

# **Retail Development in the New Forest National Park 2007 – 2017**

## **Background Paper – January 2018**

### **1 Core Strategy Policy**

- 1.1 Successive Local Plans for the National Park have sought to safeguard the role of the four defined village centres of the National Park in meeting some of the day-to-day retail needs of local residents and visitors. The strategic policy in the New Forest National Park Authority's Core Strategy (adopted December 2010) seeks to allow for the provision of a range of retail uses in the defined villages of Ashurst, Brockenhurst, Lyndhurst and Sway.
- 1.2 The Authority began monitoring the proportion of retail uses in the defined shopping areas of the four main villages on an annual basis in 2007. A proportion of the designated shopping frontages (as shown on the Proposals Map) should be kept in retail use is set out in policy DP7.
- 1.3 Core Strategy Policy DP7 Change of Use from Retail in the Defined Villages states;

*The change of use of ground floor premises from retail to financial and professional services or food and drink uses within the local shopping frontages of the Defined Villages (as defined on the Proposals Map) will be permitted provided that it will not result in the proportion of retail units in the shopping frontages of Lyndhurst and Brockenhurst being reduced to less than 50%; and in the frontages of Ashurst and Sway to less than 40%.*

- 1.4 A summary of the Town and Country (Use Classes) Order 1987 relevant to this survey are set out in Appendix 1.

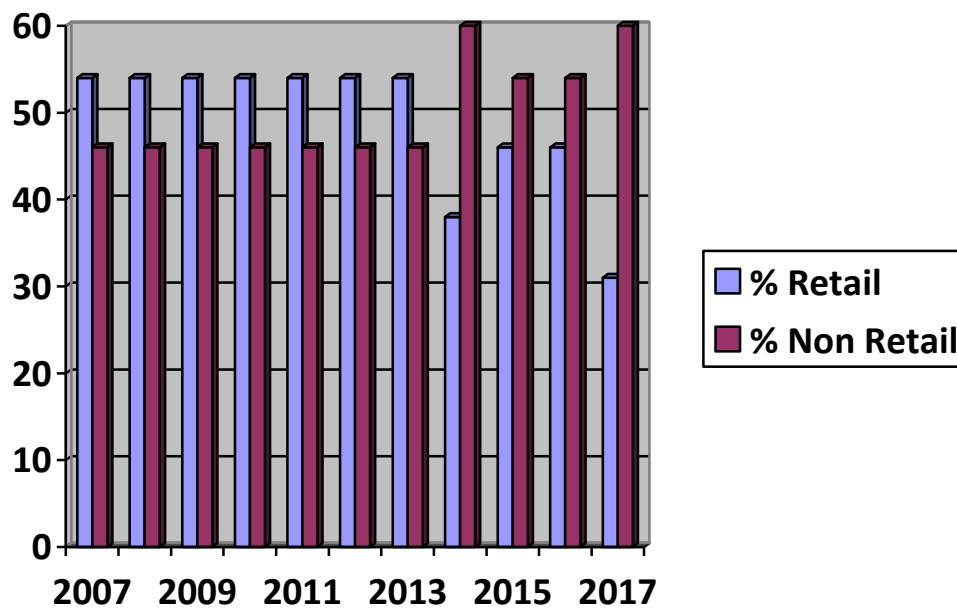
### **2 2017 Survey**

- 2.1 The survey was carried out on 21 November 2017.

### **3 Ashurst**

- 3.1 A vibrant shopping frontage. Its location off a side road adjacent to the busy A35 road with ample free parking available continues to attract passing motorists as well as local residents.
- 3.2 There are a total of 13 units (A1 retail and non-retail) in Ashurst. It has to be noted that due to this relatively small number of units, any change in Use Class Order and/or vacancy rates would significantly affect the percentages (this is also the same position for Sway which has a total of 12 units).

3.3 Between 2007 and 2013 there had been no change in the proportion of retail uses within the shopping frontage of Ashurst. The proportion of A1 retail use had remained constant at 54%. However, under changes to permitted development introduced May 2013 (and continued in subsequent amendments, the most recent dated 1 October 2017) which allowed temporary changes of use from A1 to A3 use, some units are no longer in retail A1 use. The percentage of A1 use has decreased from 54% in 2013 to 31% in 2017 and the non-retail use has increased to 69%. Thus, the proportion of A1 retail use is 9% below the 40% rule established in planning policy.



#### Vacancy Rates

3.4 None of the units (A1 and non-retail) are currently vacant. This is a continuation of the trend since 2007.

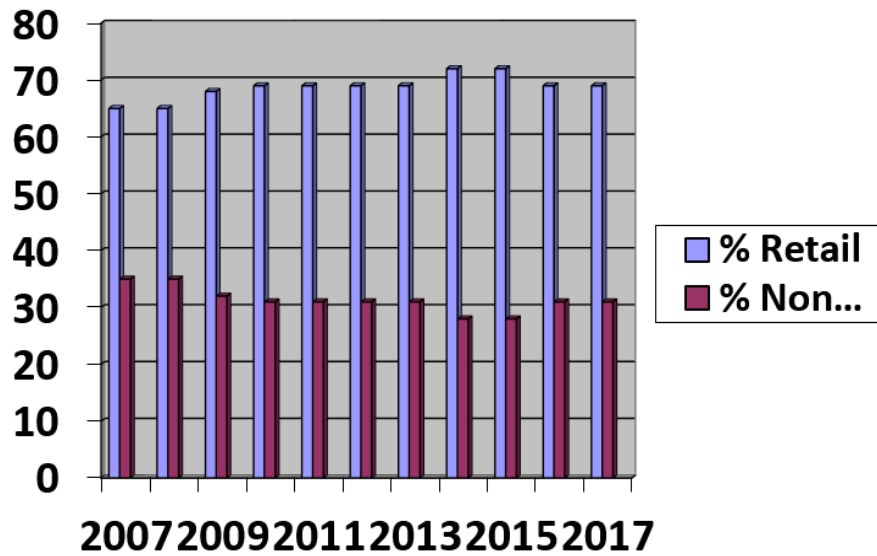
### **4 Brockenhurst**

4.1 In Brockenhurst shops continue to cater for the everyday needs of a large village community with a bakers, butcher, post office and convenience store etc. Retail and non-retail units also cater for the students attending Brockenhurst College and tourists with a number of cafes, restaurants and gift shops.

4.2 There are a total of 32 units (A1 retail and non retail) in Brockenhurst.

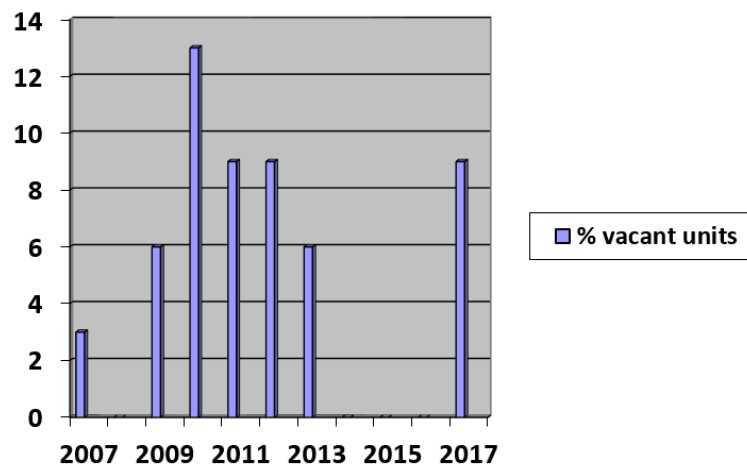
4.3 In Brockenhurst the proportion of A1 retail use increased slightly from 64% in 2007 to 72% in 2014 and 2015, falling slightly to 69% in 2016 and 2017.

- 4.4 At 69% the proportion of A1 retail use is 19% above the 50% minimum established in planning policies.



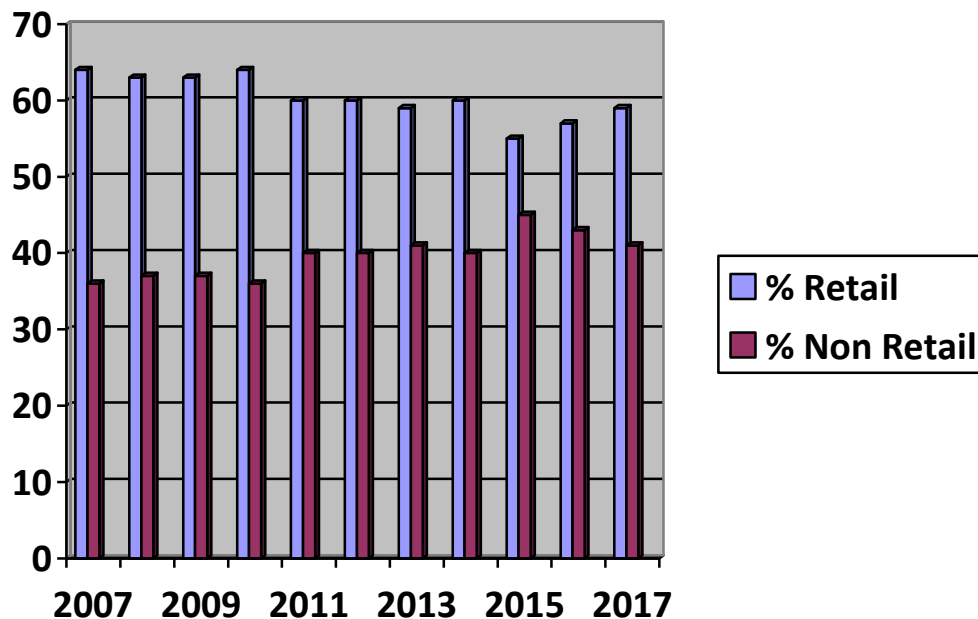
#### Vacancy Rates

- 4.5 Between 2007 to 2010 the percentage of vacant units (both A1 retail and non-retail) increased from 3% to 13%. Between 2011 the vacancy rate continued to fall and in January 2014 the rate dropped to zero per cent and remained at zero percent until 2017 when a vacancy rate of 9% was recorded (2 A1 units and 1 non-retail unit).
- 4.6 In the past the lack of vacant units in Brockenhurst always portrayed a very vibrant shopping centre. The number of units currently lying vacant however, at the time of the most recent survey will continue to be monitored.



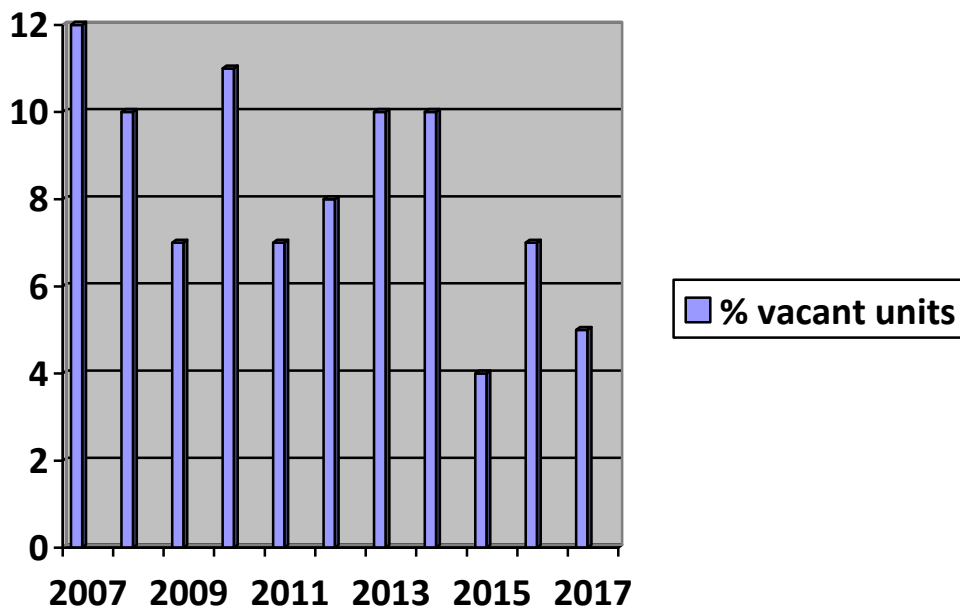
## 5 Lyndhurst

- 5.1 Lyndhurst continues to provide a vibrant shopping experience. Shops are mainly geared towards the tourist trade (it is quite common to see a number of coaches parked in the public car park in the middle of winter). Although there are two small supermarkets (Budgens and a recently opened Co-operative store) it lacks the small convenience stores (there is only one butchers shop) that one would normally expect to find in a settlement of this size.
- 5.2 The number of units in Lyndhurst is 83 (A1 retail and non-retail). In Lyndhurst the proportion of A1 retail use remained constant at 63% between 2007 to 2010. Since 2010 the proportion decreased from 63% to 55% in 2015. In 2016 the proportion increased to 57% and in 2017 to 59%.
- 5.4 At 59% the proportion of A1 retail use is 9% above the 50% minimum established in planning policies.



### Vacancy Rates

- 5.5 Between 2007 and 2014 the percentage of vacant units (both A1 retail and non-retail) has varied between 12% in 2007 to 9% in 2014. Since 2014 the vacancy rate has continued to fall to 5% in 2017. The level of vacant units within the defined shopping frontage of Lyndhurst is therefore well below the national average for vacancy rates which is currently around 14%.



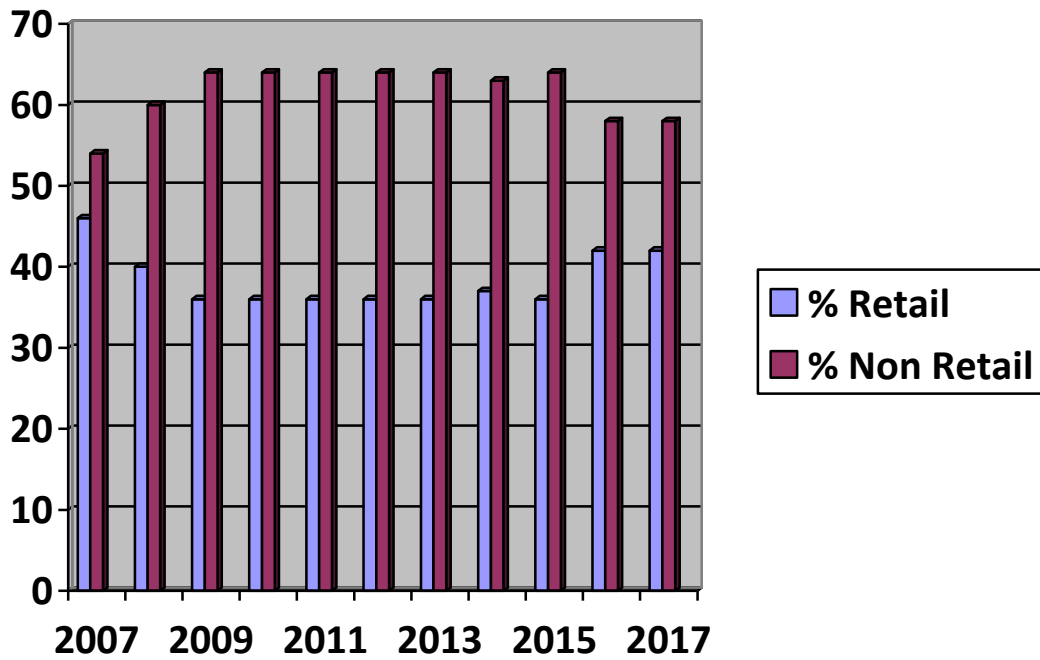
5.7 The vacant units tend to be amongst the units located at both ends of the High Street.

## 6 Sway

6.1 There are a total number of 12 units (A1 retail and non retail) in Sway.

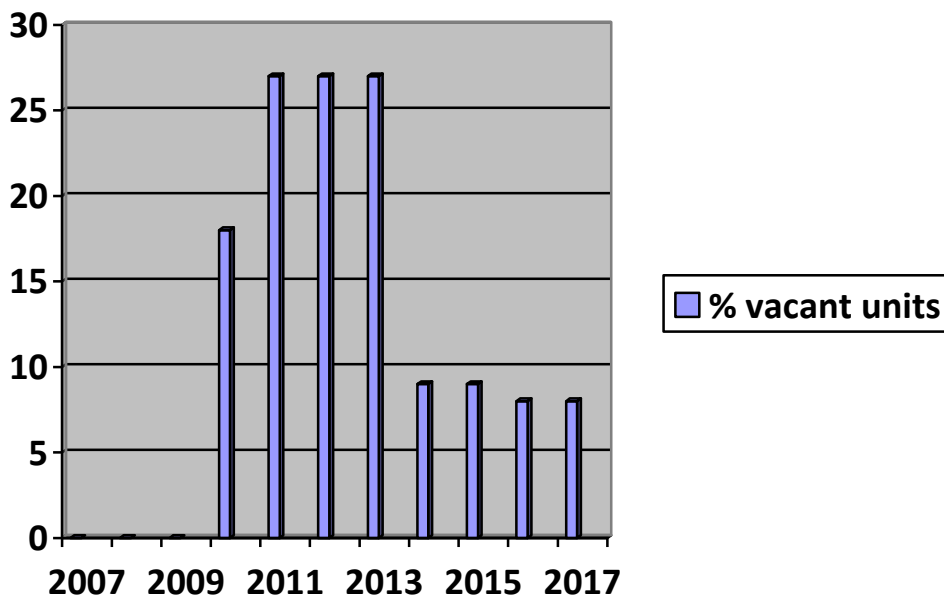
6.2 There are five retail units selling convenience goods on the High Street with one of the units being located on the ground floor of the converted Forest Heath Hotel.

6.3 The proportion of A1 retail use remained constant at 36% since 2009, thus 4% below the 40% established in planning policy. However, due to the creation of a new retail A1 use in the converted Forest Heath Hotel in 2016 the percentage of retail uses in Sway has increased to 42%, thus slightly above the 40% minimum.



Vacancy Rates

6.5 Since January 2014 none of the four A1 retail units have become vacant. One office unit (A2) adjacent to Hatch Motors continues to remain vacant (non-retail sector). A planning application for redevelopment of the garage site, including the vacant office unit for residential use and a retail unit (A1 convenience store) was refused in September 2017 and again in December 2017.



## Appendix 1

### Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987

#### **A1 Shops**

Shops, sandwich bars, hairdressers, undertakers, travel agencies, post offices, dry cleaners etc.

#### **A2 Financial and professional Services**

Banks, building societies, estate and employment agencies, professional and financial services, betting offices.

#### **A3 Restaurants and cafes**

Restaurants, snack bars, cafes

#### **A4 Drinking Establishments**

Public house, wine-bar or other drinking establishment

#### **A5 Hot Food Takeaways**

The sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.

#### ***Sui generis***

Shops selling and/or displaying motor vehicles, laundrettes, taxi or vehicle hire businesses, amusement centres, petrol filling stations

#### **B1 Business**

Offices not within A2

#### **C1 Hotels**

Hotels, boarding and guest houses

#### **C3 Dwelling Houses**

#### **D1 Non-residential Institutions**

Places of worship, clinics, health centres, libraries, art galleries

#### **D2 Assembly and Leisure**

Cinemas, music and concert halls, swimming baths, bingo halls