

Newark and Sherwood Retail and Town Centres Study

Newark and Sherwood District Council

March 2010

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 GVA Grimley was instructed by Newark and Sherwood District Council in June 2009 to carry out a Retail and Town Centres Study to inform retail planning in accordance with guidance set out in National Planning Policy ((PPS4): Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (December 2009)).
- 1.2 This study provides a robust and sound evidence base to inform the Council's Local Development Framework (LDF) and future Development Plan Documents (DPD), particularly the Council's Core Strategy. It is also intended to act as a tool for the Council to make informed choices about the nature and extent of retail and leisure growth to be accommodated in the future. The study has been undertaken within the context of Newark's Growth Point designation and the level of housing provision set out in the East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy, which anticipates the delivery of around 14,800 new homes in the District over the period up to 2026.
- 1.3 Our research and analysis identifies the performance of Newark town centre, provides vitality and viability health checks for the District's smaller centres and identifies the quantitative and qualitative need for new retail (comparison and convenience) floorspace up to 2026. We advise that forecasts beyond a five-year period should be interpreted with caution and we therefore recommend that the assessment is monitored and updated to take account of changes in retail and property market trends, as well as revised spend and population growth projections. Plans and appendices referred to throughout this report are provided in an accompanying document.

Scope

- 1.4 Newark and Sherwood is the largest District in Nottinghamshire, covering over 65,000 hectares. The District comprises much of the central and eastern parts of rural Nottinghamshire, and abuts urbanised parts of the Nottingham and Mansfield conurbations lying to the west. Lincolnshire adjoins the eastern boundary of the District, with Lincoln lying to the northeast and Grantham to the southeast. Large areas of Sherwood Forest lie to the northwest of the district, which is particularly attractive and popular with locals and visitors.
- 1.5 The scope of the study, as set out in the Council's Brief, is to provide up to date advice on the need and capacity for new retail development in the District to 2026 in light of Newark's status as a Growth Point and its role as a Sub-Regional Centre in the East Midlands Regional Plan (2009). We have undertaken a thorough audit of the current status of retail activities in Newark and Sherwood and provide detailed information on the likely future demand for retail floorspace up to 2026. Our capacity assessment provides an estimate of the scale and nature of any changes in the future retail provision in light of:-

- Existing and forecast population levels;
- Housing and regeneration growth;
- Forecast changes in retail expenditure including the current economic downturn;
- Forecast improvements in the productivity and efficiency of retail floorspace; and
- Changing forms of retail provision.

1.6 In addition, our study considers the existing boundaries and frontages and provides recommendations to ensure that the emerging Local Development Framework complies with national policy guidelines.

Approach

1.7 Our approach draws on the recommendations of the Good Practice Guidance on Need, Impact and the Sequential Approach, produced by GVA Grimley in conjunction with the DCLG, to accompany PPS4. We have adopted a transparent approach, where the key steps of our analysis, data inputs and assumptions are clearly set out and justified. In accordance with the Good Practice Guidance, our approach is also underpinned by the use of an up-to-date household telephone survey to establish current shopping patterns, town centre catchments and market share estimates for both comparison and convenience goods retailing. GVA Grimley also instructed PMRS Market Research to undertake a pedestrian flow count survey to provide a detailed understanding of pedestrian activity within Newark town centre, to inform future policy recommendations.

1.8 This study provides a thorough overview of the existing retail network and retail hierarchy in Newark and Sherwood including a detailed audit and qualitative health check of Newark town centre and an assessment of the vitality and viability of Ollerton, Southwell, Rainworth and Clipstone drawing where possible on the key performance indicators set out in PPS4 (Annex D). Additionally, the study considers retail and service provision in the smaller settlements of Edwinstowe, Bilsthorpe, Blidworth, Boughton, Sutton-on-Trent, Collingham, Lowdham and Farnsfield. The study also provides an overview of the District's out-of-centre retail provision, as well as other town centre uses including commercial leisure, cultural, entertainment, cafés, bars and restaurants, offices and hotels.

Report Structure

1.9 This report draws together the results of our research, incorporating the findings of the detailed survey-based technical analysis and health check assessments. The report is structured as follows:-

- **Section 2** summarises the national, regional and local policy framework, relevant to retail planning in Newark and Sherwood.

- **Section 3** considers current national retail and leisure trends and specifically the key socio-economic trends which are likely to influence the evolution of retailing and leisure in Newark and Sherwood.
- **Section 4** reviews the sub regional context and in particular the influence of competing centres in the wider sub region, and potential changes in influence in the future.
- **Section 5** presents our qualitative assessment of the role, attraction and performance of Newark town centre. We also assess the vitality and viability of the network of smaller centres within the District, as well as reviewing other retail and leisure provision, including out-of-centre convenience stores and retail warehouses.
- **Section 6** sets out our baseline capacity projections for convenience and comparison goods in the District, focusing in particular on the capacity for further retail floorspace, with regard to identified commitments. In addition, we consider the additional expenditure generated by the population increase from Newark's Growth Point status and the implications for future retail provision.
- **Section 7** sets out our conclusions and recommendations.

2. POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.1 This section examines the key points of relevance from national, regional and local planning policy.

National Policy Context

PPS4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth, December 2009

2.2 The central message of the guidance is the need for a more proactive approach to securing new investment in centres, and achieving more sustainable patterns of development. The Government's key objective for town centres is to promote their vitality and viability by:

- Focusing new economic growth and development of main town centre uses in existing centres and remedying deficiencies in provision in areas with poor access to facilities;
- Allowing competition between retailers and enhanced consumer choice through the provision of innovative and efficient shopping, leisure, tourism and local services in town centres which allow genuine choice to meet the needs of the entire community (particularly socially excluded groups).

2.3 The statement advises that local planning authorities (LPAs) should plan positively for growth and development by assessing the need for further main town centre uses and ensure there is capacity to accommodate them, taking account of the role of centres in the hierarchy; and to identify any deficiencies in the provision of local convenience shopping and other facilities which serve people's day-to-day needs. In assessing need for retail and leisure development LPAs should take account of both quantitative and qualitative need, giving additional weight to the latter in deprived areas.

2.4 In assessing quantitative need for retail and leisure development LPAs should have regard to relevant market information and economic data, including a realistic assessment of population and future growth, forecast expenditure and forecast improvements in retail sales density. In assessing qualitative need LPAs should assess whether provision and distribution of shopping, leisure and local services allows genuine choice to meet the needs of the whole community (particularly those in deprived areas), in light of the objective to promote vitality and viability of town centres and the application of the sequential approach. LPAs should also take into account the degree to which shops may be overtrading and whether there is need to increase competition and retail mix.

2.5 PPS4 states that, in planning for centres, regional and local planning authorities should set out a strategy for the management and growth of centres over the plan period, setting flexible policies allowing centres to respond to changing economic circumstances. LPAs should define the network and hierarchy

- of centres that is resilient to anticipated future economic changes to meet the needs of their catchments. Choices should be made about which centres will accommodate any identified need for growth in town centre uses, considering their expansion where necessary and the need to avoid an over concentration of growth in centres.
- 2.6 Identified deficiencies in the network of centres should also be addressed, giving consideration to the appropriateness of designating new centres; reclassifying existing centres; planning for extensions; or scope for consolidation. The need for any new, expanded or redeveloped out-of-centre regional or sub-regional shopping centre, or any significant change in the role or function of centres should be considered at the regional level.
- 2.7 In addition to defining the extent of the primary shopping area for their centres, LPAs are encouraged to distinguish between primary and secondary frontages (Annex B). Having regard to the need to encourage diversification of uses in town centres as a whole, PPS4 states that primary frontages should contain a high proportion of retail uses, while secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses. Where frontages are identified, the appropriate local development documents should include policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations.
- 2.8 PPS4 encourages LPAs to proactively plan to promote competitive town centre environments and provide consumer choice by:
- supporting a diverse range of uses (including complementary evening and night-time uses) which appeal to a wide range of age and social groups;
 - planning for a strong retail mix so that the range and quality of the comparison and convenience retail offer meets the requirements of the local catchment area, recognising that smaller shops can significantly enhance the character and vibrancy of the area;
 - supporting shops, services and other important small scale economic uses in local centres and villages;
 - identifying sites in the centre, or failing that on the edge of the centre, capable of accommodating larger format developments where a need for such development has been identified;
 - retaining and enhancing existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introducing or creating new ones, ensuring that markets remain attractive and competitive by investing in their improvement;
 - taking measures to conserve, where appropriate, and enhance the established character and diversity of their town centres.
- 2.9 LPAs should identify an appropriate range of sites to accommodate at least the first five years identified need. Sites for main town centre uses should be identified through a sequential approach to site selection giving preference to locations in appropriate existing centres in the first instance, followed by
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- edge-of-centre locations and out-of-centre sites, with preference given to those that are more accessible or have a higher likelihood of forming links with an existing centre.
- 2.10 The impact of proposed locations for development on existing centres will also need to be assessed by the LPA, taking into account impact considerations set out in **Policy EC16** which include impact on town centre vitality and viability; in-centre trade/turnover; investment in centres; delivery of development on allocated sites; and any locally important impacts on centres identified by the LPA.
- 2.11 In the determination of planning applications for main town centre uses that are not in a centre and not in accordance with an up to date development plan, PPS4 requires applicants to demonstrate compliance with the sequential approach and impact assessment taking into account the impact considerations set out in **Policy EC16**. Assessments of impact should focus on the first 5 years after the implementation of a proposal and should be proportionate to the scale, nature and detail of the proposed development.
- 2.12 **Policy EC17.1** directs LPAs to refuse planning permission where an applicant fails to demonstrate compliance with the sequential approach or the proposal is likely to lead to a significant impact. Judgements about the extent and significance of any impacts should be informed by the development plan (where this is up to date) or recent local assessments of the health of town centres and any other published local information e.g. a town centre or retail strategy. Where there are no significant adverse impacts identified, LPAs are encouraged to determine applications adopting a balanced approach, having regard to any material considerations (**EC17.2 and EC17.3**).

Good Practice Guide: Need, Impact and the Sequential Approach, December 2009

- 2.13 The Good Practice Guide is a government document published alongside PPS4. It does not constitute a statement of Government policy, but forms guidance to support the interpretation of town centre policies set out in PPS4.
- 2.14 Of most relevance to this Study is the advice directed towards assisting LPAs in adopting a more proactive approach to planning for town centres, and particularly the role of evidence in the plan making process to identify the need for new development and inform the preparation of proactive town centre strategies. Central to PPS4 **Policy EC1** the guidance sets out alternative approaches to assessing and identifying quantitative and qualitative needs for retail and other town centre uses. Building on the assessment of needs, the practice guidance explains how LPAs can plan positively and promote new retail-led and other town centre uses through their LDFs; setting out the 'tools' needed to prepare effective town centre strategies, including how to identify appropriate locations, and how to assess the effects of alternative policy options and specific proposals.

- 2.15 Having identified and evaluated the various policy options, LPAs should develop a clear vision and strategy for the network of centres, and strategies for individual centres. In terms of the LDF, this is likely to include clear guidance on the appropriate scale and form of new development involving main town centre uses; allocation of sites to meet identified need; identification of the extent of key development opportunities; a clear statement of the approach to be taken to bringing forward development and the LPAs attitude to other competing developments.
- 2.16 It is added that strategies for individual centres can be prepared at any time but they should be incorporated into the LDF at the earliest opportunity. This is likely to be important where key site allocations are involved, either through strategic allocations in the Core Strategy, or through sites allocated in an Area Action Plan or other document. Promoting town centre strategies through the LDF process ensures that the evidence base which underpins the strategy will be properly tested. A strategy which has been progressed through the LDF process, and been subject to effective public and stakeholder consultation and tested through independent examination will ensure that proposals must be determined in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 2.17 When preparing their LDF's, LPAs should identify what they regard as the Primary Shopping Area (PSA) to provide clarity to applicants about the policy status of different sites. In defining the PSA, it may be appropriate to take into account the anticipated future role of the centre, and in particular the scope for growth and expansion. In centres where major expansion is planned, it may be appropriate to indicate where the PSA is likely to be extended to, having regard to the potential for achieving effectively integrated new development.
- 2.18 LPAs should also identify an appropriate 'town centre boundary' within which it will seek to locate other main town centre uses. It may also be appropriate to define other areas within the town centre but outside the PSA where specific uses are encouraged e.g. specialist retail, offices bars/restaurants etc. In addition to defining the PSA and town centre boundary, where LPAs identify a need for new development to accommodate main town centre uses, they should allocate sites which are suitable, viable and likely to be available within a reasonable timescale to accommodate such needs.

Competition Committee: Groceries Market Investigation (April 2008) and 2009 Update

- 2.19 On 30th April 2008, the Competition Commission published the final report on its proposals to remedy competition issues in the UK grocery market. The report recommended the introduction of a 'competition test' in planning decisions on proposed new grocery stores and extensions which will favour new entrants and grocery retailers over those which already possess a portion of the local market share. It is proposed that the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) will be incorporated as a statutory consultee on all applications for grocery retail stores proposing a net sales area in excess of 1,000 sq m and retailers will be required to notify the OFT of any acquisitions of grocery stores with a net sales area greater than 1,000 sq m.

- 2.20 The report also identified thirty restrictive covenants being used by retailers to restrict entry by competitors and prohibits future imposition of such covenants. Grocery retailers will also be required to relinquish control over land sites in highly-concentrated markets that have been identified as inhibiting entry by competing retailers. Finally, the report recommended the establishment of an independent ombudsman to oversee and enforce a tightened Supermarkets Code of Practice to ensure compliance of the new regulations. The Competition Commission believed that the recommended measures would be sufficient and proportionate in addressing its concerns about existing and future competition in local markets.
- 2.21 Following the report, a number of representations were received and Tesco requested a judicial review, arguing that the new test was unnecessary, simply adding another hurdle to the planning process and would harm consumers. In March 2009 Tesco won an appeal against the new competition test and the Competition Appeal Tribunal ruled that the test risked harming consumers because of unforeseen circumstances. The test was referred back to the Competition Committee for further cost benefit analysis.
- 2.22 The Competition Committee subsequently carried out further analysis on the effectiveness, benefits, costs and proportionality of the test. The Competition Committee published its provisional decision in July 2009, and after considering further consultation, the test was modified to allow all retailers to make small groceries extensions to stores (one extension per store of up to 300 sq m of groceries sales area), provided that the store in question has not been extended in the previous five years.
- 2.23 On 2nd October 2009, the Competition Committee published a news release recommending that the Department of Communities and Local Government take the necessary steps to introduce the competition test into planning decisions for large foodstores. Under the test, it is proposed that the Office of Fair Trading become a statutory consultee for all foodstores applications (including new stores and extensions), where the store had, or after the proposed scheme has been implemented, will have a net sales area in excess of 1,000 sq m.
- 2.24 The Office of Fair Trading would provide advice to Local Planning Authorities on whether a particular retailer would pass the competition test. Applications would pass the competition test if, within the area bounded by a ten minute drive time of the development site:
- the grocery retailer that would operate the new store was a new entrant to that area; or
 - the total number of fascias¹ in that area was four or more; or
 - the total number of fascias in that area was three or fewer and the relevant grocery retailer would operate less than 60 per cent of groceries sales area (including the new store).

¹ Fascias refer to the identity of different store operators

- 2.25 It is considered by some that the test will bring significant benefits to consumers, which will outweigh the costs. The outcome and process remains ongoing.

Regional Policy Context

East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (March 2009)

- 2.26 The East Midlands Regional Plan identifies the scale and distribution of provision for new housing, as well as priorities for the environment, transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, energy, minerals and waste treatment and disposal within the region up to 2026.
- 2.27 The RSS notes that the East Midlands is characterised by a broad variety of contrasting environmental, social and economic conditions, and to best reflect this diversity, the RSS divides the East Midlands into five sub-areas. Newark & Sherwood lies within the Northern sub-area which the RSS describes as comprising the former coalfields of North Derbyshire and North Nottinghamshire which have been adversely affected by economic restructuring and environmental degradation. It also sets a regional housing target of 14,800 new homes for Newark and Sherwood District between 2006 and 2026.
- 2.28 **Policy 3** states that new development should be 'concentrated primarily' in and adjoining the region's five Principal Urban Areas of Derby, Leicester, Lincoln, Northampton and Nottingham. 'Significant' levels of new development should be located in the three growth towns of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough. The Policy states that development of a 'lesser' scale should be located in the Sub-Regional Centres. Newark is one of the Northern Sub-area Sub-Regional Centres along with Chesterfield, Mansfield-Ashfield and Worksop.
- 2.29 Within the Northern Sub-Region, Newark is identified as a sub-regional centre, on a par with Chesterfield, Mansfield, Sutton-in-Ashfield and Worksop, underneath the Principal Urban Areas of Nottingham, Leicester and Lincoln. The RSS states that these towns should continue to be the focus for shopping and service provision, and like the rest of the region, have the opportunity to benefit from the opening of the Robin Hood airport at Doncaster. It also notes that following the decline of the coal industry, these settlements should become the focus of economic activity to prevent the further decline of their role and function.
- 2.30 **Policy 7** recognises that the economic, social and environmental regeneration of the Northern Sub-area is a regional priority and Newark's Growth Point Programme will help achieve this. Recognising the importance of Sherwood Forest and the environmental, social and economic benefits that the Park brings, **Policy SRS 5** seeks to promote the creation of the Sherwood Forest Regional Park via the protection and enhancement of the distinctive characteristics of the Forest assets, the development of the recreational potential for local communities and visitors, and the creation of a world class visitor experience.

- 2.31 **Policy 22** identifies regional priorities for town centres and retail development. It notes that there is no clear regional hierarchy in the East Midlands and therefore a sub-area approach is adopted. It states that there is no identified need for additional regional scale out-of-town retail floorspace within the region and that a number of existing centres require public sector support to encourage private investment. It also states that quantitative forecasts should be supplemented by a wider assessment of each centre's role as a focus for employment, leisure and recreation.
- 2.32 The RSS states that by 2016 there will be potential for at least 444,000 sq m of net additional comparison retail floorspace across the region, which will be distributed in accordance with the priorities for development in **Policy 3**. The policy also indicates that appropriate development of a lesser scale should be located in the Sub-Regional Centres of Chesterfield, Mansfield–Ashfield, Newark and Worksop in order to retain a higher level of retail spend in the sub-area. The RSS does not therefore envisage major growth for Newark, and instead encourages its consolidation in the hierarchy.

Local Policy Context

Newark and Sherwood Local Plan (1999)

- 2.33 The Local Plan was adopted in March 1999 and in the absence of an adopted Core Strategy, remains the statutory development plan for the District. A number of policies have been saved, including all of the retail and town centre policies. Within Chapter 4, **Policy FS1** directs development towards the built-up areas of Newark, Balderton and the main settlements within the District and seeks to ensure the re-use of derelict, vacant or neglected sites. Section 9 sets out policies relating to 'Shopping', particularly Newark urban area, the villages local shopping provision and the countryside. It states that the majority of retail floorspace in Newark is concentrated within a compact town centre, around the pedestrianised market square.
- 2.34 The Plan recognises that the role of Newark is influenced, to a significant extent, by its location mid-way between the regional and sub-regional centres of Nottingham and Lincoln, as well as close proximity to centres of similar size, particularly Grantham, and to a lesser extent East Retford and Mansfield. Newark is an historic market town, with the majority of its floorspace concentrated within the compact town centre, around the pedestrianised market square.
- 2.35 **Policy S1** focuses on Newark's Central Shopping Area and states that planning permission will be granted for retail development which enhances the role of Newark's Central Shopping Area. This remains consistent with the objectives of PPS4 in respect of enhancing the vitality and viability of town centres, although clearly other planning and material considerations should be taken into consideration in accordance with national policy requirements.
- 2.36 **Policy S2** echoes the principles of the sequential test contained within PPS4 and states that retail development on edge-of-centre sites will be granted planning permission, provided there are no suitable sites within the Central Shopping Area (CSA) and the proposed development would enhance the role of

- the CSA. In addition this policy also contains provisions similar to those contained within PPS4 relating to town centre impact. This policy remains consistent with the objectives and framework set out in PPS4.
- 2.37 **Policy S3**, however, relates to new retail warehouses, supermarkets and superstore development, and states that these will be acceptable provided they comply with a series of criteria; the intention being to support town centres first in accordance with Policy S2. This policy, in terms of the testing criteria is now out-of-date in the context of newly published PPS4 (2009).
- 2.38 **Policy S4** seeks to resist non-retail uses in the Primary Shopping Area, however it recognises that they may be acceptable in exceptional circumstances where it would help restore a building of outstanding character or add to the vitality of the town centre. Controls are, however, considerably tighter within the Market Place and Stodman Street (**Policy S5**) where planning permission will not be granted which would result in the loss of retail floorspace at ground level without exception. **Policy S6** actively encourages planning permission for the re-introduction of retail floorspace within the Primary Shopping Frontages. The overall objectives of the three policies are not inconsistent with PPS4.
- 2.39 **Policy S7** focuses on shopping development within Village Centres, although the village centres are not specifically identified. The policy encourages development in village centres provided it is of an appropriate scale, there is adequate parking, and it would not cause traffic problems. The overall objective to ensure that people have convenience access to a wide choice of goods and services remains consistent with PPS4, although the location and designation of village centres is unclear, and the testing criteria set out is inconsistent with the wider objectives of PPS4.
- 2.40 **Policy S9** sets out the criteria with which to test applications for shopping development outside village centres, although this should be updated to reflect PPS4 in respect of wider objectives and hierarchy considerations. **Policy S10** states that planning permission will be granted for small-scale retail development in villages provided it would not create environmental or traffic problems. We would suggest the testing criteria should be expanded and updated although recognise that the objective to revitalise small communities should be taken into consideration.
- 2.41 **Policies S8, S11 and S13** focus on Rainworth; Edwinstowe, Ollerton and Southwell; and Boughton respectively. In Rainworth, the disused railway embankment is identified for redevelopment; in Edwinstowe, Ollerton, and Southwell, the policy protects ground floor retail uses within the Primary Shopping Frontages; and in Boughton the policy allocates a small development site at Hallam Road. These policies are reviewed and discussed within this study.
- 2.42 **Policy S12** encourages small scale development to serve local shopping needs throughout the Newark urban area on the basis that many residential areas are poorly served with local shops. Whilst this is not inconsistent with PPS4, the policy should be brought in line with the most up-to-date testing criteria to ensure against inappropriate development. **Policy S14** deals with shopping development in the countryside; **Policy S15** sets the parameters for garden centre proposals; and **Policy S16** focuses on

Outdoor Markets and states that they will not be permitted in the countryside with some detailed exceptions.

- 2.43 The adopted Local Plan does not identify a retail hierarchy in accordance with current national policy, however the Council published a report, 'Developing a Settlement Hierarchy and Identifying Rural Centres', in September 2006 which identified the District's settlement hierarchy (Table 2.1). It should be emphasised that the settlement hierarchy is not appropriate as a 'retail hierarchy' for the purposes of PPS4 on the basis that there are a number of gaps in the designation of frontages and town centre boundaries. This Study provides the evidence and recommendations to bring the policy position up to date, to ensure conformity with PPS4 and to provide the Council with the appropriate development control framework.

Table 2.1: Newark and Sherwood District Council: Developing a Settlement Hierarchy

Sub-Regional Centre	Rural Centres
Newark	Ollerton and Boughton Southwell Balderton Rainworth Edwinstowe Bildworth Bilsthorpe Lowdham Collingham Farnsfield Clipstone Sutton-on-Trent Farndon*

Source: Developing a Settlement Hierarchy and Identifying Rural Centres (September 2006) *Farndon is not considered within this study.

Core Strategy Preferred Options (October 2006)

- 2.44 Following the introduction of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act in 2004, Newark and Sherwood District Council began the preparation of their Local Development Framework detailing the spatial strategy for the District. The District Council consulted on Issues and Options for its Core Strategy in October 2005, following which a Preferred Options Report was published in October 2006. The Preferred Options proposed to sustain and enhance the roles of the District's centres, particularly Newark, Ollerton and Boughton and Southwell; all of which are described as providing a significant range of retail and service facilities. It stated that Newark will continue to be the key focus for retailing, leisure and other main services.
- 2.45 The Preferred Options document was prepared in the context of emerging proposals for the Potterdyke site in Newark town centre and it notes that the proposed scheme is likely to absorb at least all of the

identified capacity for comparison and convenience retail within Newark up to 2010². Preferred Option 20 reiterates the importance of the settlement hierarchy and states that it will be used as a key tool for distributing retail and service developments. It is important to note at this stage that this settlement-based approach is not consistent for the purposes of establishing the retail hierarchy as required in PPS4.

Core Strategy: Key Decisions (October 2008)

- 2.46 Following the Preferred Options consultation, the Council undertook a review of its Core Strategy in light of Newark’s Growth Point status and the emerging Regional Plan. An additional round of consultation was carried out which led to a number of elements from the Preferred Options report being updated. One of the key changes related to the settlement classification as set out in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2: Core Strategy: Key Decisions Settlement Classification

Settlement Definition	Newark Area	Southwell Area	Sherwood and Mansfield Fringe	Nottingham Fringe
Sub-Regional Centre	Newark and Balderton (refers to town of Newark and villages of Balderton and Fernwood)	-	-	-
Service Centres	-	Southwell	Ollerton & Boughton, Rainworth and Clipstone	-
Principal Villages	Collingham, Sutton-on-Trent	Farnsfield	Blidworth, Bilsthorpe, Edwinstowe	Lowdham

Source: LDF Core Strategy Key Decisions, 2008

- 2.47 The Core Strategy Key Decisions Document considers this to represent a hierarchy of sustainable locations for growth, and states that these ‘service centres’ have good transport links and a range of shops and services. In terms of retail/town centre development, however, appropriate town centre boundaries must be designated to clarify appropriate locations for new development/growth.

Core Strategy: Options Report (October, 2009)

- 2.48 The Core Strategy notes that the District has a dispersed pattern of settlements, ranging from its market towns, large villages which act as rural service centres, and smaller villages and hamlets, as well as the sub regional centre of Newark. The preferred option for the settlement hierarchy remains the same for these higher order settlements as in the October 2008 Key Decisions Report.

² Newark and Sherwood Retail Capacity Assessment, CB Richard Ellis, 2005

2.49 The overriding aim of the Core Strategy is to maintain and enhance the vitality and viability of the District's town centres. **Policy NAP1** sets out the preferred option for Newark town centre which seeks to promote Newark as the key location for administration, business, entertainment, leisure and shopping in the District by:-

- Encouraging the reuse of vacant and underused shops, offices and other buildings and vacant and underused sites for appropriate town centre uses;
- Developing and enhancing cultural, leisure and entertainment facilities and uses which attract visitors and residents to the town centre including additional tourist accommodation and facilities;
- Addressing issues of congestion by encouraging cycling and walking, improvements to public transport and to the town's road network;
- Protecting and enhancing the historic townscape;
- Ensuring that Newark's retail offer remains attractive by designating a town centre boundary and Primary Shopping Frontages and looking at ways of developing the retail offer to reduce travel to centres outside the District; and
- Encouraging the use of Newark's Market Place for Newark Market and other open air events;

2.50 Also of relevance to this Study, **Policy CP6** (Economic Growth and Prosperity) sets out the Council's preferred option for securing economic growth and future prosperity of the District. The policy recommends a good range, mix and choice of employment sites and premises to reflect the different needs of the whole District. The policy recommends most sites to be located in the Sub-Regional and Service Centres;

2.51 The Council's preferred option for the protection of community and leisure facilities is given in **Policy SP9** to ensure that these facilities, including community facilities, built sport facilities, sports fields, public open space, amenity open space, children's play area and allotments, provide a viable service to the local community. The policy broadly seeks to protect existing facilities, but does provide scope for the loss of such facilities where there is no demonstrable need, or that sufficient alternative provision has been made elsewhere.

Summary

- National planning policy guidance provides the framework for developing local shopping policies tailored to the specific circumstances of Newark and Sherwood. The overarching policy thrust is to sustain and enhance the vitality and viability of existing centres, wherever possible, and to plan positively for new development within them, having regard to the role and needs of their catchments.

- The recently adopted RSS sets the broad development strategy for the region up to 2026, and splits the region into five sub-regions. Newark and Sherwood lies within the Northern Sub-Region, and is identified within the Plan as a Growth Point. The RSS seeks to locate retail development and town centre uses predominately in or on the edge of town centres. The RSS states that by 2016 there will be potential for at least 444,000 sq m of net additional comparison retail floorspace across the region, which will be distributed in accordance with the defined hierarchy within the region. The RSS does not envisage significant growth for Newark, but rather promotes consolidation of Newark's existing position within the defined hierarchy.
- Presently the adopted Local Plan (1999) represents the development plan for the District. This does not contain a retail hierarchy, but identifies a settlement hierarchy within the District with Newark at the top of the hierarchy and a number of smaller settlements beneath. The retail hierarchy and town centre designations need to comply with PPS4 and is reviewed in later sections. The emerging LDF Core Strategy has identified a number of priorities to accommodate the future growth of the District, with Newark being the focal point for additional housing and employment growth.

3. NATIONAL RETAIL AND LEISURE TRENDS

- 3.1 To put our assessment of the quality of existing provision and the need for additional floorspace into context, it is relevant to consider the wider economic and social trends likely to influence retailing in Newark and Sherwood. A number of trends are likely to have a bearing on the future pattern of retail provision in the sub region, and the opportunities arising from development proposals. This section examines key trends and drivers for change in the retail industry. We outline the key national trends in retailing and service provision of particular relevance to Newark drawing from a range of published data sources, including research by Verdict Analysis, Mintel, Experian and the New Economics Foundation.

Demographics

- 3.2 Over the last 15 years the UK population has increased by 3.9 million to 61.8 million, which is a rate of approximately 0.44% *per annum* amounting to a total increase of 6.7% over 15 years. The number of households has also increased over the same period and at a greater rate (11.5% over 15 years). The average household size has however decreased from 2.46 people per household in 1994 to 2.36 people per household in 2009, as decreasing family sizes and instances of divorce are becoming more common (*Office of National Statistics, 2009 - figures have been interpolated between 1991 and 2001 to account for 2001 census data*).
- 3.3 The population is forecast to continue growing. The total fertility rate (TFR) in the UK has risen each year since 2001 and was last recorded in 2008 at 1.96 children per woman, its highest level since 1973. Although the current TFR rate has not reached the natural population replacement level of 2.1 children per woman, other factors such as increased life expectancy and immigration combine to boost projected population numbers (*Office of National Statistics, 2009*). These trends are forecast to continue and will affect spending habits, how much we spend, on what and where.
- 3.4 Over the next 20 years the 65 and over age group is expected to grow by 42.9% and the under 65s age group by only 6.4% (*Office of National Statistics, 2009*). Older shoppers have a younger mindset than in the past, they are more fashion aware and, in recent years, more affluent as a result of general house price growth as well as income growth (but post retirement income from pensions could become a concern if they do not achieve anticipated values). They will have more time to shop, will spend more on DIY and gardening and will expect good customer service. Clearly, the economic slowdown will impact upon disposable income and pension pots with more cautious spending patterns in the immediate future.
- 3.5 Younger shoppers will have higher education fees to pay, will experience higher housing costs, they will be more computer literate and spend more money on-line, and will spend more on entertainment/leisure so they may have less to spend in the retail sector.

Income & Expenditure

- 3.6 Incomes and expenditure grew strongly during the last 20 years, with retail expenditure growing faster than incomes. Overall, retail expenditure has increased by about 3.29% pa in real terms between 1990 and 2008, with most of this growth on comparison goods where an annual growth rate of 5.67% has been in effect between 1990 and 2008. Convenience goods spend has been growing at a much lower rate with a steady increase of under 0.86% *per annum* (derived from ONS, *Consumer Trends June 2009*).
- 3.7 Recent economic circumstances, however, have reversed this pattern of growth over the last two years and the pace of economic recovery is expected to affect expenditure growth until at least 2012 when it is anticipated that more normal growth levels will begin to approach their normal levels.
- 3.8 The extremely rapid deterioration in the economic performance during the final months of 2008 is having far-reaching implications for available income and, consequently, expenditure. The outputs from this study will be widely affected by recent events and the ongoing recession the nation is facing. Experian report as follows:

“The detailed consumer spending forecasts used in the October document [Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 2008] were based on figures available before the eruption of the major financial crisis in September, the collapse of consumer and business confidence and the sharp decline in the global economy.

Since that forecast, there have been dramatic changes in the UK’s performance.

The new forecast incorporates the substantial decline in GDP in the second half of 2008; the sharp increase in unemployment in recent months; gloomy survey evidence that has emerged in 2009; fiscal measures adopted in an attempt to shore up the economy and the steep decline in Bank rate in the past few months.”
(Experian Business Strategies, February 2009).

- 3.9 Verdict’s Economic Update (February 2009) states that *“while the latter half of last year was dominated by gloomy economic news, the impact on the real economy and on real people was marginal. Unfortunately, the financial crisis of last year has now started to spread into the wider economy and we expect this year (2009) to bring declines in growth and increase in unemployment”*.
- 3.10 Verdict emphasised the UK economy is now firmly in the grips of a recession although there are more recent suggestions that the ‘end is in sight’. The deterioration has been rapid with the fourth quarter of 2008 seeing a year-on-year decline of 1.5% - one of the sharpest contractions in economic growth since the early 1980s. 2009 has brought a sharp contraction in activity and Verdict does not believe that the “pain will ease quickly”. Indeed, Verdict is forecasting that it won’t be until the final quarter of 2010 that

- we will see positive year on year GDP growth. Moving beyond 2010, economic growth is predicted to return to positive territory but will be sluggish for a number of years as consumers and the private and public sectors all continue to pay down debt.
- 3.11 Growth projections used in Retail Studies and supporting retail statements for planning applications should therefore respond to advice in respect of the most recent economic expectations, followed by ultra long-term trends in the longer term projections. Paragraph B21, Appendix B of the Good Practice Guide on Need, Impact and the Sequential Approach states that expenditure growth rates should draw on national long-term trends, but may also have regard to expectations about future regional economic performance and to recent evidence of retail growth. It also recommends that growth rates should generally adopt a conservative level of growth in order to reflect the inherent uncertainty in economic forecasts, and the cyclical nature of the retail sector. The period up to 2011, and to some extent to 2016, will be affected noticeably by the current severe recession, particularly for comparison goods and the weak upturn that is likely to follow.
- 3.12 The growth projections used within this report have therefore responded to advice in respect of the use of trend line (historic) growth rates and forecast growth rates based on consumer expectations. Due to the retail expenditure boom in the latter half of the 1990s and the first half of the 2000s and the major economic recession which is now underway, there are significant differences between these two approaches.
- 3.13 Trend growth rates have, until recently, been influenced by the spending boom of recent years (until 2007). Trend line forecasting, based on these historic trends, incorporate booms and busts since the 1960s and therefore provide a flat rate average over long and ultra long-time periods, i.e. beyond 2021. These are no longer appropriate for short-term retail projections given the current slow-down in the economy. The period up to 2016 will be affected noticeably by the current severe recession and the weak upturn that is likely to follow. The time period required to enable growth rates to return to 'boom' levels is unknown, but it is clear that this is unlikely to happen before 2016.
- 3.14 On this basis we are advised to use economic forecasts prepared by MapInfo/Oxford Economic Forecasting and Experian Business Strategies which take into consideration current and future economic instability. Evidently, the growth rates used for our retail capacity forecasting have changed as a consequence, and have considerable implications on the levels of floorspace town centres can sustain in the short-to-medium term, i.e. up to 2016.
- 3.15 Previously we used a constant growth rate of 3.7% for comparison goods over a short, medium, long and ultra long-term period, and 0.3% for convenience goods. Table 3.1 below sets out the revised growth rates as a consequence of the national economic decline; however it should be noted that the period after 2016 is uncertain.

Table 3.1: Per Capita Expenditure Forecasts 2009-2029

	Convenience Goods	Comparison Goods
2009 - 2014	+0.8% per annum	+1.7% per annum
2014 - 2019	+1.1% per annum	+2.9% per annum
2019 – 2024	+1.1% per annum	+3.1% per annum
2024 – 2029	+1.1% per annum	+3.0% per annum

Source: Experian Business Strategies (August 2009)

- 3.16 Non-store retail sales, excluding e-tailing, are expected to decline over the next ten years, but this will be more than offset by the growth of e-tailing, resulting in overall growth in non-store sales in absolute and percentage terms. Total non-store convenience retail sales (including e-tailing) are expected to increase from 2% of sales in 2009 to 2.5% in 2014, and 2.7% in 2019. These special forms of trading are expected to stabilise around 2.7% to 3%. Total comparison non-store retail sales on the other hand are expected to increase from 6.5% in 2009 to around 8.2% in 2014, before stabilising at around 8.5% from 2016 onwards (*Experian Business Strategies 2009*).
- 3.17 The impact of growth in e-retailing on future demands for retail floorspace is an important consideration and has been factored into the forecasts set out later in this report. Factors such as the processing of online grocery orders by retailers such as Tesco in local stores, and the potential use of shops as showrooms and/or collection points may mean that the growth in Internet sales will not necessarily lead to an equivalent reduction in floorspace requirements. See the subsection on internet shopping and e-tailing below for more information.
- 3.18 According to Verdict, customers are becoming more selective in their purchasing habits as they become more concerned about the economic outlook. With rising living costs, disposable incomes are being squeezed, and as a result customers are shopping around more to find the best possible value. Increasingly retailers are finding it harder to please customers and across all sectors, retailers are converting fewer customers into main users and shoppers are less loyal to their main stores. Such circumstances will have implications on retail capacity forecasting, particularly over the short-term.
- 3.19 Consumer spending will remain weak over the coming months. Taxes are rising to pay off substantial government debt, wage growth is slowing and unemployment is rising; consumers are prioritising debt reduction; these factors are expected to combine to offset any advantages from falling inflation and ensure that spending will remain low. However there will be pockets of growth as the weak pound encourages increased tourism activity (*Verdict Research: "UK Sectors Summary Q4, 2009"*).

Sales Efficiency

- 3.20 In undertaking retail capacity and impact assessments it is generally accepted that an allowance should be made for growth in the turnover 'efficiency' (or 'productivity') of existing retail floorspace to reflect retailers' ability to improve their productivity. This increased efficiency helps maintain the vitality and viability of town centre businesses.
- 3.21 An efficiency growth rate represents the ability of retailers to increase their productivity and absorb higher than inflation increases in their costs (such as rents, rates and service charges) by increasing their average sales densities. The application of a turnover 'efficiency' growth rate is a standard approach used in retail planning studies and the Government's Good Practice Guide on Need, Impact and Sequential Approach advocates taking account of "...expected improvements in store 'floorspace productivity' for both convenience and comparison floorspace, irrespective of location" (*Planning for Town Centres: Practice Guidance on Need, Impact and the Sequential Approach - Paragraph B.48*).
- 3.22 Although hard quantitative evidence is limited, comparison businesses in particular have, over time, increased sales densities by achieving improvements in productivity in the use of floorspace. PPS4 (Policy EC1.4) requires that quantitative need/capacity assessments are to have regard to a realistic assessment of such improvement. Analysis of past data is difficult as sales densities increases have been affected by changes in the use of retail floorspace over the last 20 years, with higher value space-efficient electrical goods replacing lower value space intensive goods, the growth in out-of-centre retailing, a number of one-off events like Sunday-trading and longer opening hours and the very strong growth of retail expenditure relative to the growth in floorspace.
- 3.23 Evidently, in the current economic climate many retailers have struggled to increase or even maintain sales density levels and, together with other financial problems, have led retailers into closure, such as Woolworths and Adams. With the expectation of weaker expenditure growth in the future than over the next 10 years, sales density growth is also expected to decrease. For comparison goods, rather than the 1.5% - 2% figure previously allowed for, we are now incorporating an efficiency growth rate of 1.2% *per annum* in the period 2009 to 2014; 1.9% pa for the period from 2014 to 2019 and 2% pa between 2019 and 2026.
- 3.24 We also incorporate a sales efficiency for convenience goods and expect growth of 0.2% *per annum* from 2009-2014, rising to 0.5% pa for 2014 and beyond (*Experian Business Strategies, 2009*).

Employment

- 3.25 Between 1998 and 2007 retail expenditure has increased by approximately 4.5% *per annum*, but retail employment has increased much more slowly. Over the same period total employees in retail employment in Great Britain have increased from 2.63 million to 2.76 million, an increase of 0.5% *per*

- annum*. However, this growth has been made up mostly part time employment. Full time equivalent (FTE) employment has increased very little (*Annual Business Enquiry, 2009*).
- 3.26 Over the next 15 years Experian Business Strategies expect a 13% increase in FTE employment in the retail sector with a slightly higher increase in part time employment. Evidently, this needs to be monitored in the forthcoming years based on the slow down in the economy and corresponding increases in unemployment with significant consequences for available retail expenditure and retail sector employment positions (*Experian, FTE Employment Levels, Retailing (SIC 2003 code 25)*).

Location

- 3.27 Strong income and expenditure growth has affected retailing in another important way – the rise in car ownership and mobility. In 1961 only 30% of households had a car but only 2% of these had more than one car. With public transport (and walking and cycling) the dominant mode of transport, shopping choices were limited and distances travelled were short. By 1970 car ownership had increased significantly so that nearly 50% of households had one or more cars and the number of households with two or more cars had quadrupled but was still under 10%.
- 3.28 The last census in 2001 revealed that 72.6% of households in the UK had one or more cars and 28.8% of all households have two or more cars (*Experian Business Strategies, 2009*). This represents a large increase in mobility over the last 50 years. Households are now much more mobile than they were and therefore their choices of where to shop and the distances they can travel are much greater. These trends will continue but the rate of change may well diminish, particularly in light of the economic slow-down. It would seem likely however, that levels of mobility will be retained although frequency of travel may decline as the number of cars per household may fall in the economic downturn. The growth in car mobility evidently puts pressure on parking provision in town centres and can lead to congestion with potentially knock-on detrimental impacts for town centres.
- 3.29 Increased mobility and affluence has favoured larger centres over smaller ones. As a result larger centres have increased in size and importance relative to smaller centres; this has further reinforced the attraction of larger centres to more mobile shoppers. Smaller centres have, therefore, lost market share and have seen much less new development than the overall rate of expenditure growth would imply. This is recognised by PPS4, which urges local authorities to be pro-active in trying to encourage development in smaller centres.
- 3.30 Increased mobility and affluence has also stimulated out-of-centre development, which has grown much more rapidly than town centre development. Over the last 20 years the majority of retail development has been in edge or out-of-centre locations. This has led to increasingly restrictive planning policy in favour of town centres over the last 10 years, but only recently has the growth in out-of-centre development started to slow. This slow down is expected to continue, and 2009 has seen the first decline in out-of-town store numbers but Verdict expects out-of-town retail parks to increase their share

- of total retail spend over the next five years (*Verdict Research, Datamonitor: "UK Out-of-Town Retailing" 2009*).
- 3.31 PPS4 reinforces the Government's 'town centre first' objectives, established within PPS6. The sequential site test is still a cornerstone of retail planning policy, favouring centrally located sites and necessitating the consideration of the disaggregation of out-of-centre proposals so that smaller, more central sites are considered. However, it is also recognised that individual retailers' business models are also relevant. Disaggregation of a retailer's proposed store does not now need to be considered if the operator can demonstrate that such disaggregation would adversely affect their business model.
- 3.32 In May 2006 the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) referred the supply of groceries by retailers in the UK to the Competition Commission (CC) for investigation under Section 131 of the Enterprise Act 2002. The CC published its findings in April 2008 and reported that "in many respects, competition in the UK groceries industry is effective and delivers good outcomes for consumers, but not all is well". The two main areas of concern highlighted were:
- 1) *that a number of grocery retailers have strong positions in several local markets. Barriers faced by competing retailers that could otherwise enter these markets mean that consumers get a poorer retail offer than would otherwise be the case, while those grocery retailers with strong local market positions earn additional profits due to weak competition in those markets, and*
 - 2) *the transfer of risk and unexpected costs by grocery retailers to their suppliers through various supply chain practices if unchecked will have an adverse effect on investment and innovation on the supply chain and therefore, on consumers.*
- 3.33 A number of steps to address the problems were posed including the recommendation of the introduction of a competition test as part of the planning process for new stores, to favour new retailers other than those which already have significant market shares in an area. Recommendations for planning for consumer choice and the promotion of competition have been incorporated within PPS4. Recommendations were also made by the Competition Commission to try and prevent retailers using the control of land sites in highly concentrated markets as a means of inhibiting entry by competing retailers. These steps would have implications on the potential new locations that some retailers could look to develop within.
- 3.34 In March 2009, an appeal by Tesco to the Tribunal against the Commission's recommendation was upheld on two grounds: 1). that the Commission had not properly assessed the economic costs of the competition test, and 2). that it had failed to address sufficiently the test's proportionality and effectiveness. The matter was remitted back to the Commission for further consideration.
- 3.35 The Commission has now revised its recommendation and published its final decision in October 2009. It is now particularly focussed on the operation of the test, its potential benefits and costs, and its effectiveness and proportionality. In summary, the Commission's conclusions are that:
-

- The test will increase the incentives and ability of competitors to develop in areas of high concentration,
- The test will prevent strong existing retailers from expanding; and
- The test is likely to encourage the redirection of investment on behalf of operators away from areas in which they are already highly concentrated, and benefit consumers by encouraging competitive pricing of goods.

Size of Units

- 3.36 The growth of multiple traders and increased competition between companies has meant that the retail structure is increasingly dominated by large companies requiring larger shop units. Shopping centres and out-of-centre development that has been able to accommodate this demand for larger sized units (typically 500 - 2,000 sq m or larger) have grown in importance, reinforcing the trend of higher order centres and out-of-centre retailing growing in relative importance (i.e. polarisation in the retail hierarchy).
- 3.37 The growth in the size of stores has caused a contraction in the number of shop units and consumer choice. This is particularly evident in the food sector, with a marked decline in the number of smaller and more specialist food retailers (greengrocers, butchers, fishmongers, bakers etc), and a large increase of superstores. This is indicated by Verdict Research which shows a 4.5%% reduction in the total number of convenience stores between 1998 and 2008, as space is concentrated into a smaller number of larger stores.
- 3.38 Over the same time period the number of superstores (>25,000 sq.ft. net) has increased by 39%; food specialists and off licences/tobacconists have also declined - by 32.9% and 56.6% respectively. These trends may well weaken in the future due to possible market saturation of large foodstores and concerns over lack of competition due to the market dominance of a few key multiples (*Verdict Research, Datamonitor: "UK Food & Groceries Retailers 2009"*)
- 3.39 Out-of-town store sizes have also increased in size between 1998 and 2008, over the period average out-of-town store sizes have increased from 1,939 sq m by 5% to 2,037 sq m (*Verdict, Datamonitor: "UK Out-of-Town Retailing 2009"*). Average town centre retail store sizes increased slightly between 1998 and 2008, rising from 183 sq m to 193 sq m, an increase of 5.5% (*Verdict Research, Datamonitor: "UK Town Centre Retailing 2009"*).

Foodstores

- 3.40 Due to the restrictions on developing large new foodstores, there has been growth in the number of applications for the extension of existing foodstores and an adjustment in the composition of floorspace within existing stores over the last ten years. There has been an increased emphasis on the sale of

comparison goods at the expense of convenience goods, as expenditure growth rates for comparison goods are much higher than for convenience goods and profit margins are greater, although sales densities are often lower.

- 3.41 This trend poses an increasing threat to smaller centres, as larger foodstores will increasingly sell a wider product range of day-to-day convenience and comparison goods and services. According to Verdict, comparison goods floorspace in the larger format stores of the top four grocers now accounts for averages of between 18% (Morrisons) and 40% (Asda) of net retail floorspace (*Verdict Research: "Grocery Sales Analysis Sheet", 2008*).

Leisure Trends

- 3.42 Due to increased affluence and mobility, and the rise of the internet, shoppers no longer merely shop to satisfy 'needs', they increasingly shop to satisfy 'wants' as well. Retailing in the higher order centres and the more attractive smaller centres is changing and arguably becoming more of a quasi leisure experience. Leisure spending growth is continuing to outstrip that of retail, and despite the economic slowdown, at the moment consumers seem to be willing to continue spending on leisure.
- 3.43 Quality restaurants, coffee shops, cafes and bars, as well as multiplexes in larger centres, are therefore important to attract shoppers and encourage longer stays and higher spending. Better integration of retail and leisure facilities mutually benefits both sectors. Pedestrianised streets and covered retail areas are also important for attracting shoppers, as is the overall attractiveness of the town centre, along with good accessibility and car parking.
- 3.44 A number of factors have helped drive the growth of leisure provision in town centres. Planning policy is important as is the fact that urban living is fashionable. Town centres can offer consumers a much more vibrant atmosphere in which to eat and drink and they also offer a much wider choice of leisure venues, allowing more spontaneous decisions. For bars, restaurants and health & fitness clubs, the attraction of the town centre is 'daytime trade' and the ability to capitalise on proximity to businesses and shoppers.
- 3.45 The leisure industry has enjoyed buoyant market conditions over the last decade as a result of growing levels of disposable incomes and low unemployment. Much of the growth has been fuelled by an increase in the number of 'cash-rich, time-poor' consumers who have been prepared to pay a premium price for convenient services in order to save time. Leisure time has become a precious commodity to consumers and in order to maximise free time, consumers have often combined leisure activities as part of an overall going out experience. The range of leisure choices has also grown considerably leading to an increase in competition in the industry.
- 3.46 The recession has brought many challenges for the leisure industry. On one hand, the industry is considered to be particularly exposed to the economic downturn due to the discretionary nature of

leisure expenditure, but contrary to this leisure activities remain an important lifestyle choice for many consumers and who will prioritise leisure over other areas of spending.

Cinemas

- 3.47 Cinema audiences grew significantly during the 1990s, but by the start of the current decade the growth had slowed and research by Dodona (2009) indicates that the market has reached a plateau. Table 3.2 provides a summary of key industry indicators and charts changes in revenues and screen numbers between 2003 and 2008.
- 3.48 In 2008, there were 3,610 cinema screens across the UK, of which three-quarters were multiplexes³. The remainder are traditional cinemas that have been converted to multi-screen use, large format screens such as IMAX, and screens in mixed-use venues such as arts centres. The dominant operators are Odeon and Cineworld although since the consolidation of the industry in 2005, Vue has undertaken an aggressive building programme to try and increase their market share.
- 3.49 The cinema industry is not immune from the recession and there were some closures during 2008, the majority being art centre venues rather than high street chains. The current economic downturn has hit advertising revenues but in general the industry is considered to be in good health. Indeed, in October 2009, The Times⁴ reported that cinemas are experiencing a boom with UK cinema admissions for the first six months of 2009 at their highest levels since 2002. Although ticket prices have been rising, a night at the cinema is considered to represent a relatively cheap night out, especially for families.
- 3.50 Over the last couple of years, cinema operators have made considerable efforts to improve customer yields by introducing changes such as premium seating areas and enhancing the range of refreshments such as alcohol and higher quality food. Vue Cinemas introduced their 'Evolution' concept which provides a mix of seating types comprising bean bags and sofas as well as regular seats. National Amusements rolled out its 'Cinema de Lux' concept at three shopping malls in 2008, which is a high service concept with allocated leather seating, contemporary dining and concierge facilities.
- 3.51 Another development has been the introduction of 3D films, which are attracting premium ticket prices from operators. In the future, Dodona predict that operators of traditional cinemas, particularly those with only one or two screens, will find their competitive position eroded, especially if family audiences start travelling longer distances to larger cinemas to obtain the latest 3D experience.
- 3.52 Dodona also suggest that very large cinemas have fallen out of favour. They cite Odeon's new 14 screen cinema in Liverpool, which opened in October 2008, which is the first cinema of this size to open since May 2004. It would appear that new cinemas are being built to serve smaller catchment areas and

³ Purpose-built cinema complexes with more than five screens.

⁴ The Times 'Twist in the plot as British cinema defies the recession', October 24th 2009

despite often having the same number of screens, the number of seats in each auditorium has been reduced.

- 3.53 Investment in new cinemas is continuing but this is no longer producing such high levels of growth so the focus has switched to replacing or relocating existing cinemas. There is also some investment in under-served areas, however Dodona consider this to be merely offsetting a decline in existing markets. Over the short to medium term, future cinema projects are likely to be impacted by the level of availability of finance for property developers, although it would appear that investment in better seating, better bars and cafés and new buildings is continuing. More recently in the midst of the recession, HMV announced that it was testing a three screen art-house format above its Wimbledon music store.

Table 3.2: UK Cinema Market 2003-2008

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Screens	3,318	3,342	3,357	3,440	3,514	3,610
Admissions (£m)	167.5	171.5	164.7	156.6	162.4	164.2
Average Ticket Price (£)	4.43	4.49	4.68	4.87	5.05	5.18
Gross Box Office (£m)	742.000	770.000	771.350	762.300	820.000	850.200
Spend per head (£)	1.70	1.75	1.80	1.85	1.90	1.95
Screen Advertising Receipts (£m)	65.000	70.000	70.000	85.000	90.000	86.500
Admission per person	2.81	2.86	2.73	2.58	2.63	2.61
Admission per screen	50,482	51,317	49,059	45,523	46,223	45,491

Source: Dodona Research 2009

Bingo

- 3.54 Bingo is one of the oldest forms of gambling in the UK and has traditionally had a downmarket image limiting its appeal as a night out for the majority of the population. The typical bingo player has been perceived as working class, female and from the older demographic. However, over the last decade, the market saw a rise in the number of younger and more affluent players and deregulation allowed clubs to offer bigger prizes.

- 3.55 Nevertheless, more recent research by Mintel (2007) highlights that the industry has experienced a fall in revenues and admissions as a result of legislative changes such as the ban on smoking in public places and the rise of the online gambling. The recession has also hit the market and although operators have attempted to diversify their offer to halt the decline in participation rates, it would appear that this has merely slowed the decline and operators continue to struggle in tough market conditions.

Ten-Pin Bowling

- 3.56 Tenpin bowling has been established as a commercial leisure activity in the UK for over 40 years, but after a period of growth in the 1980s, decline set in during the early 1990s. Since then, however, a spate of investment in new centres and refurbishments by recognised chain brands has revitalised the industry to a degree and ten pin bowling remains a strong family activity.
- 3.57 Mintel research (2006) state that recently, high-end, centralised venues have started to emerge, but the question remains whether this can dispel the lingering sense amongst many that bowling is either passé or too child, or youth-orientated, whilst offering only basic refreshments. It would appear that it is down to the market and investor confidence to decide, although the concept is already beginning to evolve to generate customer demand. For example, the Bloomsbury Bowl Lanes in Bloomsbury offers a 50s American themed bowling venue with ancillary karaoke rooms, venue rooms for hire, DJ booths, bars, small scale cinema and a venue for bands and live performers/comedy nights.

Pubs and clubs

- 3.58 The pub industry continues to suffer from the recession with a record number of pub closures across the UK as a direct consequence of a decline in both drinks sales and rental revenues. Other factors such as competition from the supermarkets, changes to licensing legislation and the smoking ban have further compounded the problems faced by many operators. Many of the large national pub chains have faced difficulties and there have been cases of administration. However, on the plus side, this has meant that smaller multiples have been able to acquire premium sites at bargain prices and value led brands such as JD Wetherspoon have achieved significant sales growth and continue to expand.

Restaurants

- 3.59 It is generally considered that the recession has brought mixed fortunes for the restaurant sector. The main casualties appear to have been from the more exclusive end of the market, as well as smaller companies with less established brands. Many companies owning multiple brands have announced stable results and are seeking to trade through the uncertainties by offering heavy promotions and discounts. The fall in property prices has also provided an opportunity for stronger niche operators to expand their brands as they have been able to negotiate substantial discounts on rents and landlords have been offering attractive incentive packages to help fill vacant units.

- 3.60 For families in particular, going out for a meal has become too expensive, and many have switched to staying at home with a takeaway which has increased sales for businesses such as Domino's. There has also been a surge in 'all-you-can-eat' style restaurants which are aimed at offering value for money for working class families. The Taybarn brand owned by Whitbread is currently trading very strongly and the brand is pursuing aggressive openings in the current market despite concerns over the quantity of food that is consumed in such restaurants and the implications for health.

Internet Shopping / e-Tailing

- 3.61 Internet shopper numbers are at an all time high and online spending in 2009 is set to grow by £2.4 billion to 20.9 billion, an increase of 13.3%. This growth rate contrasts severely with the downturn suffered by the total UK retail market which will contract by 0.6% in 2009. Online spend is driven by convenience and low prices, and online spend is expected to reach £31.2 billion by 2013, when it will account for 10% of total retail spending (*Verdict Research, "UK e-Retail 2009"*).
- 3.62 In 2008 there was an increase of 1% in the number of internet users to 34.4 million people, and an 18.1% increase in online shoppers to 26.7 million shoppers. As technology continues to improve, it will fuel further growth in the market. Overall the internet shopping population is forecast to grow by approximately 50% between 2007 and 2012. In addition to this increase the amount of money the average internet shopper is spending online is also increasing, average online spend per person rose by 5.8% between 2007 and 2008 (*Verdict Research, "e-Retail Storms Ahead Through the Recession", June 2009*).
- 3.63 The more affluent AB social-economic group is currently responsible for a significant 56.8% of all online shopping, while those shoppers that are being pressurised by the current economic climate are abandoning the internet in favour of cheaper high street shopping at the likes of Primark, Matalan, Poundland. This trend is being more than outweighed by the increase in internet bargain hunters (*Verdict Research, "e-Retail Storms Ahead Through the Recession", June 2009*).
- 3.64 The online market is dominated by the electricals and food & grocery sub-sectors, which between them account for over half of all online spend. Electricals occupy the top spot with 25.7% of all spend in 2008, as the inherent characteristics of electricals are well suited to the format of e-tailing. The food & grocery sub-sector accounted for 25.3% of all online sales in 2008, and has been boosted by Asda, Sainsbury's and Waitrose expanding their geographical coverage of their online offers (*Verdict Research, Datamonitor: "UK e-Retail 2009"*).
- 3.65 The clothing and footwear sub-sector is gaining ground however and attracted 13.4% more shoppers and 37.1% more spend in 2008. The online penetration of clothing and footwear spend is expected to more than double to 11.5% by 2014.

- 3.66 Books are one of the online market's most mature sectors – having been present in the online arena for over a decade. The category came to prominence by Amazon back in 1995, and today approximately 15.5% of book sales are conducted online, this is expected to grow to 29.8% by 2013. A number of potential developments regarding books are on the horizon and have the potential to alter the dynamics of the sector, notably the digitisation of books. The immediate impact of this development in the short-term is limited, although should give traditional book retailers 'food for thought' regarding the creation of their long-term strategies.
- 3.67 The Online spend on furniture and floor coverings is low with penetration reaching 3.9% total furniture spend in 2008. Despite this low online share, growth has been considerable, at a rate of 41% in 2007 when Ikea's transactional website became one of the drivers of growth in the sector.
- 3.68 The music & video sector continues to have the overall highest online market penetration at 39.9% of total sector sales in 2008; this is an increase from 30.8% in 2007. The online share for music and video is expected to increase to 70.1% by 2013, which could have implications for physical store requirements.
- 3.69 As a consequence of this growth, there are huge pressures on retailers as the Internet has provided an attractive alternative for many consumers. Shoppers are selecting their own retail mix online and shopping centres need to compete with this choice, which is not only driven by price and range, but also service and expertise. Town centres will increasingly have to provide a retail experience that the Internet and supermarkets are unable to match, and the market will respond in some way to the varying impacts on different retail sectors. In accordance with PPS4, the emphasis should be on the overall town centre experience, the mix of uses, and not just the retail offer.

Summary

- Incomes and expenditure have shown strong growth over the last 20 years, with retail expenditure growing faster than incomes. This has seen corresponding increases in sales densities within existing retail floorspace, which has also been driven by factors such as high value space efficiency and longer opening hours. Crucially, for Newark and Sherwood however, the current economic slow down will have an impact on the retail sector, and growth forecasts will need to reflect recent publications from Experian Business Strategies.
- Heightened mobility through increased car ownership, alongside growth in affluence, has favoured larger centres over smaller centres. Shoppers are more willing to travel further a field to higher order centres which have increased in size and importance relative to smaller centres, leading to a consequent fall in their market share. As such, PPS4 now encourages local authorities to be proactive in trying to encourage development in smaller centres.
- The composition of town centres has changed through new development, with a growing number of companies requiring larger shop units to meet their shop format ratios. This has again favoured the larger centres which generally have the space to meet such retailer requirements. This is

particularly noticeable in the convenience sector, which has begun to offer an increasing supply of comparison goods in the larger foodstores, in addition to the traditional product offer; such stores therefore require more retail floorspace. The dominance of such foodstores has led to current recent concerns about market dominance and the lack of competition.

- Leisure spending growth is continuing to outstrip that of retail, and despite the economic slowdown, at the moment consumers seem to be willing to continue spending on leisure – although this may change in the coming months. Nevertheless, the mix of uses in a town centre is vital to offer choice to shoppers, and quality restaurants, coffee shops, cafes, bars and other leisure facilities are all important to encourage frequency of visit and longer stay times.
- As competition from the internet increases, town centres need to offer a quality destination where people want to spend time and gain access to facilities not available on the web. There has been a continued polarisation towards larger centres and the provision of larger stores in these larger centres. Where smaller centres have been unable to diversify their offer or create niche markets and a mix of retail, leisure and service facilities they have suffered.

4. SUB-REGIONAL CONTEXT

- 4.1 This section examines the retail performance of Newark town centre in the context of the retail network across the wider sub-region. Our analysis draws on the household telephone survey results and other data including PROMIS, Javelin Retail Rankings, the Focus Property Intelligence database, the Valuations Office Authority and EGI to identify the main retail offers and floorspace provision and the extent to which this is likely to change and influence shopping patterns in the region. We have also spoken to each local authority to establish major pipeline development proposals.
- 4.2 The household telephone survey highlights that the main centres that compete with Newark include Lincoln, Mansfield, Nottingham, Grantham, Sleaford and Retford. The survey results indicate that Worksop has a very limited influence on shopping patterns in the survey area and it is thus excluded from our analysis. The location of each centre in relation to Newark and the extent of the telephone survey area is illustrated on Plan 1.
- 4.3 Shopping patterns derived from the telephone survey allow us to calculate the amount of comparison goods expenditure that each competing centre draws from Newark's defined catchment area. This indicator takes into consideration the strength of the retail offer as well as the centre's accessibility and distance from Newark. The total expenditure leaked to these centres is set out in Table 4.1 below, and illustrated on Plan 3.

Table 4.1: Study Area Comparison Goods Trade Draw: Key Competing Centres

Centre	£ (000s)	Market Share (%)
Lincoln	273,410	32
Newark-on-Trent	121,860	14
Nottingham	111,451	13
Mansfield	62,681	7
Grantham	41,528	5
Sleaford	26,789	3
Retford	8,058	1

- 4.4 It is evident that Newark town centre draws circa £121m of comparison goods expenditure (14%) from within the survey area. However, the most dominant centre in terms of comparison goods trade draw is Lincoln, £273m (32%), largely due to its proximity to the survey area and its retail offer.

- 4.5 Nottingham is the next most popular shopping destination in the survey with circa £111m, representing just over 13% of market share. Despite the proximity of Mansfield to the study area, the centre only attracts circa £62m (7%), which reflects its role in the regional hierarchy and proximity to Nottingham. Market share plan illustrating the extent of each centre's catchment on Plans 4a to 4g.

Profile of Competing Centres

- 4.6 The rank of each competing centre has been derived from Javelin (Venuescore 2009). Javelin Group's Venuescore provides an up-to-date ranking of UK shopping venues across a number of key indicators – scale, market positioning, fashionability and age positioning of the retail offer. The score attached to each operator is weighted to reflect their overall impact on shopping patterns. For example, anchor stores such as John Lewis, Marks & Spencer and Debenhams receive a higher score than unit store retailers to reflect their major influence on shopping patterns. The resulting aggregate score for each venue is called its Venuescore.
- 4.7 It is evident from Table 1 (Appendix 1) that the neighbouring centres of Nottingham, Lincoln, Mansfield and Grantham are higher than Newark, which is ranked at 181 in 2009. Nottingham has the highest rank position of all the competing centres at 7; Lincoln is ranked 31, whilst Mansfield and Grantham are somewhat closer in rankings with 143 and 181 respectively. Sleaford and Retford are not placed in the retail rankings given their small scale.

Floorspace

- 4.8 In terms of retail floorspace, Nottingham is again the most dominant centre in this category with a retail floorspace of approximately 407,454 sq m gross, which is considerably more than 77,537 sq m identified in Newark (Table 2, Appendix 1). These figures include all retail and town centre uses and are used in this section to compare the centres on a 'like for like' basis. The floorspace in Newark is reviewed in more detail by retail category in later sections. The other centres of Lincoln (169,808 sq m), Grantham (107,994 sq m) and Mansfield (94,074 sq m) all have a greater provision of retail floorspace than Newark town centre. Retford and Sleaford are below Newark town centre in terms of retail floorspace with 55,240 sq m and 37,719 sq m respectively.

Yields

- 4.9 Low retail yields are an indicator of a centre that is performing strongly, and by this standard Newark's 7% retail yield, is on a par with Grantham. However, Newark's retail yield has slipped from its 2005 position of 5.25%, whilst Grantham has remained constant. The best performing retail yields in the area are in Nottingham (4%), with Lincoln also performing better than Newark on 5.25%. Mansfield's retail yields are also better than Newark's at 6.5%, whilst Retford and Sleaford are lower than Newark (as is consistent with the other key indicators) with 8% and 7.5% respectively. Of all the centres in the area, Newark's retail yield is the only one that has increased since 2005, possibly indicating weaker investor

confidence in the centre, with all other current yields being the same or lower than those recorded in 2005. This should therefore be monitored carefully over the forthcoming LDF period.

Rents

- 4.10 Retail rents increased in Newark between 2005 and 2009 by 7.69%. Across all other centres in the area rents have increased, except in Grantham (-15%) and Lincoln (-3.7%). The highest increase has been in Retford, which has seen an increase of 10%. Rents are currently highest in Nottingham at £2,583 per sq m, compared to retail rents in Newark town centre at £753 per sq m. In this particular healthcheck indicator, Newark outperforms Grantham (£592 per sq m). This may potentially be as a result of the constrained nature of the town centre, and the limited supply of suitable units.

Demand

- 4.11 Consistent with the majority of other key indicators, Newark sits beneath Nottingham, Lincoln, Mansfield and Grantham when one considers the number of retailers looking for new space in the centres. Nottingham's strong performance throughout this series of indicators is continued when considering the demand for retail space. Not only does Nottingham have the most requirements among the competing centres, but also it was ranked 12th in the UK with 204 requirements recorded in January 2009. Newark has a relatively low level of retail demand with 20 requirements registered. The other centres i.e. Lincoln (70th), Mansfield and Grantham (joint 195th) outranked Newark in 2009.

Pipeline Development

- 4.12 The analysis above reviews Newark's current performance in the retail network. We have taken this a stage further and also reviewed developments in the pipeline in competing centres to assess the likely increased draw capacity of the various centres that may compound trade leakage and impact on Newark's retail performance. Full details of the pipeline schemes are set out in Appendix 1.
- 4.13 Nottingham has recently complemented its already strong position with the opening of Trinity Square, anchored by Waitrose, TK Maxx, Borders and Dixons, comprising approximately 17,465 sq m of retail floorspace, which will serve to strengthen Nottingham's position over the coming years. Lincoln's performance may improve if proposals seeking to develop an additional 32,500 sq m of additional floorspace are consented; however this is the subject to some uncertainty following the collapse of the developer. If this goes ahead, it would significantly enhance the retail offer in Lincoln, and would be likely to increase the trade draw from Newark's catchment, particularly in Zones 6, 7,8 and 9, and perhaps even in Zones 5 and 1.
- 4.14 There is the potential to deliver four schemes amounting to an additional 10,700 sq m of retail floorspace in Mansfield. This may go some way to improve the retail offer in Mansfield, and potentially impact on shopping patterns in Zones 3 and 4 and the trade draw from these zones. The majority of this additional

floorspace is expected at the Courtalds site with the planned redevelopment expected to provide circa 4,000 sq m net additional retail development. This redevelopment will also involve the relocation of the existing bus station. The second largest component of the planned retail development at Mansfield is a c.3,000 sq m extension to the existing Sainsbury's store at Nottingham Road, which was granted planning permission in November 2008.

- 4.15 Planning permission was also granted in March 2009 for an extension to the Tesco at Oak Tree District Centre (Mansfield, Jubilee Way South, Jubilee Extra), which will increase the total net sales area of the store to 8,719 sq m and significantly increases the range of non-food goods on offer, which could potentially alter shopping patterns in the area. It is evident from the most recent household telephone survey that this store already has a market share for main food shopping of 30.1% in Zone 3 and 10.8% in Zone 4. The centres that fall within this catchment in Newark and Sherwood include Clipstone, Rainworth and Bildworth. Edwinstowe, Ollerton and Boughton are all relatively close but already served by a large Tesco foodstore. Market share in Zones 3 and 4 is split between the Tesco, Ollerton; Asda, Mansfield and Tesco, Oak Tree in Mansfield. The Tesco, Oak Tree commitment is discussed further in Section 6.
- 4.16 There are significant developments planned to expand the retail offer in Sleaford. The planned introduction of the Tesco store will create an additional 8,962 sq m, with the redevelopment of the existing Tesco to provide four retail units potentially delivering an additional 3,532 sq m retail sales area. In addition, the redevelopment of the Bar Maltings could potentially provide 1,391 sq m additional floorspace, which in total would amount to approximately 14,000 sq m, representing an increase of the existing 37,719 sq m retail floorspace of 36%. These pipeline developments highlight the challenges facing Newark town centre over the forthcoming LDF period in terms of increased competition and potential fall in market share as expenditure leakage is exacerbated.

Summary

- In terms of the sub-regional context, the household telephone survey has identified Nottingham, Lincoln, Mansfield, Grantham, Sleaford and Retford as the main centres competing with Newark. Located circa 20 miles from Newark, it is clear that Nottingham is Newark's greatest competitor in terms of the scale and quality of its retail offer, rental income, rank position and taking into consideration the recent delivery of the Trinity Square will only strengthen this position. Lincoln however, has a stronger influence on shopping patterns in the catchment area given its proximity to the District, the relatively rural distribution of settlements to the east of Lincoln, and the comparatively urbanised and dense number of centres to the west. Opportunities coming forward are likely to enhance this position.
- Unlike many centres, Newark has a unique cultural and heritage offer which will assist in its attractiveness and differentiated retail and leisure offer. There is a risk, however, that a 'do nothing' approach to Newark's retail strategy could jeopardise the centre's position in the retail hierarchy,

especially in light of the large scale retail developments that are coming through the pipeline in competing centres. This is an extreme scenario, although should be highlighted as a possibility. The delivery of the Potterdyke development and future town centre strategy will be key in this regard, to maintain and enhance Newark's performance.

- Whilst the other centres of Nottingham and Lincoln perform significantly better in many respects, this reflects the regional hierarchy, and Newark's role is complementary to the role of these larger centres. The town centre needs to strike a balance over the forthcoming LDF period to enhance the mainstream comparison retail offer whilst protecting the historical built environment and range of independent specialist retailing. This is discussed in more detail in our conclusions and recommendations.

5. QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

- 5.1 In this section we summarise our qualitative review of the District's retail provision including Newark town centre, the smaller town centres as well as retail warehousing and out-of-centre foodstores. As well as retail we consider other town centre uses including leisure, offices and hotels. This section should be read in conjunction with Appendices 2, 3 and 4 which provide a more detailed qualitative assessment including the identification of five character areas within Newark town centre as illustrated on Plan 5.

Newark Town Centre

- 5.2 Newark is the main centre in the District and is defined as a Sub-Regional Centre in the East Midlands RSS. It is an established market town at the junction of the A1 and the A46, which benefits from a high quality historic environment. The retail shopping area is relatively compact comprising a traditional street pattern centred on an attractive Georgian market square with many older buildings having been converted into retail use. The core retail area is focussed around St Mark's Place, Market Place and Middle Gate which includes the Buttermarket Shopping Centre. The Eastern Gates area contains a mix of retail and leisure uses and the Castle Gate / Dobson's Quay area is the focus of the town's eating and drinking offer with the River Trent and the Castle providing a pleasant backdrop.
- 5.3 Other more peripheral areas provide a mix of ancillary retail and service uses and there is a Morrison's supermarket on the northern edge of the centre. The Potterdyke area lies to the south east of the core and planning permission has been granted for the redevelopment of the former Robin Hood hotel to provide an Asda superstore and other retail units.

PPS4 Health Check Indicators

- 5.4 Our detailed qualitative analysis of Newark, set out in Appendix 2, indicates that the centre is healthy and performing well in respect of a number of health check indicators. Newark has approximately 77,500 sq m gross of retail floorspace and has a good mix of comparison, convenience and service operators. In August 2008, Experian Goad estimate that there were around 46 vacant units, resulting in a vacancy rate of 11% compared, to the national average of 10.5%. However, vacancy levels have increased over the last 12 months and at the time of our site visit 12.3% of total units (51 total units) were vacant. This is not a serious concern at the current time given the recession and impact on town centres across the UK, some of which have suffered to a greater extent. The distribution of these vacancies is illustrated on Plan 7.
- 5.5 Newark's position in the VenueScore / Javelin 2009 retail rankings is currently 181, compared to 180 in 2008. According to Focus, there are currently 16 registered requirements from retail and service

operators looking for space in Newark. The number of requirements has declined since January 2009 when there were 20 registered requirements and from a high of 50 in October 2005. Comparison goods retailers interested in the town include Peacocks, Austin Reed and the Desire Concept by Debenhams. There are also several eating and drinking operators looking for space including Starbucks and Costa although we note that Starbucks has found a suitable unit and is now represented in Newark town centre. Whilst these requirements may have fallen, the relative quality of those aforementioned retailers seeking space in Newark is encouraging for the town centre. There are no registered requirements from convenience operators; however this is not surprising as many of the big foodstore operators do not publish their requirements given site sensitivities and competition.

- 5.6 Prime Zone A retail rents are currently £753 per sq m, which is the same level as in 2007 following a peak of £807 per sq m in 2008. Retail yields have remained static at 7% since 2003 which indicates that Newark is retaining its attractiveness to retailers, although not necessarily enhancing investor confidence. Newark's historic street layout, Conservation Area and many Listed Buildings means that opportunities to develop additional modern retail floorspace are limited and much of the available floorspace is ill-suited to the demanding requirements of modern retailers.

Retailer Representation

- 5.7 The presence of multiple retailers can enhance the appeal of a town centre relative to other centres. According to Experian Goad, multiple retailers⁵ in Newark comprise approximately 37% of the comparison shopping offer and include operators such as Marks and Spencer, New Look, Clarks, Boots, WHSmith, Argos, Dorothy Perkins, Monsoon, Next and Wilkinson.
- 5.8 There is one independently owned department store (Boyes) which occupies a ground floor unit on the corner of Bridge Street, Carter Gate and Appleton Gate. Boyes is a value-led department store⁶ selling a range of goods including homewares, soft furnishings and some clothing, although it does not contain any concessions. The store is somewhat constrained and dated in its design compared to new format stores. Overall, Newark has a reasonable range of mainstream high street retailers and although Jane Young on Chain Lane caters for high end fashion purchases, there are no higher quality fashion multiples such as Hobbs, Dune, Zara and Ted Baker.
- 5.9 There is a strong representation of independent retailers (approximately 77% of total retailers according to the Experian Goad Category Report), which is reinforced by the results of the telephone survey with 11.9% of all respondents across the survey area commenting that they like the good range of independent retailers in the town centre.
- 5.10 In terms of convenience provision, there is a good sized Morrison's supermarket (3,101 sq m net) to the north of the town centre on Slaughter House Lane, which is complemented by several smaller units

⁵ A multiple retailer is defined as being part of a national network of nine or more outlets.

⁶ As defined by Experian GOAD

including the Marks and Spencer Food Hall (c.585 sq m net) and small independent retailers. On the outskirts of the town centre, there also is a Waitrose (2,390 sq m net), an Aldi (762 sq m net) and a Netto (712 sq m net) located opposite London Road car par. The convenience provision will be enhanced by a new Asda store (c.3,718 sq m net) on the Potterdyke site which has been granted planning permission.

Pedestrian Flows

- 5.11 PMRS were commissioned to undertake a pedestrian footfall survey which was conducted over a number of days in September 2009 in order to get a robust picture of average pedestrian statistics for different parts of the town centre. Pedestrian counts were conducted at 30 strategic points around Newark town centre. It is a useful means of understanding the performance and attractiveness of different parts of the town centre and their current role in the function of the designated shopping areas (see 2d).
- 5.12 The results of this survey are discussed in the following section, but generally the focus for pedestrian activity was recorded in the Market Place, Stodman Street and Bridge Street. Areas of lower activity areas were recorded at more peripheral locations around the centre, notably areas around Carter, Appleton and Barnby Gate, and areas to the west of the town centre.

Newark Town Centre Character Areas

- 5.13 In order to look in more detail at retail and leisure provision throughout the town centre we have identified five character areas, which we describe below and are illustrated on Plan 5. Existing policy designations in respect of the town centre boundary, the primary shopping area and shopping frontages are illustrated on Plan 6. This assists with the description of the centre, but does not at this stage relate directly to current or future policy designations.

(i) Slaughter House Lane / Kirk Gate / Wilson Street

- 5.14 This area covers the part of the town that is bordered by Bar Gate and Wilson Street and stretches from Morrisons in the north to the southern side of Kirk Gate. Slaughter House Lane operates as a pedestrian priority area, with various pedestrian routes through to Kirk Gate forming a pleasant pedestrian environment with a selection of unit sizes and retailer representation.
- 5.15 This area of town mixes old and new development. Many older buildings remain in use as boutique retail premises, offering a range of goods, from small convenience items to general gifts. Slaughter House Lane contrasts with Kirk Gate in appearance with the former being a wide pedestrianised route fronting onto Morrisons, the largest unit within the centre, and the latter characterised by smaller units and forming part of Newark's one way traffic system.

- 5.16 This area features several smaller independent retailers along Kirk Gate and within the narrow pedestrian accesses linking Slaughter House Lane and Kirk Gate. There are also several services occupying units in this location, including property services and financial services. There are no multiple retailers in this location. This area of the town links to Middle Gate and Market Place to the south and Dobson's Quay / Bar Gate to the west.
- 5.17 Within the PMRS survey, strong concentrations of pedestrian activity were recorded outside the Morrisons supermarket along Slaughter House Lane and along Paxtons Court linking to Kirk Gate. It is also interesting to note that little activity extended to the West of the Morrisons entrance to Bar Gate, suggesting that very few pedestrians choose to access the town centre via this route. It is therefore likely that much of the activity in this area is generated by the Morrisons and the associated car park at King Street.

(ii) Market Place / St Marks Place / Stodman Street / Middle Gate

- 5.18 This area forms the traditional core of the town centre and benefits from an attractive market place at the centre, which is overlooked by the Church of St Mary Magdalene. This area also includes the St Marks Shopping Centre and Middle Gate, which together form the core of the town's retail offer. Within this largely pedestrianised area there is the strongest representation of national multiple retailers including Boots, Next, Superdrug, Monsoon, O₂, New Look, Wilkinsons, Marks and Spencer, Clarks, Gamestation, Jessops, Millets, Burtons and Carphone Warehouse.
- 5.19 There is an open air market comprising a traditional street market on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays; an antiques, craft and bric-a-brac market on Mondays and Thursdays; and a farmers market every fourth Thursday of the month. The presence of the markets acts as a catalyst for pedestrian movement and helps create a vibrant shopping environment, as well as adding to the range of goods available in the centre. The importance of the market in Newark is highlighted by the results of the telephone survey where 27% of all respondents stated that they only visit Newark town centre on market days.
- 5.20 This area benefits from excellent linkages and levels of footfall with the highest footfall counts being recorded outside Marks and Spencer on Stodman Street. Areas of peak pedestrian activity were observed in the majority of this character area, reinforcing the view that this forms the core of the town centre, both geographically and functionally. This survey provides clear evidence that many of the pedestrians in the town centre choose to enter the town from the east at Bridge Street, and from the south via St Marks Shopping Centre. The car park at the shopping centre and the bus station to the south of the town centre are key generators for this activity. Whilst the Buttermarket links the Market Place with Middle Gate, relatively low levels of pedestrian activity were observed in this location, with the clear preference being the Stodman Street route to accessing western elements of the town centre.

- 5.21 This area of town contains contrasting views of the town centre atmosphere illustrating the best elements of Newark's built heritage within the larger-scale Market Place juxtaposed with the newer St Marks Shopping Centre to the south, which is characterised by smaller, newer units.

(iii) Castle Gate / Dobson's Quay

- 5.22 This area of the town is characterised by two distinct sub-areas; Castle Gate and Dobson's Quay. Proximity to Newark Castle and its Gardens, and the River Trent enhance the appeal of this area and attract visitors to the area. Castle Gate runs to the west of the town centre and provides the focus for the town's eating and drinking offer. A number of restaurants and public houses are located along Castle Gate including many quality independent operators such as Reeds Bar and Restaurant, The Mayze, New King Wah Chinese, as well as some national multiples such as Zizzis and Pizza Express. The Castle Gate area leads to Dobson's Quay in the north west of the town centre, which benefits from a pleasant, historic riverside atmosphere.

- 5.23 There is also a strong representation of antique, arts and craft retailers along Castle Gate, however there is very little other retail provision in this area with no multiple retailers. This western element of the town also accommodates the District's only major bingo and bowling venue at the corner of Lombard Street and Castle Gate. This area at the south west of the town centre contains a range of other uses, including civic services such as Job Centre, Social Services, Connexions Advice Centre and a Health Centre.

- 5.24 Low levels of pedestrian activity were recorded in this area of the town centre, however the footfall surveys were undertaken during the day and thus do not reflect pedestrian levels in the evenings. Considering the scale of restaurants and public houses in this area of the town, pedestrian activity is expected to be high in the evening period.

(iv) Potterdyke / Lombard Street

- 5.25 This area is located at the junction of London Road, Albert Street, Portland Street and Lombard Street. The area currently provides a limited comparison and convenience offer, with several units being occupied by financial services in the form of solicitors, estate agents, employment agencies and insurance offices. The London Road side of the junction offers a limited range of leisure services, including public houses and small restaurants. The leisure offer in this part of the town is relatively poor in range and quality to that at Castle Gate and Dobson's Quay.

- 5.26 The now derelict Robin Hood Hotel provides a gateway to the town from the south but planning permission has been granted for a new Asda foodstore, as well as other retail units, a new health centre, doctors surgery, residential accommodation and offices.

Accessibility

- 5.27 A number of main radial road routes lead into Newark; the A46 provides a link to Lincoln in the north east and to the M1 to the southwest. The A1 runs to the east of the town linking to locations in the north and south while the A617 provides a link to locations in the west such as Mansfield.
- 5.28 Nottingham East Midlands Airport is located 50 minutes drive from Newark and there are two train stations located on the edge of the town (Newark North Gate and Newark Castle). The East Coast Mainline connects Newark North Gate with the wider rail network and there are direct services to Newcastle, York, London and Edinburgh. Newark Castle provides connections to more local centres. There is also a good local bus network.
- 5.29 There are several car parks serving the town centre, the largest of which is located to the north of the Morrisons store. This multi-storey car park has a capacity of circa 600 car parking spaces, and is accessed from Kings Road. There is also a second multi-storey car park located above the St Marks Shopping Centre, which is accessed from Lombard Street and can accommodate approximately 570 vehicles. Both of these two car parks are relatively new and are run by NCP, charging dependent on the length of stay.
- 5.30 There are several other smaller car parks at ground level around the town, including the car park near the library and the cinema development, which has a capacity of circa 130 spaces. The car park serving the Netto foodstore to the south of the town centre on London Road, and the car park located at Dobson's Quay / Ossington Mews, which has capacity for around 60 vehicles.
- 5.31 The Potterdyke Car Park is a large car park located adjacent to the bus station, which is accessed from Lombard Street, and can accommodate around 200 vehicles. However, the car park forms part of a wider site intended for redevelopment, which will provide a range of uses. The redevelopment will also provide circa 400 new car parking spaces, which if delivered, would increase the number of car parking spaces serving the town centre.
- 5.32 At the time of audit, the car parks were largely occupied, which reflect our discussions with Council officers, that the lack of car parking is problematic for many users in the town centre. This is reinforced by the telephone survey results with 7.1% of respondents citing parking difficulties as reason to dislike Newark town centre.

Environmental Quality

- 5.33 In general, the environmental quality of the town centre is of a high standard, which is reinforced by the results of the household telephone survey where 28% of total respondents cited that they liked the attractive environment. Newark Castle and the River Trent offer a pleasant environment and an

attractive setting for several restaurants and cafés. The Market Place at the heart of the retail offer is also an attractive historic space.

- 5.34 The town centre benefits from good quality paving and street furniture and has clearly benefited from strong levels of investments to enhance the streetscape, including clear, quality signage and effective use of bollards and benches in appropriate areas. Beaumont Gardens, located to the east of the town (near the Reel Cinema complex) are particularly noteworthy, as are the church grounds at the north of the Market Place, and the Castle Gardens to the west of Castle Gate. The majority of the shop frontages in the town centre are engaging and add to the vitality of the town centre.
- 5.35 It is crucial to the attractiveness and the complementarity of Newark relative to the larger centres of Nottingham and Lincoln, that this historic character and pleasant shopping environment is protected and enhanced through the emerging LDF.

Customer Views and Behaviour

- 5.36 An in-centre shopper survey was not undertaken as part of this study, but customer views and behaviour have been assessed through the household telephone survey. According to the survey, the most popular responses across all respondents for why people liked Newark town centre were:-
- Attractive environment - 28%;
 - Markets - 25%;
 - Proximity to home – 15%;
 - Good range of independent stores - 12%;
 - Good range of chain / well known stores - 11%.
- 5.37 When asked what they disliked about Newark, the responses from all respondents were:-
- Nothing / very little - 59%;
 - Lack of non-food stores - 9%;
 - Difficult to park - 7%;
 - Lack of public toilets - 7%;
 - Vacant shops - 4%.
- 5.38 When asked what would make them visit Newark more often, half of all respondents commented that nothing would make them visit more often. However, 13.1% suggested more department stores would

encourage increased visits to the centre; 11.2% said more non-food stores; 6.4% suggested easier / more parking; 4.7% suggested cheaper parking and 5.6% recommended better public transport links.

Leisure Uses

- 5.39 The District of Newark and Sherwood has a broad range of leisure activities and benefits from a strong tourist and visitor economy. The traditional market town of Newark benefits from heritage tourism, while other centres in the west of the District benefit from proximity to Sherwood Forest, notably Edwinstowe, which boasts the Sherwood Forest Art and Craft Centre to the north of the village, and is located on the edge of the forest. In this section, we concentrate on the main commercial leisure uses comprising cinemas, ten pin bowling, bingo and eating and drinking uses and the main facilities are illustrated on Plan 10.

Cinemas

- 5.40 Newark has the five screen Reel Cinema located off London Road, which is the only cinema within the District. The cinema received planning consent in 2005 and is a modern complex, which now includes a Dominos Pizza takeaway adjacent. In addition, it should also be noted that the Palace Theatre shows a range of films throughout the year.
- 5.41 The household survey identified that some 51.2% of people in the survey area visit a cinema. Cinema trips vary across the study area, with the highest trip rate in Zone 1 (75%) and the lowest in Zone 3 (34%). Table 5.1 below shows that, at present, the Odeon Cinema in Lincoln is the most popular cinema in the survey area, attracting 38% of cinema trips. Newark attracts the second highest provision with 33% indicating that they use the Reel Cinema at Newark on London Road, and a further 12% using the Odeon cinema at Mansfield Leisure Park and 6% visiting the Showcase cinemas at Redfield Way, Nottingham.

Table 5.1: Most Dominant Cinema Destinations

Cinema	No. of Screens	Market Share (%)
Odeon, Lincoln	9	38
Reel, Newark	5	33.1
Odeon, Mansfield	8	12.3
Showcase, Nottingham	12	5.5
Cineworld, Nottingham	14	3.6

Source: Household Telephone Survey, July 2009 and Dodona Research, 2006

Ten-Pin Bowling

- 5.42 Newark has one six lane ten pin bowling hall located adjacent to the cinema off London Road. As a result of the household telephone survey, a number of ten-pin bowling destinations have been identified. Those most dominant destinations are provided in table 5.2 below. The household survey identified that 28% of people across the survey area partake in ten-pin bowling. The UK Superbowl at Newark Leisure Centre on Castle Gate is the only bowling facility in the District and attracts 26% of respondents. 25% go to Lincoln Bowl 20% go to Superbowl Lincoln, both of which are located in Lincoln.

Table 5.2: Most Dominant Ten-pin Bowling Destinations

Ten-Pin Bowling	Market Share (%)
UK Superbowl, Newark	25.9
Lincoln Bowl, Lincoln	25.2
Superbowl Lincoln	19.7
Superbowl 2000, Mansfield	6.8
Tenpin Ltd, Grantham	6.5
Tenpin Ltd, Nottingham	3.9
Mansfield Superbowl	3.5

Source: Household telephone survey, July 2009

Bingo

- 5.43 The Riva Bingo Hall at Castle Gate Leisure Centre in Newark is the only bingo hall within Newark and Sherwood District. However, we have also identified a number of bingo halls within the neighbouring authorities. The telephone survey highlights four bingo facilities that the survey respondents chose to visit; these are set out in table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Most Dominant Bingo Destinations

Bingo Hall	Market Share (%)
Gala Bingo, Lincoln	31.5
Riva Bingo, Newark	23.1
Gala Bingo, Mansfield	5.6
Walkers Bingo Club, Mansfield	4.8
Other	21.6

Source: Household telephone survey, July 2009

- 5.44 The household survey identified that just 8% of people across the survey area partake in bingo. The most popular destination of those surveyed was the Gala Bingo in Lincoln, which accounted for 32% of total respondents, with the Riva Bingo in Newark accounting for 23 % of respondents. Aside from these two venues, there was minimal response. However 22% of respondents suggested other bingo

destinations to those available in the survey, suggesting smaller venues such as social clubs or other bingo nights at public houses / bars.

- 5.45 What is evident, when considering the above results for bingo, cinema and ten-pin bowling, is that Newark's leisure offer performs very well, with a relatively large proportion of respondents choosing to visit Newark's leisure facilities, particularly considering the a significant element of those residents surveyed reside outside the District, thereby demonstrating the wide catchment that Newark's leisure offer serves.

Cultural Attractions

- 5.46 The Palace Theatre is located in the north of the town centre, and has been in use as a theatre since 1924 with capacity for around 600 people. The theatre is situated in a Listed Building, just off the Market Square and offers a variety of productions ranging from big band performances, cinema, comedy, dance, drama and pop music.
- 5.47 There are also several museums in Newark including the Newark Millgate Museum, The Resource Centre and the Gilstrap Centre in the ground of Newark Castle, which are home to both permanent and temporary exhibitions. Newark's Medieval Castle, although partly destroyed, is an important part of the town's history and is set in attractive Grade II Listed gardens. In 1997 Heritage Lottery Funding was received to improve the gardens incorporating new trees, shrubs and a new bandstand. The gardens are an attractive green open space in the town and are also used for concerts and events. Newark tourism information centre is also situated within the Castle grounds.
- 5.48 Newark is also home to an internationally acclaimed violin school which provides comprehensive courses in making, repairing and restoring instruments of the Violin family.

Eating and Drinking

- 5.49 There is a good range of public houses and restaurants, with many occupying attractive premises to the west of the town centre along Castle Gate / Dobsons Quay. Two recent additions to the restaurant offer have been the conversion of buildings at Ossington Mews, which are now occupied by Zizzis and Pizza Express with an attractive riverside frontage. Notwithstanding these recent additions, there are some other independent restaurants and takeaway uses interspersed along Castle Gate, which also contribute to this eating and drinking quarter, many of which are of a very good quality. There are also various cafés in the town centre, many with outdoor seating areas, which contribute to the vitality and vibrancy of the town centre.
- 5.50 The town's eating and drinking economy is a key characteristic of Newark town centre, and being focused within the western portion of the town centre this should enable effective area-based policy recommendations to protect and enhance this offer.

Hotels

- 5.51 Newark and Sherwood District attracted approximately 4.7 million visitors in 2007⁷, with many tourists visiting the attractive centre of Newark, as well as the Minster at Southwell, Sherwood Forest and the annual antiques fair. It would appear that there are currently no hotels in Newark town centre, which could indicate that the majority of visitors to the town centre are day-trippers. The former Robin Hood hotel has received planning permission to be redeveloped into an Asda supermarket.
- 5.52 Within the wider District there are several larger hotels which are listed in table 5.4 below. There are also several other types of accommodation ranging from Centre Parcs at Sherwood in the west of the District, accommodating up to 4,500 guests, as well as small bed and breakfast accommodation scattered across the District.

Table 5.4: Newark and Sherwood Hotel Accommodation

Hotel Name	Location	Number of Rooms
The Grange Hotel	Newark	16
Deincourt Hotel	Newark	33
Millgate House Hotel	Newark	36
The Saracens Head Hotel	Southwell	27
Vicarage Boutique Hotel	Southwell	16
The Forest Lodge Hotel	Edwinstowe	13
Thoresby Hall Hotel and Spa	Ollerton	220
Centre Parcs	Sherwood	862

Source: Newark and Sherwood District Council, 2009

Antique Fairs

- 5.53 In the context of visitor accommodation, it is also of note that the District attracts several antique fairs which are held six times a year to the north of the town centre at the Newark and Nottinghamshire Showground, located off the A17. These fairs draw thousands of visitors from around the world and make a significant contribution to the local economy. It is understood that hotel availability within the District is extremely limited at these times.

Offices

- 5.54 Newark and Sherwood District has experienced a shift in the structure of the economy, as deindustrialisation has given way to the tertiarisation of the UK economy. The local economy has adapted, maintaining a variety of tourism and leisure attractions, but the Council have also identified a

⁷ Newark and Sherwood STEAM Report, 2007

need to develop other areas of the economy, notably the requirement to provide for a range of businesses to locate in the District.

- 5.55 Most employment is focused in the Newark and western areas of the District and important employment sites include the Newark Northern Road Industrial Estate, Blidworth Industrial Estate, Sherwood Energy Village and the Southwell Crew Lane Industrial Estate. Newark has experienced levels of growth with established industrial areas increasing levels of occupancy. The town's employment prospects have recently been boosted by the development of a major project with approximately 600 jobs close to the A1 and the decision of the Dixons Store Group to locate its main national distribution centre at Newark is a reflection of the town's location advantages. A flagship business centre – the Newark 'Beacon' Business Innovation Centre, developed and managed by the District Council was opened in 2007, and now provides dedicated office and workshop space for fledgling businesses. With the aim of encouraging 'knowledge based' businesses to start up and grow in Newark and Sherwood, the Newark Beacon has become home to training, website, software and energy saving businesses.
- 5.56 The Newark and Sherwood Employment Land Study (2004) recommended a strategy of maximising the potential of office plots and business park sites in and around Newark. In addition, the report also recommends a balancing of the needs of residential, leisure and office uses in the town centre.
- 5.57 The East Midlands Northern Sub-Region Employment Land Review (2008) (EMNSR ELR) comments that Newark and Sherwood District has the largest amount of employment land of all districts in the Sub-Region, with 204.73 ha of committed employment land. The majority of this land is subject to outstanding planning permissions (141.38 ha). However, this figure has now been found to be unnecessarily high, and the de-allocation of large elements of this land is expected to free up further land for additional uses.
- 5.58 We have identified a number of major office developments in the Newark and Sherwood area, which are provided in Table 5.5. The majority of these developments are business park developments in out-of-town locations, which provide modern purpose built facilities.

Table 5.5: Key Office Locations in Newark and Sherwood

Location	Comments
Beacon Business Innovation Centre, Beacon Hill, Newark	Completed July 2007 incorporating 31 different format office units. Business Units (27) range from 34 sq m to 103 sq m. 4 workshops.
Sherwood Energy Village, Former Ollerton Colliery, Ollerton	Mixed Use development comprising residential, leisure, industry and commerce, recreation and education.
Brunel Business Park, Jessop Close, Newark	24 units incorporating a mix of commercial uses including offices and manufacturing.
Millgate Court, Newark	Modern office development

Cafferata Way, Newark	Modern office development
Northgate, Newark	Managed offices
Fernwood Business Park, South of Newark	Site covers 42 ha. Phase 1 site (15 ha) currently under construction for range of employment uses

Source: GVA Grimley, 2009

- 5.59 There is limited office space within Newark town centre, although there are several small-scale office buildings located on the periphery of the town centre and the Beacon Business Innovation Centre on the outskirts of the town. Office accommodation in Newark town centre is generally older and cannot compete on a like for like basis with modern office buildings, however we consider that office floorspace in the town centre will remain attractive to financial and professional service providers. Approximately 200 sq m of office floorspace will be developed on the Potterdyke site.

Retail Warehouses

- 5.60 There are two out-of-centre retail parks in the District, both of which lie in close proximity to Newark town centre as illustrated on Plan 9.

Northgate Retail Park, Newark

- 5.61 Northgate Retail Park opened in 2001 and is located approximately 500 metres to the north of Newark town centre and is situated between Northgate and the River Trent. It benefits from good vehicular access from both Northgate and Lincoln Road Bridge and has approximately 600 car parking spaces.
- 5.62 The park comprises circa 12,000 sq m of retail floorspace and is home to several major multiple retailers including Homebase, Pets at Home, Curry's, Carpetright, TK Maxx and Allied Carpets (now vacant). Planning permission has been granted to sub-divide the former Woolworths unit we understand that Next will be taking one of the units.

Beacon Hill Retail Park, Northern Road, Newark

- 5.63 Beacon Hill Retail Park is also located approximately 500 metres to the east of the town centre at the junction of Northern Road and Beacon Hill Road. The retail park forms part of the Newark Industrial Estate and benefits from good access and car parking, but limited pedestrian linkages. The park opened in 1991 and is currently occupied by Focus DIY and Topps Tiles.
- 5.64 From the results of the household telephone survey, it is clear that residents in Newark and Sherwood are using retail parks located in neighbouring authorities. When asked where they shop for furniture, floor coverings and household textiles, only 0.5% of total respondents shopped at the Northgate Retail Park, and just 0.1% shopping at Beacon Hill. And, when questioned about DIY and decorating goods

just 1.9% of respondents chose to shop at Northgate Retail Park, and 1.2% choosing to shop at Beacon Hill Retail Park.

Foodstores

- 5.65 There are several large foodstores located within Newark and Sherwood District, and a number of smaller convenience stores serving the District's outlying centres. Newark town centre is served by a number of larger foodstores, which include Morrisons, Waitrose and discount food retailers such as Netto, Aldi and Farmfoods.
- 5.66 The Morrisons store has a retail floorspace area of circa 3,101 sq m net incorporating 26 checkouts, a delicatessen, hot food counter, pharmacy, salad bar, kiosk, fish counter, bakery, toilets and an in-store café. The store does not have a significant comparison goods offer, but sells a limited range of CDs, books and DVDs and has a dedicated car park, which was busy at the time of audit. The Waitrose store, located at Ossington Way, has a net sales area of 2,390 sq m incorporating a delicatessen, salad bar, kiosk, bakery, customer café and toilets and has its own car park.
- 5.67 Newark also has a Netto (London Road), Farmfoods (Balderton) and Aldi (North Gate), all with dedicated car parking. There are few larger foodstores within the District, with the exception of Tesco at Ollerton (2,845 sq m net), Sainsbury's at Balderton (585 sq m net) and the Co-Op at Southwell (926 sq m net). The majority of the other foodstores serving the District are relatively small-scale and serve the needs of local residents, and typically comprises small Co-Op foodstores and a series of smaller convenience stores such as One Stop and Premier.
- 5.68 Residents in Newark and Sherwood are also using other large foodstores located in the neighbouring centres of Nottingham, Mansfield, Lincoln and Retford as set out in Table 5.6. Of note is Tesco Extra at Oak Tree Lane, Mansfield which takes 30.1% of main food shopping trade from Zone 3 and 10.8% from Zone 4; and the Asda at Mansfield which attracts 17.2% of Zone 3 main food shopping trade and 19.4% from Zone 4.

Table 5.6: Market Share (%) for Dominant Foodstore Destinations for Main Food Shopping

Foodstore	Zone 1	Zone 2	Zone 3	Zone 4	Zone 5
Morrisons, Newark	55.1	7.5	2.2	1.1	22.3
Tesco, Ollerton	0	0	11.8	50.5	19.1
Waitrose, Newark	6.7	6.5	2.2	0	6.4
Aldi, Newark	5.6	2.2	0	0	2.1
Sainsbury's, Balderton	5.6	0	0	0	0
Tesco Extra, Mansfield	0	5.4	35.5	13	0

Asda, Retford	0	0	0	4.3	17
Morrisons, Nottingham	0	9.7	0	0	0
Asda, Nottingham	0	11.8	0	0	0
Morrisons, Retford	0	0	1.1	1.1	11.7
Asda, Mansfield,	0	2.2	17.2	19.4	2.1
Sainsbury's, Nottingham	0	15.1	0	1.1	0

Source: Household telephone survey, July 2009

Other Centres

- 5.69 In accordance with the Study brief, we have undertaken healthchecks of Balderton, Ollerton and Boughton, Southwell, Rainworth, Edwinstowe and Clipstone. We have also prepared 'snap-shot' vitality and viability assessments for the centres of Blidworth, Bilsthorpe, Lowdham, Collingham, Farnsfield and Sutton-on-Trent. These centres constitute the principal shopping centres outside Newark town centre and are substantially smaller in scale with little or no published performance data available.
- 5.70 Experian Goad do not survey these smaller centres and as such the health checks largely draw on data provided by Newark and Sherwood District Council and GVA Grimley on-site surveys carried out during August 2009. Detailed health checks for these centres are included in Appendix 3 and 4 and we provide an overview of the vitality and viability of these centres below at Table 5.7.

Table 5.7: Other Centres Health Check Summary

Centre Name	Composition						Foodstore
	Convenience	Comparison	Services	Vacant	Other	Total	
Ollerton	6	26	35	6	10	83	Y
Clipstone	5	4	16	1	2	28	Y
Southwell	12	37	46	3	3	101	Y
Rainworth	5	5	17	4	5	36	Y
Edwinstowe	7	11	20	4	6	48	Y
Collingham	4	2	16	2	9	33	Y
Balderton	8	2	14	0	4	28	Y
Blidworth	5	5	7	0	4	21	Y
Farnsfield	5	6	5	2	0	18	Y
Lowdham	3	4	8	0	3	18	Y
Bilsthorpe	4	1	6	2	3	16	Y

Boughton	1	4	7	2	0	14	Y
Sutton-on-Trent	2	0	4	0	1	7	Y

Source: GVA Grimley, 2009

- 5.71 The smaller centres serve residential areas of varying scale within the District and surrounding areas. They are primarily used for convenience shopping and local services and play an important role in providing for the day to day needs of local communities, particularly, for those who are less mobile. All of the centres have a foodstore, although in the case of Bilsthorpe and Boughton, these stores sell a limited selection of food products, and could be more appropriately described as a well stocked newsagents.
- 5.72 Some of the larger centres also have an element of comparison retailing and have specialist roles, for example, Ollerton and Southwell comprise 31% and 37% comparison goods units respectively. Southwell caters for the many visitors to its Minster and Edwinstowe has a strong tourist role given its proximity to Sherwood Forest. Throughout these centres a mixture of architecture is evident; however several of these centres have clearly experienced a decline in the levels of investment over recent years, especially those which lie in the former coalfields.
- 5.73 There are just a handful of centres within the District that benefit from a local plan town centre designation, or designated primary frontages. The current designations are identified at Table 5.8 below. This lack of a clearly identifiable 'centre' as referred in PPS4 in most centres limits the ability to accurately determine whether or not retail units are located in, on the edge of, or outside of centres for development control purposes.

Table 5.8: Centres Policy Designations

Centre	Policy Designations
Newark	Designated Central Shopping Area and Primary Shopping Frontages
Southwell	Designated Primary Shopping Frontages
Ollerton and Boughton	Designated Primary Shopping Frontages
Edwinstowe	Designated Primary Shopping Frontages
Rainworth	Site Specific Designation (Policy S8)
Collingham	No designation
Clipstone	No designation
Balderton	No designation
Blidworth	No designation
Farnsfield	No designation
Lowdham	No designation
Bilsthorpe	No designation
Sutton-on-Trent	No designation

Summary

- Newark town centre performs well against the key performance indicators set out in PPS4 with a good selection of national multiple retailers and a small independently owned department store. In line with its position in the retail hierarchy, Newark's retail offer is less extensive than what is on offer in the neighbouring centres of Nottingham and Lincoln, although Newark does have a strong representation of independent retailers and several successful markets which provide a unique identity and attract people to the centre. The convenience offer is anchored by a Morrison's supermarket at Slaughter House Lane.
- It would appear that there has been an increase in vacant units in the town centre as a result of the recession and retail rents have also decreased. Despite the negative effects of the recession, in the longer term Newark is well placed to attract new investment, given its accessibility, its historic built environment and its Growth Point status. The Potterdyke scheme will provide new investment and it is encouraging to see that the former Woolworth's unit is being occupied at the out-of-centre Northgate Retail Park.
- Newark town centre is also the focus for the District's leisure provision with a bingo hall, ten-pin bowling facility, cinema and theatre, along with a selection of quality cafés and restaurants. However, as a result of Newark's location within the District, a significant proportion of trips to leisure facilities are taking place to destinations outside of the District, notably Lincoln, Nottingham and Mansfield. There are no hotels in the town centre and this is considered to be problematic particular when the town hosts its annual antiques fair. The presence of many historic buildings also restricts the quantum of office floorspace in the town centre with businesses preferring to locate to more modern premises outside of the town centre.
- The smaller centres in the District vary in size and composition but perform principally as convenience and service centres meeting the everyday needs of local communities. Several are former colliery villages, which are now in need of investment.
- Southwell is the largest centre in the District after Newark in terms of the number of units. The centre has a good selection of specialist and independent retailers, as well as a twice weekly market and the Co-Op store appears to be trading very strongly. The centre has an attractive historic environment and is home to a Minster.
- Ollerton and Boughton are adjoining settlements located in the north of the District. Ollerton is the larger centre anchored by a Tesco located on the edge of the centre adjacent to the Sherwood Energy Village. It is apparent that Tesco attracts a significant number of car borne shoppers who do not use other shops and services in the town centre. Boughton essentially consists of a small cluster of local independent shops and services.

- Edwinstowe is an attractive and compact centre located in the north west of the District providing a good range of everyday shops and services. The centre has a number of specialist shops and cafés which mainly cater for visitors from the nearby Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre.
- Rainworth is located in the west of the District close to the border with Mansfield and provides a range of convenience and service uses with a limited comparison offer dispersed with residential uses.
- The remainder of the District's smaller centres are smaller in scale and typically function as local centres. Of particular note is Balderton which although falling within the built-up area of Newark, does not form part of Newark town centre. Balderton is characterised by two distinct areas; an older area of traditional retailing along Main Street and a purpose built car orientated parade at the Lakeside Shopping Centre, both of which are considered to be trading strongly as local top-up destinations with no vacant units. There is a good mix of foodstore operators, which all appear to be trading strongly.
- Clipstone is anchored by a Co-Op, which appears to be under performing. The centre is also dominated by the busy Mansfield Road which detracts from its attractiveness and hinders pedestrian movement. Bilsthorpe is one of the smallest centres in the District and has a very limited convenience offer in the form of a small newsagent. Collingham and Farnsfield are both attractive centres with a good retail offer. Bildworth provides a good range of services and currently has no vacant units. Lowdham also appears to be healthy with no vacancies, as is Sutton-on-Trent, the smallest centre in the District with only seven units.
- The District's retail warehouse offer is concentrated at two retail parks in Newark, and similar outflows of expenditure are observed as with leisure uses. The District's larger foodstores are primarily focussed around Newark, however there is also a large Tesco at Ollerton. The remainder of the foodstore provision serving the remainder of the District is small-scale aimed at meeting local convenience needs.

6. QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 In this section, we estimate the current performance of Newark and Sherwood's retail provision, as a basis for forecasting the capacity for additional retail floorspace in the period to 2026. The capacity tables accompanying this assessment are attached in Appendices 5, 6, 7 and 8.
- 6.2 We have used a conventional and widely accepted step-by-step methodology, consistent with best practice, which draws upon the results of the household telephone survey of existing shopping patterns to model the existing flows of available expenditure to different retail destinations. To develop the baseline position, we have:-
- Calculated the total amount of convenience and comparison goods expenditure which is available within the postcode areas comprising the Newark and Sherwood survey area;
 - Allocated the available expenditure to the convenience and comparison goods shopping destinations, on the basis of the household telephone survey of shopping patterns, so as to provide estimates of current sales and forecasts of future sales;
 - Compared the total expenditure attracted to each shopping destination with current retail floorspace to assess sales densities in each shopping destination.
- 6.3 Building on the baseline position, we have explored the global capacity for further convenience and comparison goods retail floorspace within Newark and Sherwood.

Data Inputs

i) Survey Area and Household Telephone Survey

- 6.4 In order to provide detailed factual baseline information on shopping patterns in Newark and Sherwood, we commissioned a new household telephone survey covering 1,000 households across 11 zones. GVA Grimley designed the survey questionnaire in consultation with Council Officers and NEMS – who undertook interviewing and data processing during July and August 2009.
- 6.5 The survey area was drawn up in consultation with the Council and the zones were defined with reference to previous retail studies undertaken in neighbouring local authorities including Mansfield and Lincoln. NEMS selected households using a random stratified sampling from all available telephone numbers within the defined survey area and approximately 95 interviews were conducted in each zone. The final results were weighted to ensure that the results were representative of the total population in each zone.

6.6 The survey results identify shopping habits of households for both convenience and comparison goods. Where necessary, the survey results have been re-based to remove certain responses, such as 'internet/mail order shopping', to ensure consistency with categories excluded in the expenditure projections. For convenience goods, the household telephone survey included questions on 'main' food and 'top-up' food shopping. The results of the two types of food expenditure were then merged through the application of a weight, which reflects the estimated proportion of expenditure accounted for by each type. For food we use a 75% / 25% 'main' to 'top-up' food weighting, which is widely accepted and used in retail planning studies. This forms a composite pattern of convenience spending, expressed as a market share for each destination centre or foodstore, for each survey zone.

6.7 The survey also includes six questions on specific comparison goods types, which coincide with Experian Business Strategies definitions of comparison goods expenditure. The retail and needs modelling exercise uses the weighted averages of the household survey responses for each goods type based on the proportion of per capita expenditure on that goods type. This process establishes the pattern of spending for residents of each zone in terms of the following types of goods:-

- Clothes and shoes;
- Furniture, floor coverings and household textiles;
- DIY and decorating goods;
- Domestic electrical appliances;
- TV, hi-fi, radio etc ; and
- Personal, luxury goods and recreational goods.

ii) Internet Sales/E-tailing

6.8 For the purposes of the quantitative capacity forecasting, we have deducted Special Forms of Trading (SFT), which includes mail order, internet based sales and vending machines, from expenditure per capita figures for convenience and comparison goods SFT. These Special Forms of Trading need to be excluded from retail assessments because it relates to expenditure not spent in shops and does not have a direct relationship to the demand for retail floorspace.

6.9 We consider that the proportion of expenditure accounted for by SFT will increase over the period 2008 to 2026, based on Experian Business Strategies latest research into Internet sales as a result of the growth in home computing and Internet Connections. For convenience goods, we forecast a rise in this sector from 1.33% in 2007 to 2.53% by 2014, rising to 3% by 2026 (Table 2, Appendix 5) and for comparison goods we forecast a rise from 6.2% in 2007 to 8.5% by 2019 remaining at this level until 2021 (Table 2, Appendix 6).

- 6.10 We have not undertaken scenario testing to assess the potential impact of the growth of e-tailing on the capacity for new convenience and comparison goods floorspace. We recommend that strategies for town centres should focus on enhancement, the mix of uses and overall visitor experience to compete effectively with the growing competition of the internet. It is difficult to predict the future and the capacity figures outlined throughout the remainder of this section could decline marginally as a consequence of the growth in internet sales. We therefore recommend that local authorities should follow the recommendations set out in PPS4, and update the evidence base and forecasting in the latter part of the LDF when there is more evidence of the rate of growth of internet sales.

iii) Estimates of Population in the Survey Area

- 6.11 To establish the baseline at 2009, population estimates were prepared for each survey zone from the Experian E-marketer system. Experian population projections are based on the 2001 Census and mid year estimates. They take account of the most recently available government population estimates and projections, as well as changing postal geography at the local authority level. They also take account of people and households that were not recorded in the 2001 Census and they are updated to allow for changes in the housing stock, as well as population changes due to births, deaths, migration and the ageing of the population.
- 6.12 The population of the survey area is currently 286,669. It is forecast to grow to 304,397 by 2014, 321,715 by 2019, 338,045 by 2024 and 344,058 by 2026 (Table 1, Appendix 5 and 6). Overall, population is forecast to grow by 20% between 2009 and 2026 across the entire survey area.

iv) Available Expenditure in the Survey Area

- 6.13 The Experian E-Marketer System provides estimates of the per capita expenditure for convenience and comparison goods in 2007 prices. As outlined above we have made deductions for special forms of trading. We have applied individual per capita expenditure figures across each survey zone to provide a more detailed understanding of available expenditure in different parts of the catchment area.
- 6.14 Over the last 18 months, the economy has rapidly deteriorated and this is having far-reaching implications on available income, and consequently expenditure. Verdict's Economic Update (February 2009) states that *"while the latter half of last year was dominated by gloomy economic news, the impact on the real economy and on real people was marginal. Unfortunately, the financial crisis of last year has now started to spread into the wider economy and we expect this year (2009) to bring declines in growth and increase in unemployment"*.
- 6.15 Verdict emphasise the UK economy is now firmly in the grips of a recession although there are more recent suggestions that the 'end is in sight'. The deterioration has been rapid with the fourth quarter of 2008 seeing a year-on-year decline of 1.5% - one of the sharpest contractions in economic growth since the early 1980s. 2009 has brought a sharp contraction in activity and they do not believe that the "pain will ease quickly". Indeed, they are forecasting that it won't be until the final quarter of 2010 that we will

- see positive year on year GDP growth. Moving beyond 2010, economic growth is predicted to return to positive territory but will be sluggish for a number of years as consumers and the private and public sectors all continue to pay down debt.
- 6.16 Growth projections used in Retail Studies and supporting retail statements for planning applications should therefore respond to advice in respect of the most recent economic expectations, followed by ultra long term trends in the longer term projections. Paragraph B21, Appendix B of the Good Practice Guide on Need, Impact and the Sequential Approach states that expenditure growth rates should draw on national long-term trends, but may also have regard to expectations about future regional economic performance and to recent evidence of retail growth. It also recommends that growth rates should generally adopt a conservative level of growth in order to reflect the inherent uncertainty in economic forecasts, and the cyclical nature of the retail sector. The period up to 2011, and to some extent to 2016, will be affected noticeably by the current severe recession, particularly for comparison goods and the weak upturn that is likely to follow.
- 6.17 For convenience goods we use an expenditure growth rate of 0.9% between 2007 and 2008 to take account of 'real' growth before the onset of the recession, which then falls to -0.5% between 2008 and 2009. Between 2009 and 2019 we have used the most up to date forecasts published by Experian Business Solutions (0.8% per annum between 2009 and 2014; and 1.1% per annum between 2014 and 2019).
- 6.18 Post 2019, we have adopted the Experian 'ultra-long' term trend for convenience goods of 0.5% per annum published in the August 2009 Experian Business Strategies Retail Planner Briefing Note 7.0. The 'ultra-long' term trend provides a robust basis for future projections for long term forecasts because it effectively evens out the economic cycles of growth and decline, although it is considered to be depressed by the fact that the 1970s were a very difficult period for the UK economy following the OPEC oil price rise of 1973. Forecasts also become subject to increasing margins of error over time as it is more difficult to accurately forecast into the future.
- 6.19 Table 3, Appendix 5, applies per capita convenience goods expenditure within each zone to population forecasts. This shows that total available convenience goods expenditure within the survey area is currently £496m. This is forecast to grow to £544.8m by 2014, £606.8m by 2019, £652.1m by 2024 and £669.8m by 2026, which represents an overall growth of approximately £169.6m (34%) between 2009 and 2026.
- 6.20 For comparison goods, we use an expenditure growth rate of 3.7% between 2007 and 2008 to take account of 'real' growth before the onset of the recession, which then falls to 1.1% between 2008 and 2009. Between 2009 and 2019 we adopt the most up to date forecasts published by Experian Business Solutions (1.7% per annum between 2009 and 2014; rising to 2.9% per annum between 2014 and 2019). Post 2019, we have adopted the Experian 'ultra-long' term trend for comparison goods of 4.7% per annum published in the August 2009 Experian Business Strategies Retail Planner Briefing Note 7.0.
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6.21 In terms of comparison goods, total available expenditure within the survey area is currently £855.2m, and is forecast to increase to £907.7 by 2014, £1,178m by 2019, £1,557 by 2024 and £1,737m by 2026. This equates to an overall growth of £889m (105%) between 2009 and 2026 (Table 3, Appendix 6).

v) Sales Efficiency

6.22 It is also necessary to factor in changes in respect of sales efficiency rates. This represents the ability of retailers to increase their productivity and absorb higher than inflation increases in their costs (such as rents, rates and service charges) by increasing their average sales densities. The application of a turnover 'efficiency' growth rate is a standard approach used in retail planning studies and the Government's Good Practice Guide on Need, Impact and Sequential Approach advocates taking account of "...expected improvements in store 'floorspace productivity' for both convenience and comparison floorspace, irrespective of location" (*Planning for Town Centres: Practice Guidance on Need, Impact and the Sequential Approach - Paragraph B.48*).

6.23 As growth in expenditure falls it is fair to assume that growth in turnover in existing shops will also fall. Evidently, in the current economic climate many retailers have struggled to increase or even maintain sales density levels and, together with other financial problems, this has led retailers into closure, such as Woolworths and Adams. With the expectation of weaker expenditure growth in the future than over the last 10 years, sales density growth is likely to be towards the bottom end of the range. Based on advice published by Experian we have adopted a sales efficiency growth for comparison goods of 0.75% in the period 2009 and 2014; 1.9% for the period from 2014 to 2019 and 2% between 2019 and 2026. For convenience goods we have factored in sales efficiency rates of 0.2% between 2009 and 2014 and 0.5% between 2014 and 2026.

vi) Floorspace Data

6.24 The comparison and convenience floorspace data used in our modelling has been drawn from a range of data sources including the Institute of Grocery Distribution (IGD), Newark and Sherwood District Council, the Trevor Wood Retail Warehouse database and Experian Goad. Our floorspace assumptions for the foodstores include, where appropriate, an adjustment to identify the proportion of purely convenience goods floorspace. Most large foodstores include a proportion of non-food floorspace and we have therefore adjusted the net floorspace to identify the proportion of sales space allocated for convenience goods. This accords with the expenditure data and the expenditure assumptions used.

Convenience Goods Assessment

6.25 Addressing Newark town centre, the smaller towns and the District's main out-of-centre destinations, we have reviewed shopping patterns and the performance of existing convenience goods floorspace. Using the composite market shares derived from the household survey and baseline expenditure estimates,

we have calculated the convenience goods turnover of the main convenience provision in Newark and Sherwood.

- 6.26 The following analysis reviews the performance of the main foodstores identified by the results of the household telephone survey, by comparing each store with expected turnover levels if the stores were all trading in line with company average sales densities, in accordance with PPS4.

i) Newark Town Centre

- 6.27 In total, we estimate that the convenience stores in Newark Town Centre have a turnover of £59.4m. If all stores traded at company average levels, the turnover would be £49.2m. According to the 2009 telephone survey, Morrison's is trading very strongly, whereas the Marks and Spencer foodhall and other local shops are underperforming. In reality it is likely that the survey may have under-estimated the turnover of the smaller stores and these stores will benefit from trade from office workers, tourists and shoppers passing through the town centre. This is likely to be due to the nature of the survey questions which focus on main food shopping.

ii) Smaller Centres

- 6.28 Newark and Sherwood has several smaller town centres each with varying levels of convenience goods floorspace. Balderton is one of the larger centres and this is reflected in its convenience goods provision. We estimate that the foodstores in Balderton (including a Co-op and Sainsbury's at London Road, Tesco Express at Main Street and Farmfoods at the Lakeside shopping centre) have a combined turnover of £14.9m, which is higher than the estimated turnover if all of the stores were trading at company average levels (£12.8m). In particular, the Tesco Express is trading very strongly with a turnover of £5.5m compared with a company average turnover of £2m, and the Sainsbury's store is trading marginally above expected company average levels.
- 6.29 In Southwell, the Co-Op store is performing very well with an estimated turnover of £8.6m compared to a company average turnover of £6.4m. The results of the telephone survey indicate that the local shops in Southwell are also trading well with a combined turnover of £2.3m compared to a company average turnover of £0.5m. In reality, it is likely that the shops in Southwell are trading even more strongly as a result of the number of visitors and tourists to Southwell throughout the year.
- 6.30 We estimate that the convenience floorspace in Ollerton and Boughton has a combined turnover of £24m compared to a company average turnover of £27m. The Tesco store is trading slightly below company average turnover levels and the Co-Op and the local stores are not trading as well. Rainworth, Clipstone and Edwinstowe are all anchored by Co-Op stores; and all are trading at below company average expectations.

- 6.31 The results of the household telephone survey indicate that the majority of the convenience provision in Newark and Sherwood's other smaller centres is performing well with the exception of the local shops in Sutton-on-Trent and Bildworth. This reflects the importance of local provision to meet the everyday needs of local people, particularly the needs of those who do not have access to a car and who cannot access larger foodstores.

iii) Out-of-Centre Provision

- 6.32 The household telephone survey identified the use of eight out-of-centre foodstores within Newark and Sherwood local authority area which collectively turnover £53m, compared to a company average of £37.9m. In particular, several of the discount foodstores are trading strongly, for example we estimate that the Aldi in Newark has a turnover of £6.2m compared to a company average turnover of £2.8m and Netto in Ollerton has a turnover of £2m compared to a company average turnover of £0.8m. The results of the survey indicate that Waitrose in Newark is under trading, however this may reflect the nature of the survey questions which focus on main food shopping trips.
- 6.33 It is likely that the household telephone survey has under estimated the turnover of some of the foodstores in Newark and Sherwood. The quantitative assessment is imprecise, but in the absence of actual sales figures, still provides the best and most consistent estimate of the turnover of the foodstores in Newark and Sherwood. It should also be noted that there is a network of smaller independent convenience retailers in Newark and Sherwood which we have not been able to model because of the very small market shares derived from the telephone survey results. However, our qualitative observations have revealed that independent retailers appear to be performing well and contribute at varying levels to serving the everyday needs of residents in Newark and Sherwood, particularly for top-up food shopping.

Baseline Convenience Goods Capacity Forecasts

- 6.34 We have examined the capacity for further convenience goods floorspace at the global level for Newark and Sherwood up to 2026 (incorporating the interim years of 2014, 2019 and 2024). It is important to note that capacity forecasts become increasingly open to margins of error over time and should be updated over the LDF period.
- 6.35 The forecasts for global capacity will enable the Council to test alternative options for the spatial distribution of new development. By forecasting at the local authority level, the Council can make informed policy choices about where that capacity should be met depending on a whole range of other considerations such as site availability and public transport accessibility. Capacity arising in a specific centre does not necessarily mean that the identified capacity should be met within that centre. A more appropriately located site in a nearby centre may encourage, for example, more sustainable travel patterns.

- 6.36 In terms of convenience commitments coming forward in the future, we have considered the following schemes as provided by Newark and Sherwood District Council and set out in table 32, Appendix 5.
- Asda, Potterdyke (Ref: 07/01460/FULM);
 - Tesco, Ollerton Extension (Ref: 07/01138/FULM);
 - Co-Op, Barnby Gate, Newark (Ref: 06/00591/FUL);
 - Fernwood Village Centre (Ref: 07/00549/FUL);
 - Aldi Extension, Northgate, Newark (Ref: 07/00766/FUL); and
 - Tesco Extension, Oak Tree District Centre, **Mansfield District Council**.
- 6.37 We have included the Tesco extension at Oak Tree Road (Mansfield District Council) within our assessment, drawing on our own assumptions and the Mansfield Retail Study (2005), written by GVA Grimley also. Given its proximity, and based on current shopping patterns, this store extension will draw some trade from Zones 3 and 4 of the Newark household telephone survey (i.e. the north western area of the Newark and Sherwood District). The Mansfield Retail Study (2005) identified a net floorspace of the existing Tesco of 3,297 sq m, with a commitment to increase this by 2,459 sq m. The store therefore currently has a net floorspace of 5,756 sq m, and as we have already set out in Section 4, Tesco now has consent to increase the net floorspace to 8,719 sq m (total), i.e. an increase of 2,963 sq m net.
- 6.38 The Tesco store location at Oak Tree in Mansfield District is close to the Newark and Sherwood District boundary; and the store extension is likely to generate an additional (approximate) £13.4m of convenience goods expenditure – on the basis that the extension incorporates a 50/50 convenience/comparison breakdown of floorspace (assumption) and trades at 70% of company average levels (£9,020 per sq m net). Making a very broad assumption, to provide a general indication, the store extension might draw around 30% of its trade from Newark and Sherwood District, i.e. around £4m of convenience goods expenditure. These figures are loosely based on the trade draw patterns of the Tesco store as set out in the Mansfield Retail Study (2005), and are therefore based on evidence. This forthcoming development has therefore been taken into account alongside commitments identified within the quantitative assessment.
- 6.39 In order to translate residual convenience goods expenditure into floorspace, we have assumed two development scenarios; the first for a major foodstore operator such as Sainsbury's, Asda, Tesco or Morrisons for example, and the second for a discount foodstore operator such as Lidl, Aldi or Netto. The first scenario assumes new floorspace would achieve a sales density of around £10,000 per sq m net, whilst the second scenario assumes a substantially lower sales density of £4,000 per sq m net. This means that more floorspace can be supported if the operator is a discount retailer which requires less expenditure to retain viability.
- 6.40 Table 6.2 illustrates global convenience goods capacity for Newark and Sherwood. These figures are based on current market shares and take account of the commitments outlined above. Our global analysis highlights that there is no capacity for additional convenience goods floorspace up to the period
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2014, although this rises to 1,336 sq m net by 2019, 2,485 sq m net by 2014, and 2,686 sq m net by 2026. Assuming a discount foodstore operator, capacity equates to 6,715 sq m net by 2026.

Table 6.2: Global Baseline Capacity Forecasts for Convenience Goods (sq m net)

Global Capacity	2009-2014	2009-2019	2009-2024	2009-2026
Newark and Sherwood District (Major Foodstore Operator @ £10,000 per sq m net)	-400	1,336	2,485	2,686
Newark and Sherwood District (Discount Foodstore Operator @ £4,000 per sq m net)	-999	3,340	6,212	6,715

Source: GVA Capacity Modelling, Table 33 and 34, Appendix 5.

Comparison Goods Assessment

i) Newark Town Centre

- 6.41 We have used the household telephone survey to estimate the market share of Newark town centre (Table 4, Appendix 6). Newark's core catchment area is focused on Zone 1 where Newark has a market share of 51%, and Zone 5 where Newark has a market share of 32%. Newark also draws market share from Zone 2 (8%), Zone 10 (7%) and Zone 11 (6.5%). Newark's market share in the remainder of the zones is less than 6%, which reflects the dominance of higher order centres including Lincoln in the north east, Grantham to the south of Newark and Nottingham and Mansfield to the west.
- 6.42 Experian Goad (August 2008) estimates that there is 31,829 sq m gross of comparison retail floorspace in Newark town centre, which is equivalent to 22,280 sq m net using a gross to net ratio of 70%. Based upon the current level of turnover Newark town centre therefore has a sales density of £5,470 per sq m net. This is a good average level of performance for a centre of Newark's size and reflects the scale and quality of its retail offer. We estimate that turnover of Newark town centre could reach £129m by 2014, £167m by 2019, £220 m by 2024 and £246m by 2026. (Table 5, Appendix 6).

ii) Southwell

- 6.43 Southwell is the second largest centre in the District, and has a reasonable scale of comparison goods provision; evidenced by it's role as a comparison goods shopping destination identified in the Household Telephone Survey. Our assessment indicates that Southwell attracts the highest market share in Zone 2 (7%), although this drops considerably to less than 1% in a number of other zones outside of this Core Catchment Area. We estimate that Southwell town centre has a comparison goods turnover of £6.3m;

although this does exclude expenditure from visitors and tourists which we know is likely to be a strong contributor to the economy in this centre.

- 6.44 It has not been possible to obtain floorspace data for Southwell town centre and thus we have been unable to calculate its sales density and therefore it's relative performance. The remaining smaller town centres do not have a significant comparison shopping function although we note that there are comparison operators in Ollerton and Edwinstowe. They provide more specialist comparison shopping and everyday household items, and do not appear in the survey results for

Out-of-Centre

- 6.45 We have identified the market share drawn to the two main retail warehouse parks operating in Newark and Sherwood, namely the Beacon Hill Retail Park and the Northgate Retail Park both in Newark. These out-of-centre retail parks attract the most significant trade from Zones 1 and more modest market shares from the remaining zones.
- 6.46 We estimate that collectively the out-of-centre retail stores in Newark and Sherwood draw approximately £10.9m from the survey area, this compares with a turnover based upon company average sales densities of £19.5m. From the telephone survey results it is clear that residents are travelling to retail warehouse locations outside of the District for their bulky goods shopping. A closer analysis of the survey results reveals that residents are travelling to the retail parks in Nottingham, Lincoln and Mansfield as discussed in Section 5.

Baseline Comparison Goods Capacity Forecasts

- 6.47 In assessing capacity for future comparison goods floorspace, we have assumed that the efficiency with which existing floorspace is being used will increase over time, and we have assumed an annual growth in existing sales per sq m net of 0.75% per annum between 2009 and 2014; 2% per annum between 2019 and 2026; and 1.9% per annum between 2014 and 2019. Drawing on our experience elsewhere we have assumed new floorspace should achieve sales of at least £5,000 per sq m net growing at the relevant sales efficiency rates.
- 6.48 We have factored in a number of commitments for comparison goods floorspace which will come forward in the future (see Table 12, Appendix 6) as provided and agreed by Newark and Sherwood District Council as follows:
- Comparison element of the Tesco Ollerton Extension (Ref: 07/01138/FULM);
 - Comparison element of Asda Potterdyke (Ref: 07/01460/FULM);
 - Other Retail Units in the Potterdyke scheme (Ref: 07/01460/FULM);
 - Fernwood Village Centre (Ref: 07/00549/FUL); and
 - Big W Sub Division: Creation of Mezzanine Floorspace (Ref: 09/00419/FULM)

- 6.49 Table 6.3 illustrates that there is some capacity for comparison goods across the District based on current market shares and taking account of the commitments listed above. We forecast that there is capacity for a further 430 sq m net of comparison goods floorspace by 2019, rising to 7,379 sq m net by 2024 and 10,388 sq m net by 2026.

Table 6.3: Baseline Comparison Goods Floorspace Capacity (sq m net)

Global Capacity	2009-2014	2009-2019	2009-2024	2009-2026
Newark and Sherwood District	-5,064	430	7,379	10,388

Source: GVA Capacity Modelling, Table 13, Appendix 6.

Newark's Growth Point Status

- 6.50 Newark and Sherwood has been awarded Growth Point status by the government which will provide funding to ensure that the necessary infrastructure can be put in place to support the District's growth. The Regional Spatial Strategy requires Newark and Sherwood District Council to deliver 14,800 new homes by 2026. At the present time it is envisaged by the Council that approximately 11,000 of these will be new homes with the remainder coming from housing commitments and completions.
- 6.51 As part of this study we have been asked by the Council to provide advice on the nature and scale of retail floorspace that could be supported by the population growth. The Council consulted on four development scenarios for the distribution of future housing and it is expected that a decision will be taken on which one to proceed with in early 2010. We have tested one scenario which delivers 70% of the new homes (7,678) in and around the settlements of Newark, Balderton and Fernwood with the remainder in Ollerton and Boughton (1,073), Clipstone (612), Rainworth (833) and Southwell (717).
- 6.52 There are three other scenarios which we have not tested, which provide between 5,312 and 6,542 in Newark, Balderton and Fernwood, with the remainder distributed between the Service Centres and Principal Villages (as defined in the adopted Local Plan). Our assessment provides an indication of the level of retailing that could be supported by this housing growth, however it is important to note that the distribution of this growth will change depending on which development scenario the Council decide to adopt. This preliminary testing scenario is intended as an indication of future change.
- 6.53 In the Newark Urban Area (defined as Newark, Balderton and Fernwood), it is anticipated that a proportion of the new housing will be built on a site known as Land to the South of Newark, which could deliver between 3,000 and 3,500 new homes along with a new community park, primary schools, sports facilities, jobs and retail provision (see Plan 11). It is anticipated that a planning application for Land South of Newark will be submitted to the Council in 2010. As part of the work on the Core Strategy, the

Council are also looking at the potential of allocating a number of other strategic sites at Fernwood and Land East of Newark, which could also accommodate a significant quantum of new homes.

- 6.54 In order to look at the retail capacity that will be generated by the Growth Point population, we have carried out a separate scenario where we have factored in the additional population growth as explained above. In order to do this, we have worked out which zone each settlement falls within and we have factored in the additional population using an average household occupancy of 2.36 persons per dwelling based on the average household size for Newark and Sherwood from the 2001 Census as set out in Table 6.4 below.

Table 6.4: Growth Point Population Forecasts

Settlement	Survey Zone	No of Houses	Population*
Newark, Balderton and Fernwood	1	7,678	18,120
Ollerton and Boughton	4	1,073	2,532
Clipstone	4	612	1,444
Rainworth	3	833	1,966
Southwell	2	717	1,692
Total		10,913	25,754

Source: Newark and Sherwood District Council.

* Based on an average household size of 2.36 persons per dwelling.

- 6.55 We have assumed that the housing growth will be distributed in three equal phases in 2014, 2019 and 2024 and we have added the additional population growth to the baseline population growth generated by Experian. In order to inform policy decisions in respect of the appropriate scale of development we have focused this alternative scenario on Newark's Urban Area, rather than the District as a whole. This effectively reviews capacity arising within an appropriate catchment area, setting out clearly the scale of development that existing and new communities in the urban area can support, rather than relying on trade draw from much further afield. We have incorporated those commitments only falling within Newark's Urban Area, i.e. excluding both the Tesco extension at Ollerton and Tesco extension at Oak Tree in Mansfield, and Fernwood Village Centre.
- 6.56 The following table sets out capacity arising for both convenience and comparison goods within Newark's **Urban Area**, incorporating the additional population envisaged as part of Growth Point Status. The full quantitative model is attached in Appendix 7 (convenience goods) and Appendix 8 (comparison goods).

Table 6.5: Growth Point and Baseline Capacity Forecasts (sq m net)

Global	2009-2014	2009-2019	2009-2024	2009-2026
Convenience Goods With Growth Point in Newark's Urban Area	966	3,415	5,465	5,661
Comparison Goods With Growth Point in Newark's Urban Area	-1,467	6,128	15,818	19,067

Source: GVA Capacity Modelling, Appendices 6 and 8.

- 6.57 The above analysis is a theoretical scenario but gives an indication of the additional capacity that will be generated by the population growth generated from Newark's growth point status for both convenience and comparison goods. If assuming a discount food operator, the growth in population and expenditure in Newark's Urban Area could support more convenience goods floorspace; up to 8,255 sq m net by 2019.
- 6.58 The biggest challenge for the Council will be to ensure that an appropriate level of retail provision is provided as part of the development at the Land South of Newark site, as well as potential sites at Fernwood and Land East of Newark. Local shops and facilities are an essential component of attractive, viable and sustainable urban extensions and district and local centres with a strong retail offer are vital in terms of fostering sustainability, social inclusion and to support other valued community facilities (such as libraries, health facilities, employment centres, training centres and sports facilities).
- 6.59 It will be necessary for the Council to ensure that any new retail provision at Land South of Newark, Fernwood and at Land East of Newark is of an appropriate scale and does not undermine the vitality and viability of the District's existing town centres, smaller centres and villages. The presence of an anchor multiple foodstore is often key to developing successful neighbourhood centres and although local retailers can be sceptical of multiple foodstores, they can bring many benefits and also increase footfall benefiting all of the other retailers and helping to support services. It is also important to consider the range of ancillary retail and service uses, which are important components of neighbourhood centres in order that local residents can fulfil their everyday needs.
- 6.60 We recommend against designating District and Local Centres at Land South of Newark, Fernwood and at Land East of Newark in emerging policy; instead we recommend that policy acknowledges that District and Local Centres may emerge and that retail development will be appropriate subject to a range of criteria and appropriate tests in national planning policy. It is apparent, however, that Newark's Urban Area can support a further 3,415 sq m net of convenience goods floorspace by 2019 assuming a major foodstore operator with a higher sales density, growing to 5,465 sq m net by 2024. To put this into context, this (3,415 sq m net) is larger than the existing Tesco store in Ollerton and the Morrisons store in Newark. Any proposals would need to comply with the national policy requirements and be tested robustly against sequential and impact considerations.

- 6.61 We also note that there will be some population growth in Ollerton and Boughton, Clipstone, Rainworth and Southwell, as well as in the Principal Villages, depending on which development scenario is adopted by the Council. We have already acknowledged that the existing retail provision in these centres provides important local shopping facilities and it will be necessary for the Council to create a planning policy environment where existing facilities can continue to trade successfully, perhaps expanding and adapting to meet the needs of an expanding population, whilst recognising that some new convenience and service provision may be required, perhaps to fill a gap in the existing provision. It will also be important for the Council to consider the location of any new retail facilities in relation to areas of new housing to ensure that new facilities are in the most sustainable location.

Leisure Expenditure Projections

- 6.62 We have taken the base position and projected available expenditure per capita leading up to 2026 based on the population projections for the study area, and assuming an ultra long term growth rate in available expenditure of 2.1% per annum for leisure goods. The Experian E-marketer Report calculates annual consumer leisure expenditure⁸ per person on leisure and recreation goods and services in 2007, based upon the demographic profile of the catchment area. This ultra long term growth rate figure is derived from Experian Business Strategies Retail Planner Briefing Note 7.1 (August 2009).
- 6.63 Applying the per capita goods expenditure to the total population of the survey area, there is currently £585m of available leisure expenditure, which is expected to rise to just under £1 billion by 2026.

Table 6.6: Total Leisure Expenditure

	2009 (£000)	2014 (£000)	2019 (£000)	2024 (£000)	2026 (£000)
Newark and Sherwood Survey Area	585,114	689,045	807,704	941,377	998,714

Source: Experian Business Solutions, E-marketer, 2009

Restaurant/Café Expenditure

- 6.64 According to Experian Business Solutions (2006) the average person spends £1,139 per annum in restaurants/cafes. Experian also estimate that people's average likely spend on leisure goods such as eating out increases by 2.1% each year. Currently the total spend available for restaurants/cafés in the Newark and Sherwood survey area is £332.4m, increasing to £391.5m in 2014, rising to 459m in 2019, rising to £534.9m in 2024 and £567.5m in 2026 as identified in Table 6.7.

⁸ Leisure expenditure includes recreation and sporting services, cultural services, games of chance (gambling) and bars/restaurants.

Table 6.7: Restaurant / Café Expenditure Forecasts

	2009 (£000)	2014 (£000)	2019 (£000)	2024 (£000)	2026 (£000)
Newark and Sherwood Survey Area	332,379	391,452	458,901	534,886	567,474

Source: Experian Business Solutions, E-marketer, 2009

- 6.65 Given best practice, the growing trend towards mixed-use schemes discussed and evident strong growth in expenditure in this sector, it is usual to assume that comparison goods retail schemes will comprise circa 15% of leisure floorspace (i.e. Use Class A3/4/5 eating and drinking). Whilst this is a relatively crude assumption, it provides an indication of the level of café, bar and restaurant floorspace which could be provided for as set out in Table 6.8.

Table 6.8: A3/A4 Floorspace Capacity (sq m gross)

A3/A4 Floorspace Capacity for Newark	2014 (sq m gross)	2019 (sq m gross)	2024 (sq m gross)	2026 (sq m gross)
Base Scenario	-953	504	2,358	3,162
Growth Point Scenario	-416	1,695	4,386	5,294

Source: Experian Business Solutions, E-marketer, 2009 and GVA Grimley 2009

- 6.66 Clearly the profile of the catchment population, in relation to the proportion of ABs (professional / managerial socio-economic groups), will determine the location, scale and quality of restaurants/café in the catchment area. There is strong growth in overall leisure expenditure, and the above analysis supports the argument for more leisure floorspace to meet the need resulting from a growth in expenditure over the LDF period. The figures outlined in Table 6.8 do not include commercial leisure facilities such as cinemas, and only indicate capacity for restaurants, bars and cafés and other similar leisure uses falling within Use Class A3/A4.

Summary

- Our convenience goods assessment indicates that overall the foodstores in Newark and Sherwood are performing well. There are several stores that are significantly over performing including the Morrisons store in Newark town centre, Tesco Express in Balderton, Co-Op in Southwell and Aldi in Newark. Smaller foodstores in the District's smaller and village centres also appear to be performing well providing essential 'top-up' items for local people.

- We have considered convenience goods commitments coming forward and made an allowance for these in preparing the capacity forecasts and as such, based on current market share, we anticipate that there is no capacity for additional convenience goods floorspace by 2014, although this does rise to 1,336 sq m net by 2019, 2,485 sq m net by 2024 and 2,686 sq m net by 2026. Assuming a discount food retailer, this rises to 6,715 sq m net by 2026. The additional population generated by Growth Point status would generate total capacity for 5,661 sq m net (assuming a higher order major foodstore operator) *in the Urban Area*.
- In terms of comparison goods Newark appears to be performing well in relation to the size of its retail offer, however its catchment area will always compete with the more dominant centres of Lincoln, Grantham, Mansfield and Nottingham. We estimate that Newark town centre has a total comparison goods turnover of £121.9m in 2009, which we forecast will increase to £246m by 2026. Our assessment found that the District's retail warehouse provision is performing poorly with a combined turnover of £10.8m. The remainder of the District's centres do not have a significant comparison goods offer with the exception of Southwell, which we estimate to have a turnover of £6.3m in 2009, although it is likely that Southwell's actual turnover is higher as a result of tourist and visitor spending which are not accounted for by the telephone survey.
- Our global forecasts indicate that there is capacity in the longer term for additional comparison goods floorspace over the period to 2026. For the District, we forecast that capacity will arise post 2014 when a higher growth rate has been adopted; we estimate that there will be capacity for 430 sq m net by 2019 rising to 7,379 by 2024 and 10,388 sq m net by 2026. With growth point status implemented, there will be capacity within the Urban Area for 19,067 sq m net by 2026.
- Our assessment of future leisure expenditure indicates that there is the potential to support additional leisure facilities in the District over the LDF period.

7. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Drawing on our qualitative and quantitative analysis, this section considers the key conclusions and policy recommendations for Newark and Sherwood moving forward over the forthcoming LDF period.

Policy Priorities

- 7.2 The East Midlands RSS identifies Newark as a sub-regional centre on a par with Chesterfield, Mansfield, Sutton-in-Ashfield and Worksop. The RSS does not provide a specific retail hierarchy and instead adopts a sub-regional approach. For Newark, development of a 'lesser' scale is encouraged, reflecting its catchment population and its proximity to the larger centres of Nottingham and Lincoln, where more significant growth is envisaged. The RSS also recognises the importance of delivering population growth and associated infrastructure and services as part of Newark's Growth Point status.
- 7.3 The adopted Local Plan (1999) does not define a retail hierarchy for the District, although a settlement hierarchy is identified in the Council's emerging Core Strategy. The settlement hierarchy is not an appropriate alternative to a retail hierarchy in policy terms as it covers larger urban areas rather than identifying areas of retail activity. The lack of a clear retail hierarchy is problematic for retail planning in the District and we consider this in more detail later on in this section and recommend a suitable retail hierarchy for the Council's LDF.
- 7.4 Local policy directs development towards the built-up areas of Newark (including Balderton), Ollerton and Boughton and Southwell. Newark is identified as an important convenience shopping destination within the District and the key issue for Newark is the need to maintain its vitality and viability in light of a growing number of non-retail uses as well as preserving its historic environment.

Sub Regional Positioning

- 7.5 In terms of the sub-regional context, the household telephone survey identifies that the main centres that compete with Newark are Lincoln, Mansfield, Nottingham, Grantham, Sleaford and Retford. Our review of the key performance indicators for these centres confirms the influence of the higher order centres of Lincoln and Nottingham. Nottingham has the largest influence in the south of the District, whereas Lincoln attracts people from the east. As expected, and in line with the sub-regional hierarchy, these centres have a superior retail offer and their ease of accessibility to Newark, coupled with new retail development and investment means that they exert considerable influence on Newark's catchment area.
- 7.6 Mansfield also captures an element of available trade from Newark's catchment area but despite its proximity to the western areas of the District, its influence is less significant which reflects the scale of Mansfield's retail offer and its position in the sub-regional hierarchy, at the same level as Newark. To a lesser extent, Grantham attracts people to the south of the District.

- 7.7 Many of Newark's competing centres have benefited from recent developments enhancing their retail offer. For example, Trinity Square was recently completed in Nottingham and there are proposals to enhance the retail offer in Lincoln and Mansfield. This highlights the challenges facing Newark over the forthcoming LDF period in terms of increased competition and potential decline in market share as expenditure leakage might increase. Clearly all centres face development implementation obstacles and the influence of competing centres should be monitored, i.e. whether they come forward or not, and the likely implications for Newark.

Capacity Projections

- 7.8 Using the results of the household telephone survey, we have estimated the current performance of the retail provision in the District of Newark and Sherwood and have forecast the capacity for additional convenience and comparison goods floorspace up to 2026. We have looked at two scenarios; a 'baseline' position and a 'growth' scenario incorporating the additional expenditure that will be generated by population growth as part of Newark's Growth Point Status.
- 7.9 In the baseline position, for convenience goods, based on current market shares and taking into account commitments, we forecast that there is no capacity for additional convenience floorspace in Newark and Sherwood in the period 2009-2014, although this does rise to 1,336 sq m net by 2019 and 2,485 sq m net by 2024 and 2,686 sq m net by 2026. Capacity is greater if considering a discount food operator such as Lidl, Netto or Aldi.
- 7.10 For comparison goods, in the baseline scenario, we identify capacity for a further 430 sq m net of comparison goods floorspace up to 2019, rising to 7,379 sq m net by 2024 and 10,388 sq m net by 2026. We discuss the implications of the additional expenditure generated by Newark's Growth Point Status later in this section.

Newark Town Centre

- 7.11 In general, Newark appears to be a healthy town centre performing adequately in a number of key areas. The centre's role and function appears to meet the expectations set out in the RSS as a second tier centre behind larger centres such as Nottingham and Lincoln. The development of the Potterdyke scheme will provide new investment, however there are other areas for improvement and consolidation over the LDF period and it is important that these are identified and promoted, particularly in light of investment in competing centres.
- 7.12 At the current time, Newark has a good mix of comparison, convenience and service uses. The retail offer comprises a number of mid market multiple retailers such as Marks and Spencer, New Look and Next, but representation from higher quality fashion multiples is weaker. Boyes is the only department store, however it is value-led, with a limited product range and is dated in its design and appearance.

- 7.13 Convenience provision is good with a Morrisons to the north of the town centre, which appears to be trading very strongly. There is also a Marks and Spencer foodhall and various independents including several good quality delicatessens, bakers and butchers. Along Ossington Way, there is an out-of-centre Waitrose and further north on Northgate an Aldi foodstore. Given the distance from these stores and separation from the main concentration of town centre retailing, limited pedestrian linked trips were observed at the time of survey, although we understand that some linked trips do take place although the evidence is not available to demonstrate this at the current time. Further 'on-street' or other survey work would be required to understand the extent of linked trips between these foodstores and the Primary Shopping Area.
- 7.14 Newark's convenience provision will be enhanced by the proposed Asda store⁹ on the Potterdyke site, which will sell both convenience and comparison goods. Our quantitative assessment has identified capacity for further convenience goods floorspace within the District, and with the identification of the Carter Gate area and other smaller infill sites, there may be opportunities for small scale convenience goods floorspace within Newark town centre, perhaps an express format or stores selling local and organic products. Surplus capacity should also be directed towards existing smaller centres and areas of population growth, which we discuss in more detail later in this section.
- 7.15 Zone A rents and yields have remained static in recent years, but registered retail requirements have fallen. Newark's position in the Javelin retail rankings has also fallen, which suggests that although Newark remains an attractive centre for many retailers, there is some indication that the town centre is not necessarily enhancing its role and this should be addressed over the LDF period to prevent decline.

The Historic Environment

- 7.16 Newark's historic street layout is an asset, but also presents a challenge in respect of pedestrian flows, linkages and new development. The Conservation Area, Listed Buildings and Georgian market square provide an attractive built environment and add to the centre's unique identity, but expansion within the centre is constrained. There are few suitable, viable and available sites within the town centre that can accommodate new additional retail and leisure floorspace.
- 7.17 Much of Newark's attractiveness is rooted within its historic and unique shopping environment and the presence of a Conservation Area and numerous Listed Buildings should not limit its performance but rather promote it. New development should seek to enhance the character and/or appearance of the Conservation Area and the setting of Listed Buildings. The Council should identify buildings and areas of the town that need enhancing and adopt a more flexible policy stance to help bring empty buildings and vacant shop units back into use and facilitate the conversion of existing buildings to accommodate town centre uses in the appropriate policy locations.

⁹ NB – Asda Potterdyke has planning permission but this has not yet been implemented

- 7.18 There are examples of national multiple retailers who are willing to adapt their business model to occupy historic units. We consider that Newark should aim to attract these types of operators such as up market fashion retailers such as East, Fat Face, White Stuff and Kew, as well as quality cafés and restaurants that occupy historic units and embrace local distinctiveness.

Independent Retailers

- 7.19 Newark has a strong representation of independent retailers (approximately 77% of all retailers) which helps to distinguish the town centre from other towns across the UK. The results of the telephone survey demonstrate the attraction of the centre's independent retailers, with 12% of respondents citing the town centres independent retailers as a key strength for the town centre, amongst other reasons.
- 7.20 The strength of Newark's independent retail sector generates a character of unique value in which shoppers feel they can obtain goods which are perhaps not available in competing centres with a high level of service and care. Opportunities exist to build upon this distinctiveness to generate a strong experience for local shoppers, visitors and tourists. Our assessment has shown that Newark is unlikely to be able to create the conditions to compete on a level with the neighbouring centres of Lincoln and Nottingham, and in any event this is not the objective of the RSS, however Newark does have the potential to provide a retail and leisure sector which has a greater diversity and encourages people to dwell for longer.
- 7.21 There is a unique opportunity in Newark to compete strongly through the offer of a quality attractive historic environment, a pleasant experience and good shopping facilities, and both multiple and independent retailers. This will help differentiate Newark from the higher order competing centres. Although it is very difficult for planning policy to promote independent retailers, it is clear that the LDF should seek to provide the optimum policy conditions for specialist, niche and independent retailers. There are other ways of supporting this sector and we recommend that Newark should seek to make its independent offer central to its retail offer and use promotional activity to boost footfall through town centre management initiatives.
- 7.22 We also consider that the Council should improve the impact, visibility and information available on independent retailers in the town and explore the possibility of setting up an advice and information sharing service. With the help of a town centre manager and other business support arrangements, it may be possible to set up an independent retailer forum to coordinate marketing and promotional activities. Independent retailers are unlikely to have the resources and systems of larger multiple retailers and thus the Council should also look at other options such as reducing business rates, and funding to support skills development. As well as supporting existing independent retailers, the Council may wish to consider whether there are any opportunities to encourage new independent retailers to locate in the town.

Markets

- 7.23 Markets play an important role in Newark's retail offer by helping to spread footfall, accommodating some of the need for new retail floorspace and providing space that is suited to local and independent businesses. We recommend that Newark should look at opportunities to enhance and expand its markets, for example, by looking at new market locations, encouraging high quality stalls and promoting temporary, themed and seasonal markets. The Council should explore the options for the future of markets through a town centre Area Action Plan, in conjunction with a public realm strategy.

Vacancies

- 7.24 A degree of vacancy among retail units is a normal part of a healthily functioning town centre and on average approximately 10% of all units in a centre will be vacant at any one time. The failure to let empty shops, however, leads to periods of prolonged vacancy which negatively affects the character of an area. Blank facades, permanently drawn shutters and boarded up shops remove active street frontages and can attract fly-posting and litter, suffer vandalism and fall into disrepair, which can harbour anti-social activity and in extreme cases create no-go areas and urban blight. However, Newark is not currently in danger of experiencing such extreme instances of degradation, and effective intervention and town centre policies / management will adequately address this issue.
- 7.25 Fluctuations in footfall may also affect the viability of units as rents/business rates may be too high to allow a shop or business to trade viably. The negative impact of a vacant unit on the surrounding area may encourage other vacancies nearby, in units that are also struggling to reconcile their rents with lower levels of passing trade, which can produce further reductions in pedestrian activity.
- 7.26 Vacancy levels in Newark are marginally higher than the national average and should be monitored carefully over the LDF period. The economic downturn has led to the closure of several retailers in the town centre, and in this respect it is clear that Newark is not immune from national trends. The economic downturn is starting to have a visible impact on town centres. A recent survey estimated that the number of empty shops in Britain rose from 63,500 in December 2008 to 90,000 in February 2009 and forecast further increases.
- 7.27 The Government document, 'Looking After Our Town Centres' (April 2009) provides commentary on the position of many town centres across the UK and provides imaginative examples of ways to deal with vacant units, as well as proactive measures being introduced to assist local authorities to respond quickly. The Government has demonstrated commitment to enable vacant properties to be used for temporary purposes until demand for retail premises starts to improve.
- 7.28 Many vacant shop windows in town centres are being used to post information about community events, the local area, healthy living choices, local fitness classes, and so on. Shop frontages are being used to showcase other shopping facilities, attractions and events in the area and in some areas, town centre managers have brokered arrangements to enable vacant shops to be used as art galleries, museums,

and community services centres. Although there are barriers that hinder similar activities (uncertainty about planning permission; landlords may be difficult to contact or reluctant to consider a temporary lease; or funding might be needed to redecorate and adapt a shop for temporary use), the Government emphasises that these can be addressed.

Eating and Drinking

- 7.29 Leisure uses are important in supporting Newark's overall offer and attraction. Daytime and evening eating and drinking facilities add to the overall vibrancy, attraction and visitor 'stay-time', whilst creating a 'destination' to distinguish Newark from other centres.
- 7.30 We consider that Newark has a strong selection of pubs, cafés and restaurants for a town of its size. There are a number of cafés located around the Market Square with outdoor seating areas which animate the street scene during the day. The focus of Newark town centre's evening economy however is along Castle Gate and at Dobson's Quay. Castle Gate provides a range of independent and multiple businesses, whilst Dobson's Quay forms a newer development, with several well known chain restaurants occupying attractive converted buildings overlooking the River Trent.
- 7.31 The proliferation of quality restaurants along the western flank of the town centre should be encouraged and we recommend that policy encourages and facilitates the evolution of these areas as niche eating/drinking quarters. In particular, we consider that there are opportunities to intensify eating / drinking and associated leisure uses at Dobson's Quay subject to relevant planning controls, exploiting its riverside location and enhancing linkages with the town centre.
- 7.32 Additional eating/drinking areas could also be encouraged in the Market Square and around the cinema. It will however be important for the Council to restrict the proliferation of A5 hot food take-away outlets in these locations and ensure that any changes of use in the Primary Shopping Area does not undermine the mix of uses. Guided by the Use Classes Order, the Council should encourage the retention and introduction of further restaurants and bars (A3/A4 Use Class), but should resist the introduction of any additional A5 hot food takeaways within the primary and secondary shopping frontages. Policy should be worded accordingly.

Other Town Centre Uses

- 7.33 Newark has a good range of 'other' town centre uses distributed throughout the centre which contribute to footfall and general vitality and viability. The presence of the River Trent and Newark Castle on the edge of the town centre also complements the visitor and tourist economy. There is a theatre, cinema and ten pin bowling alley, which are popular and well used. We recommend that Newark should continue to diversify other town centre uses to ensure that they appeal to a broad range of people.
- 7.34 At present, there is no hotel in Newark town centre and it is likely that the town would benefit from a 'quality' or 'boutique' hotel operator to support the tourism industry. Newark should also develop a

tourism strategy that is focussed on the town centre to provide retail and leisure experiences that appeal to both day trippers and short break visitors. For example, there may be opportunities to develop 'activity breaks' or 'day experiences' building on themes such as organic food or Newark's reputation for antiques and violins.

- 7.35 There are some offices in the town centre, mainly occupying upper floors of commercial units. Office spaces are small and poorly configured due to the historic nature of many buildings and in recent years there has been an increase in more modern office park accommodation on the edge of the town centre. We consider that Newark should continue to encourage professional services and other office uses in the town centre, as they generate footfall and help to support local shops and services. It is unlikely to be appropriate to accommodate large scale office developments in the town centre as this would take up valuable space which is better safeguarded for retail and leisure uses, and such large scale office development would fit uneasily with the historic grain.

Development Sites

- 7.36 In respect of capacity for additional comparison goods floorspace, our assessment has identified a need for 430 sq m net by 2014, rising to 7,379 sq m net by 2024 and 10,388 by 2026. Our assessment also recognises that the RSS does not promote a step change in the role of Newark. Taking on board these findings and the fact that there are few suitable, available and viable sites within the town centre that can accommodate additional retail and leisure floorspace, it is apparent that the key challenge for Newark is how to incorporate additional floorspace within or adjoining the Primary Shopping Area, thereby increasing footfall and dwell time. It is also fundamental to ensure that local residents continue and where possible increase their use of Newark for shopping in light of increased competition outside of the District.
- 7.37 The overriding objective over the LDF period will be the consolidation and enhancement of the existing composition of the town centre through investment in the existing building stock, the environment, public realm and infill development / redevelopment. A key objective is for Newark to maintain market share and performance within the network of sub-regional centres and we recommend that the Council explore fully infill development / redevelopment opportunities. These would provide new units, attracting new retailers / leisure operators, thereby encouraging footfall and shopper/expenditure activity.
- 7.38 The implementation of the Potterdyke planning permission will contribute to the retail offer in the town centre. However, it lies outside the recommended Primary Shopping Area and it will be important for the Council to understand how Potterdyke will function with the rest of the town centre once the scheme has been built. The Potterdyke area lies to the south east of the town centre and planning permission has been granted for the site including the redevelopment of the former Robin Hood hotel, to provide an Asda superstore, ten other retail units, a new health centre, a doctors surgery, residential accommodation and offices. The Council should encourage linkages between the town centre and

Potterdyke and enforce a car parking regime that will encourage linked trips with the rest of the town centre, providing physical as well as functional linkages.

- 7.39 Carter Gate currently forms part of Newark's Primary Shopping Frontage, however it is evident that it is currently underperforming compared to other areas. There are several clusters of vacant units, it is more distant from town centre car parks and is considered to be a less attractive retail area. It also has fewer Listed Buildings than other areas of the town centre, which could make it easier to accommodate new development. A clear opportunity for change is evident around the Carter Gate area. The Council may wish to explore the potential of this site in more detail through a future Area Action Plan for the town centre as part of the LDF process. The Council should also identify any other development opportunities through the development plan process.
- 7.40 We recommend that the Council explore the potential of this area through the LDF process. At this stage, it is not appropriate to speculate on the most suitable uses although it is evident that retail uses should be encouraged, however it may become apparent that Carter Gate is more suited to a mixed-use residential led scheme, rather than prime retail. This would generate footfall, add to vitality and viability and ensure that the area does not become peripheral to the rest of the town centre. Clearly such decisions should be informed by the preparation of an Area Action Plan.

Town Centre Boundary and Retail Frontages

- 7.41 The adopted Local Plan defines a 'Central Shopping Area' in Newark, as well as 'Primary Shopping Frontages' as illustrated on Plan 6. The Central Shopping Area covers the main areas of retail activity within the town centre with the exception of the Dobson's Quay area and the Potterdyke site. The Local Plan does not distinguish between Primary and Secondary retail frontages as advised in PPS4.
- 7.42 Moving forwards, the LDF should take account of the current performance of the town centre to identify retail frontage and boundary definitions in accordance with national policy (as set out below), to set the framework for development and change:
- **Town Centre:** Defined area, including the Primary Shopping Area (PSA) and areas of predominantly leisure, business and other main town centre uses within or adjacent to the Primary Shopping Area.
 - **Primary Shopping Area:** Defined area where retail development is concentrated, (PSA) generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages. The extent of the PSA should be defined on the proposals map.
 - **Primary Frontage:** Primary frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses.

- **Secondary Frontage:** Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses.
- 7.43 Our qualitative health check has enabled a detailed understanding of retail composition and pedestrian footfall in different areas of the town centre, and as such, gives a clear indication of where frontage designations should be drawn. It should be noted that what appears to be a declining retail frontage should not necessarily be relegated to a more secondary role, and should be given the opportunity to develop and improve over the LDF period through policy intervention.
- 7.44 The adopted Local Plan defines a Central Shopping Area and Primary Shopping Frontages for Newark town centre (Plan 6). The Central Shopping Area as currently defined is not a policy compliant definition and should be changed to Town Centre Boundary, consistent with the PPS4 definition set out above. We indicate our recommended boundary designation on Plan 13 and should be referred to Town Centre Boundary in the forthcoming LDF.
- 7.45 We also recommend that a Primary Shopping Frontage is drawn to comprise Market Place, Bridge Street, St Mark's Place, Stodman Street up to the junction with Middle Gate, Middlegate, Paxtons Court and Catergate up to the pathway leading to St Mark's Place. This area contains the centre's key retailers, has strong pedestrian activity and is the focus for retail activity (Plan 13).
- 7.46 Policy should protect A1 retail uses throughout this area and prevent the infiltration of A3 / A4 / A5 uses and control against the loss of A1 uses. The presence of national multiple retailers and high end specialist and niche independent retailers should be encouraged in the primary frontage. Restaurants and cafés (A3 and A4 uses) can be allowed within the primary shopping frontage, although the proportion / number should be controlled as the overriding objective is to retain the A1 retail function of the primary shopping frontages. We recommend that A5 uses be prevented within the primary shopping frontage, and policy should clearly state this restriction.
- 7.47 We also recommend that the Council should designate Secondary Frontages drawn to comprise Appleton Gate, parts of Balderton Gate and Barnby Gate, The Arcade, Chain Lane, Church Street, Kirk Gate, Paxtons Court, Boar Lane, the remainder of Stodman Street and Castlegate (Plan 13). These areas have a more diverse mix of retailers and a high proportion of service operators, they also have lower footfall but form important linkages to the primary retail area and town centre car parks. These areas already have a considerably more mixed composition of retail and leisure service businesses, and this should be encouraged over the LDF period.
- 7.48 PPS4 states that the Primary Shopping Area 'generally' comprises the primary and those secondary frontages which are contiguous and closely related to the primary shopping frontage. More recently, the revised Use Classes Order has given local authorities greater control over the mix of A3/4 and 5 restaurant, café, pubs and fast food takeaways, and this should be taken advantage of to protect the vitality and viability of centres. The LDF should define the Town Centre Boundary and the more concentrated Primary Shopping Area.
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- 7.49 It would seem appropriate therefore for the LDF to provide greater protection of uses in the primary and secondary frontages resisting fast food restaurants where necessary, and allowing more flexibility beyond these frontages (but perhaps still within the town centre). Those frontages that fall outside of the primary and secondary frontages are likely to be more flexible to a range of retail, leisure and other town centre uses including, for example, fast food takeaways.
- 7.50 In defining the PSA, national policy notes that it may be appropriate to take into account the future role of a centre including the scope for growth and expansion and potential development sites. Where specific proposals are identified, such as extensions to existing town centre shopping schemes, it may be appropriate to define these areas as planned extensions to the PSA.
- 7.51 At the current time we consider that it is not appropriate to include the Potterdyke site within the Primary Shopping Area. It will be important for the Council to understand how the Potterdyke site functions with the rest of the town centre once the scheme has been built and gone through its 'settling down' period. As we have already noted, the Council should encourage linkages between the town centre and the Potterdyke development. Once these links are established, it may then be appropriate to extend the PSA, but the extension should not come forward in advance of the redevelopment, to maintain the appropriate restrictions on development until the development has become established.
- 7.52 It is important to note that the inclusion of the Potterdyke site within the Primary Shopping Area and / or the town centre boundary, in advance of the implementation of the development will mean that the Council has less control over the type and nature of retail activity on the site, and it could lead to a shift in retail activity to the south of the town centre with potential negative implications for the northern sector. Development and change should be continually monitored, facilitating linkages and underpinning future reviews of boundaries.
- 7.53 PPS4 notes that it may be appropriate to define other areas within town centre boundaries where specific uses are encouraged such as specialist retail, offices and bars/restaurants to ensure such uses can benefit from the centre's accessibility by alternative means of transport and to facilitate linked trips. In this regard, we consider that Castle Gate and Dobson's Quay form an important part of Newark's leisure offer and as a result we recommend that the Council should recognise the role and relationship of these areas with the rest of the town centre in future policy to exploit further opportunities of the riverside location.
- 7.54 Nevertheless, evening entertainment can bring with it anti-social behaviour and the Council should incorporate policy areas to manage. The Council can draw on the Use Classes Order to encourage and protect against different types of leisure provision:
- A3/4/5: Restaurants/cafés, drinking establishments, hot food take-away;
 - D1: Non-Residential Institutions (e.g. museums, public libraries, art galleries and exhibition halls);
 - D2: Assembly & Leisure (cinemas, bingo hall, dance hall, swimming bath, skating rink etc); and

- Sui-Generis: Theatres, nightclubs, amusement arcades.

Out of Centre Retail Provision

- 7.55 Retail warehousing provision in Newark contributes to the comparison shopping offer and in recent years a number of traditional high street retailers have started to locate on the parks, although we understand that there are some conditions that restrict the types of goods that can be sold from certain units.
- 7.56 The main concentration of out-of-centre retail warehouse provision in the District is located on the outskirts of Newark town centre comprising the Northgate Retail Park, Beacon Hill Retail Park and standalone units at Ossington Way. Despite the proximity of these areas to Newark town centre, connections are constrained for both cars and pedestrians because of the physical barrier presented by the River Trent. Nevertheless, we consider that the Council should explore all options to enhance linkages in the future.
- 7.57 Despite the presence of Homebase and Focus DIY, a significant proportion of Newark and Sherwood's residents are travelling to retail parks on the outskirts of Nottingham, Lincoln and Mansfield to undertake bulky DIY, furniture and homeware shopping trips. This is consistent with Newark's demographic profile which suggests that there is a high proportion of older more affluent residents in Newark's catchment area who have time and money to spend on home goods but who are travelling to centres outside of the District to undertake these trips.
- 7.58 It would appear pertinent for the Council to look at this sector in more detail to explore the options to improve the existing provision of home, furnishing, gardening and other bulky goods in Newark. In the first instance and in line with Government policy, we recommend that the Council should consider whether there are any opportunities to enhance retailing for these types of goods in Newark town centre, however, given the constraints of the historic environment it may be appropriate to look at edge and or out-of-centre sites.
- 7.59 Proposals in respect of existing and proposed out-of-centre shopping destinations should be assessed against national policy guidance in PPS4. It will be important to protect the vitality and viability of existing centres and restrict the spread of high street retailing to out-of-centre locations. Restrictions on the sale of goods should also be maintained to help protect the vitality and viability of the town centre.

Town Centre Management

- 7.60 Our findings have identified the need to consolidate Newark's position and retail/leisure offer. The key focus is the encouragement of new, higher quality operators, the enhancement of the environment and connectivity, and quality in-fill development / redevelopment. This can partly be achieved through policy, but would also benefit significantly from focused management to facilitate partnership working between

key stakeholders, commercial contacts with key operators (both existing and potential), the monitoring of key performance indicators, and the promotion of marketing and publicity campaigns.

7.61 We recommend the establishment of a Town Centre Manager role to facilitate its future direction, growth and enhanced vitality and improved perceptions in Newark. Working with planning officers and other organisations, the role of a town centre manager often includes the following key tasks:

- Development of a Town Centre Business Plan through consultation with key stakeholders. The intention is generally to engage the wider business community in working to help develop the plan for the future;
- Making and maintaining commercial contacts in the retail/town centre sector;
- Monitor and maintain the continued control/awareness of cleanliness, security, physical environment and other potentially problematic issues; and monitor key performance indicators;
- Maintain and develop good intelligence over the financial performance of the town centre;
- Prepare and deliver a marketing strategy, promotional material and publicity to achieve an increased awareness of the town centre. This should include cultural and entertainment events and local activities.

Smaller Centres

7.62 In accordance with the Council's brief we have carried out thorough audits of the smaller town centres within the District. There is currently no retail hierarchy within Newark and Sherwood and these centres do not have any policy designation as defined in PPS4.

7.63 In general we conclude that these centres are all vital and viable and in adequate health providing important local convenience and service provision to meets the everyday needs of local residents. However, it is evident that these centres vary in size and scale with some providing a more extensive retail offer than others. The concentrations of retail activity in each centre are identified on plan 14 and can be used by the Council to assist in defining future policy designations for local and district centres.

7.64 **Southwell** is the largest centre in the District after Newark in terms of the number of units with 101 units. Southwell serves its local population with convenience and service goods and the Co-Op located on the outskirts of the centre appear to be trading very strongly. The centre also has a good selection of specialist and independent retailers, supported by Southwell market held on Thursdays and Saturdays. The centre's retail offer is largely supported by the local community and tourists, many of whom come to visit the town's Minster. Our healthcheck indicates that Southwell is performing well with a low vacancy rate and benefits from an attractive environment. The adopted Local Plan defines a Primary Shopping Frontage within Southwell and we recommend that this is retained and that Southwell is designated as a **District Centre**.

- 7.65 Southwell is likely to experience further population growth as a result of Newark's Growth Point status and initial options regarding housing allocations. With regard to future development opportunities within Southwell, it is evident that the centre's historic core limits future development and we therefore consider that policy should focus on consolidating and enhancing the existing provision including the development of small scale infill sites where appropriate. We also note that there is an under-used / vacant telephone exchange site adjacent to the existing Co-Op and health centre, which could offer the potential for retail use, albeit in an existing out-of-centre location.
- 7.66 **Ollerton and Boughton** are two separate centres, located in the north of the District, within one urban settlement. Ollerton is the larger centre with 83 units compared to Boughton with 14 units. Ollerton's retail offer is dominated by a Tesco located on the edge of the centre adjacent to the Sherwood Energy Village on the site of the former colliery. The store opened in 2002 and sells a wide range of food and non-food products, and also has planning permission to extend. The presence of Tesco attracts shoppers to the centre but linkages between Tesco and the rest of the town centre are weak and it is apparent that Tesco attracts a significant number of car borne shoppers who do not use other shops and services.
- 7.67 There are several vacant units including the site of the former Forest Centre towards the west of the centre. Ollerton village is located at the junction of Station Road, Church Street and the Market Place area. This area of the settlement contains a limited retail provision, based around the New Plough Inn public house and Ollerton Mill tea rooms.
- 7.68 Boughton is situated to the east of Ollerton and essentially consists of a small cluster of local independent shops and services. There are two vacant units at either end of the centre which present an opportunity for redevelopment or a change of use. In the Council's future policy, we recommend that the Council consider designating Ollerton as a **District Centre** and Boughton as a **Local Centre** to reflect their relative size and roles. It is envisaged that Ollerton and Boughton will experience population growth in the future and it will be important to ensure that there is an adequate provision of local shops and services.
- 7.69 **Edwinstowe** is an attractive and compact centre located in the north west of the District providing a good range of everyday shops and services with a total of 48 units. The centre has a number of specialist shops and cafés which mainly cater for visitors from the nearby Sherwood Forest Visitor Centre. The adopted Local Plan defines a Primary Shopping Frontage within Edwinstowe and we recommend that this is retained and that Edwinstowe is designated as a **District Centre** in the retail hierarchy. We also recommend that linked trips are promoted between Edwinstowe and Sherwood Forest in order to capture expenditure from tourist and visitors. Our audit revealed a potential development opportunity for retail use at the corner of Mansfield Road and Church Street and there could also be opportunities to intensify existing uses within the centre.

- 7.70 **Rainworth** is located in the west of the District close to the border with Mansfield. The centre has a total of 36 units and provides a range of convenience and service uses with a limited comparison offer. Rainworth consists of a core area of retail and service uses, as well as various other units dispersed with residential uses.
- 7.71 Policy S8 in the adopted Local Plan allocates an area for new shopping development in Rainworth at the disused railway embankment to the north of the junction of Southwell Road East and Kidlington Road. We understand that there has been limited interest in this site for retail use and although it offers the potential to improve the range and scale of retail provision in Rainworth, we recommend that the Council should consider opportunities to provide a wider mix of uses on this site including retail. In addition, there would appear to be several small infill development opportunities in Rainworth and these could provide opportunities to enhance the range of shops and services to support the existing and future population. We consider that Rainworth should be designated as a **District Centre** in the District's retail hierarchy.
- 7.72 The remainder of the District's centres are smaller in scale and typically function as **local centres**. Of particular note is **Balderton** which although falling within the built-up area of Newark, does not form part of Newark town centre. Balderton is characterised by two distinct areas; an older area of traditional retailing along Main Street and a purpose built car orientated parade at the Lakeside Shopping Centre, both of which are considered to be trading strongly as local top-up destinations with no vacant units. There is a good mix of foodstore operators, which all appear to be trading strongly from the results of the telephone survey, as well as our qualitative observations.
- 7.73 Our assessment has identified that these two areas function separately from each other and thus we recommend that the Council should designate '**Balderton North**' and '**Balderton South**' as separate **Local Centres**. As with many of the District's smaller centres, it would appear that the main priorities for Balderton are to enhance the public realm and consolidate the existing retail and service offer. It will also be important to ensure that local shops and services can support the planned population growth in the centre.
- 7.74 **Clipstone** is a typical local centre anchored by a Co-Op, which our assessment identifies to be under performing, perhaps as a result of its close proximity to Mansfield. Clipstone is dominated by the busy Mansfield Road which detracts from the attractiveness of the centre and hinders pedestrian movement, although the retail and leisure offer is set back from the road. It is envisaged that there will be some additional population growth in Clipstone and we consider that there are opportunities to enhance the existing retail provision and public realm. We envisage that Clipstone should be designated as a **local centre** in the District's retail hierarchy.
- 7.75 **Bilsthorpe** comprises two separate retail areas, which we recommend should be distinguished as two different **local centres** named **Bilsthorpe North** and **Bilsthorpe South** in future policy designations.

Both have a very limited convenience offer in the form of a small newsagent and we therefore consider that there could be an opportunity to enhance this offer in the future if required.

- 7.76 **Collingham** and **Farnsfield** are both considered to be attractive centres with a good retail offer. **Bildworth** provides a good range of services and is performing well currently with no vacant units given its close proximity to Mansfield. **Lowdham** also appears to be healthy with no vacancies, as is **Sutton-on-Trent**, the smallest centre in the District with only seven units. We recommend that Collingham, Farnsfield, Bildworth, Lowdham and Sutton-on-Trent are included as **local centres** in the District's retail hierarchy.
- 7.77 Many of the District's smaller centres would benefit from improvements to the public realm to provide a more attractive shopping environment. Several of the centres benefit from an attractive built environment, but others, and in particular the former colliery settlements such as Rainworth, Clipstone and Bilsthorpe appear run down with poorly maintained shop frontages and utilitarian street furniture. We recommend that the LDF seeks to enhance the environment and public realm in all of the District's centres for example by facilitating pedestrian movement, tackling congestion, eliminating visual clutter and controlling the design and appearance of shop fronts.
- 7.78 It is also apparent that the District's smaller centres do not have any clear boundary designations for retail uses, or defined shopping frontages. This creates a lack of a clearly identifiable 'centre' as defined in PPS4 and limits the ability to accurately determine whether or not retail units and development proposal sites are located in, on the edge of, or outside of centres. We therefore recommend that the Council should allocate appropriate boundaries for each of the District and Local Centres, as well as designating shopping frontages in the large District Centres. This will assist the Council with development control decisions for planning applications for retail and other town centre uses.

Newark's Growth Point Status

- 7.79 Considered together Newark's Growth Point status and the RSS target for Newark will see the delivery of approximately 11,000 new homes by 2026. A significant proportion of this growth will be in and around the settlement of Newark, but there will also be growth in Ollerton and Boughton, Clipstone, Rainworth and Southwell, as well as in the Principal Villages. The Council consulted on four development scenarios as part of its emerging Core Strategy to decide where this growth will be accommodated.
- 7.80 In Newark, it is acknowledged, and has previously been accepted by an Inspector at the Local Plan Inquiry, that a site known as 'Land South of Newark' has the capacity to deliver a high level of growth and the Council's Growth Point ambitions have been based around residential development in this broad location (see Plan 11). The Council are also looking at the potential of allocating a number of other strategic sites at Fernwood and Land East of Newark. It is important that such areas of population

- growth are supported by adequate shops and services and careful consideration needs to be given to this in the Council's LDF.
- 7.81 Our quantitative modelling generates capacity for convenience and comparison goods floorspace across the District. To take this a stage further, we have undertaken a scenario to look at the additional expenditure generated by the growth point population based on 70% of the growth being focused on the Newark urban area (Zone 1 of the Newark and Sherwood Household Telephone Survey). Our modelling exercise indicates that, provided the Growth Point population growth is implemented, Newark's **Urban Area** could support an additional convenience goods floorspace area of 3,415 sq m net by 2019, rising to 5,465 sq m net by 2024.
- 7.82 For comparison goods we forecast that the additional expenditure generated by the Growth Point population growth will see capacity increase to 4,911 sq m net by 2019, 15,040 sq m net by 2024 and 18,459 sq m net by 2026, across the District.
- 7.83 It is clear that the Growth Point population will generate additional capacity for new retail floorspace and it is important for the Council to ensure that an appropriate level of retail floorspace is provided to support both new and existing residents fostering sustainability, promoting social inclusion and reducing the need to travel by car. Not all of this additional capacity will be met in this location, as it is expected that an element of this capacity will be met in other areas, but the Council should ensure that sufficient additional provision is delivered through an appropriate phasing strategy to keep pace with the potential growth in population.
- 7.84 In any event, clearly proposals for new retail development in these locations will need to be of an appropriate scale to that of the proposed type of centre, in accordance with the typologies contained at Annex B of PPS4. For example, a new District Centre in this location may comprise groups of shops, often containing a supermarket or superstore, and a range of non-retail services, such as banks, building societies and restaurants as well as local public facilities such as a library.
- 7.85 It is envisaged that the Land South of Newark site could deliver approximately 3,000 to 3,500 new homes which equates to a population of 7,080 to 8,260 based on an average household occupancy of 2.36 persons per dwelling. We support the principle of a sustainable District / Local Centre at one or more of the Council's proposed strategic housing land allocations, and capacity figures indicate total convenience floorspace in Newark's Urban Area, above commitments, should be no more than 3,500 sq m net combined (in Newark's Urban Area). Strategic growth opportunities are subject to key drivers and caveats such as population and housing growth, and we recommend that the Council should commission a separate master planning study to consider these issues in more detail once the scale of other uses is more fixed.
- 7.86 We suggest that the Core Strategy should acknowledge that District and Local Centres will be appropriate in the chosen growth point locations to ensure that the new population is served by an appropriate range of local shops and services, and that new retail development will be appropriate
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subject to a range of criteria in accordance with PPS4 including its impact on Newark town centre and existing District and Local Centres.

Newark and Sherwood Retail Hierarchy

- 7.87 PPS4 encourages Local Planning Authorities to define a network and hierarchy of retail centres with particular attention being given to smaller centres which are not identified in the RSS. There is no existing retail hierarchy for Newark and Sherwood although Newark is defined as a sub-regional centre in the RSS. Newark is the dominant centre in the District but there is a network of other centres with varying levels of retail provision, and the Council should seek to ensure that they benefit from adequate policy protection in relation to the scale of retailing considered appropriate in each centre.
- 7.88 For the purposes of retail planning, we recommend that the Council define a clear retail hierarchy in the emerging Core Strategy to assist with development control decisions and to direct future retail floorspace to the most appropriately located centres in the retail hierarchy in accordance with PPS4. Newark is clearly the highest order centre in the District and should be defined as a sub-regional or main town centre at the top of the retail hierarchy. We recommend that Southwell, Ollerton (excluding Boughton), Edwinstowe and Rainworth are designated as District Centres, which are defined in PPS4 as *“usually comprising a group of shops often containing at least one supermarket or superstore, and a range of non-retail services, such as banks, building societies and restaurants as well as local public facilities such as a library”*.
- 7.89 We recommend that the centres of Boughton (excluding Ollerton), Balderton North, Balderton South, Clipstone, Collingham, Blidworth, Farnsfield, Lowdham, Bilsthorpe North, Bilsthorpe South and Sutton-on-Trent are designated as Local Centres. PPS4 defines local centres as including *“a range of small shops of a local nature, serving a small catchment. Typically, local centres might include, amongst other shops, a small supermarket, a newsagent, a sub-post office and a pharmacy. Other facilities could include a hot-food takeaway and laundrette”*.

Table 7.1: Newark and Sherwood District: Suggested Retail Hierarchy and Policy Designations

Centre	Position in Retail Hierarchy
Newark	Sub Regional Centre / Town Centre
Southwell	District Centre
Ollerton	District Centre
Edwinstowe	District Centre
Rainworth	District Centre
Boughton	Local Centre
Collingham	Local Centre
Clipstone	Local Centre

Balderton North	Local Centre
Balderton South	Local Centre
Blidworth	Local Centre
Farnsfield	Local Centre
Lowdham	Local Centre
Bilsthorpe North	Local Centre
Bilsthorpe South	Local Centre
Sutton on Trent	Local Centre
Out-of-Centre Provision	No Designation

Source: GVA Grimley. NB – Designations should be illustrated on the proposals map and town centre boundaries are not the same as ‘Settlement Boundaries’.

Monitoring

- 7.90 We consider that the Council should set out a monitoring framework which follows the guidance in PPS4 and makes provision to regularly update the town centre health checks in the District’s centres; to monitor the scale and location of new development; to monitor key economic trends and update and revisit the capacity projections set out in this study at regular intervals. We also anticipate it will be appropriate to reconsider the network of centres in light of new retail development at strategic housing sites such as Land South of Newark.
- 7.91 In parallel with monitoring the comparison and convenience retail functions, it will be appropriate to monitor the development of other key town centre uses. In particular, leisure uses should be carefully monitored and the delivery of new leisure development should be reconsidered in the period up to 2019. It will also be important to develop annual monitoring of office floor space completions, to establish the annual take-up and location of new office development. Such monitoring will assist in reviewing change and trends and assist longer term planning for the future
- 7.92 Having prepared a detailed audit of current uses in the Council’s centres, we consider that the Council should update this database, ideally on an annual basis to monitor the provision of local services, and to identify where opportunities for new retail and leisure uses are likely to arise as a consequence of population growth and/or the decline of existing facilities.
- 7.93 We anticipate that, based upon this annual monitoring it would be appropriate to revisit the quantitative analysis which underpins this study at regular intervals in order to judge more accurately the long term implications and prognosis for the economy, and the policy strategy and scope for new key town centre development.

Key Recommendations

- Consolidation of Newark town centre's position within the Regional hierarchy. The town centre should not be seeking to compete with larger competing centres such as Nottingham and Lincoln, but should seek to enhance its retail and leisure offer, creating a 'different' retail experience.
- The key challenge for Newark will be to attract new retail and leisure providers, whilst retaining the current provision of small and independent retailers underpinning the character and local distinctiveness of the town. The key priority is to promote Newark to the market in such a way that it can attract some national multiple retailers, particularly higher end fashion operators, to complement existing specialist and niche retailers. Newark should seek to achieve a balanced mix of national multiples, independents, as well as cafés, bars and restaurants within a high quality setting.
- Improved town centre management to address currently relatively high levels of vacancy within the town centre. The appointment of a town centre manager to foster strong working relationships with existing town centre retailers, encourage the introduction of additional multiple retailers that will attract shoppers to the centre and to coordinate the resources of independent retailers.
- Build on the existing high quality shopping environment within the town centre and seek to enhance and improve the streetscape wherever possible. Investment in improved connectivity and linkages between the Potterdyke redevelopment site and the town centre should evolve to capitalise on the expected investment in the Potterdyke area.
- Identify appropriate primary and secondary shopping frontages for the town centre and protect ground floor uses for retail concentration within these areas.
- Retain and support the A3/A4 uses within the town centre and exploit the locational advantages of the Castle Gate and Dobson's Quay area to enhance this offer. The Council should resist any further proliferation of A5 uses within the primary and secondary shopping frontages.
- There is currently a high level of bulky goods leakage to destinations outside of the District and we consider that the Council should explore opportunities to enhance the provision of bulky goods through the development plan process to 'claw-back' this expenditure, but without any detrimental impact on Newark town centre.
- We recommend the Council promote a retail hierarchy, independent of the settlement hierarchy being progressed through the Core Strategy. This should be consistent with the typologies contained at Annex B of PPS4 and be designated on the proposals map.
- The Council should identify potential locations for new local and district centres in and around growth areas, but should not fix floorspace thresholds prematurely and should instead consider appropriateness of scale following consideration of other land uses. New retail floorspace should be of 'local scale' to serve an appropriately defined catchment area.

- Nevertheless, the capacity forecasts identify that Newark's Urban Area could support an additional 3,415 sq m net of convenience goods floorspace by 2019 provided the full extent of envisaged Growth Point population is implemented. All proposals/applications should be considered against the key national retail policy tests.
- Undertake appropriate monitoring work at regular intervals. In particular, the quantitative capacity forecasts should be reviewed and updated to respond to change and economic circumstances to ensure they are robust for longer term planning.