial Estate (69,600 sq. ft. & 48,500 sq. ft.)

Morrisons; Anchorage Park (35,900 sq. ft.)

Asda; (82, 600 sq. ft)

Retail Parks

Ocean Retail, Burrfields Road: Dominated by bulky comparison goods retailer's. The size of units range from 10,000sq. ft. upwards.

Victory Retail Park, Flathouse Road: Situated to the north of the city centre, just off of Mile end road, this area is largely occupied by retailers of bulky comparison goods. The units on this site are a *maximum* size of 10,000sq ft.

Burrfields Road: Two stores, Staples (15,000 sq. ft.) & Pets at Home (9,000 sq. ft.).

Other Retail Warehouses

B&Q Norway Road (24,400 sq ft)

Days Buildbase, Burrfields Road (69,500 sq ft)

Magnet, Fitzherbert Road (17,000 sq ft)

MFI, Airport Service Road (57,300 sq ft)

Retail Floorspace in Portsmouth [A1, A2, A3]		
	Gross (sq ft)	Net (sq ft)
City Centre	1,068,754	697,553
Southsea	531,580	216,367
North End	279,627	163,720
Cosham	238,810	160,459
Fratton	221,254	123,011
All Centres	2,340,025	1,361,100
Out-of-centre	540,500	350,500
Remainder of city	2,345,100	1,361,100
PORTSMOUTH TOTAL	5,225,625	2,848,386

Source: Portsmouth Shopping Study; Colliers Erdman Lewis.

THE FUTURE

In the next few years Portsmouth may see significant changes to the City's shopping patterns as a number of new developments come forward. A major project in coming years is the redevelopment of the redundant Tricorn site in the City Centre. This former shopping centre site, currently a temporary car park, is identified in the Portsmouth City Local Plan as a location for the development of new shopping floorspace. An outline planning application for the redevelopment of the site was approved in November 2005. Details of the redevelopment can be found on the City Centre North Information Sheet.

As part of the process of review of the Portsmouth City Local Plan, the Council produced a City Centre Strategy "Towards 2000 and Beyond" to provide a framework for the city centre's future. In addition the Council undertook a series of "health checks", covering aspects of the city's main shopping centres, such as rents, occupancy levels, quality of the environment and so forth; to be used in the future to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of these centres.

In June 2002, the City Council published "Portsmouth City Centre Urban Design Masterplan", a vision document focusing on the design and fabric of the city centre. Themes to come out of this document were to create better links between the centre and surrounding residential areas, strengthening the Commercial Road/Guildhall Walk spine and restoring pedestrian priority, improving Commercial Road/Arundel Street streetscape and enhancing the sense of arrival at the gateways to the city centre, especially from the north.

FURTHER INFORMATION

As well as the various documents mentioned above, there are a number of other information sheets available from the City Council Planning Department relating to some of the locations and developments mentioned above, covering their history and development in more detail, these include:

- Anchorage Park
- The Bridge Centre, Fratton
- City Centre/Commercial Road
- Cosham High Street
- Gunwharf Development
- Tesco, Southampton Road

- Tricorn
- City Centre North