



SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE

BRUNTSFIELD/MORNINGSIDE TOWN CENTRE

April 2017

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Further information

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This version has been subject to a minor technical update to ensure consistency with the adopted Local Development Plan.

1. Introduction

The Supplementary Guidance has been prepared in accordance with Policy Ret 9: Alternative Use of Shop Units in Defined Centres, in the Local Development Plan (LDP) and applies to all shop units within the town centre. It aims to deliver two LDP objectives set out in Chapter 6 (Shopping and Leisure) of the Plan:

- To maintain the existing and proposed broad distribution of centres throughout the city and sustain their vitality and viability; and
- To improve the appearance, quality and attractiveness of all centres.

The Supplementary Guidance has been informed by the 'Public Life Street Assessment' carried out by design consultants, HERE+NOW, which explored how the town centre should evolve to maximise the potential for benefitting public life.

2. Bruntsfield/ Morningside Town Centre – Key Findings

Bruntsfield/Morningside is one of Edinburgh's nine town centres (including the City Centre). It is defined, protected and promoted as the heart of the community and a hub for a wide range of activities from shopping to leisure. Bruntsfield/Morningside Town Centre (defined in Map 1 and 2 on page 8-9) is located along a main arterial route leading south from the City Centre. The boundary starts at the junction of Leamington Terrace/ Bruntsfield Place and continues down to the bottom of Morningside Road, taking in side streets like Church Hill Place and a part of Colinton Road.

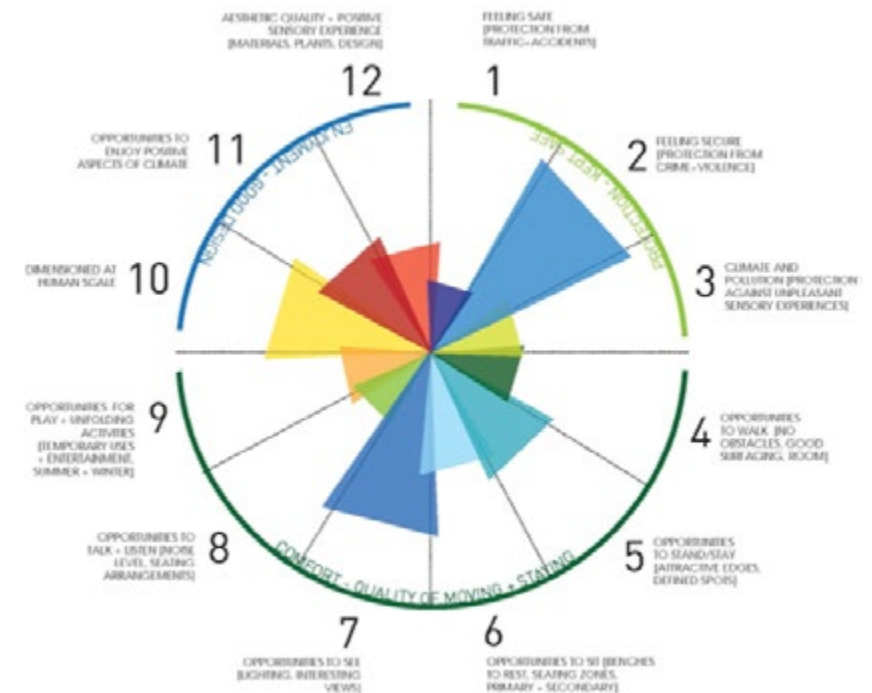
Bruntsfield/Morningside is densely populated, with a population of over 10,000 within easy walking distance of the town centre. The area is historic in character, with a number of listed buildings and the majority of the town centre is located within Marchmont, Meadows and Bruntsfield, Merchiston and Greenhill, and Morningside Conservation Areas.

Public Life Street Assessment

A systematic methodology using direct observation techniques (pedestrian counts, behavioural mapping and tracing studies) was used to assess both the place and movement function of Bruntsfield/Morningside Town Centre. The results are summarised below and in the accompanying graphics.

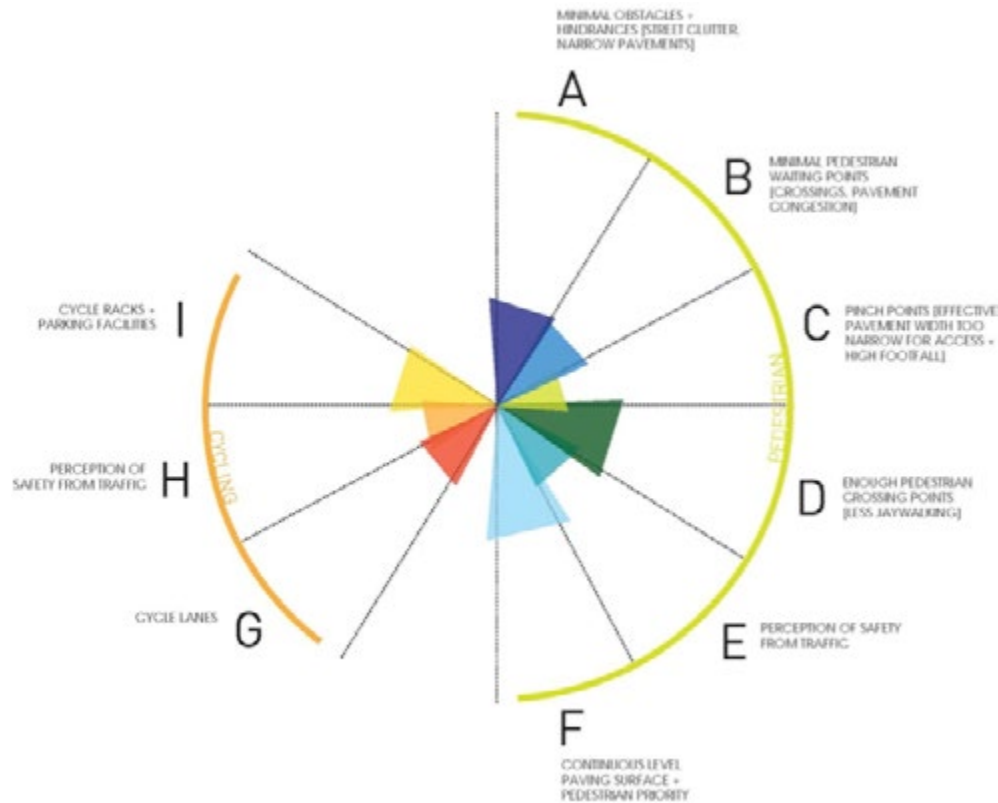
Place Function Analysis

As identified in the image below, Bruntsfield/Morningside Town Centre has a mix of place function scores, with some very high, for example feeling secure, and some very low, such as feeling safe from traffic and opportunities to walk. The diversity of small scale shops provide visual interest and a desire to stop and stay, particularly where awnings provide shelter. However, narrow pavements and limited opportunities to sit often restrict people's desire to stop and stay. Likewise, although there are many high points along the street which offer views to the Pentlands, there are little opportunities to appreciate these.



Pedestrian Movement Function

As identified in the image below, Bruntsfield/Morningside Town Centre scored poorly for movement function, both for pedestrians and cyclists. These low scores are the result of narrow pavements, street clutter, poor material surfaces, poor drainage, and a lack of cycle facilities and pedestrian priority. Narrow pavements, heavy peak footfall and long waiting times at crossing points result in significant pedestrian congestion in many places throughout the town centre. This often results in incidences of jaywalking, single file walking and frequently stepping out into the road to avoid people and obstacles.

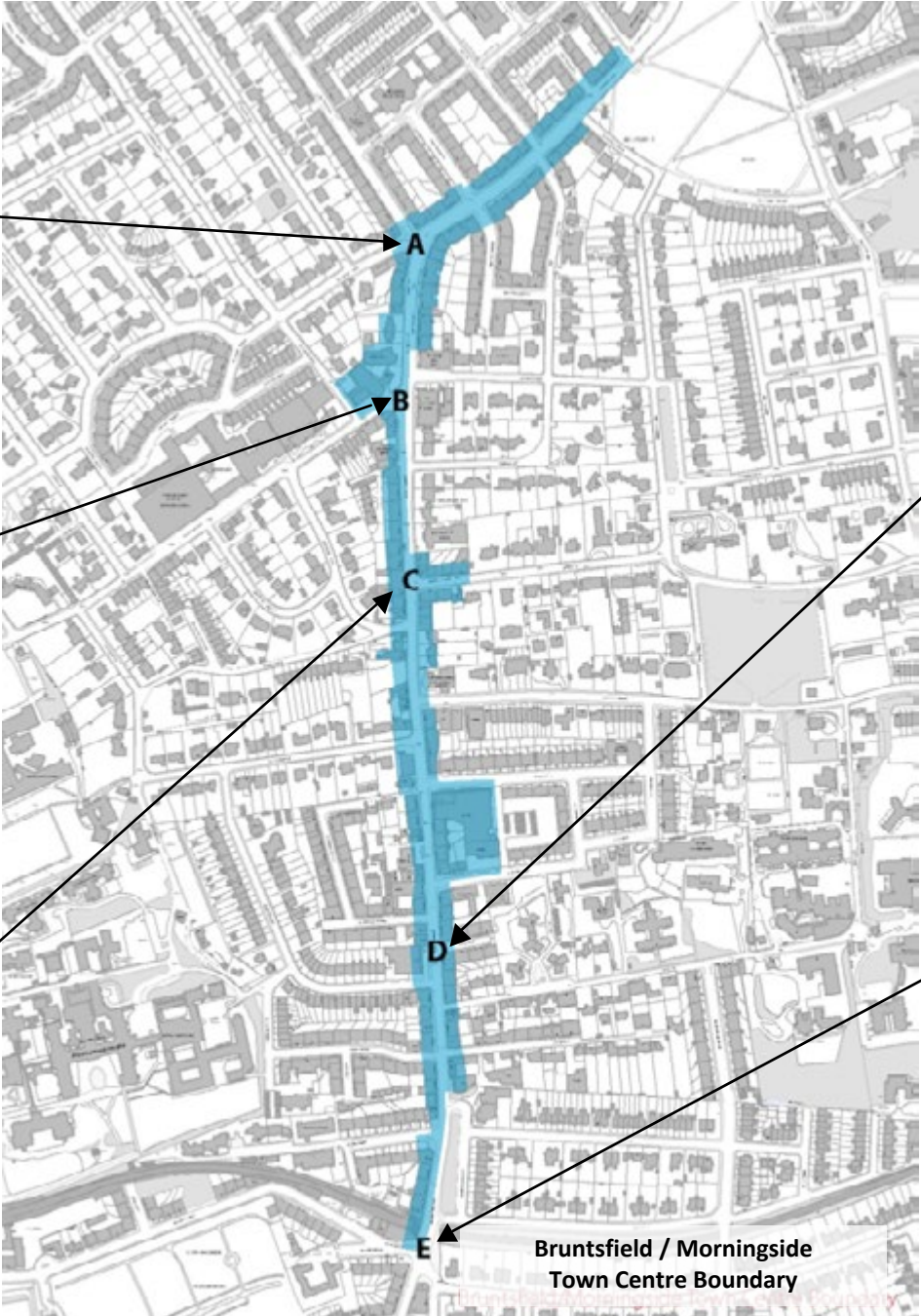


The map and images on the following page show the observational tracing studies carried out at the five locations (A-E) within the town centre boundary. The tracing studies mark pedestrian movement lines. As these build up, pedestrian desire lines and highly trafficked routes become more obvious, giving a graphical representation of the volume and direction of pedestrian movement.

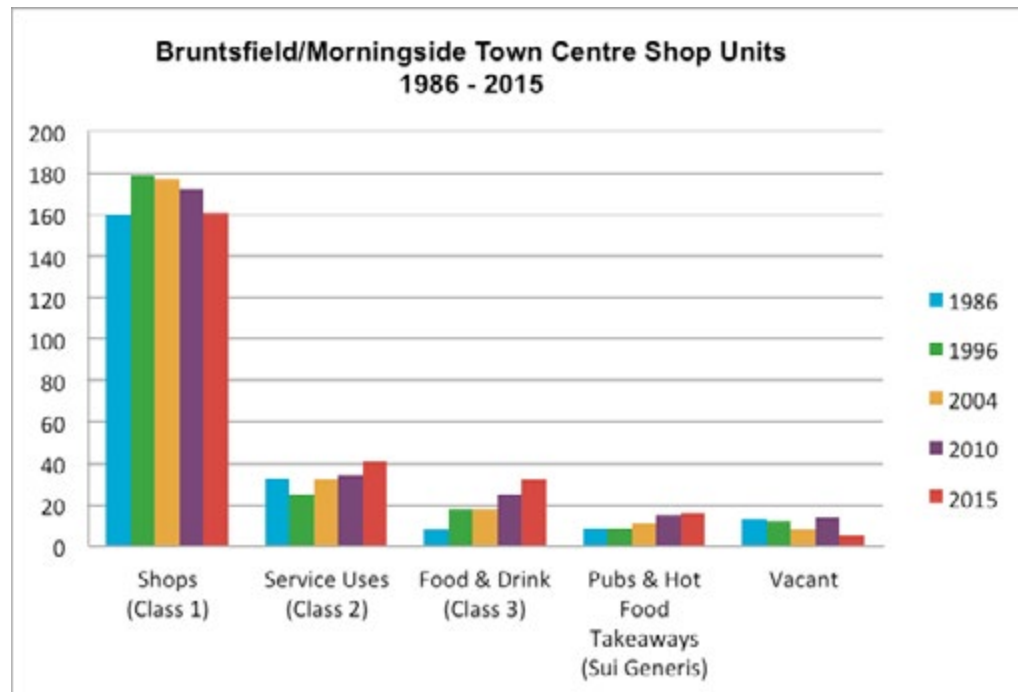
From approximately March 2017, Bruntsfield/Morningside Town Centre will introduce a 20mph speed limit, which is currently being rolled out across the city. Reduced traffic speed will improve the sense of security for pedestrians and cyclists. Since the Public Life Street Assessment was carried out, the town centre has also benefitted from the **trade waste policy** that only allows trade waste to be presented on the street/outside premises for one-hour within set collection windows. This has significantly reduced pavement clutter and improved pedestrian movement at peak times, for example commuter times and during lunch breaks.

Shops and other town centre uses

Similar to Edinburgh's other town centres, the shop units are predominantly ground floor units under traditional tenemental housing. Where a unit is used as a shop it is necessary to get planning permission from the Council to change to another use. However, the planning system cannot control what goods shops are selling, nor can it control which company occupies a shop. National retailers such as Boots and Superdrug are commonplace, but a good proportion of retail units are occupied by up-market independent operators. There are also a number of smaller supermarkets within the town centre, Marks & Spencers Simply Food and a large Waitrose. The mix of uses has been monitored in **city-wide shop surveys** periodically undertaken since 1986. As identified in the chart below, the survey shows a steady increase in other town centre uses. It also shows a steady decrease in the vacancy rates. The vacancy rate is 2%, which is significantly below the Edinburgh average of 7% and below the national average which is between 9 and 13%.



Bruntsfield / Morningside
Town Centre Boundary



Notwithstanding the number of shop uses, the area also benefits from having a number of community, leisure and public uses located within and in close proximity, such as Bruntsfield Links, Morningside Library, Dominion Cinema, Church Hill Theatre, a number of health centres and the Eric Liddell Centre, which operates a range of caring services, educational courses, and activities for the community. As a result of the mix of uses, employment in Bruntsfield/Morningside Town Centre is high at 4,900. Re-letting potential is also high, with vacancy rates being consistently low. Rents have increased or remained stable over recent years. The retail rent (2 years ending September 2015) is £24/sq ft; the highest of all eight town centres (excluding the city centre) and double that of Leith and Portobello.

3. The Vision for Bruntsfield/Morningside

There is great potential to improve the movement and place function of Bruntsfield/Morningside Town Centre. Three key overarching aims have been identified for the town centre as a whole. Both the Planning and Transport Service and Localities team should endeavour to apply these, where appropriate. External parties should consider these when submitting planning applications.

AIM 1 - Prioritise pedestrian and cycle movement

- a) Improve connections with the wider active travel network as identified on Map 1 and 2.
- b) Increase opportunities for cycle parking facilities at key points along the town centre.
- c) Simplify complex pedestrian crossings at key junctions, for example Holy Corner.
- d) As part of the Capital Renewals Program and in line with Edinburgh's Street Design Guidance, explore the potential to move the kerbs to make pavements wider and carriageways narrower.
- e) Minimise appropriate pavement displays and other street clutter as identified in any relevant street audits prepared by the Council or Living Streets.
- f) Explore the opportunities of redesigning key junctions that currently present a barrier to pedestrian movement, for example Holy Corner, where the semi public space outside Bank of Scotland provides an opportunity for new civic space with seating, green space, and cycle racks.

AIM 2 - Promote and facilitate staying times by making environmental improvements, which would enhance visual interest and comfort within the public realm

- a) Incorporate and enhance natural and built features where they can contribute positively to new development, for example the former listed police box, the South Suburban railway line, any existing pedestrian links, and private/public open spaces.

- b) Ensure active frontages to the street by prohibiting the change of use from shop use to residential in ground floor units.
- c) The mix of uses at ground floor level must seek to activate the building, by providing glazing which will allow for natural surveillance and interaction to take place between the building and outdoor space.
- d) Support high quality shopfront design that complies with the Council's Guidance for Businesses, and the Listed Building and Conservation Area Guidance.
- e) Maximise opportunities for formal and informal outdoor seating incorporating shelter in the form of trees, planters or shop front awnings.
- f) Open up existing private open space, for example at Hermitage Terrace, to enable it to function as part of the town centre.
- g) Retain existing frontage set-backs along Morningside Road, as part of future redevelopment opportunities, to provide for flexible pedestrian priority spaces with opportunities for outdoor markets on an otherwise very linear and narrow street. For example at Belhaven Terrace (Bank of Scotland), Morningside Park (M&S Simply Food/Superdrug), Falcon Avenue (Waitrose), Balcarres Street (Bank of Scotland) and Hermitage Terrace (Post Office).

AIM 3 - Ensure a mix of uses to meet the needs and demands of the population, thus maintaining it as a destination for both shopping and leisure activities that extend into the evening

- a) Planning applications for a change of use from a shop to a non-shop use must comply with the policies set out in Section 4.
- b) Opportunities should be considered for promoting residential use above shop units in any new development or redevelopment schemes within and on the edge of the town centre boundary, for example the M&S Simply Food/Superdrug, Post Office and Bank of Scotland buildings along Morningside Road.

- c) Where pavements are wider and there are clusterings of food and drink uses, outdoor seating permits should be encouraged.
- d) Support class 3 food and drink use on corner units where there is opportunity to activate the public street life.

4. Retail Policies

The three policies below (**Policy BM 1**, **Policy BM 2** and **Policy BM 3**) set out when a shop unit can change from a shop use to a non-shop use.

Policy BM 1 – Alternative Use of Shop Units in Primary Frontages

In the Primary Frontages, defined in [Table 1](#) (see Map 1 and Map 2), the change of use of a shop unit 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 units in the frontage 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 centre and would not be detrimental to its vitality and viability.

Table 1 : Primary Frontages
20 - 104 Morningside Road
179 - 235 Morningside Road
200 - 372 Morningside Road
237 - 265 Morningside Road
132 - 174 Bruntsfield Place & 2 Bruntsfield Avenue
176 - 206 Bruntsfield Place
103 - 129 Bruntsfield Place
131 - 141 Bruntsfield Place

Policy BM 2 – Alternative Use of Shop Units in Secondary Frontages

In the Secondary Frontages, defined in [Table 2](#) (see Map 1 and Map 2), the change of use of a shop unit 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 in the frontage 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 centre and would not be detrimental to its vitality and viability.

Table 2 : Secondary Frontages

78 - 130 Bruntsfield Place

145 - 177 Morningside Road

Policy BM 3 – Alternative Use of Shop Units Elsewhere in Bruntsfield/ Morningside Town Centre

For those locations not within a 'frontage', but elsewhere within the Bruntsfield/Morningside Town Centre boundary, a change of use from a shop to a non-shop use will be permitted provided a proposal is:

- Class 2 – financial, professional or other services
- Class 3 – food and drink uses
- An appropriate commercial or community use which would complement the character of the centre and would not be detrimental to its vitality and viability

5. Links to other Policies and Guidance

Other relevant policies in the [Local Development Plan](#) include:

- Ret 3 Town Centres;
- Ret 11 Food and Drink Establishments; and
- Hou 7 Inappropriate Uses in Residential Areas

Policy Ret 3 generally supports shop uses in town centres. Policies Ret 10 and Hou 7 consider the impact of proposals on nearby residents, such as public houses and hot-food takeaways.

One-Door Approach

The One Door Approach to Development Consents aims to give the customer all the information they need at the start of the development process. Food and drink, public house and hot-food takeaway uses will often require other consents and are subject to separate controls by licensing for:

- Alcohol
- Hours of operation
- Outdoor pavement seating

For more information on these, see the Council's website on the [One Door Approach](#) to development consents, the Council's [Guidance for Businesses](#) or contact the [Business Gateway](#).

Edinburgh Street Design Guidance

Edinburgh's new [Street Design Guidance](#) brings together previously separate CEC guidance on street design to achieve coherence and co-ordination across the city, with the ultimate goal of providing the people of Edinburgh with a world-class network of vibrant, safe, attractive, effective and enjoyable streets. The guidance will apply to a range of Council services who manage streets for various purposes.

Edinburgh Design Guidance

The **Edinburgh Design Guidance** sets out the Council's expectations for the design of new development in Edinburgh. The guidance is intended for all new buildings and should be used as a point of reference, a basis for the planning, design and communication of new development proposals and a material consideration in assessing planning applications. It aims to provide guidance on how to comply with the policies in the local plans, explain the key ideas which need to be considered during the design process, give examples of good quality design, and set out the requirements for design and access statements.

6. Definitions

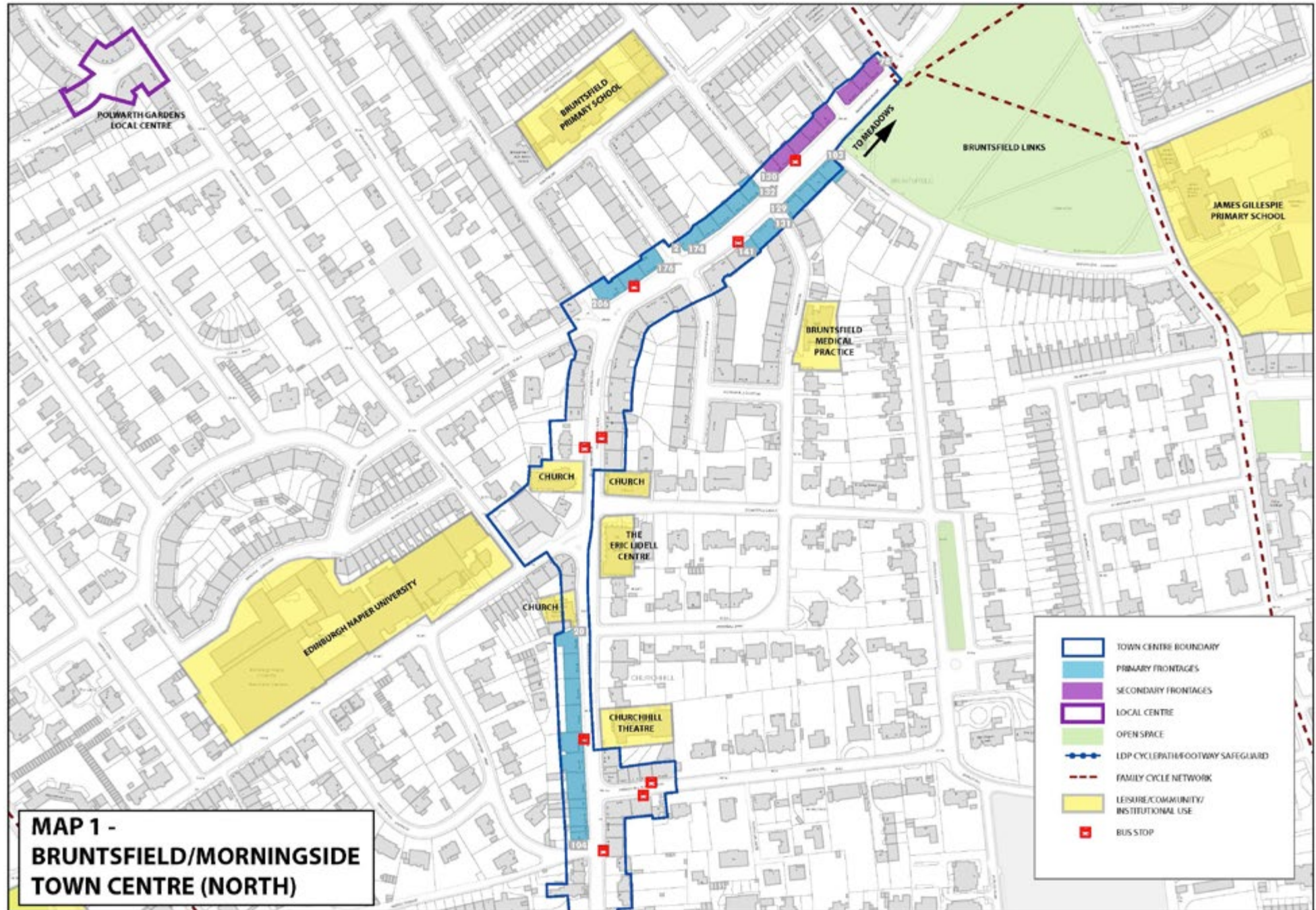
Class 1 shop use - A unit used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public, for example, post office, sale of tickets, cold food for consumption off the premises, and hairdressing.

Shop unit - Premises opening directly onto the street and designed primarily for shop use.

Non-shop uses - Changing a shop to a non-shop use is known as a 'change of use' and will always require planning permission. Examples of non-shop uses are:

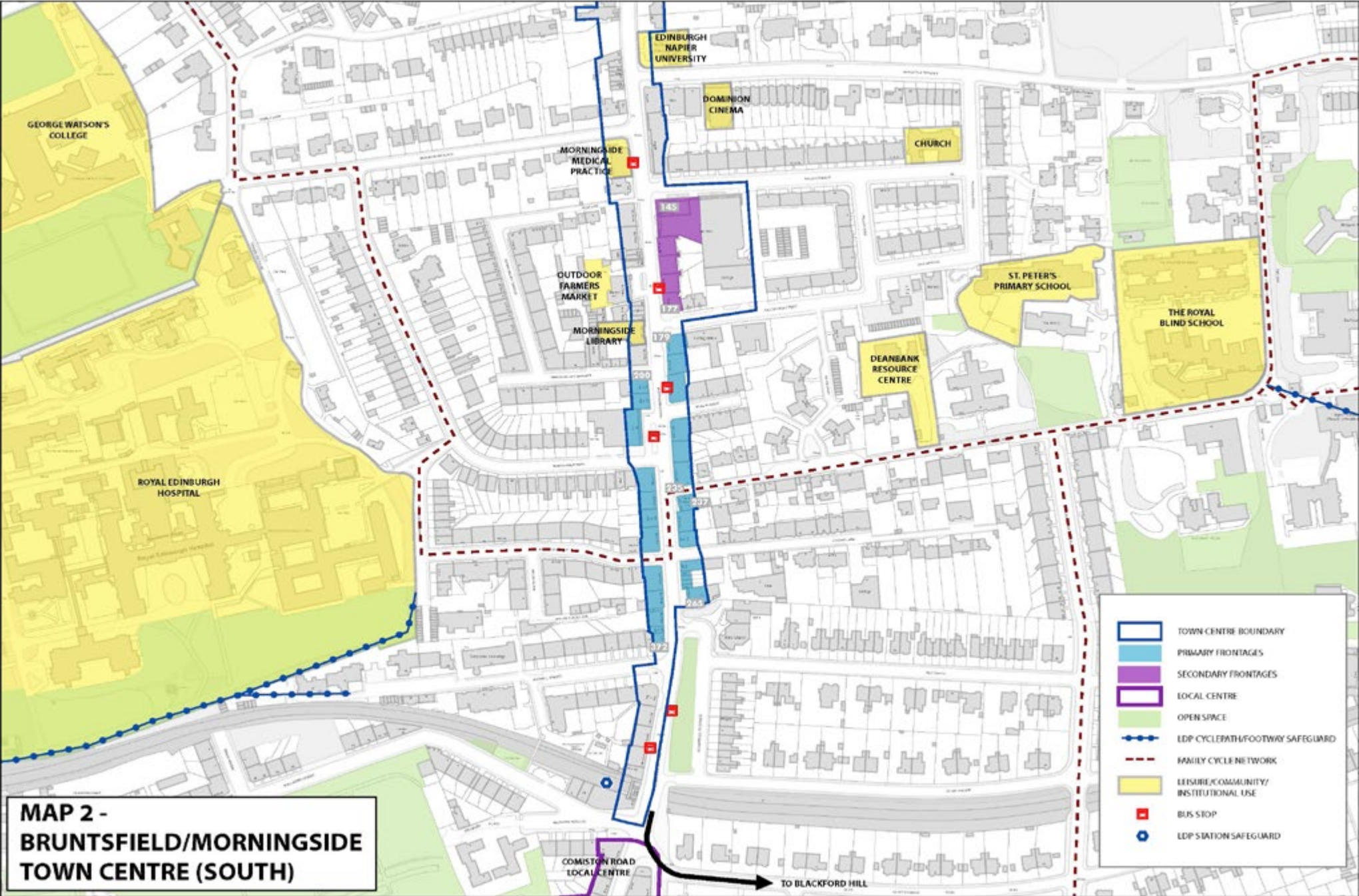
- **Class 2 Service Uses** – lawyers, accountants, estate agents, health centres, tanning salons, betting shops and pawn brokers.
- **Class 3 Food and Drink** (consumed on premises) – restaurant, cafe, snack bar (not a public house or hot food take-away).
- Pubs and hot food takeaways are classified as **Sui Generis**.

Some changes of use are permitted development, for example, a cafe (Class 3) being turned into a shop unit (Class 1). The Scottish Government Circular 1/1998 contains guidance on use classes.



**MAP 1 -
BRUNTSFIELD/MORNINGSIDE
TOWN CENTRE (NORTH)**

-  TOWN CENTRE BOUNDARY
-  PRIMARY FRONTAGES
-  SECONDARY FRONTAGES
-  LOCAL CENTRE
-  OPEN SPACE
-  LDP CYCLEPATH/FOOTWAY SAFEGUARD
-  FAMILY CYCLE NETWORK
-  LEISURE/COMMUNITY/ INSTITUTIONAL USE
-  BUS STOP



DRAFT SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE

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