

The Inspector would like the Council to confirm the factual position as regards the definition of the physical extent of the Newport Retail Park district centre in the adopted UDP.

Unlike the other district centres, there appears to be no identification of the extent of the district centre boundary for Newport Retail Park by way of an inset map; nor is anything definitive shown on the UDP proposals map.

In the light of this, does the Council agree with objectors to the LDP who maintain that the district centre as designated in the UDP extends to the whole of the retail park?

A plan indicating what the Council takes to be the district centre as defined in the UDP, with such explanation of their reasoning as may be needed, would be of assistance.

It is correct that the Newport Retail Park is not defined by way of an inset map or proposals map in the UDP. The subject of the Newport Retail Park was discussed at UDP Inquiry, but no boundary was defined. At the UDP examination the Council argued that the District Centre should be limited to grow as the Eastern Expansion Area developed. Unfortunately the Inspector did not agree with this view, and the Council's concerns regarding the disproportionate expansion of the Retail Park have occurred with a detrimental effect on the City Centre and other District Centres (notably Maindee).

The East Newport Development Framework SPG May 2007 (SD64) includes a framework plan illustrating the proposed land use of the Eastern Expansion Area. The extract of the plan which shows the Retail Park District Centre is shown below. The Retail Park is identified in red, but Cineworld, Megabowl and the 4 units opposite Cineworld are allocated for leisure uses (shown in brown).

For an appeal relating to the Former Megabowl Unit (07/0872), the Council and appellants agreed that there is no district centre boundary defined in the Newport UDP and the appeal site is identified on the UDP Proposals Map for "Leisure/Recreation". The site also lies within the area designated for the Eastern Expansion Area (Policy SP26). It was stated in the Statement of Common Ground for the 2007 appeal that if a boundary for the Retail Park District Centre had been prepared "then the appeal site would have been included within it" [para 2.3 of Statement of Common Ground submitted by Newport City Council and RPS Planning and Development on behalf of Johnsey Estates (1990) LTD].

Having agreed to this at appeal and in the absence of any subsequent diagrammatic definition, the Council has continued to accept the entire Newport Retail Park as the District Centre (as identified in the East Newport Development Framework).

However, throughout the LDP process, the Council has been looking to address this lack of formal definition and, with the benefit of updated and new evidence (as submitted during Hearing Session 8), ensure that the Newport Retail Park District Centre boundary reflects its role as a District Centre and nothing more. The Council maintain its position that the preparation of the LDP is the appropriate time to review its district centre boundaries and that the boundary as shown in the submitted LDP is the appropriate district centre boundary.

