

CITY CENTRE SHOPPING & LEISURE

JANUARY 2020



Introduction

This revised Supplementary Guidance sets out the policy approach to proposed changes of use of shop units within the city centre retail core. The city centre retail core is defined and protected in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP). The city centre is the regional centre of the city region providing a broad range of functions including shopping, office, leisure, culture, tourism and government.

The LDP provides a framework for a tailored approach to assessing proposals for change of use applications within the city centre retail core and town centres. This revised Supplementary Guidance has been prepared in accordance with **Policy Ret 9: Alternative Use of Shop Units in Defined Centres** and applies to all shop units within the city centre retail core.

The Supplementary Guidance aims to deliver two LDP objectives set out in Section 6 (Shopping and Leisure) of the Plan:

- To sustain and enhance the city centre as the regional focus for shopping, entertainment, commercial leisure and tourism related activities and encourage appropriate development of the highest quality.
- To improve the appearance, quality and attractiveness of all centres.

This Supplementary Guidance forms part of the statutory development plan. Applications for change of use must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. To assist in interpreting the LDP, the Council issues non-statutory guidance. Guidance for Businesses also provides guidance on change of use. This is a material consideration in the determination of applications and should be considered alongside this statutory Supplementary Guidance.

Changes to the Planning System

The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 was enacted in July 2019. It will not take effect for some time, because secondary legislation, guidance and transitional arrangements all need to be put in place by the Scottish Government. Accordingly, this supplementary guidance is being reviewed under the existing legislation. Further information on changes to the planning system is available on the [Scottish Government webpage](#).

Vision for the City Centre

This Supplementary Guidance aligns with the Edinburgh City Centre Transformation (ECCT) programme, which outlines a programme for a vibrant and people-focused capital centre, which improves community, economic and cultural life. This will play a key role in helping to deliver successful placemaking within Edinburgh.

Within the city centre retail core, the CCT programme seeks to improve the experience of George Street, Princes Street, Rose Street and the perpendicular streets of Castle Street, Frederick Street and Hanover Street as places to spend time and shop. The proposals include:

- Wider pavements, quality surfacing and public seating;
- Pedestrian priority at crossings;
- Inclusive design and disabled parking provision;
- New cycle infrastructure
- Stronger links to Princes Street Gardens, St Andrew Square and Charlotte Square; and
- Improved public transport stops and journey times.

The retail core also forms part of a wider zone where people on foot, bike and public transport will have true priority over vehicles. Whilst access for residents and servicing will be maintained, reductions in on-street parking and carriageway space will see motor vehicles given access as 'guests'.



City Centre Retail Core

The city centre retail core extends from Shandwick Place in the West to the new Edinburgh St James in the East, Princes Street in the South to George Street in the north. The city centre lies within the New Town Conservation Area and the Old and New Towns of the Edinburgh World Heritage Site.

A mix of uses currently exists within the city centre retail core with shop units with direct access to the street (including multi-level units) comprising the largest proportion of units at 57%, cafes/restaurants the second largest at 18%, *sui generis* (non-class) uses comprise 9% and financial/professional services comprise 7%. There is a need to ensure a healthy balance of uses within the city centre in line with development plan policy to ensure its vitality, viability and maintain footfall, with a sufficient proportion of retail units to ensure that shopping continues to be a predominant use. However, there are also benefits in allowing shops to change to other uses to achieve a diverse, thriving and welcoming city, allowing complementary uses that support the main shopping function and encourage use into the evening.

Changing circumstances since the original guidance was adopted including the trend towards online retailing, the publication of a Retail and Leisure Commercial Needs Study commissioned by the Council, and the ECCT programme provided justification for revising the guidance to make it more flexible to support alternative uses of shop units particularly on Princes Street and the three perpendicular streets (Castle Street, Frederick Street, and Hanover Street).

What is a shop unit?

As defined in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan (2016), a shop unit is a premises accessed directly onto the street and designed primarily for shop use. In some locations the shop unit can be above street level or at basement level but still have direct access and be visible from the street. In some cases a shop unit may be multi-level, for example a department store.

Changing a shop unit to a non-shop use will always require planning permission.

What is a shop use?

A unit used for the sale of goods (not hot food) to visiting members of the public, for example, clothes shop, post office, sale of tickets, travel agency, cold food for consumption off the premises, hairdressing, funeral parlour, launderette or dry cleaners. This is further defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997. Scottish Government Circular 1/1998 contains guidance on use classes.

What is a non-shop use?

Any use falling outwith the definition of Class 1 shop use, for example:

- Service uses – lawyers, accountants, estate agents, health centres, tanning studios and pawn brokers.
- Food and drink – restaurant, café, snack bar (excluding public houses and hot food takeaways).
- Commercial/business use – general office, light industry or research and development, which can be carried out without detriment to the amenity of any residential area.
- Community use – social and cultural activities.
- Leisure use – cinema and gymnasium.
- Sui generis (non class) uses – betting shops, pay day loan shops, pubs and hot food takeaways.

Some other changes of use are permitted development, for example, a café (class 3) to a shop unit (class 1).

Change of Use Policies

Policies

CC 1 Princes Street frontages

Proposals for a change of use of shop units on defined frontages, as shown on next page, in Princes Street to non-shop uses will be permitted provided:

- a. The proposal is for a change of use to Class 3 (food and drink) or Class 11 (assembly and leisure); and
- b. As a result of permitting the change of use, no more than one third of the total number of units in the frontage of that block will be in non-shop use.

In the case of shop units that have multiple levels, the above criterion will apply to the ground floor level of the unit only.

CC 2 Castle Street, Frederick Street and Hanover Street frontages

Proposals for a change of use of shop units on defined frontages, as shown on next page, in Castle Street, Frederick Street and Hanover Street to a non-shop use will be permitted provided:

- a. As a result of permitting the change of use, no more than half the total number of units in the frontage of that block will be in non-shop use; and
- b. The proposal is for an appropriate commercial or community use which would complement the character of the City Centre Retail Core and would not be detrimental to its vitality or viability.

CC 3 City Centre Primary Frontages

Proposals for a change of use of shop units, as shown on next page, in the defined City Centre Primary frontages to a non-shop use will be permitted provided:

- a. As a result of permitting the change of use, no more than one third of the total number of in the frontage of that block will be in non-shop use; and
- b. The proposal is for an appropriate commercial or community use which would complement the character of the City Centre Retail Core and would not be detrimental to its vitality or viability.

CC 4 Elsewhere in the City Centre Retail Core

Proposals for a change of use of shop units, as shown on next page, elsewhere in the City Centre Retail Core to a non-shop use will be permitted provided;

- a. As a result of permitting the change of use no more than half of the total number of units on the same side of the named street as the proposal would be in non-shop use; and
- b. The proposal is for an appropriate commercial or community use which would complement the character of the City Centre Retail Core and would not be detrimental to its vitality or viability.

Defined Frontages

Princes Street Frontages

- 10-25 Princes Street, 30-46 Princes Street, 47-77 Princes Street, 78-98 Princes Street,
- 99-117 Princes Street, 118-134 Princes Street, 135-146 Princes Street

Castle Street, Frederick Street and Hanover Street frontages

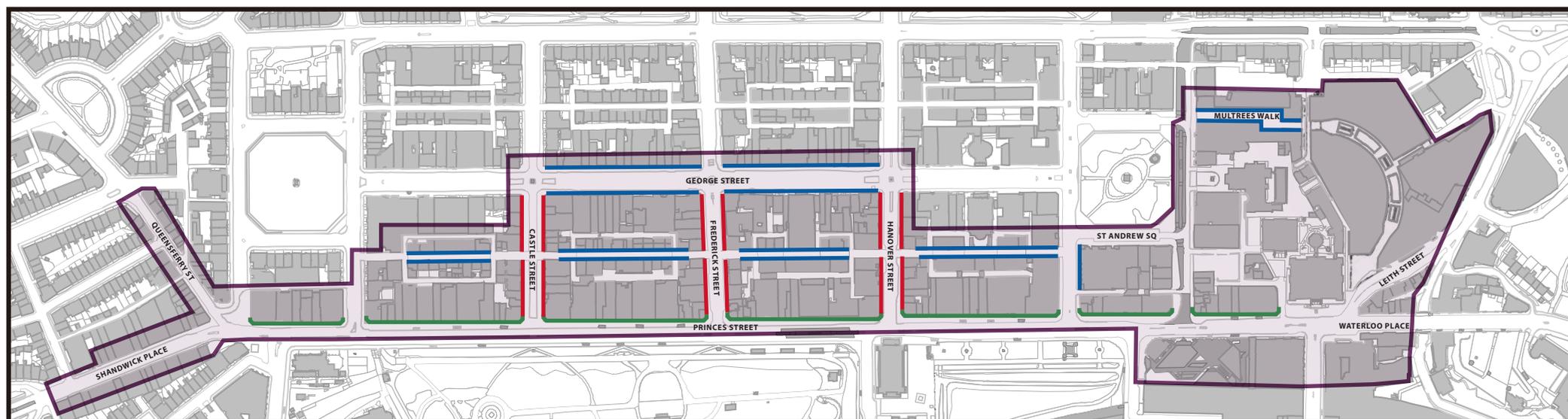
- 4-20 Castle Street, 22-32a Castle Street, 5-19 Castle Street, 21-31 Castle Street
- 6a-18 Frederick Street, 20-36 Frederick Street, 3a-19 Frederick Street, 21-31 Frederick Street
- 2-24 Hanover Street, 28-56 Hanover Street, 3-31 Hanover Street, 35-51 Hanover Street

City Centre Primary Frontages

- 133a-167 Rose Street, 168-202 Rose Street, 77-131 Rose Street, 106a-160 Rose Street
- 37-73 Rose Street, 50-104 Rose Street, 2-40 Rose Street
- 6-19a South St. David's Street
- 1-15 Multrees Walk
- 16-27 Multrees Walk

George Street Frontages

- 30-70 George Street
- 72-104 George Street
- 33a-69 George Street
- 71-109 George Street





Further information

online: www.edinburgh.gov.uk/supplementaryguidance

email: localdevelopmentplan@edinburgh.gov.uk

blog: www.planningedinburgh.com