

(ii) Shops and Offices

There are about 193 shops and 33 offices in Harpenden with a total road frontage of 3,537 feet and occupying about 9½ acres. 136 of these shops are in the central area. In addition, there are 25 licensed premises in the Urban District. (39)

These facilities are mainly confined to the central business area in the High Street and Station Road and in three subsidiary centres in Southdown Road, at Batford and along the Luton Road in North Harpenden. (40)

Proposals

The proposals for shops are concerned primarily with building up the subsidiary centres to serve the increased population, with slight additions and improvements to the main centre in the High Street area. (41)

Using the Greater London Plan recommendation of 75-100 persons per shop, the town would in future require between 200 and 267 shops, probably the latter figure being more likely. (42)

Provision can be made in the central area of the town for about twenty new shops when redevelopment permits. (43)

The Batford neighbourhood with about 1,500 persons on the Council housing estate will require not less than 15 new shops. (44)

The Southdown Road area has only one properly designed parade of shops, and, whilst it is presumed that the converted cottages will in time be rebuilt as shops, a further ten shops will be required here. (45)

By "rounding off" existing development in the Roundwood Lane area in North Harpenden about 1,600 people will be provided for, with, possibly, a need for about ten new shops in the Luton Road locality. (46)

The completion of the West Common estate should give rise to a need for not more than four shops, preferably associated with the existing business premises at Hatching Green. (47)

The existing office accommodation is necessarily somewhat restricted, chiefly because of the limited demand. Excluding the Council Offices, the total area is just under three acres. The future expansion of Harpenden to accommodate 20,000 people will create a demand for more office floor space and the Plan anticipates this demand by offering an alternative use of the larger and older residential properties in Arden Grove. (48)

(iii) Churches and Cemeteries

Churches

Harpenden possesses 22 Churches, Chapels and Church Halls. Collectively, they occupy some 8 acres of land reasonably well disposed round the town. The variety of denominations, Church of England, Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, Congregational and Christian Scientist are sufficiently representative to meet the reasonable requirements of the existing town. The six largest churches provide seating for 2,500 persons. All the churches have been erected within the last 100 years, although the tower to the Parish Church of St. Nicholas dates back to the 15th century. The Greater London Plan expresses the opinion that in planning for churches, provision should be made for about 10 per cent of the population. On this basis, Harpenden is already well provided for but as the local ratio has always been about 20 per cent it is reasonable to make provision for a percentage in excess of 10 if not as high as 20. (49)