

Hearing 1: Tuesday 26th & Wednesday 27th September 2017

Matters and Issues: Policy J27

Statement of Mid Devon District Council

ISSUE 5 **Is there a “clear synergy” between the Outlet Shopping Village (OSV) proposal and the tourism and leisure elements of the proposed allocation?**

5.1 The “Visit Devon” web site, states

“Devon is so much more than beautiful beaches, idyllic villages and wide open countryside. It also has some of the best shopping centres in the country, with everything from big brand names to unique boutiques. Visit Devon and you can indulge in some serious retail therapy.”

5.2 Shopping is clearly seen by Visit Devon as part of the visitor experience and according to Visit Devon shopping accounts for around 22% of the visitor spend in Devon.

5.3 Mid Devon however receives less than 5% (4.5% actual) of the 525 million visitor shopping spend in Devon. The visitor spend on shopping is so low in Mid Devon that no Mid Devon locations receive a mention on the Visit Devon shopping web page.

5.4 There is clearly a synergy between visitor tourism and shopping, visitor shopping plays a significant part in the Devon tourist economy and is seen as a key leisure activity for both day and staying visitors to the area.

5.5 While the Visit Devon`s shopping web site identifies a wide variety of shopping opportunities from local crafts to high street designer fashion, Devon has no sizable readily accessible Outlet Shopping Village. The current facilities are at Street in Somerset, and 57 miles from Exeter, 50 Miles from Sidmouth, and well over 60 miles from Dawlish, Teignmouth and over 70 miles from Torbay and/or Atlantic Village, Bideford (a small centre of approximately 30 units) approximately 42 miles from Exeter, 46 miles to Junction 27, 60 miles to Exmouth, 60 miles to Dawlish.

5.6 The AA “discount shopping outlets” web site describes “many outlets offering free parking and play areas, and some even have tourist attractions nearby so you can really make a day

of it.” www.theaa.com/.../inspirations/discount-shopping-outlets.html. The allocation site at J27 is intended to be a day out or short break destination.

5.7 Set out below are some examples of where visitor attractions are combined with outlet shopping villages.

- **Springfields, Spalding** describes its leisure attractions as - the Spalding water taxi, miniature railway, jurassic golf, orbitors & mini diggers and an exhibition of great regional attractions which provides some of the region's fantastic & educational exhibits, nature trails, parks & working museums - it's a relaxing place to enjoy a break from shopping and find out more about what else there is on offer in the region.
- **Festival Park Ebbw Vale** outlet shopping and leisure - provides the uk`s longest supertubing run, South Wales`s largest free children`s play castle, an owl sanctuary and over 75 acres of award winning parklands to explore.
- **Swindon Designer Outlet** – has UK's first Wall Holla and Interactive Sona play area. The Wall Holla, a towering structure with unusual facets that inspire children to explore their way through the inventive maze. Sona is a playground using movement and sound. Different games can be played by dancing and moving around, resulting in a unique kind of play, combining computer games with all the fun of outside activities and traditional play and nearby Steam – the Museum of the Great Western Railway. It also provides McArthurCars that provide a safe and fun way for little shoppers to get around the Centre and the Hooter Express steam train to take a tour around the centre.
- **Junction 32 Outlet Shopping Village, Castleford** - Promoted as a great family day out with a great choice of shops, cafes, an outdoor play area and Mr Mulligan’s Pirate Golf. Advertised as being next door to Xscape, Yorkshire which provides the country's biggest real snow slope, 2 rock climbing walls, gravity trampoline park, an aerial assault course, an indoor skateboard park, a 4D golf course, Laserzone, bowling, adventure golf,
- **Hornsea Freeport outlet shopping village** provides Bugtopia and Beach Cove
- **Gunwharf Quays, Portsmouth** advertised as being only yards from Portsmouth Historic Dockyard and Spinnaker Tower and surrounded by an extensive range of onsite leisure facilities so you can take time out from all that shopping to relax and unwind or just enjoy a great family day out.
- **Dalton Park, Seaham, Durham** provides a play area and parkland trails to explore. The child-friendly trails were launched to celebrate World Wetlands Day and have become popular for pond-dipping, wildlife walks, and birdwatching.
- **Freeport Braintree** adjacent Freeport Leisure Park which boasts a 12-screen cinema and bowling alley.
- **Atlantic Village, Bideford** boasts its own children's theme park, Atlantis Adventure Park features fun for all ages from gold panning and adventure golf, to indoor play and a children’s train ride and Atlantic Bowl.

- **Clark`s Village, Street** - There's lots of fun for children too, including a traditional carousel and an outdoor adventure playground with wooden turrets, dragon slides, swings and an infant play area. It encourages visits Clarks Shoe Museum (next door) while you're there?
- The much discussed **Rushden Lakes** development will comprises a 74,000 sq ft home and garden centre, 340,000 sq ft of retail units across three terraces, a drive-thru restaurant, lakeside visitor centre and restaurants. A hotel, crèche and leisure club will be included on the site and it is estimated that the combined leisure, tourism and retail offering will attract over 3 million visitors annually. The SSSI will be integrated with the retail scheme to promote increased 'dwell time' by visitors and the combined retail and leisure destination will include a visitors' centre, a marina and boathouse, footpaths and cycle routes through the SSSI, and access into neighbouring tourist attractions such as Stanwick Lakes.

5.8 There is a very clear synergy between OSV`s and leisure destinations. They are clearly often combined or promoted together as a family day out. The mix of facilities appeals across all age groups.

List of Reference Documents

National Planning Policy Framework. - March 2012

National Planning Practice Guidance – last updated July 2017

Backing the Tourism Sector - A Five Point Plan - Department of Culture media and Sport – July 2015

Tourism Action Plan. – Department of Culture Media and Sport. – August 2016

Shared Economic Strategy 2017-20. A collaborative approach to growth and productivity -November 2016 - (Heart of Devon Economic Partnership – Exeter City Council, Teignbridge, East Devon and Mid Devon District Councils).

Mid Devon District Council, Corporate Plan. 2016 -2020

Mid Devon Tourism Study. – November 2014

Visit England – Domestic Leisure and Tourism Trends for the Next Decade - 2013

Visit England - Three Year Averages by Local Authority. (2013 to 2015)

Visit Devon – The Economic Impact of Devon`s Visitor Economy. - October 2015

Mid Devon draft Destination Management Plan -

<https://democracy.middevon.gov.uk/documents/s7965/A%20Destination%20Management%20Plan%20for%20Mid%20Devon%20Tourism%20V3%202%2019012017%20Economy%20Policy%20Development%20Gr.pdf>