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Your ref:
Our ref: ZPP/10/45

18 August 2005

Dear Sir/Madam

CONSULTATION ON DRAFT SCOTTISH PLANNING POLICY 8: TOWN CENTRES

I enclose a consultative draft copy of *Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) 8: Town Centres* which, when finalised, will replace *NPPG8: Town Centres and Retailing*.

Responding to this draft consultation document

We are inviting written responses to this draft consultation document by 11 November 2005. Further copies of the document are available by telephoning (0131) 244 7543. The document is also available on our web site: www.scotland.gov.uk/planning

Please send your response to:

spp8@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

or

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If you have any queries contact Ken Jobling by emailing ken.jobling@scotland.gsi.gov.uk or by telephoning (0131) 244 7548.

We would be grateful if you could clearly indicate in your response which questions or parts of the consultative draft you are responding to as this will aid our analysis of the responses received.

For future engagement:

If you wish to access this consultation online, go to <http://www.scotland.gov.uk/view/views.asp> You can telephone Freephone 0800 77 1234 to find out where your nearest public internet access point is, if you prefer to submit your response by e-mail to spp8@scotland.gsi.gov.uk

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Yours faithfully

KEN JOBLING

RESPONDEE INFORMATION FORM

Please complete the details below and attach it with your response. This will help ensure we handle your response appropriately:

Name:

Postal Address:

Consultation title: SPP8: Town Centres

1. Are you responding as: (please tick one box)

- (a) an individual (go to 2a/b)
(b) **on behalf of** a group or organisation (go to 2c)

2a. INDIVIDUALS:

Do you agree to your response being made available to the public (in SE library and/or on SE website)?

- Yes (go to 2b below)
No, not at all

2b. **Where *confidentiality is not requested***, we will make your response available to the public on the following basis (please tick **one** of the following boxes)

- Yes, make my response, name and address all available
Yes, make my response available, but not my name or address
Yes, make my response and name available, but not my address

2c. ON BEHALF OF GROUPS OR ORGANISATIONS:

Your name and address as respondees **will be** made available to the public (in the SE library and/or on SE website). Are you content for your response to be made available also?

- Yes
No

3. We will share your response internally with other SE policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for the Scottish Executive to contact you again in the future for consultation or research purposes?

- Yes
No

C. The Scottish Executive Consultation Process

Consultation is an essential and important aspect of Scottish Executive working methods. Given the wide-ranging areas of work of the Scottish Executive, there are many varied types of consultation. However, in general Scottish Executive consultation exercises aim to provide opportunities for all those who wish to express their opinions on a proposed area of work to do so in ways which will inform and enhance that work.

While details of particular circumstances described in a response to a consultation exercise may usefully inform the policy process, consultation exercises cannot address individual concerns and comments, which should be directed to the relevant public body. Consultation exercises may involve seeking views in a number of different ways, such as public meetings, focus groups or questionnaire exercises.

Typically, Scottish Executive consultations involve a written paper inviting answers to specific questions or more general views about the material presented. Written papers are distributed to organisations and individuals with an interest in the area of consultation, and they are also placed on the Scottish Executive web site enabling a wider audience to access the paper and [submit their responses](#). Copies of all the responses received to consultation exercises (except those where the individual or organisation requested confidentiality) are placed in the Scottish Executive library at Saughton House, Edinburgh (K Spur, Saughton House, Broomhouse Drive, Edinburgh, EH11 3XD, telephone 0131 244 4552).

The views and suggestions detailed in consultation responses are analysed and used as part of the decision making process. Depending on the nature of the consultation exercise the responses received may:

- indicate the need for policy development or review
- inform the development of a particular policy
- help decisions to be made between alternative policy proposals
- be used to finalise legislation before it is implemented

If you have any comment about how this consultation exercise has been conducted, please send them to:

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SCOTTISH EXECUTIVE
Development Department

Scottish Planning Policy

SPP 8

Town Centres: Consultation Draft

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PLANNING SERIES:

- **Scottish Planning Policies (SPPs)** provide statements of Scottish Executive policy on nationally important land use and other planning matters, supported where appropriate by a locational framework.
- **Circulars**, which also provide statements of Scottish Executive policy, contain guidance on policy implementation through legislative or procedural change.
- **Planning Advice Notes (PANs)** provide advice on good practice and other relevant information.

Statements of Scottish Executive policy contained in SPPs and Circulars are material considerations to be taken into account in development plan preparation and development management.

Existing National Planning Policy Guidelines (NPPGs) have continued relevance to decision making, until such time as they are replaced by a SPP. The term SPP should be interpreted as including NPPGs.

Statements of Scottish Executive location-specific planning policy, for example, the West Edinburgh Planning Framework, have the same status in decision-making as SPPs.

The National Planning Framework sets out the strategy for Scotland's long-term spatial development. It has the same status as SPPs and provides a national context for development plans and planning decisions and the ongoing programmes of the Scottish Executive, public agencies and local government.

Important Note: in the interests of brevity and conciseness, Scottish Planning Policies do not repeat policy across thematic boundaries. Each SPP takes account of the general policy in SPP1 and highlights the other SPPs where links to other related policy will be found. The whole series of SPPs should be taken as an integral policy suite and read together.

CONTENTS

	Paragraph
Introduction	1
Policy Context	3
Policy Principles	6
(a) Identifying a Network of Centres	7
(b) Focusing Development in Town Centres	12
(c) Improving Town Centres	19
(d) Providing an Attractive and Safe Environment	22
(e) Enhancing Accessibility	24
(f) Monitoring and Review	27
Implementation	
Development Plans	29
Assessing Proposed Developments	31
Casinos	34
Notification Arrangements	35
Enquiries	38

STOP

INTRODUCTION

1. This draft Scottish Planning Policy (SPP) sets out the Executive's policy for town centres and the key uses which contribute to their economic growth and enhancement. When finalised it will replace NPPG 8 *Town Centres and Retailing*, published in October 1998. While the underlying policy remains unaltered, this SPP clearly and concisely emphasises the Executive's support for town centres. The document acknowledges the importance of a broader range of land uses rather than a specific focus on retailing. The content of the draft SPP takes account of the findings of research into the operation of NPPG8.¹
2. This SPP covers town centres, how to plan for their development and how to respond to development proposals for town centre uses wherever they are proposed. The policy is intended to be applied broadly, to the range of uses that together make a town centre. It applies to all retail, leisure, entertainment and recreation uses (such as cinemas, casinos and food and drink establishments). It also applies to other uses that contribute to the vitality and viability (see paragraph 28) of a particular centre (such as community facilities, civic space, culture and tourism and business uses). The focus will be on establishing a mix of uses and activities in town centres, and housing should form an important element of the mix. It is acknowledged that town centres are not able to accommodate all forms of retail development. Therefore, this SPP also establishes the methods for treating such proposals, which should be complementary to those in town centres.

POLICY CONTEXT

3. Vibrant, thriving town centres should be the focus for communities. Therefore, the aim of this document is to direct development and regeneration primarily towards town centres to protect and enhance their vitality and viability. The policy supports the Executive's wider goals relating to economic growth, social justice, health improvement, an improved environment and a better quality of life. Town centres provide a diverse range of commercial and community activities, including places of employment, open spaces and meeting places; a mix of interdependent land uses which, taken together, create a sense of place and identity. The physical structure, the range and mix of uses make a 'town centre' different from a 'shopping centre' and provide much of its character and identity. Additional centres which are focussed particularly on shopping and leisure may, where impact is acceptable, complement town centres.

¹ Research Study on the Effectiveness of NPPG8: Town Centres and Retailing, Scottish Executive, 2004

Box 1: Key Definitions

Town Centres:

The term 'town centre' is used to cover city, town and district centres, irrespective of size, that provide a diverse and sustainable mix of activities and land uses which create an identity that signals their function and wider role.

Shopping & Leisure Centres:

Shopping and leisure centres have a more specific focus on retailing and leisure, or can include elements of both. Examples include out-of-centre locations for shopping centres, leisure uses, retail warehouses and parks and factory outlet centres.

4. Retail and leisure provision is fundamental to the concentration of activities in town centres and to the Scottish Executive's top priority of growing the economy.² The retail sector is a key contributor to the Scottish economy. It is a significant provider of employment and has strong links to other economic sectors, particularly tourism and leisure. Research indicates that convenience is a key element in the relationship between the way we shop and our other lifestyle activities. As a result the retail sector is becoming increasingly diverse and complex; it adapts to market changes quickly, particularly in terms of scale, processes and formats.
5. The Executive is committed to land use policies that secure vital and viable town centres, which provide economic, social, health and environmental benefits for the community at large. This involves promoting and enhancing town centres by focusing appropriate growth and development in them. The Executive's **key policy objectives** for town centres are therefore to:
 - **Promote competitive places and encourage regeneration, in order to create town centres that are attractive to investors and suited to the generation of new employment opportunities.** This means identifying town centres as the most appropriate location for retailing and other related activities in order to sustain and enhance their vitality and viability.
 - **Create a climate that enables all sectors of the community to have access to a range of shopping, leisure and other services and for deficiencies in provision to be remedied.** This means supporting an efficient, competitive and innovative retail and leisure sector which allows genuine consumer choice to meet the needs of the entire community. It does not mean using the planning system to protect the competitive interests of individual retailers or other businesses.
 - **Improve the physical quality of our town centre environments.** This means promoting good quality design, protecting and enhancing existing quality and supporting the creation of town centres which are attractive, safe and inclusive for all.
 - **Support development in existing accessible locations or in locations where accessibility can be improved.** This means encouraging developments that are accessible to all, reduce the need to travel and provide alternatives to car use by being served by a choice of modes of transport.

² See 'A Smart, Successful Scotland', Scottish Executive, 2004

POLICY PRINCIPLES

6. Planning authorities should, through development plans and other strategies, implement these key policy objectives. They should tailor their approach to meet particular local circumstances and community needs. In order to deliver these objectives, stakeholders should focus on the **policy principles** listed in box 2. Further information on implementing each of these principles is detailed in the appropriate section.

Box 2: Policy Principles

- (a) Identifying and promoting town centres as part of a network of centres,
- (b) Focusing development in existing town centres by using a sequential approach to development,
- (c) Maintaining, improving and developing town centres,
- (d) Promoting an attractive and safe environment,
- (e) Ensuring that centres are accessible to all sectors of the community by a range of modes of transport.
- (f) Regularly monitoring and reviewing their policies.

(a) IDENTIFYING A NETWORK OF CENTRES

7. To encourage a sustainable approach to development, the Executive supports the promotion of a network of centres through which the individual role of each centre supports and is supported by the role of other centres. Dependent on local context, such a network could include a hierarchy of town and shopping centres.
8. The network of centres and the role of individual centres within it should be identified within development plans. Where appropriate, the plan may also specify the centre's function, for example, a centre restricted to the sale of bulky goods only. In identifying the network, consideration should be given to the broad quantitative and qualitative requirements for all town centre uses. The network will then provide a context for the assessment of proposals for new development. Investment priority should focus on town centres. Where policies and proposals support a centre's identified role and function, there is no requirement to provide a detailed assessment of need. Additionally, investment to maintain and improve shopping and leisure centres should be supported where the centres are part of the network and where such investment will not undermine town centres.
9. Town centres are more than a concentration of uses, as described previously in paragraph 3 and box 1. To be identified as a town centre a diverse mix of uses and attributes, including a high level of accessibility, must be provided. This will include uses which are key contributors to the vitality and viability of a particular town centre. Consideration should be given to how the uses contribute to the more aspirational qualities of character, which create a sense of place and identity, and further the well-being of communities. Range and quality of



shopping, wider economic and social activity in both the day and the evening, proximity to residential areas and quality of the environment are key elements in achieving these wider aspirations, rather than a standard approach to retail led development which can create homogeneous centres.

10. In rural areas, small towns, villages and other accessible locations provide a range of facilities, shops and services. As SPP15³ indicates, planning policy should recognise the need to support the vital role of these centres.
11. Because networks are dynamic, any significant change in the role and function of specific centres should be identified pro-actively through the development plan process, rather than being driven by individual applications. This could involve alterations to the status of existing centres or the identification of new ones in circumstances where deficiencies or gaps are identified in the existing network of centres, where there is significant population growth, where accessibility changes, or where there are wider regeneration aims. Under-performing centres which show a sustained decline in overall performance should not automatically receive protection if a more appropriate and sustainable alternative exists or could exist.

(b) FOCUSING DEVELOPMENT IN TOWN CENTRES

12. Planning authorities and developers should adopt a sequential approach to selecting sites for all town centre type uses that contribute to the vitality and viability of a particular town centre, unless guidance in this SPP or the development plan provides for a particular exception. The principles underlying the sequential approach also apply to proposals to expand, or change the use of existing developments, where the proposals are of such a size or type that they would result in a change to their character as determined by the development plan. The sequential approach requires that locational preference should be as follows: first, town centre sites; then where no suitable town centre site is available, edge-of-centre sites; and where neither town centre nor edge-of-centre sites are available, then out-of-centre sites in locations that are, or can be made, easily accessible by a choice of modes of transport.
13. Application of the sequential approach requires flexibility and realism from planning authorities, developers, owners and occupiers. Planning authorities should be responsive to the needs of town centre uses, identifying not just suitable but also viable sites with regard to size, location, and availability within a reasonable time period and indicating how and when constraints could be resolved. Developers, owners and occupiers should, when identifying and developing sites, have regard not only to their own requirements but be sympathetic to the town setting in terms of format, design and scale. This should include the scope for accommodating the proposed development in a different built form, for adjusting or sub-dividing large proposals in order that their scale might offer a better fit with existing development, and for making use of existing vacant and under-used land or premises.

³ SPP15 Planning for Rural Development, Scottish Executive, 2005

14. **Town Centre:** The delineation of the boundary of a town centre will be dependent on the identification and evaluation of the full range of town centre uses and qualities mentioned above (See paragraph 9). In most cases, this will include the retail core, which consists of the primary and secondary retail areas. Where development for town centre uses is proposed within a town centre, assessment of its impact on the viability of similar uses in that centre will not be necessary.
15. **Edge-of-Centre** cannot be defined by a precise distance as different centres vary in their size and scale. Interpretation of what is edge-of-centre should be relative to the local context, including topography and whether transport links allow or deter easy access to the surrounding area. It should be within comfortable and easy walking distance of the identified boundary of the town centre. Consideration should be given to the function and the character of the site within the context of the town centre as well as the ease of movement between the site and the town centre in terms of physical linkages and barriers, for example paths and roads. Thought should also be given to visual integration and the attractiveness of the experience of accessing the site by different modes.
16. **Out-of-Centre:** Out-of-centre location should be considered only if it can be demonstrated that all town centre and edge-of-centre options have been thoroughly assessed and discounted as unsuitable or unavailable.
17. Where development proposals in edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations fall outwith the development plan framework, it is for developers to demonstrate that more central options have been thoroughly assessed. Even where a developer demonstrates an edge-of-centre or an out-of-centre location to be the most appropriate, the impact on the vitality and viability of existing centres still has to be demonstrated and accepted by the planning authority. The development should also be subject to assessment against policy set out in SPP17, Planning for Transport.⁴
18. Accessible edge-of-centre and out-of-centre locations may be considered appropriate for the retailing of particular goods, for example space expansive displays of bulky goods (furniture, DIY, carpets, garden and electrical goods), for which the location would provide a qualitative benefit to customers. These uses are not key contributors to the vitality and viability of town centres. Where possible, such uses should be located together to limit the need to travel between them. Appropriate conditions restricting the sale of certain goods or the format of units, including the development of mezzanine floorspace, should also be used where appropriate.

4 SPP17 Planning for Transport, Scottish Executive, 2005



(c) IMPROVING TOWN CENTRES

19. Actions to support improvements in town centres and to create successful places are encouraged. Improvements range from small scale public realm works to assembly of larger scale development sites which aid regeneration. Achievement of these improvements will require an understanding of a centre's individual strengths, as well as its role within the wider network. Within this context, the use of town centre management techniques is encouraged.
20. **Town centre strategies** are key to the delivery of such improvements. Within the context provided by the statutory development plan, the strategies should provide the more detailed framework which enables action to be realised. Town centre strategies should be informed by up-to-date monitoring and review of town centres making use of health checks (Further explanation of the term and its use is set out at paragraph 28). To aid wider understanding, a more consistent approach to strategy development should be adopted. Each strategy should be developed in co-ordination with other strategies, for example the community plan, and transport and economic strategies, deriving maximum benefit from early involvement and joint working with interested stakeholders. These will include: local communities; representatives from both the public and private sectors (for example other relevant local authority departments and retailers, businesses and consultancies); and voluntary organisations. This will enable development of proposals which better reflect the priorities of the range of different interests.
21. The strategies should: indicate the scope for potential change through redevelopment, renewal, alternative uses and diversification; consider the constraints to their implementation, for example diversity in site ownership and funding; and recognise the rapidly changing nature of retail formats. They should identify clear actions, tools and delivery mechanisms to overcome these constraints, for example improved management or the use of compulsory purchase powers. The strategy should then promote new opportunities for development actively using master planning and design exercises. Finally, it should include a monitoring exercise to link back to the health check and to examine the extent to which it resulted in the actual delivery and implementation of an improved town centre environment.

(d) PROVIDING AN ATTRACTIVE AND SAFE ENVIRONMENT

22. The Scottish Executive attaches priority to securing high design standards in new development. Development plan policies and individual proposals in town centres should reflect recent Executive policy and guidance on design.⁵ It is essential that town centres provide a high-quality, inclusive and safe environment if they are to remain attractive and competitive. Well-designed buildings and public spaces, which are fit for purpose, comfortable, safe, attractive, accessible and durable are key elements which can improve the health, vitality and economic potential of town centres.

⁵ A Policy Statement for Scotland: Designing Places, Scottish Executive, 2001. SPP 20: Role of Architecture and Design Scotland, Scottish Executive, 2005. PAN 68: Design Statements, Scottish Executive, 2003.

23. The promotion of mixed use, higher density development in town centres is encouraged. It may also be applicable to improvements and extensions to out-of-centre locations. Where appropriate, this could take the form of vertical integration, for example incorporating residential development in “living above the shop” or as horizontal integration, where town centre uses are located beside complementary uses such as office developments. Changes to the built environment should be supported through improvements to the public realm, streetscape and open space. The design of all proposals, including landscaping and parking provision, should respond to the character of the surroundings. Standard designs which fail to integrate the development with its surroundings, such as large shed style developments and those which fail to create effective links with the surrounding urban fabric, should be refused planning permission. Discussion of development proposals with Architecture and Design Scotland at an early stage is encouraged (see SPP20).

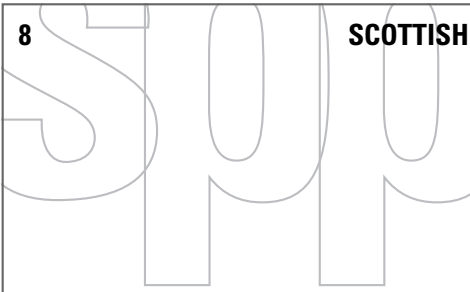
(e) ENHANCING ACCESSIBILITY

24. Policy and guidance on planning for transport can be found in SPP17, PAN75, PAN66 and ‘Transport Assessment and Implementation: A Guide’.⁶ Retail and leisure developments should be highly accessible. They should be located close to existing access networks, that have potential to accommodate higher density development, or where accessibility can be improved by developer or public funding.
25. Accessibility is essential to the success of a town centre. The perception of convenience is also a key element, for example whether a location is in close proximity to a person’s home or place of work. A mix of uses and increased convenience enhances the likelihood of generating linked trips.
26. Access is a key element of the wider social justice and health improvement agendas. Town centres should be accessible at all times to all sectors of the community, including those with impaired mobility. Wider economic advantages are also important, for example access to employment and training opportunities and a whole range of goods and services such as healthcare and education. In addition, adequate access to fresh food is a significant contributor to the health and well-being of communities. Retail, leisure and other developments may therefore have a role to play in the process of regeneration.

(f) MONITORING AND REVIEW

27. Monitoring is essential to the effective planning and management of town centres. Regular review of the network of centres, development activity and a town centre’s performance are all parts of this monitoring process. Keeping stakeholders informed of the results of monitoring and review exercises will enable a more proactive approach to development.

⁶ SPP 17 Planning for Transport, Scottish Executive, 2005. PAN 75 Planning for Transport, Scottish Executive, 2005. PAN 66 Best Practice in Handling Planning Applications Affecting Trunk Roads, Scottish Executive, 2003. Transport Assessment and Implementation: A Guide, Scottish Executive, 2005.



28. A **health check** is the appropriate monitoring tool to measure the strengths and weaknesses of a town centre and to analyse the factors which contribute to its vitality and viability. Vitality is a measure of how lively and busy a town centre is and viability is a measure of its capacity to attract ongoing investment, for maintenance, improvement and adaptation to changing needs. Together these give an indication of the health of a town centre. A range of key performance indicators can be used to provide an effective insight into the performance of a centre and so offer a framework for assessing vitality and viability to assist decision makers in identifying new opportunities for improvement. Box 3 provides examples of widely accepted indicators.

Box 3: Examples of Vitality and Viability Indicators

- Pedestrian flow (footfall) measures the numbers and movement of people on the streets. Counts should be collected on a consistent basis over a period of time, at different locations and times.
- Prime rental values provide a measure of the relative position of locations or streets within a centre and give an indication of retailer desire to locate within an area.
- Space in use for different town centre functions and how it has changed.
- Retailer representation and intentions: national multiples and independents.
- Commercial yield. Generally, the lower the yield the more confidence that investors have in the long term profitability of the centre. Although a valuable indicator of retail viability, it needs to be used with care, as, in part, it reflects a developer's, rather than a retailer's, interest in locating in an area.
- Vacancy rates, particularly street level vacancy in prime retail areas.
- Physical structure of the centre, including opportunities and constraints, and its accessibility.
- Periodic surveys of consumers.
- Crime – co-operation with the local police Architectural Liaison Service can assist in identifying persistent or potential problems in an area.

Further information about vitality and viability is included in: 'Vital and Viable Town Centres: Meeting the Challenge', DoE, 1994. HMSO (ISBN 0-11-752943-5).

IMPLEMENTATION

DEVELOPMENT PLANS

29. In preparing development plans, planning authorities should identify a network of town centres, shopping centres and out-of-centre shopping areas, as paragraph 8 indicates. They should also set out policies to support and enhance town centres. The policies should contribute to the key objectives of the overall development plan strategy and therefore reflect circumstances appropriate to the particular area. They should be evidence based and set a framework for the development of more detailed town centre strategies.
30. Planning authorities should, in co-ordination with related strategies and stakeholders, assess how centres might meet requirements for new development and identify appropriate sites having regard to other policies of the development plan, for example transport and design. They should indicate whether, as part of the sequential approach, development may be appropriate outwith existing centres and if so, identify appropriate locations.

ASSESSING PROPOSED DEVELOPMENTS

31. All planning applications should be rigorously assessed against the development plan and the policy set out in this SPP. The assessment should be applied to all new development, redevelopment or extensions to existing facilities, changes of use, renewal of planning permission and applications to vary or remove existing planning conditions concerned with the scale and or character of the development. In summary, the assessment will need to ensure that;
 - The proposal is of high design quality and at an appropriate scale for its location (see paragraphs 22 and 23).
 - The locations is, or can, be made conveniently and safely accessible to all sectors of the community by a choice of modes of transport (see paragraphs 24 to 26).
32. In addition, where the proposed development is not consistent with the development plan, the assessment should ensure that;
 - A sequential approach to site selection has been used (see paragraphs 12 to 18).
 - There is no unacceptable impact on the vitality and viability of the network of centres identified in the development plan (see paragraphs 7 to 11, 14 and 28).
 - The proposal will help to meet qualitative and quantitative deficiencies identified in the development plan (see paragraphs 8, 19 to 21 and 27).
 - The proposal does not conflict with other significant objectives of the development plan or community planning strategies.



33. To ensure robust consideration of the above, an impact analysis should be undertaken in support of applications for retail and leisure development over 2,500 sq m gross floorspace which are at an edge-of-centre or out-of-centre location and which are not in accordance with the development plan. They may occasionally be necessary for smaller retail and leisure proposals and other town centre uses which may be considered to have a significant impact on vitality and viability. The analysis needs to consider the relationship with the network of centres identified in the development plan. In carrying out an analysis, a broad based approach should be adopted. It should not be necessary to attempt detailed calculations or forecasts of a sector's growth as small variations in assumptions can lead to a wide range of forecasts. Parties should, where possible, agree data and present information on areas of dispute in a succinct and comparable form. Updated guidance on impact assessment relative to town centre uses will be published in the future.

CASINOS

34. Planning consideration of any casino development will need to take account of the Gambling Act 2005, which defines three categories of casino and makes provision for determining the geographical distribution of casino premises licences within specified limits. Within that context, the location of casinos should be determined against the policy in this SPP. There may however, be scope for casinos in other locations to be determined by a range of material considerations including contribution to regeneration, employment and tourism, and close proximity to other major leisure developments accessible by public transport.

NOTIFICATION OF APPLICATIONS

35. Planning authorities are required by the Town and Country Planning (Notification of Applications) (Scotland) Direction 1997, as amended, to notify the Scottish Ministers when they intend to grant planning permission for:
- Development for the purpose of retail shopping comprising an area of 10,000 square metres or more of gross retail floorspace;
 - Development involving retail sales which is such that the goods for sale are likely to be purchased to a significant extent by persons resident within an areas of a local authority area other than that in which the proposed development is to be situated, where the council of the other area, having been consulted, has made representations to the effect that planning permission should not be granted;
 - Development which the planning authority considers to be a significant departure from an approved structure plan or a local plan approved by Scottish Ministers.

36. In addition, the Town and Country Planning (Consultation on Retail Applications) (Scotland) Direction 1996 requires planning authorities to consult other local authorities in respect of any development where the goods and services are likely to be purchased to a significant extent by residents within a local authority area, other than that which the proposed development is to be situated. Further information is set out in **SODD Circular 4/1997 and 15/1998**
37. These Directions are designed to reinforce policy by providing the Scottish Ministers with the opportunity to call-in applications for their own decision, although the general policy remains that applications will be called-in selectively and normally only where the proposals are of more than local importance.

ENQUIRIES

38. Enquiries about the content of this draft SPP should be addressed to Ken Jobling, SEDD Planning, Area 2-H, Victoria Quay, Edinburgh. EH6 6QQ (0131 244 7548) or by email to ken.jobling@scotland.gsi.gov.uk. Further copies can be obtained by telephoning 0131 244 7543. This draft SPP and other SPPs, PANs and a list of Circulars can be viewed on the Scottish Executive web site: www.scotland.gov.uk/planning

