

RETAIL PARKS ARE EVOLVING

8TH MARCH 2000

Retail Parks are continuing to adapt to our changing lifestyle and spending patterns. Out of a total of 539 retail parks currently trading, 20 now feature a cinema, 15 include bowling alleys and 10 have health and fitness centres. With other occupiers including bingo halls, hotels, restaurants and public houses, these changes led to a new type of retail development - Retail and Leisure Parks, with 24 schemes trading and a further twelve under construction or in development. Many of these parks have a fairly even split between retail and leisure tenants and developers of several other schemes are planning to build extensions incorporating cinemas and other leisure facilities.

Traditional Retail Parks are also evolving, as large space users such as B & Q, Comet and Currys, gradually migrate to larger superstores. Their vacant stores are often re-let to non-traditional retail park tenants or sub-divided, creating opportunities for new categories of retailer to take smaller units. Retailers moving in to Retail Parks over the last 18 months include Au Naturale, Borders, Harry Corry Textiles, Holiday Hypermarket, Mamas & Papas, Mecca Bingo and The Carphone Warehouse. However, whilst clothing and sports goods chains like JD Sports, JJB Sports and Matalan continue to open large numbers of stores, the vast majority of tenants on Retail Parks are still traditional DIY, Electrical and Furniture & Carpet stores.

One of these new Retail and Leisure Parks is *The Coliseum at Cheshire Oaks* between Ellesmere Port and Chester, where the 191,000 sq. ft. leisure elements opened in December 1999 and 131,000 sq. ft. of retail opens this month. There are few traditional retail park tenants, with newcomers including Boots, Borders, Dixons, Electronics Boutique and Holiday Hypermarket with a wide variety of restaurants and public houses together with a 15 screen Warner Village Cinema. Another example is *Middlebrook Retail & Leisure Park* in Bolton, which has more than 30 units including traditional retail park tenants Comet, Currys, Great Mills, Homestyle by Fads and several furniture stores. Less traditional tenants include Allders at Home, Boots, Holiday Hypermarket, Hollywood Bowl, Mill House Inns and a 12 screen Warner Village Cinema.

These are some of the 433 different trading fascias found in Retail Parks, Leisure Parks and those that combine both uses, according to **Shopping meets Leisure 2000**, which was recently published by Trevor Wood of TW Research Associates in conjunction with Lunson Mitchenall. **Shopping meets Leisure 2000** is the first comprehensive research publication to look at both retail and leisure parks, listing tenants and other important information for the majority of schemes.

Speaking about these findings, Neil Mitchenall of Lunson Mitchenall said, *“The growing importance of Retail Parks and the lack of detailed, current, information on out of town developments has always been something of a mystery to me, given the proliferation of information sources for town centre shopping developments. We think this comprehensive research report, which is already used by many people throughout the industry, will become an essential reference work.”*

Trevor Wood of TW Research Associates added, *“There seems to be no limit to the variety of tenants who feel they are able to trade successfully within retail parks. We now have a wide range of traditional high street retailers, such as booksellers, department stores, opticians and travel agents, gradually expanding into what was previously considered to be the exclusive domain of DIY and Electrical retailers.”*

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Notes to editors:

This table and analyses are extracted from “**Shopping meets Leisure 2000**”, which was published by Trevor Wood of TW Research Associates in conjunction with retail property consultants Lunson Mitchenall.

“**Shopping meets Leisure 2000**” contains more than 80 pages of detailed analysis and listings of over 800 retail parks and leisure schemes compiled principally from questionnaires and extensive research within the industry. The report looks at schemes anticipated to be trading by 2003 as well as those currently trading.

A listing of the 24 Retail and Leisure Parks is attached, in descending order of size.

A Retail Park has been defined as a purpose-built development with at least three units covering 30,000 sq. ft or more of lettable floorspace, solely comprised of retail warehouse units. They have a minority of units occupied by traditional high street comparison goods retailers and usually, but not always, dedicated surface car parking.

A Retail and Leisure Park has been defined as a purpose-built development with at least three retail warehouse units covering 30,000 sq. ft or more of lettable floorspace, with a considerable proportion of leisure occupiers and, usually but not always, dedicated surface car parking.

If you would like to borrow a copy of the full report for review, please contact Trevor Wood at TW Research Associates or Neil Mitchenall at Lunson Mitchenall.

Copies of “**Shopping meets Leisure 2000**”, including postage, are available at £95 per copy within the UK, 190 Euros within Europe or \$190 outside Europe from either:-

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Retail and Leisure Parks

Location	Retail and Leisure Park	Size (Sq. Ft.)
Bolton - Horwich	Middlebrook Retail & Leisure Park	700,000
Ellesmere Port	The Coliseum at Cheshire Oaks	322,000
Wigan	Robin Park	310,000
Swindon	Greenbridge Retail & Leisure Park	300,500
Derby	The Meteor Centre	287,500
Glasgow - Drumchapel	Great Western Retail & Leisure Park	285,000
Sheffield	Drakehouse Retail & Leisure Park	214,000
Swansea	Parc Tawe Retail Park - Phase 1	212,000
Poole	Tower Park	210,000
Wakefield	Westgate Retail and Leisure Park	208,000
Newport (Wales)	Newport Retail Park	203,689
Norwich	Norwich Riverside	200,000
Falkirk	Central Retail Park	159,000
Eastbourne	Sovereign Harbour Retail Park	127,163
Liverpool	Edge Lane Retail Park	120,000
Redditch	The Quadrant	120,000
Bristol	Avon Meads Retail Park	117,000
London - Dalston	interchange	111,000
Barrow-in-Furness	Hollywood Park	110,000
Preston - Walton-le-Dale	Capitol Centre	109,000
Inverness	Inshes Retail & Leisure Park	95,000
Kilmarnock	Queens Drive Retail & Leisure Park	73,000
London - Catford	Catford Island	66,000
Liverpool - Aintree	Grand National Retail & Leisure Park	45,000

Source: **Shopping meets Leisure 2000** (TW Research Associates / Lunson Mitchenall)