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Greater Exeter Town Centre and Retail Study Part One

East Devon District Council, Exeter City Council,
Mid Devon District Council,
Teignbridge District Council
in partnership with Devon County Council

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Contents

1.	Introduction	1
2.	Planning Policy Context.....	5
3.	Retail and Leisure Trends	14
4.	The Sub-Regional Retail Hierarchy	23
5.	The Health of Defined Town Centres in Teignbridge District	31
6.	The Health of Defined Town Centres in East Devon District	81
7.	The Health of Defined Town Centres in Mid Devon District.....	126

Appendices

Appendix I Study Area Plan

Appendix II Convenience and comparison market share

1. Introduction

Scope and Purpose

- 1.1 This report has been prepared by GVA in a response to an instruction by Teignbridge District Council (TDC), East Devon District Council (EDDC), Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) and Exeter City Council (ECC) ('the Councils') to prepare a Town Centre and Retail Study ('the Study') for the Greater Exeter area. The Greater Exeter Strategic Plan (GESP) is being prepared in partnership with Devon County Council along with the District Councils. The study will provide essential evidence base information to assist the Councils in their preparation of Greater Exeter Strategic Plan, as well as any Local Plans currently being prepared at the district level.
- 1.2 The Councils are starting work on an overall spatial strategy for the Greater Exeter area, with the GESP intended to be a statutory development plan document which sets out the strategic elements of a Local Plan. It will cover the period to 2040. The GESP is likely to provide:
- Vision and objectives for the GESP area;
 - High-level strategies for housing, economic growth, transport and environmental themes;
 - Development distribution;
 - Policies for growth areas and other functional areas;
 - Large development allocations;
 - Strategic infrastructure proposals;
 - Common policies for certain topics.
- 1.3 It is important that town centre retailing policy is considered for the GESP and/or district Local Plans and this Study is intended to act as an evidence base document for the relevant elements of these plans.
- 1.4 As part of the preparation of their own current development plan documents each Council has commissioned, in recent years, their own retail and town centre evidence base studies. These are:
- Exeter: the recently published Exeter and West End of East Devon Retail and Leisure Study (2017)

- East Devon: the East Devon Retail Needs Study and Town Centre Health Check (2008), the East Devon Retail Study Update (2011) and, in relation to the 'West End' of East Devon, the recently published Exeter and West End of East Devon Retail and Leisure Study (2017)
- Mid Devon: the Mid Devon Retail Study (2012)
- Teignbridge: the Teignbridge Retail and Leisure Study (2010)

1.5 This Study is intended to supersede the above studies insofar as they relate to town centre health issues (apart from the 2017 study for Exeter and the west end of east Devon) and the assessment of the need for additional retail floorspace in the main settlements in each of the four Council's administrative areas. This Study has adopted some of the shopping patterns data which was gathered for the Exeter and West End of East Devon Retail and Leisure Study and incorporated it into a wider survey of shopping patterns which has been commissioned for the purposes of this latest Study. Only part of the Exeter and West End of East Devon Retail and Leisure Study (2017) is intended to be superseded by this Study and it will act as a companion document, providing up to date information on the health of Exeter city centre and the various district and local centres across the city, along with advice on site allocations and planning policies for Exeter and the West End of East Devon (including Cranbrook).

1.6 The objectives of this study, as identified in the brief issued by the Councils, are as follows:

- A review of salient retail and town centre trends across the UK in order to set the context for developing a retail and town centre strategy in the GESP;
- A series of town centre health checks covering all of the main town centres in the MDDC, TDC and EDDC administrative areas;
- An updated survey of household shopping patterns covering an area which is sufficiently wide to gather data on convenience and comparison goods
- Assessments of quantitative and qualitative retail floorspace need for each of the main settlements in the ECC, EDDC, TDC and MDDC administrative areas.

1.7 Within the EDDC, TDC and MDDC administrative areas, the main town centres covered by this Study are as follows:

- East Devon: Honiton, Exmouth, Sidmouth, Seaton, Ottery St Mary and Axminster
- Mid Devon: Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton.
- Teignbridge: Newton Abbot, Teignmouth, Dawlish, Ashburton, Bovey Tracey, Buckfastleigh and Chudleigh

1.8 In order to achieve the above aims, the Councils require a comprehensive analysis of retailing and town centre health across the four administrative areas. Accordingly this Study includes the following key components:

- An assessment of the role and function of the main town centres in the four administrative areas in the wider sub-region.
- A detailed assessment of shopping patterns across the GESP area and the wider catchment.
- A review of the health and key characteristics of the main town centres in EDDC, TDC and MDDC administrative areas.
- An assessment of existing shopping patterns and store/centre turnover levels for convenience and comparison goods shopping.
- An assessment of the likely retail expenditure capacity to support new convenience and comparison goods¹ floorspace in the main town centres in the GESP area.

Due to the scale and nature of the project, the Study will be prepared in two parts, with this report comprising Part 1, and a forthcoming report comprising Part 2.

1.9 Key contributors to the above tasks have been a number of items of empirical research. First, the Councils and GVA have commissioned a new bespoke survey of household shopping patterns ('the 2016 household survey') covering the GESP area and extending into surrounding areas. The survey has sought data on shopping patterns for convenience and comparison goods shopping, along with the usage of the main 'town centres'. The results of the 2016 household survey have been used to inform the quantitative assessment of shopping patterns and expenditure flows and the subsequent retail need assessment.

1.10 The second area of empirical research has been in relation to the assessment of the health of the main town centres across the EDDC, MDDC and TDC administrative areas. This exercise has incorporated land use surveys of these defined centres, along with a review of wider health-check indicators and an appraisal of the results of the household survey data, particularly in regard to qualitative issues.

¹ Convenience goods are defined as food and non-alcoholic drinks, tobacco, alcohol, newspapers and 90% of non-durable household goods (Non-durable household goods comprise cleaning materials, kitchen disposables, household hardware and appliances, kitchen gloves, cloths etc and pins, needles, tape measures and nuts and bolts). Comparison goods are defined as all other non-food retail goods (such as clothing, footwear, furniture, carpets, household textiles, home furnishings, electrical goods, toys, games, health and beauty, jewellery, glassware, tableware, pet goods and bicycles).

Contents of Report

- 1.11 The remainder of this report, relating to the stage one work, is structured as follows:
- Section 2 outlines the current local and national planning policy context for retail and leisure development issues in Mid Devon, Exeter, Teignbridge and East Devon, including the existing and emerging retail and town centre strategies, along with current national advice and guidance on the preparation of evidence base documents.
 - In Section 3 we outline the current trends in the retail sector in the UK, including the influence of internet shopping, the role of town centres and retail sector trends.
 - Section 4 outlines the sub-regional context for retailing and town centre across the GESP area including the position of the main 'town centres' in the wider retail hierarchy and the strategies in surrounding areas which could influence the future of shopping in the GESP area.
 - Section 5, 6 and 7 provides our review of the health of the main town centres in Teignbridge, East Devon and Mid Devon. This section also includes a review of the main out of centre retail provision in the local area and committed retail developments.
- 1.12 Part 2 of the work, which will follow the publication of Part 1, will include the following:
- An explanation on the basis for the need assessment for retail floorspace;
 - An assessment of the need for additional retail floorspace in the main settlements across the GESP areas, including an assessment of quantitative retail expenditure capacity and a review of the quality of existing and committed retail floorspace; and
 - A summary of the findings of the study along with a set of recommendations for a retail and town centres strategy for the GESP area.
- 1.13 All plans and statistical information referred to in the text of this report are contained in appendices found at the rear of this document.

2. Planning Policy Context

Introduction

- 2.1 This section of the Study outlines the existing planning policy context, at the local level, which exists across the four administrative areas in the GESP area. This will help to set the context for the consideration of key town centre and retailing issues, including the health of defined centres in each Council's retail hierarchy and the existing retail and town centre strategies.
- 2.2 In addition, this section provides a summary of national policy and guidance within the National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') and the National Planning Practice Guidance ('NPPG'). These provide direction on the issues which should be considered during the preparation of development plans and their associated evidence base, including the approach to assessing town centre health issues and the assessment of need for additional retail uses. The planning policy context for Exeter City Council is contained in the Exeter and West End of East Devon Retail and Leisure Study (2017).
- 2.3 The planning policy context for Exeter City Council is contained in the Exeter and West End of East Devon Retail and Leisure Study (2017).

Teignbridge District Council

- 2.4 Teignbridge District lies to the south and south-west of Exeter, to the north of Torbay and on the western side of the River Exe estuary. At the present time, the current development plan within Teignbridge District comprises the Teignbridge Local Plan 2013-2033 (adopted in May 2014).
- 2.5 Policy S13 is the main strategic policy for retailing and town centres, setting out the retail hierarchy in this part of South Devon. Newton Abbot is at the top of the hierarchy as a 'strategic town centre' followed by Dawlish and Teignmouth as 'significant town centres' and then Bovey Tracey and Chudleigh as 'locally important town centres'. S13 goes on to note that the Council will:
- a) support them as sustainable locations for living, working and activity through the day and into the evening while maintaining the essential retail character of primary shopping frontages;*
- b) support the key role of small scale, local or independent outlets and the sale of local produce as part of their local distinctiveness and character;*

c) promote development in or adjoining town centres of a scale and nature which will enhance their vitality and viability, including the following provision for net comparison goods retail floorspace:

i. Newton Abbot around 11,000 square metres net

ii. Teignmouth around 1,000 square metres net

d) invest to enhance their facilities, environment and economic potential;

e) where possible, and in accordance with the town centres first sequential approach, locate major retail and leisure developments within or on the edge of town centres; and

f) resist the development of new major retail and leisure developments in out of centre locations where they would significantly harm the vitality or viability of a town centre, including those adjoining the plan area.

2.6 The Local Plan also provides a range of development management policies, with EC7, EC8 and EC9 dealing with proposals within defined centres (including within primary and secondary shopping frontages).

2.7 Policy EC6 is entitled 'large scale retail development' and deals with proposals within and outside of primary shopping areas. The policy notes that proposals within defined primary shopping areas will be acceptable in principle provided that:

a) at least 20% of the floor space is in units of less than 280 square metres sales area suitable for independent or locally owned outlets; and

b) where possible, residential, business, retail or other uses are included above ground floor level.

2.8 For proposals outside of the defined primary shopping areas, EC6 requires all of the following criteria to be met:

c) the proposal accords with the sequential approach as follows:

i. if it is within 300 metres walking distance of a town centre there must be no site available within the town centre for the use proposed;

ii. if it is more than 300 metres walking distance from a town centre there must be no site available within or closer to the town centre for the use proposed;

d) any consequential reduction in expenditure within an existing town centre will not prejudice existing, committed and planned town centre investment and will not lead to significant harm to the vitality, viability or range of retail provision of any affected town centre, taking account

of the resilience of the existing town centre, and the cumulative impacts of recent and proposed out of centre retail proposals; and

e) the proposal will not increase overall travel.

2.9 In terms of site specific proposals to accommodate the identified needs:

- Policy TE4 allocates the Brunswick Street/Northumberland Place area in Teignmouth for a mixed use development including 1,000sq m of either comparison goods retail floorspace or commercial floorspace.
- Policy NA9 allocates the Markets area in Newton Abbot for 11,000sq m net comparison goods floorspace, along with residential, leisure, commercial floorspace and car parking provision.

2.10 In addition to the two site specific allocations, the Local Plan also provides the following town centre related policies:

- Policy NA8 outlines a proposal for a town centre masterplan in Newton Abbot, which will deal with transportation and movement issues, along with the delivery of a broader evening economy.
- Policies KS4 and KS5 deal with Kingsteignton town centre, including improvements to the area around the Fountain (KS4) and the redevelopment of the existing Town Council offices (KS5) for other community and complementary uses.
- Policy KK5 outlines that proposals for the enhancement of the village centre of Kingskerswell, including the provision of local shopping, services and other key village centre uses, will be supported once the South Devon Link Road has been completed.
- A mixed use local centre, including shops, is allocated as part of the South West Exeter urban extension (Policy SWE1).
- Policy BT5 indicates that proposals for enhancements, including parking, accessibility and the public realm, will be supported in Bovey Tracey town centre.
- Policy CH8 notes that Chudleigh town centre will be enhanced to provide a high quality town square 'shared space' including parking, traffic calming, and street planting/furniture.

Mid Devon District Council

2.11 The development plan for Mid Devon District currently comprises three elements: the Core Strategy 2026 (adopted in 2007), the Allocations and Infrastructure Development Plan Document (adopted in 2010) and the Local Plan Part 3: Development Management Policies

(adopted in 2013). At present, MDDC is preparing the Local Plan Review: 2013-2033, which was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate in March 2017.

- 2.12 The main retail/town centre policy in the Core Strategy is COR6. It notes that the vitality and viability of Bampton, Crediton, Tiverton and Cullompton will be protected and enhanced by positive management including new shops, homes, offices and other main town centre uses and, outside of these town centres, only permit new retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses which are needed and meet the sequential test.
- 2.13 The Allocations and Infrastructure DPD allocates the following sites for retail-related development:
- Phoenix Lane, Tiverton. 2,400sq m of retail, office or leisure uses.
 - Bampton Street, Tiverton. 900sq m of retail floorspace, to be provided in small units.
 - William Street, Tiverton. 1,000sq m retail and/or office floorspace.
- 2.14 Policy DM16 of the 2013 Development Management Policies DPD outlines the approach to retail and other main town centre use proposals within defined town centres and primary shopping frontages. Policy DM17 outlines the sequence of preferred locations for the sequential test and also the impact policy criteria which need to be addressed for retail and leisure proposals over 500sq m gross.
- 2.15 Draft policy S7 of the Local Plan Review (which follows a similar structure to Policy COR6 of the Core Strategy) indicates that the vitality and viability of Tiverton, Crediton and Cullompton will be maintained and enhanced through positive management including inter alia new shops, homes, offices and other main town centre uses and, outside of these town centres, only permit new retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses which meet the sequential and impact tests in draft Policy DM15 of the Local Plan Review. Draft Policy DM15 outlines the sequence of preferred locations for the sequential test and also the impact policy criteria which need to be addressed for retail, leisure and office proposals over 500sq m gross. The draft Local Plan also includes a policy allocating a large area of land at Junction 27 of the M5 motorway for a retail outlet centre and a leisure destination.

East Devon District Council

- 2.16 The development plan in East Devon District comprises the East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031(adopted in 2016). The Local Plan does not have a specific retail / town centre hierarchy policy although the following towns have a defined Town Centre Shopping Area: Axminster, Budleigh Salterton, Exmouth, Honiton, Ottery St Mary, Seaton and Sidmouth.
- 2.17 In terms of strategies for the existing town centres, the following is provided for:
- Axminster. Promotion of the Webster Garage site and adjoining to support commercial activity, an enhanced public realm and to address traffic congestion.
 - Budleigh Salterton. Giving priority to the enhancement of the environment and promotion of business opportunities in the town centre shopping area defined on the Proposals Map to provide the focus for jobs, shops and tourism.
 - Exmouth. The Local Plan makes reference to the masterplan which has been prepared by LDA Design for EDDC in recent years and paragraph 10.11 of the supporting text makes reference to the redevelopment potential of the London Inn car park, post office and yard, former gas holder on Union Street and builder's merchant on Fore Street. Strategy policy 22 makes reference to significant investment in new retail and commercial facilities in the town centre and the improvement of links between the town centre and seafront through Bath Road.
 - Honiton and Ottery St Mary. Strategy policies 23 and 24 indicate that EDDC will give priority to the enhancement of the environment and promotion of business opportunities in the town centre shopping areas defined on the inset plan to provide the focus for jobs, shops, tourism, leisure and recreation.
 - Seaton. The enhancement of the existing fabric and character of the town, including design improvements and expansion of commercial opportunities in waterfront areas (sea wall and esplanade and harbour and estuary) will underpin Seaton's developing role as a year-round holiday destination. Priority will be given to the enhancement of the environment and the promotion of business opportunities within the Town Centre to improve the attraction of the town for residents, visitors and businesses.
 - Sidmouth. Enhancement of the environment and promotion of business opportunities in the town centre.
- 2.18 Strategy policy 12 outlines the future development of the new community at Cranbrook and notes that the town centre will provide a focal point for retail, business and leisure activities and will be designed to create a vibrant day and night-time economy and will be complemented by a series of smaller neighbourhood centres.

- 2.19 There will also be new neighbourhood centres within the Pinhoe urban extension on the edge of Exeter and the mixed use development at Blackhorse/Redhayes.
- 2.20 There are also a number of development management policies in the second half of the Local Plan and these include:
- Policy E9 encourages retail and non-retail uses in the Town Centre Shopping Areas which add variety and increase activity, subject to a number of conditions.
 - Policy E10 seeks to retain shops in the primary shopping frontages unless non-retail uses would not undermine the retail function, character, vitality and viability of the primary shopping area.
 - Policy E11 outlines EDDC's approach to retail development proposals outside of the defined Town Centre Shopping Areas. This includes the adoption of a sequential approach to site selection (in-centre, then edge-of-centre, then out-of-centre) and the consideration of retail impact issues on proposals outside of Town Centre Shopping Areas over 500sq m.

National Planning Policy and Guidance

- 2.21 The National Planning Policy Framework ('NPPF') was published on 27 March 2012 and sets out the Government's planning policies for England. It replaced a suite of national Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance and some Circulars with a single, streamlined document.
- 2.22 At the heart of the NPPF is a 'presumption in favour of sustainable development', which should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision-taking. The NPPF encourages Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area.
- 2.23 The NPPF continues to recognise that the planning system is plan-led and therefore Local Plans, incorporating neighbourhood plans where relevant, are the starting point for the determination of any planning application. In line with the Government's aim to streamline the planning process, each LPA should produce a single Local Plan for its area with any additional DPDs or SPDs to be used only where clearly justified.

2.24 The NPPF maintains the general thrust of PPS4 (which comprised the previous national planning policy statement on retail and town centre uses). It advocates a 'town centres first' approach, and requires planning policies to positively promote competitive town centre environments and manage the growth of centres over the plan period. In planning for town centres LPAs should:

- Recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality;
- Define a network and hierarchy of centres that is resilient to anticipated future economic changes;
- Define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, based on a clear definition of primary and secondary shopping frontages in designated centres and set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations;
- Promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer which reflect the individuality of town centres;
- Retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones, ensuring that markets remain attractive and competitive;
- Allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of economic development needed in town centres. Where town centre sites are not available, LPAs should adopt a sequential approach to allocate appropriate edge of centre sites;
- Set policies for the consideration of proposals for main town centre uses which cannot be accommodated in or adjacent to town centres;
- Recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres; and
- Where town centres are in decline, plan positively for their future to encourage economic activity.

2.25 The NPPF requires Local Plans to be aspirational but realistic. They should address the spatial implications of economic, social and environmental change and set out opportunities for development and clear policies indicating what will or will not be permitted and where.

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- 2.26 LPAs should ensure that the Local Plan is based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area. These assessments should be integrated and take full account of relevant market and economic signals. LPAs should use the evidence base to assess, inter alia:
- The needs for land or floorspace for economic development, taking account of both quantitative and qualitative requirements for all foreseeable types of economic activity over the plan period, including retail and commercial leisure development;
 - The existing and future supply of land available for economic development and its sufficiency and suitability to meet the identified needs;
 - The role and function of town centres and the relationship between them, including any trends in the performance of centres; and
 - The capacity of existing centres to accommodate new town centre development.
- 2.27 On 6 March 2014 the Department for Communities and Local Government ('DCLG') launched the online National Planning Practice Guidance ('NPPG'), which cancelled a number of previous planning practice guidance documents, including the Practice Guidance on Need, Impact and the Sequential Approach (2009). Although it does not constitute a statement of Government policy, it provides technical guidance on how to prepare a robust evidence base and how to assess the impact of proposals for main town centre uses.
- 2.28 The web-based NPPG resource provides guidance on how to assess and plan to meet the needs of main town centre uses in full through production of a positive vision or strategy for town centres. This strategy should be based on evidence of the current state of town centres and opportunities to meet development needs and support their viability and vitality and should consider:
- The appropriate and realistic role, function and hierarchy of town centres in the area over the plan period. This will be informed by audits of existing centres to assess their role, vitality, viability and the potential to accommodate new development. It should cover a three to five year period, but also take the lifetime of the Local Plan into account and be reviewed regularly;
 - The most appropriate mix of uses in the centre to enhance overall vitality and viability;
 - The potential to expand centres or enable new development or redevelopment of under-utilised spaces to accommodate the scale of need identified for main town centre uses. This should involve evaluating different policy options (for example, expanding the market share of a particular centre) or the implications of wider policy such as infrastructure delivery and demographic or economic change;

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- Appropriate timeframes for provision of new retail floorspace;
 - Complementary strategies that may be necessary or appropriate to enhance the town centre and help deliver the vision for its future; and
 - How car parking provision can be enhanced and both parking charges and enforcement be made proportionate in order to encourage town centre vitality.
- 2.29 The NPPG sets out a range of indicators relevant when assessing the health of town centres over time. These include:
- Diversity of uses
 - Proportion of vacant street level property
 - Commercial yields on non-domestic property;
 - Customer views and behaviour;
 - Retailer representation and intentions to change representation;
 - Commercial Rents
 - Pedestrian flows;
 - Accessibility;
 - Perceptions of safety and occurrence of crime; and
 - State of town centre environmental quality.
- 2.30 When planning for town centres, the NPPG states that LPAs should take full account of relevant market signals and keep retail land allocations under regular review. Where it is not possible or appropriate to accommodate identified capacity in town centre locations, LPAs should plan positively to identify the most appropriate alternative strategy for meeting the need for these main town centre uses, having regard to the sequential and impact tests.
- 2.31 When applying the sequential approach in plan-making, the NPPG states that LPAs should take into account the need for main town centre uses, the supply and demand for land, and whether there are sites which are suitable, available and viable having regard to the nature of the need that is to be addressed. It goes on to note that, if the additional main town centre uses cannot be accommodated in town centre sites, the next sequentially preferable sites should be considered. Finally, the NPPG states that Local Plans should contain policies to apply the sequential test to proposals for main town centre uses that may come forward outside identified sites or locations allocated in the Local Plan.

3. Retail and Leisure Trends

- 3.1 To put our assessment into context and inform our advice on the need for additional retail floorspace in the Greater Exeter area, we have undertaken a review of the current retail market and social trends influencing the retail sector. Our review draws on published data sources, including research by Experian and Verdict.

Economic Outlook

- 3.2 Following the vote to leave the European Union, the Bank of England forecast (in August 2016) that, due to uncertainty, economic activity would weaken and unemployment would rise. It also forecast that inflation would rise about the target of 2% as a result of the depreciation of sterling that has accompanied the referendum result.
- 3.3 However, since August 2016, the Bank of England has reported that indicators of activity and business sentiment have recovered from their lows immediately following the referendum and estimates of GDP growth in the third quarter of 2016 are above expectations. The data suggests that the near-term outlook for activity is stronger than expected with higher growth in household spending and a more resilient housing market. However, by contrast, investment intentions have continued to soften and the commercial property market has been subdued.
- 3.4 The Bank of England expects output growth to be stronger in the near term but weaker towards 2019. This reflects the impact of lower real income growth in household spending and also the uncertainty over future trading arrangements (including the risk that UK-based firms' access to EU markets could be materially reduced, which could restrain business activity and supply growth over a protracted period).

Population Change

- 3.5 The rate at which the UK population is growing is accelerating. Between 1971 and 1991 it increased by just over 0.1% pa, whereas over the subsequent 20 years it increased by almost 0.5% pa. Over the period 2016-26 it is expected to increase by 0.7% pa, or 7.1% in total. This population growth will vary between regions over the next 10 years, with London expected to show the strongest growth (+12%), followed by the East (8.7%), South East (7.9%) and the South West regions (+7.0%). This contrasts with growth of just 4.5% in Yorkshire and Humberside and 3.7% in the North West. Marked disparities can occur between local authorities within the same region, due to differences in housing demand, land availability and local policies.

- 3.6 Advances in healthcare and medicine mean that people are living much longer. It will therefore be increasingly important for Councils to ensure that older consumers are adequately catered for with the right type of facilities in the right locations. The proportion of the population aged over 65 is expected to increase from 17.5% of the total population in 2016 to 19.5% in 10 years' time, a growth rate of 20%, which is more than double the rate of total population growth (7.1%).

Retail Expenditure and Sales Efficiency

Retail Expenditure Growth

- 3.7 Set out below are the latest retail expenditure forecasts from Experian, dated November 2016. They are therefore, pre-referendum figures and should be treated with caution until the next set of forecasts are released by Experian in October/November 2017.
- 3.8 Comparison goods spending is expected to grow at a much higher rate than convenience goods spending over the period to 2035. For comparison goods, expenditure growth per head was 2.3% in 2013, increasing to 7.2% in 2014, 4.6% in 2015 and 3.3% in 2016 according to Experian. Between 2017 and 2025 annual average growth in comparison goods spending is expected to be around of 3% pa. For convenience goods, spending declined every year in real terms between 2007-2016. Experian do not estimate a return to positive expenditure growth until 2021 (+0.2%) and then average growth between 2024-2035 of around +0.1% pa.
- 3.9 To put these forecasts into historical context, comparison goods growth averaged 4.2% pa over the last 40 years, with stronger growth of 5.2% pa over the last 30 years and 5.6% pa over the last 20 years. Convenience goods growth has been much weaker, averaging 0.4% pa over the last 40 years and 0.3% pa over the last 20 years.

Online Spending

- 3.10 The popularity of online retailing continued to grow rapidly over the past decade. Most retailers now have an online presence, thus it is expected that this growth will slow going forwards. It is, however, likely to continue outpacing growth in total retail sales each year from 2014 to 2019, rising from £45.4bn to £67.4bn, an overall increase of 48% .
- 3.11 Internet spending and other forms of sales which are not derived from physical floorspace need to be taken into account when undertaking retail studies. Special Forms of Trading ('SFT'), includes all types of non-store retailing (internet, markets and mail order) and in 2015 was equivalent to 13.4% of total retailing (15.6% for comparison goods and 9.2% for convenience goods). In 2021, Experian predict that non-store sales (SFT) will reach 18.3% of total retail, growing steadily to around 19.6% by 2035.

- 3.12 Not all of non-store sales reduce the need for physical floorspace (for instance click and collect and the fulfilment of many grocery internet orders through local stores). Therefore, to account for this when calculating the effect of SFT on the need for retail floorspace, Experian recommend adjustments of 12.4% for comparison goods and 3% for convenience goods in 2016. These are forecast to rise to 15% and 4.4% respectively by 2021.

Sales Efficiency Growth

- 3.13 The sales efficiency growth rate represents the potential ability of retailers to increase their productivity and absorb higher than inflation increases in their costs (e.g. rent, rates and service charges) by increasing their average sales densities. Applying a turnover 'efficiency' sales density growth rate is a standard approach used in retail planning studies and has been used in this study in accordance with good practice.
- 3.14 Following the weak or negative overall sales growth during the recession and the growth of online shopping, many retailers have struggled to increase or maintain sales density levels and, together with other financial problems, this has led some retailers into administration. As a result sales density growth is now significantly lower than the high rates seen during the boom of the latter half of the 1990s and first half of the 2000s.
- 3.15 The trend towards the demolition of inefficient stores and the provision of more modern stores with higher and more efficient sales densities is expected to result in less scope to increase comparison goods sales densities in the future. Accordingly, Experian expect an efficiency growth rate for comparison goods of 2.3% pa between 2019 and 2023 and 2.2% pa between 2024-2035.
- 3.16 Scope for increased sales densities is even more limited for convenience goods because the majority of foodstores already drive high sales efficiencies. An efficiency growth rate of -0.1% pa between 2019 and 2023 and +0.1% between 2024-2035 is recommended by Experian and these assumptions inform our approach.

Internet Growth & Multichannel Retailing

- 3.17 The online shopping population is reaching saturation, with over 40m online shoppers in the UK expected by 2017. Future growth in the market is likely to come from increased spend driven by new technology and improved delivery options. Changes in technology are driving sales with the expansion of tablet devices which provide a better browsing experience. According to Verdict, in most sectors the average spend per trip is 64.5% higher on a tablet than a laptop/PC.

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- 3.18 Click and collect is forecast to be one of the most significant drivers of growth, with a rise of 62.7% in click and collect purchases expected between 2013 and 2018. The service provides physical retailers with an important benefit over pure internet operators and creates opportunities for making additional purchases when customers collect orders from stores.
- 3.19 The growth in online sales has implications for bricks and mortar stores as it potentially reduces the need for so many outlets. However, trends indicate that online and in-store shopping channels are becoming more blurred as shoppers increasingly research items online or in stores before making purchases. According to Verdict, in 2012 61% of shoppers researched goods online before purchasing in store, and some 38% of customers researched goods in store before buying online.
- 3.20 These trends, combined with the importance of 'click and collect' highlight that physical stores will still have a significant role in the multichannel shopping environment, although their size and format will differ from traditional stores. The advantages of physical stores, in terms of the shopping experience, service and immediacy of products in a showroom setting, will see a network of key stores remain a fundamental component of retailer's strategies to provide an integrated multichannel retail proposition.

Changing Retailer Requirements

Space Requirements

- 3.21 The retail sector has undergone significant changes over the last decade which has fundamentally altered how, where and when we shop. This has had major implications for retailers' space requirements, which combined with the recent recession, has changed the retail landscape of our towns and cities.
- 3.22 During the recession retailers' margins were squeezed, whilst other costs continued to rise and a raft of multiple and independent retailers either collapsed or have significantly shrunk their store portfolios. The decline in the amount of occupied retail space in town centre locations has not typically been offset by new retail developments. Many town centre schemes have been put on hold or significantly scaled down in size, and with 'fairly weak' expenditure growth forecast in the medium term, retailers are expected to remain cautious about store expansion.

- 3.23 The growth of the internet means that retailers no longer need stores in every town to achieve national coverage. Many retailers are therefore focusing their development programmes on the provision of large flagship stores in strategic locations, supported by smaller satellite stores and transactional websites. The larger flagships accommodate full product ranges whilst smaller stores offer more select ranges, supplemented by internet kiosks allowing access to the full range. This offers many advantages to retailers including lower property costs, more efficient logistics and being able to open stores where there is a high level of demand despite there being space restrictions.
- 3.24 Research by Verdict indicates that, in 2009, there were 293,000 stores in 2009 and this is expected to fall to 278,000 in 2016 and then remain relatively constant to 2019. This fall in store numbers was also accompanied by a fall in the amount spent in the UK's high streets, from £110bn in 2009 to £107bn in 2016.
- 3.25 This polarisation of retailing will result in larger dominant centres continuing to attract key retailers (where space is available), with medium sized centres potentially struggling to attract investment. Local, or neighbourhood, centres should be less affected by this trend and are likely to retain their attraction for top-up and day-to-day shopping. In addition to national multiple retailers, all levels of centre in the retail hierarchy accommodate local independent traders. Such traders face pressure from both the internet and national multiples and have found that success lies in being able to offer a product or service not available elsewhere, or a level of customer service which marks them apart from mainstream retailers. Indeed, this level of differentiation can mark a town out as a specialist in a certain area of retailing.

Out-of-Centre Retailing

- 3.26 Retailers are opting to develop stores in the most strategic and cost effective locations, with a notable resurgence of out-of-centre destinations, which offer benefits of lower rents, larger retail units and in most cases, free car parking. According to Verdict, out-of-town retailing is the only form of retailing which has seen store numbers increase between 2004-2014, with a 2.1% increase, against 13% falls for town centres and neighbourhood shops.
- 3.27 Many traditional town centre retailers have developed out-of-town store formats, including John Lewis, who now operate a number of 'At Home' stores in out-of-centre locations, as well as other retailers such as Next (Next Home, Next Home & Fashion) and TK Maxx (TK Maxx and Homesense formats).

The Role of the Town Centre

- 3.28 In recent years much has been made of spiralling vacancy rates in town centres and the pressures the traditional high street is under. While it is true that the changing role of high streets is an issue for retailers and society alike, it is important not to overplay the woes of the channel. High streets remain the most visited locations, with 82.1% of consumers having shopped there in the past 12 months. Moreover, these shoppers visit, on average, more than once a week. Indeed the high street retains many strengths. It is the predominant location of many leading brands.
- 3.29 The challenge is that, as the biggest location, the high street has the most to lose from the growth of new areas particularly neighbourhood, malls and online. It will be the smaller town centres which lose out and particularly those also under pressure from uneconomical rates and rents charges and difficulty providing parking facilities.
- 3.30 With new channels springing up and fighting for a share of shopper spend, some town centres will grow, some will stagnate and some will become smaller or obsolete. However, overall the high street will remain a hugely significant channel for retail for the foreseeable future and one retailers can't afford to blindly dismiss.
- 3.31 An on-going transference of spend from physical locations to online is meaning that retailers are having to change the way they approach each of the physical channels. In many ways, retail parks enjoy the best synergies with the internet. With lower rents and easier access, retail park stores can be used to provide showrooms to complement a retailer's online experience. They are also more practical for fulfilling click and collect orders, and even dispatching stock for home delivery. However, few retailers are yet to exploit this in a way consumers appreciate.
- 3.32 Neighbourhood stores also fit well into a multichannel strategy. They can be used for small, local shops to 'top up' larger online orders and to fulfil click and collect orders although the latter obviously presents some logistical issues.
- 3.33 High streets face the most difficult task in adapting to an 'online world'. In order to survive and thrive they need to focus on what they can offer that's different, such as the enjoyment of the shopping experience, or the ability to physically interact with products and retailer brands.

- 3.34 As retail evolves so do the places where retailers are looking to open stores and expand. Expansion no longer means automatically looking through vacant town centre units. Demand for new neighbourhood stores in ultra-convenient locations, set against a lack of supply, has led to a huge increase in unit change of usage in order to create new retail space. The grocers in particular have re-purposed old pubs, houses and offices. Retail park stores are also changing, with demand for ever larger spaces in reverse. Instead, spaces are being subdivided and sub-let to drive sales per square foot.

Retail Sector Trends

Food and Grocery

- 3.35 The top four supermarkets (Tesco, ASDA, Sainsburys and Morrisons) continue to dominate the market and represent approximately 55% of the total convenience market . Although this has fallen from 59% in 2011.
- 3.36 With vast store networks and online offers, their coverage reached peak levels in recent years. However, combined with weaker spending on convenience goods, the transfer of trade online and the rise of the discounters (ALDI and Lidl), expansion plans have been put on hold and the top four retailers have diverted investment to cutting prices on goods rather than increasing the quantum of floorspace in their larger store portfolios. Indeed, space within some larger format stores is being sub-let to restaurants and other retailers. An example of this is Sainsburys with Argos concessions in a number of its stores.
- 3.37 The development of smaller store formats for top up food shopping has become increasingly popular in response to consumers seeking to reduce waste by moving from weekly shops to more frequent smaller shops. As a result, many of the main operators are expanding their smaller concept stores - Tesco Express, Sainsbury's Local, Little Waitrose, Marks & Spencer Simply Food etc.
- 3.38 The value/discount retailers are continuing to expand, having gained considerable market share during and after the recession. Aldi and Lidl have both succeeded in attracting customers who are looking to trade down in price but not quality, and between 2011 and 2016, Aldi has increased its market share by three and a half times, from 1.9% to 5.3%. Over the same period, Lidl's market share has risen from 1.9% to 2.7%.
- 3.39 Food retailers are also continuing to develop online offers to meet increasing consumer demand for convenient food shopping, much of which is still fulfilled through existing store networks. Click and collect services are expanding into the grocery sector with some retailers developing 'drive-thru' collection points for picking up online orders.

Clothing and Footwear

- 3.40 By 2017, Verdict estimates that the clothing and footwear sector will represent 15.9% of total retail spend (a marginal increase from 15.2% in 2012). The proportion of clothing sales transacted online is expected to rise to just over 20% by 2017 as browsing services improve.
- 3.41 Low levels of consumer confidence in addition to high prices are expected to keep clothing and footwear sales volumes low. Premium and luxury brands will continue to maintain their consumer appeal, whilst growth from value retailers will become more subdued as they seek to ensure their profitability.

Premium and Luxury Goods

- 3.42 More affluent consumers have been able to maintain a higher level of personal and discretionary spending during the recession and therefore the premium and luxury goods sector has remained relatively strong. There is still high demand for premium brands and goods across all retail sectors, from clothing and accessories to high tech items.
- 3.43 In response to this trend, Verdict predict that the premium sector of the UK department store market will account for 43% of total department store expenditure in 2017 as midmarket department stores (e.g. John Lewis, House of Fraser and Debenhams) expand designer and luxury goods ranges.

Electricals

- 3.44 The electrical sector has suffered as a result of the recession as households cut back on 'big ticket' items combined with the shift of spending online. Since 2008 the proportion of electrical spending which takes place online has more than doubled to 43% . Casualties in the sector include Comet and Jessops, along with Best Buy who exited the UK market.
- 3.45 Growth remains strong however for smaller, high tech items such as tablets and premium electrical goods, with retailers such as Apple and John Lewis continuing to do well. There is also demand for 'value' ranges of electrical goods, much of which has been captured by the supermarkets. Over the medium-term at least, sales of big-ticket items are likely to remain subdued.

Homewares

- 3.46 Growth in the more traditional part of the homewares market (such as furniture and floorcoverings) is heavily reliant on the housing market and has been weak in recent years. Growth is expected to remain subdued during 2016/17, but will improve as the housing market strengthens. The softer end of the homewares market (i.e. smaller more decorative items), has been more resilient as consumers look at cheaper ways to refresh their homes.

Music, Video and Books

- 3.47 Technology is removing the need for physical stores as consumers can now download/stream music and films directly. As a result the music and video sector has shrunk significantly with negative growth in retail spending. Over three quarters (78%) of music and video sales are now online and Verdict predicts that by 2017 online sales will account for 90% of the market.
- 3.48 The book sector has been, in recent years, heavily influenced by the growth of e-reader devices (e.g. Kindle), and the sector has been increasingly moving from physical to digital products. By 2018 it is estimated that around three-quarters of book sales will be via the internet although the predicted death of high street book shops has not materialised with Waterstones returning to profit in 2016/17.

Summary

- Economic growth will continue to remain muted over the plan period, with relatively weak expenditure growth in the short-medium term.
- It is evident that the traditional high street faces a number of challenges, not least from the impacts of the recession, including tightening of retail spending and changing consumer behaviour, but also from increasing competition posed by the internet, multichannel retailing and out of centre developments.
- Town centre strategies which support the continued evolution of the high street are considered ever more vital. This may involve providing a high quality shopping 'experience', maximising the benefits of tourist trade, and improving the mix of retail and non-retail outlets to increase length of stay and spend. It will also involve the ability to attract a wider suite of land uses into centres, such as residential and workspace, in order to add vitality throughout the day.
- It will be important for town centres to be well positioned to be able to adapt to on-going changes in the retail and leisure sector over the development plan period and to reaffirm their unique selling points which differentiate their retail offer from other centres.

- The on-going pattern of polarisation suggests that larger centres are well placed to maintain and enhance their offer. However, this is dependent on continued investment to ensure the right mix of retailers and other services.

4. The Sub-Regional Retail Hierarchy

Introduction

- 4.1 In order to set the context for the assessment of town centre health issues and an assessment of current shopping patterns, plus the identification of future needs, we consider it appropriate and useful to review the wider sub-regional retail hierarchy and provide a summary of the retail development strategy in surrounding administrative areas. This will include the remaining parts of Devon, Somerset, western parts of Dorset and Cornwall.

The Retail Hierarchy

- 4.2 Set out below in Table 4.1 is a summary of the ranking of the main settlements in the GESP area in relation to other centres across Devon, Somerset and Cornwall, along with the total floorspace of these centres. The ranking information is taken from the Venuescore database, produced by the Javelin Group, which ranks city and town centres based upon the type and extent of retail provision they contain. We have chosen to compare the latest Venuescore rankings (for 2016/17) with the 2009 rankings. The floorspace information for each centre, where available, is taken from Experian GOAD.
- 4.3 VenueScore is an annual survey compiled by Javelin Group, which ranks the UK's top 2,700+ retail venues including town centres, stand-alone malls, retail warehouse parks and factory outlet centres. VenueScore rankings are based on a consistent, weighted scoring system which seeks to measure the overall attraction of each venue compared to other venues across the country. VenueScore evaluates each centre in terms of its provision of multiple retailers – including anchor stores, fashion operators and non-fashion multiples. The sectors covered include comparison retail, convenience retail and foodservice (e.g. restaurants). The score attached to each operator is weighted to reflect their overall impact on shopping patterns. For instance, anchor stores such as John Lewis and Marks & Spencer receive a higher score than other stores. The resulting aggregate score for each venue is its VenueScore. The VenueScore reflects the presence and importance of multiple retailers trading in each venue, and generally correlates closely with the actual market size of these shopping venues in terms of actual consumer spending. The lower the number, the higher the ranking.
- 4.4 In addition to its Venuescore, each location is assessed in terms of a range of other attributes including:
- Market positioning (i.e. is the offer aspirational or down-market?)

- Age focus (is the offer targeting younger or older consumers?)
- Fashion focus (how dominant is the venue's clothing offer?)
- Fashionability of its offer (is the clothing offer traditional or progressive?)
- Foodservice bias (how strong is the food and beverage offer?)
- Comparison vs. convenience bias
- Anchor strength (how much of the overall score is delivered by major anchors such as department stores, variety stores, supermarkets, etc.)
- Shopping centre vs. high street dominance (is there a powerful mall offer?)

Table 4.1 – sub-regional centre rankings

Centre	VenueScore Ranking 2009	VenueScore Ranking 2016/17	Floorspace (sq m gross)
Exeter	31	22	121,944
Plymouth	28	40	146,870
Taunton	77	90	110,981
Torquay	143	169	73,068
Yeovil	143	160	74,294
Barnstaple	193	197	70,922
Newton Abbot	268	292	56,875
Paignton	530	520	44,825
Exmouth	583	592	33,649
Tiverton	530	558	28,251
Teignmouth	1,152	937	25,037
Bideford	583	1008	39,242
Totnes	1111	1008	31,196
Sidmouth	900	1074	24,563
Kingsbridge	1,475	1044	24,164
Axminster	1,390	1140	14,808
Dartmouth	1111	1233	16,583
Honiton	972	1276	21,757
Brixham	1475	1325	21,005
Seaton	-	1559	19,723
Ottery St Mary	-	2171	10,135
Dawlish	1,754	2566	12,857
Holsworthy	1,754	3133	-
Ivybridge	-	2815	11,650
Cullompton	-	-	14,548
Crediton	1,870	3133	-

Source: VenueScore 2009 and 2015/16 rankings and Experian GOAD

- 4.5 Exeter has improved its ranking over the period 2009-2015/16, from 31st to 22nd in the country (out of 3,439 centres in total). It is now the third highest ranked centre in the South West after Bristol (13th) and Bath (19th) and has overtaken Plymouth as the highest ranked centre in Devon.
- 4.6 There is a considerable gap between Exeter and the next highest ranked centre in the GESP area which is Newton Abbot which is ranked 292nd. This is a slight fall from the town's 2009

ranking (268th). The other two Teignbridge towns within the Venuescore rankings are Teignmouth and Dawlish. Table 4.1 indicates a noticeable improvement in the ranking of Teignmouth and a noticeable fall for Dawlish.

- 4.7 The only town in Mid Devon which has data for both 2009 and 2016/17 in the Venuescore rankings is Tiverton. Table 4.1 above indicates that there has been a small fall in the ranking from 530th in 2009 to 558th in 2016/17.
- 4.8 The highest ranked centre in East Devon is Exmouth which has seen its ranking decline slightly from 583rd in 2009 to 592nd in 2016/17. In terms of the other main centres in East Devon within the Venuescore rankings, there is a mixed picture, including an improvement for Axminster but a fall in the ranking of Sidmouth and Honiton.

The Wider Sub-Region

Plymouth, South Hams & West Devon

- 4.9 The local authorities of Plymouth, South Hams and West Devon are located on the western edge of the GESP area and the three Councils have also decided to work together to produce a Joint Local Plan. When adopted, the Joint Local Plan will guide the provision of new housing and employment development along with infrastructure provision and policies to manage future development.
- 4.10 The focus for retail development proposals in this area in recent years has been Plymouth where the City Council has, in its Core Strategy, indicated that it wishes to see new district centres at Derriford (in the north of the city) and Weston Mill (in the west of the city). In addition, there is an adopted Area Action Plan ('AAP') for the city centre which allocates several sites for a significant amount of retail development (as part of mixed use schemes). However, given that the AAP was prepared several years ago, the City Council are currently undertaking a review of the strategy for the city centre and a City Centre Masterplan has recently been published. Elsewhere in Plymouth other notable retail and leisure development commitments include a large Next Home & Fashion store at Marsh Mills and a leisure development (including multi-screen cinema and food/drink uses) at the Bretonside Coach Station site.

Torbay

- 4.11 In December 2015, Torbay Council adopted the Torbay Local Plan which will guide development in the Borough up to 2030. The area comprises the three settlements of Torquay, Paignton and Brixham and the Local Plan identifies the following opportunities in the town centres of each settlement:
- Torquay town centre: mixed use development of the Lower Union Street and Town Hall car park areas.
 - Paignton town centre: mixed use redevelopment of the Crossways Shopping Centre, Victoria Square multi-storey car park, along with development at Hyde Road, the harbour and Station Lane.
 - Brixham town centre: redevelopment of the Middle Street car parking area to provide food retail, residential, car parking and smaller retail unit shops².

² A previous planning application for a Tesco supermarket on this site has not been pursued.

- 4.12 Recent proposals for supermarkets at Babbacombe Road and Edginswell Business Park have been refused at appeal whilst planning permission has been granted for retail uses at White Rock Business Park and bulky goods retail uses at Devonshire Park, both in Paignton. A Range store has also opened on Babbacombe Road in Torquay.

North Devon & Torridge

- 4.13 North Devon and Torridge Councils are preparing a joint Local Plan which has been submitted for Examination (with the Examination hearings closing in December 2016). The draft Local Plan proposes a four-tier centre hierarchy, with Barnstaple defined as a 'sub-regional centre', followed by Bideford as a 'strategic centre'. The lower levels of centre are 'main centres' (Braunton, Great Torrington, Holsworthy, Ilfracombe and South Molton) and 'district centres' (Appledore, Northam, Roundswell and Westward Ho!).
- 4.14 Within Barnstaple, the two key proposed retail development allocations are Queen Street / Bear Street within the town centre (for a mixed use redevelopment) and, outside of the town centre, at Anchorwood Bank for inter alia 6,000sq m of net retail floorspace. The Anchorwood Bank site has previously been subject to planning permissions for retail, leisure and residential development in recent years and an ASDA supermarket has recently opened on this site.
- 4.15 Within Bideford, a number of regeneration sites are proposed to be allocated, including East-the-Water Wharfs (mixed use development, including retail uses), Livestock Market (leisure and recreation uses), the Pill (commercial and leisure uses), Bridge Street car parks (retail and residential development). Elsewhere in Bideford, planning permission has also been granted for new Lidl and ALDI foodstores and an extension to the Atlantic Village outlet shopping centre.
- 4.16 Within Holsworthy, the cattle market site at Under Lane is proposed to be allocated for mixed use development, including a new foodstore. Planning permission has previously been granted for a Tesco supermarket on this site. Delivery of this redevelopment is linked to the provision of a new cattle market facility elsewhere in the Holsworthy area.

Cornwall

- 4.17 Cornwall Council ('CC') adopted their Local Plan Strategic Policies document in November 2016. The Strategic Policies document will be supported in due course by an Allocations Development Plan Document and Neighbourhood Plans. As such, the Local Plan Strategic Policies document does not allocate specific sites and Policy 4 of the plan provides an all-encompassing policy dealing with support for the 'town centre' retail hierarchy in Cornwall, and policy criteria for dealing with retail proposals located outside of the 'town centre' retail hierarchy and also change of use proposals within 'town centres'. In addition, Policy 4 is supported by a schedule setting out the levels of retail floorspace capacity for convenience and comparison goods shopping in each of the main settlements in Cornwall (based upon a retail study undertaken by GVA in 2015).
- 4.18 The levels of retail floorspace capacity set out in the supporting text are influenced by a number of planning permissions for retail development across Cornwall, which have been supplemented by further retail commitments granted permission after the completion of the 2015 retail study. These include: two large scale comparison goods developments adjacent to the A30 in Hayle, partial redevelopment of the Kingsley Village retail complex at Fraddon, Higher Trewhiddle Farm in St Austell and a number of retail commitments in Truro and Threemilestone (including Truro City FC, Willow Green Farm, Maiden Green Farm and West Langarth).

Taunton Deane

- 4.19 The development plan in Taunton Deane comprises three documents: a Core Strategy, the Taunton Town Centre Area Action Plan ('AAP') and the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan 2016.
- 4.20 The Core Strategy, adopted in 2007, sets out the strategic planning context for the Borough and Objective 3 is to enhance the role and function of Taunton town centre in the retail hierarchy through the promotion of regeneration opportunities. Policy CP3 outlines the amount of convenience and comparison goods floorspace which should be provided for in Taunton town centre, Taunton's urban extensions, in Wellington and the rural areas. CP3 indicates that 60,100sq m of new comparison goods retail floorspace should be provided for in Taunton alone, although it should be noted that this was based upon an evidence base which has now become rather out-dated.

- 4.21 At the same time as preparing the Core Strategy, the Taunton Town Centre AAP was also prepared. The AAP took the broad retail floorspace capacity guidelines from the Core Strategy and allocated them to specific sites in Taunton town centre. The key retail development allocations in the AAP include the Firepool area, the Coal Orchard area, the existing Tesco and Morrisons supermarket sites, along with land at High Street and East Street.
- 4.22 Within the Site Allocations and Development Management Plan, which was adopted in December 2016, there are a suite of policies which are designed to manage retail and other main town centre use proposals within and outside of the various defined retail frontage/area designations:
- Policy TC1 outlines the land uses which are preferred in the primary retail frontages and sets out a series of criteria for assessing individual proposals.
 - Policy TC2 deals with proposals in the secondary retail frontages.
 - Policy TC4 indicates a requirement for the application of the sequential and impact tests for retail proposals falling outside of the defined primary shopping areas.
 - Policy TC5 is the main development control policy dealing with proposals lying outside of the defined primary shopping areas, including the need to consider the sequential and impact tests, along with connectivity and accessibility issues and the range of retail goods which should be sold.
- 4.23 The Site Allocations and Development Management Plan provides for the provision for mixed use local centres within the large mixed use allocations at Cromeytrowe and Staplegrove
- 4.24 In recent years there have been a number of planning applications for retail development in Taunton, including a mixed use development scheme at Firepool, a new ALDI foodstore on Bridgwater Road and the conversion of the former Homebase DIY store to a mixed comparison goods The Range store.

South Somerset

- 4.25 The South Somerset Local Plan 2006-2028 was adopted in March 2015 and comprises the development plan for South Somerset District. Policy EP9 sets out the retail hierarchy for the District, with Yeovil identified as the 'principal town centre' followed by Chard, Crewkerne, Ilminster and Wincanton as 'market towns'. Ansford/Castle Cary, Langport/Huish Episcopi and Somerton are identified as 'district centres' and Bruton, Ilchester, Martock, Milborne Port, South Petherton and Stoke sub Hamdon are 'local centres'.

- 4.26 Policy EP10 outlines the amount of additional convenience and comparison goods floorspace to be provided in Yeovil up to 2028 whilst policies EP11 and EP12 outline the District Council's approach to the application of the sequential and retail impact tests (including the applicable thresholds for the assessment of impact in the different settlements across the District). There are few references to site specific retail development opportunities in South Somerset's main settlements, although the ones which are mentioned are the extension to the Quedam shopping centre in Yeovil town centre³ and the Boden Street area in Chard town centre. In addition, in late 2016, Sainsburys announced plans for a new supermarket in Yeovil, with a planning application expected in 2017.

West Dorset

- 4.27 West Dorset and Weymouth & Portland Council have prepared a joint Local Plan and this was adopted by both Councils in 2015. Policy ECON4 of the Local Plan sets out the general approach to the management of retail development and development proposals in town centres. The Local Plan outlines a number of key town centre / retail projects, including a comprehensive strategy for Weymouth town centre (including the preparation of a masterplan), the identification of the Charles Street area in Dorchester town centre for significant new retail development and land off Trinity Street for a future expansion of Dorchester town centre. Land at Rope Walks and the coach station car park is identified for a future expansion of Bridport town centre, whilst the Newland car parks are identified for the future expansion of Sherborne town centre.

³ A planning application for the extension to the shopping centre was submitted to SSDC but was withdrawn before it could be determined in 2013.

5. The Health of Defined Town Centres in Teignbridge District

Introduction

5.1 This section provides an assessment of the health of existing 'town centres' across Teignbridge District and also a review of existing retail provision outside of the formal retail hierarchy. In line with the contents of the project brief for this Study, the seven main 'town centres' which have been assessed are:

- Newton Abbot (including Kingsteignton)
- Teignmouth
- Dawlish
- Ashburton
- Bovey Tracey
- Buckfastleigh
- Chudleigh

5.2 The NPPG outlines the following indicators which should be used to assess town centre health:

- Diversity of uses
- Proportion of vacant street level property
- Commercial yields on non-domestic property
- Customers views and behaviour
- Retailer representation and intentions to change representation
- Commercial rents
- Pedestrian flows
- Accessibility
- Perception of safety and occurrence of crime
- State of town centre environmental quality

5.3 Where suitable information regarding the above indicators is available, this has been used to guide our assessment of the health of the defined town centres. Given the size of the centres surveyed, there is no reliable information retail rents and yields.

Newton Abbot Town Centre

Structure of the centre

- 5.4 Newton Abbot is the largest defined town centre in Teignbridge District. The adopted Teignbridge Local Plan shows the centre as relatively linear in nature, extending from east to west along Queen Street, Courtenay Street, Union Street, Market Square and Market Walk, Bank Street and the eastern part of Wolborough Street. The Local Plan also defines a primary shopping area and primary and secondary retail frontages. The defined primary shopping area includes most of the retail properties in the town centre boundary but excludes the eastern end of Queen Street.
- 5.5 The primary retail frontage extends along Bank Street, Courtenay Street, the western part of Queen Street and the Market Walk Shopping Centre. The secondary frontages extend along Union Street and the eastern part of Queen Street.
- 5.6 The adopted Local Plan includes four allocations which relate to sites/areas in the town centre. These are:
- Policy NA8: outlines a proposal for the production of a masterplan for the town centre which should be designed to address issues such as car parking, movement around the town centre, new mixed use development, the evening economy and access to the River Lemon.
 - Policy NA9: proposes the redevelopment of the markets area for 11,000sq m of comparison goods floorspace, additional leisure and commercial floorspace, 120 dwellings, an enhanced public realm and some short stay car parking.
 - Policy NA10: this area lies on the western edge of the town centre boundary and is known as the Bradley Lane opportunity area. The main focus for this policy is to provide employment generating land uses, including 15,000sq m of Class B uses, community and public uses, at least 170 new homes and seek to retain retail buildings that make a positive contribution to the physical environment and mix of uses on the site.
 - NA12: located on the north-eastern edge of the town centre boundary, Policy NA12 allocates the Cricketfield area for a potential transport hub and the focus for sports, leisure and community facilities. The policy notes that the leisure uses should exclude commercial leisure uses such as cinema, bingo and bowling alley uses. The policy also indicates that this site might accommodate comparison goods uses post 2021 subject to an assessment of the need and the impact on the delivery of development in the cattle market and market walk areas.

Diversity of Uses

5.7 In order to analyse the diversity of land uses in Newton Abbot town centre over recent years, we have obtained land use data from Experian GOAD. Data has been obtained for 2011, 2014 and 2016 and GVA has undertaken a survey of the town centre in August 2016 in order to bring the data up to date. The land use data for these three years is shown in Table 5.1 below.

5.8 To clarify, the terms used within the table below are defined within the Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note (November 2016) as follows:

- Convenience goods: low-cost, everyday items that consumers are unlikely to travel far to buy. Defined as food and non-alcoholic drinks, tobacco, alcohol, newspapers and 90% of non-durable household goods.
- Comparison goods: all other retail goods (including, but not limited to: clothes, electrical and household goods, furniture, booksellers etc.)
- Service: including leisure services such as recreational and sporting services, restaurants, cafes, bars, hairdressing salons, financial services.
- The columns of the table identify the number of units, the percentage of those units compared to the overall number of units within the centre, and the percentage average for the UK as a whole for comparison.

Table 5.1: land use profile of Newton Abbot town centre, 2011-2016

Sector	2011			2014			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	18	6.5	8.6	17	6.2	9.0	23	8.0	9.4
Comparison	124	44.6	41.5	127	46.0	40.4	118	42.7	39.5
Service	100	36.0	35.1	107	38.8	37.0	110	39.1	37.9
Other	6	2.2	1.2	8	2.9	1.2	6	2.2	1.2
Vacant	30	10.8	13.7	17	6.2	12.4	18	8.0	12.2
Total	278	100	100	276	100	100	275	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

- 5.9 Table 5.1 indicates that there has been a rise in the number of convenience goods retailers in Newton Abbot town centre between 2011 and 2016, from 18 to 23. Throughout this period the proportion of convenience goods retailers remained below the national average although the proportion in Newton Abbot rose at a faster rate than the rise in the national average. As a consequence, the proportion of convenience goods retailers in the centre in 2016 is closer to the national average than in 2011.
- 5.10 Whilst there was a small rise in the number of comparison goods retailers in the town centre between 2011 and 2014, a fall occurred between 2014 and 2016. Despite this fall, the proportion of comparison goods retailers in the town centre remains slightly above the national average at 42.7% (compared with the national average of 39.5%).
- 5.11 The number of service uses in the town centre increased by around 10% between 2011-2016 and throughout this period the proportion of service uses has remained above the national average.

Retailer Representation

- 5.12 Within the convenience goods retail sector, the largest retailer is ASDA which occupies a supermarket in the western part of the town centre. The store extends to 3,698sq m net and sells a wide range of convenience goods along with a reasonably wide range of comparison goods products. The store is served by a large surface level car park with circa 500 spaces.
- 5.13 Other convenience goods retailers in the town centre include an Iceland frozen foods store on Courtenay Street. The store extends to 471sq m net sales and is likely to appeal primarily to top-up shopping trips. The remaining convenience goods retailers in the town centre are local independent traders including convenience stores, an off licence, butcher, fishmonger, a greengrocer, baker and two health food shops.
- 5.14 Within the comparison good sector, there are a number of national multiple retailers including Wilko, New Look, Poundland, Carpetright, Waterstones, Boots, WH Smith, Peacocks, Marks & Spencer and Argos. In addition, there is a local department store, Austins, which occupies a number of premises towards the western end of Courtenay Street and Wolborough Street.
- 5.15 Overall, outside of Exeter, Newton Abbot has the widest range of comparison goods retailers in the GESP area. Our updated land use survey indicates that the proportion of retailers in the following categories is above the national average: furniture/carpets/textiles, electrical goods, chemists/toiletries/opticians, jewellers/clocks and charity/pets/other comparison goods. Conversely, the proportion of clothing stores in the town centre (5.8%) is below the national average of 9.7%.

5.16 Within the service sector, the town centre accommodates a number of the national high street banks and building societies including HSBC, Halifax, Natwest and Lloyds. Apart from Costa and Wetherspoons, a large majority of service uses are local independent traders with a range of cafes, restaurants and takeaways. There is a reasonably large concentration of take-away and restaurant uses at the eastern end of Queen Street and a general absence of food and service uses from the pedestrianized section of Courtenay Street. In terms of the proportions of the different types of service uses, most are in general conformity with the corresponding national averages, such as restaurants/cafes, banks/building societies and health/beauty uses. The only sector where there is a noticeable difference to the national average is estate agents, where the proportion is 5.1% compared to a national average of 4.0%.

Out-of-Centre Retail Provision – Newton Abbot/Kingsteignton

5.17 Within the wider Newton Abbot and Kingsteignton area there are a number of out-of-centre retail stores. In relation to foodstores and supermarkets, there are the following:

- There is a large Tesco supermarket, extending to 3,954sq m net sales area, located on Newton Road between Newton Abbot and Kingsteignton and close to Newton Abbot racecourse. The store provides a wide range of convenience goods and a large comparison goods offer. The store is served by a partially decked customer car park and a petrol filling station.
- A short distance to the north of the Tesco store is a Lidl foodstore, along on Newton Road in Kingsteignton. The store has a net sales area of 1,000sq m, with around 80% of the sales area devoted to the sale of convenience goods.
- The other large supermarket in the Newton Abbot area is Sainsburys, which is located adjacent to the Penn Inn roundabout at the junction of the A380 and A381. The store has a net sales area of 2,887sq m and sells a wide range of fresh, frozen and pre-packaged convenience goods, along with a reasonably large range of comparison goods.

5.18 Other out-of-centre non-food units comprise:

- There are Homebase and B&Q DIY stores, located in Kingsteignton and Newton Abbot respectively. The B&Q is located on Jetty Marsh Road and has a gross floor area of circa 3,000sq m. The Homebase is located on Greenhill Way in Kingsteignton and has a gross floor area of circa 3,500sq m and includes an Argos store within its premises.
- Newton Road Retail Park is located in Kingsteignton and contains three separate retail units: Matalan (2,415sq m gross), Brantano (743sq m gross) and Halfords (9743sq m gross). The retail park is served by a surface level car park capable of accommodating circa 150 vehicles.

- The most recent addition to the stock of out-of-centre retail floorspace in the Newton Abbot / Kingsteignton area is Newton Abbot Retail Park which opened in 2012. The retail park contains five Class A1 retail units and a separate Costa Coffee unit of circa 150sq m. The five retailers present at the retail park are: Next (1,254sq m), Boots (697sq m), Hobbycraft (1,077sq m), Pets at Home (697sq m) and Home Bargains (1,050sq m). The Next and Hobbycraft stores have mezzanine floors.

5.19 A further out of centre retail facility is the Trago Mills shopping complex, which is located to the north-west of Newton Abbot close to the A38. Trago Mills sells a very wide selection of non-food goods, including furniture, craft, stationery, books, electrical, DIY, gardening, electrical, pet, home furnishing and clothing/footwear goods, along with cafes. The site also includes a reasonably large Co-op convenience store comprising approximately 2,048 sq.m gross floorspace.

Vacancies

5.20 Table 5.1 indicates that the number of vacancies in Newton Abbot town centre has decreased over the period 2011-2016 from 30 in 2011 to 18 in 2016. At the present time, the number of vacant units in the centre comprise 8% of all retail units which is lower than the national average of 12.2%.

Accessibility

5.21 For those visitors travelling to Newton Abbot town centre by car, there are a number of large off-street car parks available including:

- Venture Court (long stay) – 93 spaces
- Newfoundland Way (short stay) – 190 spaces
- Wolborough Way (long stay) – 116 spaces
- ASDA (short stay) – 500 spaces
- Livestock Market (long stay) – 190 spaces
- Halcyon Road (short stay) – 115 spaces
- Multi-storey car park (long stay) – 296 spaces
- Cricketfield (long stay) – 341 spaces

5.22 Bus stops are located in different parts of Newton Abbot town centre although there is a particular concentration along Sherborne Road. Bus stops are also located at Highweek Way, Queen Street and, on the edge of the town centre, at Station Road and Kingsteignton Road. The stops at Sherborne Road are visited by regular services up to every 20 minutes to Exeter, Torquay⁴, Paignton, Brixham, Dawlish, Teignmouth, Bovey Tracey and Totnes. Some of the services also visit the bus stops on Highweek Way, railway station and Queen Street, whilst a number of long distance coach services also stop at the railway station⁵.

5.23 Newton Abbot's railway station lies on the eastern edge of the town centre and is a five minute walk to from the primary shopping area. It is served by local services between Exeter, Paignton and Exmouth and a number of long-distance services to Cornwall, Plymouth, Bristol, London and the north of England.

Customer Views & Behaviour

5.24 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Newton Abbot town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.

5.25 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is able to attract approximately 46% of all first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 14c residents (the zone in which the town centre lies). In relation to the other zones surrounding the town centre (14a, 14b, 14d and 14e) the town centre's first choice main food market share is 2%, 18%, 15% and 28% respectively.

5.26 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is also a popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 32% for zone 14c, and 31%, 22% and 25% for zones 14b, 14d and 14e respectively.

5.27 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that over half (52%) of zone 14c residents use the town centre, and 13% of zone 14b, 10% of zone 14d and 32% of zone 14e use the centre for this type of shopping.

5.28 Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts food shopping trips from outside the immediate shopping catchment area, in particular zones 2a and 13c.

⁴ Including The Willows in Torquay

⁵ Services visiting London, Penzance, Huddersfield

- 5.29 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Newton Abbot. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table shows that zone 14c is able to command a strong market share across all comparison goods categories, although it is particularly successful in relation to non-bulky comparison goods. For example, over 91% of all health and beauty shopping trips from the zones covering Newton Abbot's core catchment area (14c) flow to the town centre, as well as 88% of all books, CD and DVD shopping trips.
- 5.30 Whilst not as high as health and beauty and books and CD/DVDs, the town centre is also reasonably successful in attracting shopping trips in relation to other comparison goods. For example, zone 14c attracts a market share of 66% for glassware, tableware and jewellery, and 51% for clothes, footwear and other fashion goods. Unsurprisingly, the worst performing sectors for the town centre are DIY and household goods/appliances.

Pedestrian Flows

- 5.31 During the course of completing this study and the health check assessment of Newton Abbot, we have observed the different levels of pedestrian flow throughout the town centre. The highest levels of pedestrian activity were recorded to be around Courtney Street, Market Walk and the western end of Queen Street. There are also reasonably high levels of activity between the ASDA supermarket and the western part of the core retail area.

Environmental Quality

- 5.32 The central part of Newton Abbot has a high quality well planned structure to its townscape, with a number of key buildings and public spaces. The buildings provide continuous frontages along a number of the key streets and their location at the back of the pavement provides for a distinct and enclosed public realm. Queen Street and Courtenay Street both have a strong Victorian appearance, with Queen Street directly connected to the arrival of the railway in Newton Abbot in the 1840s.
- 5.33 Buildings within the core retail area are generally three storeys reducing down to a mixture of 2/3 in the more peripheral areas. Within this area, many of the buildings have a strong character, although the appearance of the Market Square area is a detracting influence whilst the adjacent multi-storey car park is at a greater height than adjoining buildings and does not provide a complementary relationship.

5.34 Overall, the physical attractiveness of Newton Abbot town centre makes an important contribution to its wider attractiveness to shoppers and visitors. The centre has a strong pattern of historic buildings, planned vistas and structure planting. However, there are some areas where improvements can be made and these include some of the pedestrian spaces across the centre, reducing the dominance of vehicles in Queen Street and improving the appearance of the multi-storey car park.

Occurrence of Crime

5.35 In order to understand the occurrence of crime within Newton Abbot town centre, we have obtained data from Devon & Cornwall Constabulary. This is shown in Table 5.2 below for the period October 2015-September 2016 and is broken down by crime type:

Table 5.2 – crime types in Newton Abbot town centre (October 2015 – September 2016)

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	197
Bicycle theft	1
Burglary	12
Criminal damage	37
Drugs	14
Other crime	4
Other theft	35
Possession of weapons	3
Public order	15
Robbery	0
Shoplifting	91
Theft from the person	11
Vehicle crime	2
Violent offences	95

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

5.36 Table 5.3 below shows the trend in total crimes per month over the October 2015-September 2016 period.

Table 5.3 – crime month-by-month in Newton Abbot town centre

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	59
August 2016	43
July 2016	41
June 2016	37
May 2016	42
April 2016	35
March 2016	59
February 2016	40
January 2016	39
December 2015	49
November 2015	29
October 2015	44

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

Summary

- 5.37 Newton Abbot is the largest town in Teignbridge District and shows good levels of vitality and viability. The proportion of convenience goods retailers has increased over the past few years but remains slightly below the national average. The largest convenience goods retailer is ASDA, which attracts both main and top-up food shopping trips, and helps the centre to attract around half of first choice local main food trips and half of all local top-up food trips. The town has an above average representation of comparison and service retailers, and Newton Abbot has the widest range of comparison goods retailers in the GESP area outside of Exeter. In addition, the vacancy rate remains below the national average, which is a sign of the continuing popularity of the town centre as a location for retailers to do business.

Teignmouth Town Centre

Structure of the centre

- 5.38 Teignmouth is the second largest town in Teignbridge with a population of around 15,300. Its town centre is located to the south of the town, close to the seafront and the mouth of the river Teign. The Teignbridge Local Plan identifies the key issues which face Teignmouth as high house prices, out-commuting, flood risk in the town centre and physical constraints to growth such as topography. The town's strengths include its coastal location, commercial port, mainline railway station and the quality of the local environment which attracts tourists and visitors to the local area.
- 5.39 The Local Plan proposals map provides four separate boundaries for the town centre:
- Town Centre. Covering a large area from The Den and Powderham Terrace in the south, to the junction of Quay Street and Exeter Road in the west, along Exeter Road to Lower Brimley Road to the north-east and then along French Street and southwards along the seafront.
 - Primary Shopping Area ('PSA'). The PSA extends westwards along Wellington Street from its junction with Station Road and then along the majority of Bank Street, along with the northern parts of Somerset Place and Den Road.
 - Primary Shopping Frontage. The primary retail frontage extends westwards along Wellington Street from its junction with Station Road and then along Bank Street up to its junction with Somerset Place.
 - Secondary Shopping Frontage. The secondary frontages extend along Teign Street, Somerset Place, Northumberland Place, Station Road, Waterloo Street and Regent Street.
- 5.40 The adopted Local Plan includes a number of allocations which relate to sites/ areas in the town centre. These include:
- Policy TE4: Regeneration proposals for Brunswick Place and Northumberland Place. Including 1,000sq m. of comparison retail or commercial floor space, replacement car parking provision, supporting national cycle routes and improvements to walkways and seating.
 - Policy TE5: Marina Facility at Polly Steps: An area within close proximity of the town centre, providing parking, satisfactory design and public access facilities.

Diversity of Uses

5.41 In order to analyse the diversity of land uses in Teignmouth town centre, we have examined data from Experian's recent land use surveys in the centre (from 2011 and 2014) and undertaken our own updated assessment in August 2016. Table 5.4 below shows the land use data for the three assessment years:

Table 5.4: land use profile of Teignmouth town centre, 2011- 2016

Sector	2011			2014			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	24	11.7	8.6	19	9.0	9.0	20	9.4	9.4
Comparison	91	44.4	41.5	97	45.8	40.4	97	45.8	39.5
Service	69	33.7	35.1	76	35.9	37.0	75	35.4	37.9
Other	2	1.0	1.2	2	0.9	1.2	2	0.9	1.2
Vacant	19	9.3	13.7	18	8.5	12.4	18	8.5	12.2
Total	205	100	100	212	100	100	212	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

5.42 Table 5.4 indicates that there has been a fall in the proportion of convenience goods retailers between 2011 and 2016 (although there was a small rise between 2014 and 2016). This fall has led the proportion of convenience goods retailers in Teignmouth town centre to match the national average in 2016, following an above average proportion in 2011.

5.43 There was a rise in the number of comparison goods retailers between 2011 and 2016 from 91 to 97. The proportion of comparison goods retailers has remained above the national average throughout this time period. The proportion of comparison goods retailers continued to rise in Teignmouth town centre whilst the national average continued to fall. The proportion of comparison goods retailers was therefore closer to the national average in 2011 than 2016.

5.44 The proportion of service uses in the town has increased from 2011. However, Table 5.4 indicates that during this time period the proportion of service uses has remained below the national average.

Retailer Representation

- 5.45 Within the convenience goods retailers sector, Waitrose is the largest retailer in the northern part of the town centre. This store, which is accessed from Higher Brook Street, has a net sales area of 1,635sq m and is served by a surface and underground car park. The store was opened in 2014, taking over from a second Co-op store in the town.
- 5.46 Other convenience goods retailers in the town centre include a Co-operative food store on Bank Street (356sq m net) along with a number of independent butchers, bakers and grocery stores, plus a Holland and Barrett health food store.
- 5.47 Within the comparison goods sector, there are a small number of national multiple retailers including M&Co, Boots, Peacocks Clothing, Specsavers and Superdrug, along with a number of nationally known charity shops such as Oxfam, Cats Protection and Sue Ryder. Within the independent sector there are a number of household goods shops, clothing and footwear retailers, along with retailers who cater for tourists/visitors to the town (including antiques and gift shops). In terms of comparisons with national averages, the proportion of clothing and footwear stores is commensurate with the national average whilst the proportion of gift, arts, crafts and stationery stores is double the national average.
- 5.48 Within the service sector, a number of national high street banks are found within the town centre, including Barclays bank and Lloyds Bank on Wellington Street, and Natwest bank on Den Road. Additional nationally recognised service retailers include Costa and Subway, on Bank Street and Wellington Street respectively. Within the service sector the proportion of café, restaurant and take-away retailers is slightly above the national average, whilst the proportion of estate agents is below average.

Out-of-Centre Retail Provision

- 5.49 Within the Teignmouth area there are a number of out-of-centre retail stores, including:
- Morrisons, Teignmouth Road. This store is located on the western edge of the town and was opened in 2013. The store has a net sales area of 1,902sq m and is served by circa 280 surface level customer car parking spaces. The store accommodates a wide selection of fresh and pre-packaged convenience goods and a small comparison goods offer. A key rationale for the granting of planning permission for this store was to stem the level of leakage of convenience goods shopping trips from Teignmouth to Torbay and Newton Abbot.

- Tesco Express. Located between the town centre and the Morrisons supermarket is a small Tesco Express store on Bitton Park Road. This store is attached to a petrol filling station and sells a modest range of convenience goods. There is also a small off-street parking area for customers.
- Wyevale Garden Centre, Bishopsteignton. Located approximately two miles west of Teignmouth town centre, the garden centre sells gardening goods, furniture, clothes and has a café on site.

Vacancies

5.50 Table 5.4 indicates that the number of vacancies in Teignmouth town centre has decreased between 2011 and 2016. The proportion of units vacant within the town centre in 2016 comprised of just fewer than 9%, remaining below the national average in 2016 of 13%. This combines with a significant improvement in the town's VenueScore rating over the same period, as regeneration in the town continues.

Accessibility

5.51 For those visiting the town centre by car, there are a number of parking off-street facilities available around the town centre as identified below. There are also a number of on-street spaces throughout the centre and there is generally a high demand for these spaces, particularly during peak periods and the summer months:

- Brunswick Street (short stay) - 56 spaces
- Teign Street (short stay) – 63 spaces
- Eastcliffe (long stay) – 157 spaces
- The Point (long stay) – 225 spaces
- Quay Road (long stay) - 171 spaces
- Polly Steps (long stay) – 60 spaces

5.52 Bus stops can be found in various location in the town centre. These include along Esplanade, Wellington Street, Den Road and Orchard Gardens. A number of services from the town centre also stop at the railway station. Additionally, there are a number of bus stops located along the main Exeter Road. There a number of services which link the town centre to different parts of Teignmouth, whilst longer distance services visit Dawlish, Paignton, Exeter, Torquay and Newton Abbot. There is also a daily service to South Devon College in Paignton. A small number of National Express coach services stop on Dawlish Road to the north-east of the town centre.

5.53 Teignmouth's railway station is situated to the north of the main town centre, less than a five minute walk from the primary shopping area. Frequent local trains run between Exmouth, Exeter and Paignton. A smaller number of services also run to Plymouth, Cornwall, Bristol, London and Manchester.

Customer Views & Behaviour

5.54 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Teignmouth town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.

5.55 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is able to attract approximately 20% of all first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 14a residents (the zone in which the town centre lies), with the majority visiting the out of centre Morrisons store on Newfoundland Road (53%). In relation to the other zones closest to the town centre (2d and 14d) the town centre's first choice main food market share is 3% and 4% respectively.

5.56 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a more popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 28% for zone 14a, with approximately 19% of the market share going to the out of centre Morrisons store.

5.57 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that 40% of zone 14a residents use the town centre, and 45% use the out of centre Morrisons. 5% of zone 2d and 3% of zone 14d use the town centre for this type of shopping.

5.58 Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts limited food shopping trips from outside the immediate shopping catchment area.

5.59 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Teignmouth. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table shows that zone 14a commands a limited market share across the comparison goods categories, although it is reasonably successful in relation to a few. For example, 58% of all health and beauty shopping trips from the zones covering Teignmouth's core catchment area (14a) flow to the town centre, as well as 44% of all books, CD and DVD shopping trips, and 15% of household appliances.

5.60 Table 2 indicates that the majority of residents within Teignmouth's core catchment tend to do their comparison goods shopping at either Exeter City Centre or Newton Abbot town centre.

Pedestrian Flows

- 5.61 During our visits to Teignmouth town centre, we observed pedestrian flows through the centre. The highest areas of pedestrian activity were observed to be the western end of Wellington Street and along Bank Street. More moderate levels of activity were recorded around Regent Street and Teign Street, whilst lower levels of activity were observed along the secondary shopping street of Northumberland Place. The comparative levels of pedestrian activity observed during our visits broadly match the 2010 Retail and Leisure Study.

Environmental Quality

- 5.62 Teignmouth town centre lies on land reclaimed from the River Teign estuary and the sea, leading to it occupying naturally low ground levels and thus susceptible to flooding. Records of the town date back to 1044, although the town grew rapidly during the 19th century as a sea-side resort. Due to this rapid expansion, many parts of the town have a unified and elegant character. Buildings around the Den and Den Promenade are grand in scale and high quality and provide an attractive backdrop to the sea front and pier. Indeed, many other parts of the town centre are also attractive, including around the Triangle, Wellington Street, Den Road and Bank Street.
- 5.63 Within the main retail area of the centre, buildings are generally three storey in height and provide a good sense of enclosure to the surrounding streets. Bank Street is pedestrianized and provides a pleasant pedestrian environment. The other streets are shared between traffic and pedestrians and, whilst the pavement areas vary in width, they generally provide a pleasant environment for visitors to the centre. Trees and other vegetation in a few parts of the centre also add to its attractiveness.

Occurrence of Crime

- 5.64 In order to understand the occurrence of crime within Teignmouth town centre, we have obtained data from Devon and Cornwall Police Constabulary. This is shown in Table 5.5 below for the period between October 2015 and September 2016, and is broken down by crime type:

Table 5.5 – crime types in Teignmouth, October 2015-September 2016

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	114
Bicycle theft	1
Burglary	19
Criminal damage	23
Drugs	4
Other crime	0
Other theft	19
Possession of weapons	0
Public order	8
Robbery	0
Shoplifting	30
Theft from the person	3
Vehicle crime	3
Violent offences	42

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police

5.65 Table 5.6 shows Data from Devon and Cornwall Police has been obtained in order to understand the occurrence of crime in Teignmouth town centre. Table 5.1 below shows data from the period of October 2015 to September 2016.

Table 5.6 – crime types in Teignmouth town centre, October 2015- September 2016

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	18
August 2016	30
July 2016	39
June 2016	26
May 2016	16
April 2016	28
March 2016	22
February 2016	9
January 2016	16
December 2015	21
November 2015	13

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police

Summary

5.66 Teignmouth is the second largest town centre in Teignbridge after Newton Abbot and is situated within an attractive local environment which attracts a good number of tourists and visitors to the local area. The town centre’s proportion of convenience goods retailers is currently directly in line with the national average and the centre benefits from a Waitrose, Co-op and a number of independent traders. The centre attracts around one fifth of first choice main food shopping trips from the local area, with a higher proportion of trips flowing to the out of centre Morrisons. The centre is more popular for top-up food shopping but again has a lower market share than Morrisons. The proportion of comparison goods retailers falls above the national average and includes a small number of national multiple retailers. The centre’s market penetration for comparison goods shopping is relatively low, although performs well in the health and beauty and CDs/books sectors. The vacancy rate for the centre remains below the national average and therefore Teignmouth’s vitality and viability continues to be reasonably strong given its size and function.

Dawlish Town Centre

Structure of the centre

- 5.67 Dawlish is the third largest town within the Teignmouth district, lying on the coast to the north of Teignmouth and midway between the mouths of the Teign and Exe estuaries. The town grew rapidly during the 19th century as it became popular as a sea side resort, with the centre of the town, around Dawlish Water, being reclaimed.
- 5.68 The Teignbridge Local Plan proposals map defines the town centre boundary as encompassing an area of land from Park Street in the north, Regent Street and Town Tree Hill in the west, Plantation Terrace in the south and along the sea front to the east. There is also a defined primary shopping area, divided into two parts. The larger of the two parts, in the northern part of the centre, includes the Strand, Piermont Place, Queen Street and Park Road. The southern part lies along the southern edge of Brunswick Place.
- 5.69 The adopted local plan includes the following allocations that relate to sites/areas in the town. These are:
- Policy DA9: Improving connectivity within Dawlish town. Including improvements to car parking facilities, walking and cycling routes, and improvements to public transportation.
 - Policy DA12: Regeneration; improving areas such as the Strand and the Lawn within Dawlish town centre, improvements to access to the beach from seafront; replacements to seating and kiosk features within the public realm with the enhancement of civic space.

Diversity of Uses

Table 5.7: land use profile of Dawlish town centre, 2011-2016

Sector	2011			2014			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	15	13.5	8.6	15	13.4	9.0	15	13.8	9.4
Comparison	37	33.3	41.5	37	33.0	40.4	40	36.7	39.5
Service	50	45.1	35.1	47	42.0	37.0	47	43.1	37.9
Other	1	0.9	1.2	2	1.8	1.2	2	1.9	1.2
Vacant	8	8.1	13.7	11	9.8	12.4	5	4.6	12.2
Total	111	100	100	112	100	100	109	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

- 5.70 Table 5.7 indicates that throughout the period of 2011 to 2016 the number convenience goods retailers within the centre has remained the same at 15. This comprises around 13%-14% of all retail units in the town centre, meaning that Dawlish has a higher than (national) average proportion of such uses.
- 5.71 Between 2013 and 2016, the number of comparison goods retailers rose from 37 to 40, following a static level of provision between 2011 and 2013. In 2016 the proportion of comparison goods retailer in Dawlish town centre stood at 36.7% which is below the national average of 39.5%. Indeed, throughout the assessment period, Dawlish has had a proportion of comparison goods retailers which has remained below the national average although the increase in comparison retailers is in contrast to the national trend.
- 5.72 The number of service sector retailers decreased from 50 to 47 during the period 2011-2013, then continued to remain at the same level between 2013 and 2016. Throughout this time period the proportion of service sector retailers remained above the national average, although the decrease in the proportion of service uses in the town centre is in contrast to an increase in the proportion of such uses in town centres nationally.

Retailer Representation

- 5.73 At present, there are no large convenience goods retailers within Dawlish town centre. There are a number of smaller convenience stores along the primary frontages of the town centre. These include Co-op and One Stop convenience stores located on The Strand and a Costcutter convenience located on the corner of Queens Street and High Street. There are also a number of small independent convenience goods retailers, including a butcher, grocery stores, a greengrocer and a health food shop.
- 5.74 Within the comparison goods sector there are, unsurprisingly, due to the volume of visitors to Dawlish, a high number of gift shops. There are also a number of clothing/fashion stores, (small) electrical goods stores and a selection of charity shops. However, when compared to the national average, Dawlish is under-provided for in terms of clothing, furniture, textiles, book, arts/crafts and jewellery stores, whilst it has a higher than average proportion of gifts, sports/hobbies and charity shops. All comparison goods retailers are local independent traders, apart from a Boots located on The Strand.
- 5.75 Within the service sector there is only one national high street bank, Lloyd's, which means that the proportion of financial institutions (1% of all retail units) in Dawlish are well below the average (3.9%) for this type of provision in town centres nationally. The majority of service based retailers in Dawlish town centre are independent businesses, and a high proportion are café, restaurant and take-away uses. There are also a number of health and beauty related businesses and a proportion of estate agencies which is slightly above the national average.

Out-of-Centre Retail Provision

- 5.76 The only significant out of centre retail store in the Dawlish area is a Sainsburys supermarket located on Exeter Road. This store opened in 2011 and has a net sales area of 2,065sq m. Around three quarters of the store's sales area are devoted to the sale of convenience goods, including fresh, frozen and pre-packaged goods. The store is served by a large surface level car parking area and a petrol filling station.

Vacancies

- 5.77 Table 5.7 indicates that the number of vacant units within Dawlish town centre increased between 2011 and 2013 from 8 to 11, before decreasing to 5 in 2016. Throughout this period the proportion of vacancies in the centre remained below the national average and the 2016 vacancy level is now less than half of the national average. This indicates that whilst there have been changes in the number of convenience, comparison and service uses in the town centre over the past several years, most properties are re-occupied, indicating that there is a good demand from the business sector for shop premises in the town centre. There are no particular concentrations of vacancies in the centre. However, the centre's VenueScore rating has decreased over the same period.

Accessibility

- 5.78 For those visiting Dawlish by car, there are a number of off-street car parking facilities available. These are:
- Barton Hill (long stay) – 245 spaces
 - The Strand (short stay) – 21 spaces
 - Sandy Lane (long stay) – 85 spaces
- 5.79 There are also a number of on-street spaces throughout the centre and there is generally a high demand for these spaces, particularly during peak periods and the summer months.
- 5.80 A number of bus stops are located along the main shopping streets of Dawlish, including The Strand, Queen Street, The Green and Exeter Road. These are visited by services such as those linking to Exeter, Newton Abbot, Torquay, Paignton and Newton Abbot, and also a circular service linking the town centre with Sainsburys and Dawlish Warren.
- 5.81 Dawlish train station is located at the eastern edge of the town centre, between the shops and the seafront. The station has a surface level car parking area and is served by trains running along the Exeter to Plymouth Line. Frequent local trains run between Exmouth, Exeter and

Paignton. A smaller number of services also run to Plymouth, Cornwall, Bristol, London and Manchester.

- 5.82 The Exe estuary cycle route also ends in Dawlish, and connects to Exeter and Exmouth. The Dawlish section has only recently been completed and is currently less popular than the Exeter, Exmouth and Powderham sections so far.

Customer Views & Behaviour

- 5.83 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Dawlish town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.
- 5.84 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is able to attract approximately 8% of all first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 2d residents (the zone in which the town centre lies), with the large majority visiting either the out of centre Sainsburys store on Exeter Road (47%) or out of centre Morrisons on Newfoundland Road in Teignmouth (14%).
- 5.85 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a more popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 20% for zone 2d, with approximately 19% of the market share going to the out of centre Sainsbury's store on Exeter Road to do their second choice main food shop.
- 5.86 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that 42% of zone 2d residents use the town centre and 45% use the out of centre Sainsburys.
- 5.87 Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts a very limited number of food shopping trips from outside the immediate shopping catchment area, primarily in the form of top up food shopping from zones 2e and 4a (just over 1% market share from each zone).
- 5.88 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Dawlish. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table shows that zone 2d commands a limited market share across the comparison goods categories, except for health and beauty goods, which achieves a 79% market share. In addition, Dawlish draws a reasonable market share for books, CDs and DVDs (27%), household appliances (19%), and DIY equipment (15%).
- 5.89 Table 2 indicates that the majority of residents within Dawlish's core catchment tend to do their comparison goods shopping in either Exeter City Centre or Newton Abbot town centre.

Pedestrian Flows

- 5.90 As part of our visits to Dawlish town centre for this Study, we have observed the comparative levels of pedestrian flow around the centre. We have found that the consistently highest level of flow is along The Strand. This is unsurprising given the concentration of shops, services and other visitor attractions in this part of the centre. Beyond The Strand, we observed a relatively even flow across the rest of centre, which became noticeably busier in the summer months and school holidays. These areas include Brunswick Place, the route from Barton Hill car park and around The Lawn.

Environmental Quality

- 5.91 As noted at the start of this section, the character and appearance of Dawlish today owes much to its development as a sea side resort during the 19th century. The central part of the town centre, now known as The Lawn (formerly The Pleasure Grounds) is a man-made feature as a result of the channelling of Dawlish Water. It creates a parkland setting, enhanced by a number of mature trees.
- 5.92 The Lawn is surrounded by 2-3 storey buildings which provide an appropriate setting and sense of enclosure. The quality of buildings throughout the town centre is generally good and there are clear signs of on-going maintenance and investment. The Strand and Brunswick Place contain many of the listed buildings in Dawlish, and the railway station (which was constructed as part of Brunel's South Devon Railway line) is also listed.
- 5.93 Whilst there can be a significant amount of traffic moving through the town centre, its impact is controlled by The Strand and Brunswick Place being one-way streets with on-street parking. This has the effect of slowing vehicle speeds and making pedestrian movement around the centre easier. Pavement areas in the centre vary in width and can become over-capacity during the summer months.
- 5.94 The South Devon railway line is also an important characteristic of the appearance and function of the town centre. The railway line and station create a visual barrier between the main part of the centre and the seafront. However, its location is undoubtedly a positive contribution to the aesthetics of the centre and the railway line does not pose a complete barrier between the centre and the seafront.

Occurrence of Crime

- 5.95 In order to understand the occurrence of crime within Dawlish town centre, we have obtained data from Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary. This is shown in Table 5.8 below for the October 2015- September 2016 and is broken down by crime type:

Table 5.8 – crime types in Dawlish town centre, October 2015- September 2016

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	153
Bicycle theft	1
Burglary	4
Criminal damage	19
Drugs	2
Other crime	3
Other theft	12
Possession of weapons	2
Public order	11
Robbery	1
Shoplifting	8
Theft from the person	5
Vehicle crime	3
Violent offences	25

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

5.96 Table 5.9 below shows the trend in total crimes per month from October 2015 to September 2016

Table 5.9 – crime month-by-month in Dawlish, October 2015-September 2016

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	26
August 2016	34
July 2016	31
June 2016	29
May 2016	24
April 2016	16
March 2016	16
February 2016	21
January 2016	10
December 2015	13
November 2015	13
October 2015	16

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

Summary

5.97 Dawlish benefits from a good mix of independent retailers across the diversity of uses. The overall proportion of convenience goods retailers in the centre is above the national average although the centre has historically struggled to retain a large proportion of main food shopping trips due to the size of stores present. This remains the case, although the level of leakage of trips from the town as a whole has reduced following the opening of the out of centre Sainsbury's. However, the Sainsbury's also now has a higher market share for top-up food shopping trips than the town centre. In addition, the proportion of comparison goods retailers falls below the national average and there is a general lack of national multiple retailers present within the centre, especially in the fashion/clothing category. In keeping with the seaside tradition, there is a good representation of restaurants, cafes and take away outlets in the town, and the vacancy rate has dropped significantly over the past 5 years, which is a positive sign.

Ashburton Town Centre

Structure of the centre

- 5.98 The town of Ashburton lies within Dartmoor National Park, 9 miles to the west of Newton Abbot and 3 miles to the north of Buckfastleigh. The town is characterised by its fine historic architecture and outstanding surrounding views of Dartmoor National Park. Located alongside the A38 Devon Expressway, the town enjoys good vehicular links with other parts of South Devon. The town centre lies in the south west of the town, although its precise boundary is not defined on Dartmoor National Park Authority's ('DNPA') Development Management and Delivery Development Plan Document ('the DMD').
- 5.99 Therefore, for the purposes of our health check, we have made our own definition of the centre which includes West Street, East Street and North Street. This matches the area covered by Experian GOAD's regular land use surveys of the town centre. Due to the size of Ashburton town centre, a formal primary shopping area definition, which differs from the town centre boundary, is not warranted in our opinion.
- 5.100 There are no specific land use allocations for Ashburton within the DMD. However, Section 3.2 of that document notes that Ashburton has a vibrant town centre although there is a strong feeling that traffic congestion, along with limited public parking, is a threat to the health of the centre. Paragraph 3.2.3 of the DMD notes that there is no possibility of extending the current car park at North Street, although the redevelopment of the cattle market has the potential to provide some additional parking provision.

Diversity of Uses

- 5.101 In order to analyse the diversity of land uses in Ashburton town centre, we have used Experian GOAD's land use surveys from 2011 and 2014 and have supplemented this with our own survey in August 2016. Table 5.10 below shows the land use data for these three years:

Table 5.10: land use profile of Ashburton town centre, 2011-2016

Sector	2011			2014			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	13	17.3	8.6	11	14.1	9.0	12	14.1	9.4
Comparison	31	41.3	41.5	38	48.7	40.4	39	48.7	39.5
Service	23	30.7	35.1	23	29.5	37.0	20	29.5	37.9
Other	2	2.7	1.2	2	2.6	1.2	2	2.6	1.2
Vacant	6	8.0	13.7	4	5.1	12.4	4	5.1	12.2
Total	75	100	100	78	100	100	77	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

5.102 Table 5.10 indicates that there has been a small fluctuation in the number of convenience goods retailers between 2011 and 2016. The number of retailers fell from 13 to 11 between 2011 and 2014 and then rose slightly to 12 units by the time of our survey in 2016. Despite this small change, the proportion of convenience goods retailers in Ashburton town centre has remained well above the national average.

5.103 There has been an increase in the number of comparison goods retailers within the town centre, from 31 in 2011 to 39 in 2016. Most of this rise occurred during the period 2011-2014, which coincided with a drop in vacancies and convenience goods retailers. This increase in comparison goods retailers meant that by 2014/6 Ashburton had a proportion (48.7%) higher than the national average (39.5%).

5.104 In contrast, Table 5.10 indicates that the number of service uses in the town fell between 2014 and 2016, from 23 to 20. Throughout the period 2011-2016, the proportion of service uses in the centre remained below the national average.

Retailer Representation

5.105 Within the convenience goods sector there are Co-op and Spar convenience stores, along with a good selection of local independent traders including a newsagent, delicatessens, two butchers, an off-licence, a baker and a health food store. In combination, whilst these traders might not be able to satisfy a good proportion of main food shopping needs, they provide a wide selection of convenience goods and provide a particularly attractive feature for the town centre.

5.106 Within the comparison goods sector, retailers include a number of antiques and furniture/homeware retailers, along with clothing/fashion retailers and jewellers. The high number of antiques and arts/crafts retailers is the reason why the proportion of comparison goods retailers

in Ashburton is higher than the national average. Indeed, apart from the furniture and arts/crafts categories, the proportion of retailers in all other comparison goods categories are below their respective national averages.

- 5.107 Within the service sector, Ashburton town centre accommodates one national high street bank Lloyds, on East Street, having recently lost Natwest (also on East Street). Other service uses are independent retailers, including a number of cafes, restaurants, hair and beauty salons and two estate agents.

Vacancies

- 5.108 Table 5.10 indicates that the number of vacancies within Ashburton centre has decreased between 2011 and 2016 from 6 to 4. Throughout this time period, the proportion of vacancies in Ashburton town centre has continued to remain well below this national average (5% in 2016, compared with the national average of 12%). There are no particular concentrations of vacancies in the centre and only four vacancies in the centre indicates that there is a good level of demand for commercial premises in the centre of Ashburton.

Accessibility

- 5.109 The main off-street car parking area in Ashburton is at Kingsbridge Lane, which provides 138 spaces. This is a pay and display facility. As noted above, off-street parking in Ashburton is in short supply, due to the historic nature of the centre, and is an important issue for businesses in terms of attracting visitors to the town centre. There is a small amount of on-street parking on North Street and East Street, however it is in short supply.
- 5.110 In terms of public transport accessibility, there are bus stops located on North Street and West Street. Bus services visiting these stops include a regular town service around Ashburton and two services travelling to Exeter, Paignton, Totnes, Ivybridge, Buckfastleigh, Bittaford and Plymouth.
- 5.111 There is not a train station in Ashburton.

Customer Views & Behaviour

- 5.112 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Ashburton town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 1 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.
- 5.113 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is able to attract approximately 16% of all first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 13c residents (the zone in which the town centre lies), with most visiting either the Asda in Newton Abbot town

centre (19%), or the out of centre stores of Tesco on Newton Road in Kingsteignton (15%) or the Lidl on Newton Road (13%).

- 5.114 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a more popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 31% for zone 13c. 23% of residents within zone 13c are drawn to the Tesco on Newton Road, and 17% of the market share is going to the Asda in Newton Abbot.
- 5.115 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that Ashburton plays a much more important top-up role, with 82% of zone 13c residents using the town centre for this type of food shop.
- 5.116 Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts a negligible number of food shopping trips from outside the immediate shopping catchment area of zone 13c, which suggests the centre only really supports local residents.
- 5.117 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Ashburton. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table shows that Ashburton plays a limited role in terms of comparison goods shopping, even for its immediate shopping catchment.
- 5.118 Zone 13c commands a limited market share across the comparison goods categories, with the highest market share being attributed to health and beauty goods (66%), followed by recreation and luxury goods (26%) and books, CDs and DVDs (25%).
- 5.119 Table 2 indicates that the majority of residents within Ashburton's core catchment also tend to do their comparison goods shopping in either Exeter City Centre or Newton Abbot town centre.

Pedestrian Flows

- 5.120 As Ashburton is a small centre, there is little variation in pedestrian flow across the different parts of the centre. The busiest area is North Street, due to the identity of retailers and other businesses which are present and also the proximity of the Kingsbridge Lane car park.
- 5.121 There are no dedicated pedestrian crossings in the town centre, although the presence of on-street car parking and traffic congestion does reduce vehicle speeds. The pavement areas in the centre are, in places, narrow due to the historic nature of the centre, although the quality of pavement areas is generally good.

Environmental Quality

- 5.122 All of Ashburton town centre lies within a Conservation Area which was designated in 1971 and the physical structure of the town has been influenced by its setting close to the River Ashburn and the configuration of the valley sides that rise steeply around it. Apart from some modern demolitions in the Kingsbridge Lane and North Street area, the town centre largely retains many 18th and 19th century buildings. Buildings are situated at the back of pavement, creating a tightly knit enclosed urban form and an attractive town centre environment. Most buildings in the town centre are listed and are 2/3/4 storey's in height. Unlike some other historic town centres in Devon, shopfronts in the centre are largely unspoilt by modern changes and additions and there is evidence of on-going maintenance and investment by landlords and tenants. Overall, the quality of the built environment is a key positive attribute for Ashburton town centre, making it one of the most distinctive town centres in South Devon.

Occurrence of Crime

- 5.123 In order to understand the occurrence of crime within Ashburton, we have obtained data from Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary. This is shown in Table 5.11 below for the period October 2015- September 2016 is broken down by crime type:

Table 5.11 – crime types in Ashburton, October 2015 – September 2016

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	13
Bicycle theft	0
Burglary	4
Criminal damage	13
Drugs	0
Other crime	0
Other theft	3
Possession of weapons	0
Public order	2
Robbery	0
Shoplifting	7
Theft from the person	0
Vehicle crime	3
Violent offences	9

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

5.124 Table 5.12 below shows the trend in total crimes per month between October 2015 and September 2016.

Table 5.12 – crime month-by-month in Ashburton, October 2015 and September 2016

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	5
August 2016	3
July 2016	7
June 2016	8
May 2016	5
April 2016	6
March 2016	7
February 2016	3
January 2016	2
December 2015	3
November 2015	1
October 2015	4

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

Summary

5.125 Ashburton’s land use profile identifies the town centre has a high collective of convenience and comparison retailers, and the centre as a whole is dominated by smaller independent retailers largely due to the size and shape of the majority of retail units. Food shopping is dominated by top-up shopping trips and there is a generally low level of retention of comparison goods trips from local residents. With regard to the services sector, these are generally tailored towards the tourist customers with a predominance of cafes and restaurants. The vacancy rate remains particularly low which suggests the centre continues to perform well albeit with a limited catchment.

Bovey Tracey Town Centre

Structure of the centre

- 5.126 Bovey Tracey lies on the edge of Dartmoor where the River Bovey leaves the moorland valley to cross Bovey Heath. As defined by the Teignbridge Local Plan proposals map, the town centre lies reasonably central to the town and is centred upon Fore Street. The Local Plan provides four different designations, including a small area of primary shopping on the eastern side of Fore Street close to its junction with Abbey Road. The secondary shopping frontage designation extends along the full length of Fore Street from Town Hall Place in the north to Bovey Bridge in the south. There are also town centre and primary shopping frontage designations. Both cover similar areas to the secondary shopping frontage, although the primary shopping area stops at 20 Fore Street, whilst the town centre boundary extends across a greater area and includes the Methodist Church.
- 5.127 The Teignbridge Local Plan includes a number of proposals for the town centre. These include:
- Policy S19 supports town centre enhancements including improvement to public realm, improved traffic management, creation of a town square, and a new Information Centre and public toilets.
 - Policy BT5: Enhancements to the town centre, including parking, accessibility and the public realm.

Diversity of Uses

- 5.128 In order to analyse the diversity of land uses in Bovey Tracey town centre we have obtained data from Experian GOAD from their land use surveys in 2011 and 2014 and also undertaken our own updated assessment in August 2016. Table 5.13 shows the land use data for these three years:

Table 5.13: land use profile of Bovey Tracey town centre, 2011-2016

Sector	2011			2014			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	7	14.6	8.6	7	14.0	9.0	7	15.2	9.4
Comparison	18	37.5	41.5	17	34.0	40.4	18	39.1	39.5
Service	20	41.7	35.1	22	44.0	37.0	19	41.3	37.9
Other	1	2.1	1.2	1	2.0	1.2	2	4.4	1.2
Vacant	2	4.2	13.7	3	6.0	12.4	2	4.4	12.2
Total	48	100	100	50	100	100	46	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

5.129 Over the period 2011-2016, the number of properties within retail use within Bovey Tracey town centre has fluctuated. In 2011, there were 48 properties and this rose to 50 in 2014. However, by the time of our survey in 2016, the number of retail uses had fallen to 46.

5.130 Table 5.13 indicates that there has been no change to the number of convenience goods retailers in Bovey Tracey town centre between 2011 and 2016. Throughout this period the proportion of convenience goods retailers in the town centre (15% in 2016) has continued to remain above the national average (9% in 2016).

5.131 Whilst there was a smaller decline in the number of comparison goods retailers in the town centre between 2011 and 2014, 2011 levels were regained in 2016. In 2016 there were 18 comparison goods retailers in the town centre, which is equivalent to 39.1% of all surveyed retail units. This is commensurate with the national average (39.5%).

5.132 The number of service uses in the town centre rose between 2011 and 2014, from 20 to 22, and then fell to 19 in 2016. Despite this recent fall the proportion of service uses within the town centre has continued to remain above the national average, which is an indication of the important service role that the centre has for the local community.

Retailer Representation

5.133 The two largest convenience goods retailers in the centre of Bovey Tracey are Tesco Express and Spar⁶. The Tesco Express store extends to around 160sq m net, whilst we estimate the Spar to have a net sales area of circa 100sq m. Both stores sell a modest range of convenience goods,

⁶ Since the survey was undertaken a Co-op has opened on Fore Street

catering primarily for top-up food shopping trips. Other convenience goods retailers include a number of independent retailers including a butcher, two greengrocers and a delicatessen.

- 5.134 Within the comparison goods sector, all are local independent traders, apart from a Lloyds pharmacy. Retailers include a small number of clothing stores, a pet shop, a number of charity shops, a hardware store and an antiques store.
- 5.135 Within the service sector, Bovey Tracey is another settlement included within this study which has recently lost its Natwest bank. The only remaining bank within the centre is a Lloyds. Other service uses include a laundrette, hair and beauty salons, a small selection of cafes and takeaways, plus a small number of estate agents. In terms of the proportions of these service uses, restaurants, cafes and takeaways are below the national average, whilst health/beauty uses and estate agents are above the national average.

Out-of-Centre Retail Provision

- 5.136 Outside of the town centre, Bovey Tracey also has a small number of retail uses. These include a Co-op convenience store within a Texaco petrol filling station. This is located at the southern edge of the town, on the main route in to the town from the A38. In addition, there is a small industrial area on Pottery Road situated to the south of the town centre which comprises a number of car garages and the House of Marbles which is a manufacturer of toys and games and which also incorporates a retail shop and cafe. There is also a small format M&S Simply Food located at the BP garage on Newton Road/Bovey Straight.

Vacancies

- 5.137 Table 5.13 indicates that the number of vacancies in Bovey Tracey town centre between 2011 and 2014 was low, with 2 vacancies in 2011, 3 vacancies in 2014 and 2 in 2016. Throughout this period, the proportion of vacancies in the centre has remained one third of the national average, indicating a good level of demand for retail premises in Bovey Tracey. The most notable vacancy at the time of our 2016 survey was the former Natwest bank premises within the primary shopping area.

Accessibility

- 5.138 For those visiting Bovey Tracey town centre via private car, there are a number of car parking facilities, including:
- Mary Street (long stay) – 62 spaces
 - Station Road (long stay) – 129 spaces
 - Methodist Church (long stay) - 78 spaces

- 5.139 Due to the historic nature of the town centre and the topography around the centre, these car parks are a fairly lengthy walking distance from the core retail area. As a consequence, the modest number of on-street parking spaces on Fore Street are usually in high demand
- 5.140 Bus stops in Bovey Tracey are in three main locations: Town Hall Place, at the junction of Fore Street and Abbey Road and at the southern end of Fore Street close to the Methodist church. These stops are visited by a number of bus services, providing linkages to Exeter, Newton Abbot, Okehampton and Totnes.
- 5.141 There is not a railway station in Bovey Tracey.

Customer Views & Behaviour

- 5.142 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Bovey Tracey town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.
- 5.143 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is able to attract approximately 11% of all first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 2a residents (the zone in which the town centre lies), with most visiting either the Asda in Newton Abbot town centre (27%), or the out of centre stores of Tesco on Newton Road in Kingsteignton (22%) or the Lidl on Newton Road (10%).
- 5.144 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a slightly more popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 15% for zone 2a. 26% of residents within zone 2a are drawn to the Tesco on Newton Road, 13% of the market share is going to the Asda in Newton Abbot and 12% of the market share is going to Sainsbury's at Penn Inn.
- 5.145 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that Bovey Tracey plays a much greater top-up role, with 55% of zone 2a residents using the town centre for this type of shopping.
- 5.146 Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts a very limited market share of food shopping trips from other survey zones, with only a minor proportion of market share coming from zone 14e.
- 5.147 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Bovey Tracey. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table shows that Bovey Tracey plays a very minor role in terms of comparison goods shopping, even for its immediate shopping catchment of residents within zone 2a.

5.148 Zone 2a commands a small market share across the comparison goods categories, with the highest market share being attributed to health and beauty goods (54%), followed by books, CDs and DVDs (17%) and DIY/hardware products (8%).

5.149 Table 2 indicates that the majority of residents within Bovey Tracey's core catchment tend to do their comparison goods shopping in either Exeter City Centre or Newton Abbot town centre.

Pedestrian Flows

5.150 From our visits to Bovey Tracey during the course of completing this Study we have observed the various levels of pedestrian flow in and around the town centre. We have observed reasonable levels of flow to and from the car parking areas at the northern and southern ends of the centre, although the highest level of flow is generally along Fore Street between its junctions with Abbey Road and Orchard Terrace.

Environmental Quality

5.151 Fore Street, which is the focus for the town centre, rises gently from south to north in a curved alignment. Fore Street and Union Square are dominated by 18th and 19th century architecture with a number of the buildings along this listed street. Buildings within the main town centre are a mixture of two to three-storeys in height, characterised by slated roofs (although some thatched examples still remain) and a mixture of architectural styles and quality. Along Fore Street, buildings are generally placed to the back of the pavement, creating a distinctive well framed street scene as it rises up from the River Bovey.

Occurrence of Crime

5.152 In order to understand the occurrence of crime within Bovey Tracey, we have obtained data from Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary. This is shown in Table 5.14 below for the period between October 2015 and September 2016 and is broken down by crime type:

Table 5.14 – crime types in Bovey Tracey (October 2015 – September 2016)

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	7
Bicycle theft	0
Burglary	4
Criminal damage	1
Drugs	0
Other crime	0
Other theft	1
Possession of weapons	0
Public order	0
Robbery	0
Shoplifting	1
Theft from the person	0
Vehicle crime	0
Violent offences	0

Source: Devon and Cornwall Police

5.153 Table 5.15 below shows the trend in total crimes per month over the period between October 2015- September 2016

Table 5.15 – crime month-by-month in Bovey Tracey

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	4
August 2016	1
July 2016	2
June 2016	2
May 2016	1
April 2016	1
March 2016	1
February 2016	0
January 2016	0
December 2015	0
November 2015	2
October 2015	0

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police

Summary

5.154 Bovey Tracey continues to be well represented in terms of small convenience goods retailers, well above the national average, which helps the centre attract over half of all local top-up food trips. However, due to the lack of larger convenience retailer, the majority of local residents carry out their main food shop either at the Asda in Newton Abbot town centre or the out of centre Tesco on Newton Road. The proportion of comparison goods retailers falls slightly below the national average and is predominantly made up with independent traders, and the small range of goods and retailers available is reflected in the generally low level of retention of comparison goods trips from local residents. However, the vacancy rate falls well below the national average, which suggests the centre is reasonably healthy with a relatively limited role in the retail hierarchy.

Buckfastleigh Town Centre

Structure of the centre

- 5.155 Buckfastleigh lies within the southern part of Dartmoor National Park. It is a historic mill town and is identified by DNPA's Development Management and Delivery DPD as both a Local Centre and District Centre.
- 5.156 The town lies parallel to the A38 dual carriageway and the Development Management and Delivery DPD does not identify a formal town centre boundary, the text of the DPD document indicates that the town centre is principally Fore Street along with parts of Chapel Street and Plymouth Road.

Diversity of Uses

- 5.157 In order to analyse the diversity of land uses in Buckfastleigh town centre, we undertook our own land use survey in 2016. Table 5.16 below summarises the results of the survey and compares it to the 2009 land use survey undertaken for the 2010 Teignbridge Retail and Leisure Study.

Table 5.16: land use profile of Buckfastleigh town centre, 2009 & 2016

Sector	2009			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	5	17.2	9.5	4	19.0	9.4
Comparison	6	20.7	44.0	8	38.1	39.5
Service	9	31.0	33.8	8	38.1	37.9
Other	2	6.9	1.3	1	4.8	1.2
Vacant	7	24.1	11.4	0	0.0	12.2
Total	29	100	100	21	100	100

Source: 2010 Teignbridge Retail and Leisure Study and GVA land use survey 2016

- 5.158 The most notable change in the survey data shown in Table 5.16 is the reduction in the number of surveyed retail units, down from 29 in 2009 to 21 in 2016. It would appear that previous vacancies are now no longer in retail use, with evidence of conversions to residential use. Table 5.16 also shows that the proportion of convenience uses remains above the national average despite a reduction in the number of surveyed units and the increase in the number of comparison goods uses now means that the proportion is just slightly below the national average.

Retailer Representation

- 5.159 The only national multiple convenience goods retailer within the centre of Buckfastleigh is a Co-op store on Chapel Street. The store extends to 177sq m net sales and sells a modest range of fresh and pre-packaged convenience goods. Due to its size, this store is likely to concentrate upon serving top-up food shopping trips. The two other convenience goods retailers in the centre comprise a greengrocer and a newsagent.
- 5.160 Within the comparison goods sector, retailers include Boots pharmacy, gift shops, charity shops and a domestic appliances store. Service uses include small number of takeaways, cafes and health/beauty premises.

Accessibility

- 5.161 The following car parks are available in close proximity to the central area of Buckfastleigh:
- Mardleway (long stay) – 46 spaces
 - The Globe (short stay) – 10 spaces
 - Station Road (long stay) – 30 spaces
- 5.162 Due to the narrow nature of the streets within the central area of Buckfastleigh, there are, unlike many other centres covered by this study, no bus stops close to the core retail area. The closest bus stop is on Plymouth Road, which is visited by a service which travels to Totnes, Ashburton, Paignton and Newton Abbot.

Customer Views & Behaviour

- 5.163 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Buckfastleigh town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.
- 5.164 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is able to attract approximately 9% of all first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 13b residents (the zone in which the town centre lies), with most visiting either the Morrisons on Coronation Road in Totnes (23%), the Lidl on Newton Road outside Newton Abbot Town Centre (17%) or the Asda in Newton Abbot (17%).
- 5.165 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a slightly more popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 18% for zone 13b. 25% of residents within zone 13b are drawn to the Asda in Newton Abbot, 16% of the market share is going to the Lidl on Newton Road near Kingsteignton and 8% of the market share is going to the Morrisons on Coronation Road in Totnes.

- 5.166 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that Buckfastleigh plays a much greater top-up role, with 77% of zone 13b residents using the town centre for this type of shopping, with 71% of the market share using the Co-op on Chapel Street.
- 5.167 Understandably, Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts a very limited market share of food shopping trips from other survey zones, with only a minor proportion of market share coming from the surrounding two zones of 13a and 13c.
- 5.168 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Buckfastleigh. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table shows that Buckfastleigh plays a reasonably significant role for certain comparison goods categories.
- 5.169 Zone 13b commands a market share of 49% for household appliances, 45% for audio-visual equipment, 75% for health and beauty products and 26% for books, CDs and DVDs. The other categories (DIY, clothes, glassware, recreation and luxury goods) command a low market share.
- 5.170 Table 2 indicates that the majority of residents within Buckfastleigh's core catchment tend to do their comparison goods shopping in either Plymouth City Centre, Exeter City Centre or Newton Abbot town centre.

Pedestrian Flows

- 5.171 Due to the size of the central area of Buckfastleigh, there is not a significant variation in the level of pedestrian flow throughout the centre. However, the two busiest locations are generally around the western end of Fore Street and also outside the Co-op store on Chapel Way. This corresponds with the highest collection of shops and also the popularity of the Co-op store as the main food shopping location in the town.
- 5.172 Pedestrian movement around the centre is best achieved on Fore Street which has the better standard of pavement areas. Parts of Plymouth Road and Chapel Way have no or only partial pavement areas which is a concern for pedestrian safety. However, safety was improved following the introduction of the link road which removed a considerable amount of traffic from the centre of Buckfastleigh.

Environmental Quality

- 5.173 The central area of Buckfastleigh lies within a conservation area which was originally designated in 1976 and extended in 1990 and 1993. Between 1998 and 2001, a Conservation Area Partnership Scheme was in operation in the town and which brought in funding from English Heritage and made considerable improvements to properties along Fore Street.

5.174 Most buildings in the central area have the appearance of 18th and 19th Century structures although a number of these are replacements or modifications of earlier structures. The main shopping area lies in Lower Town and buildings here tend to be typically two storeys, with a variety of shop fronts along the ground floor. Subtle variations in the building line along Fore Street gives visual interest. The attractiveness of Fore Street is enhanced by the use of granite for the pavement areas.

Occurrence of Crime

5.175 In order to understand the occurrence of crime within Buckfastleigh, we have obtained data from Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary. This is shown in Table 5.17 below for the period between October 2015 and September 2016 is broken down by crime type:

Table 5.17 – crime types in Buckfastleigh (October 2015 – September 2016)

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	24
Bicycle theft	0
Burglary	3
Criminal damage	9
Drugs	0
Other crime	1
Other theft	4
Possession of weapons	0
Public order	3
Robbery	0
Shoplifting	3
Theft from the person	0
Vehicle crime	1
Violent offences	15

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

5.176 Table 5.18 below shows the trend in total crimes per month over the October 2015-September 2016 period.

Table 5.18 – crime month-by-month in Buckfastleigh (October 2015-September 2016)

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	2
August 2016	3
July 2016	8
June 2016	6
May 2016	9
April 2016	9
March 2016	7
February 2016	5
January 2016	6
December 2015	5
November 2015	1
October 2015	1

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

Summary

5.177 Buckfastleigh is characterised by a high proportion of convenience retailers which are well above the national average. However, due to the size of retailers present, the centre struggles to retain a large proportion of main food shopping trips due to the size of stores present. For top-up food shopping, Buckfastleigh plays a much stronger role, and is able to attract nearly three-quarters of top-up food shopping from the local area, with most people using the Co-op on Chapel Street. The centre also achieves an average proportion of comparison and service retailers, and is able to attract a good proportion of local shopping trips for a number of comparison goods categories. At the time of carrying out the healthcheck, no vacant units were recorded, which suggests Buckfastleigh is a reasonable popular destination for retail and other businesses with reasonable levels of town centre health although it should be noted that the number of retail businesses has reduced.

Chudleigh Town Centre

Structure of the centre

- 5.178 Chudleigh is a small market town located to the east of the River Teign and close to the A38 Devon Expressway. The town lies between Exeter and Newton Abbot, with Exeter around 5 miles to the north, and, as such, has become a commuter town in recent years (and which has been emphasised by the level of new housing development in recent years). The town initially grew on the basis of the wool trade and the rearing of sheep, although that declined during the 18th century and the town's character was changed substantially following a devastating fire in 1807.
- 5.179 The Teignbridge Local Plan's proposals map provides a defined town centre boundary for Chudleigh and also secondary shopping frontages. The town centre boundary encompasses Market Way, Fore Street and the junction of Fore Street with Old Exeter Street and New Exeter Street. The defined secondary shopping frontages run along the southern edge of Market Way, around the junction of Fore Street with Old Exeter Street and New Exeter Street and part of the southern edge of Fore Street.
- 5.180 The adopted Local Plan includes a policy, CH8, which promotes a series of town centre enhancements, including the provision of a high quality town square 'shared space' for pedestrians and vehicles, which will include traffic calming measures, parking provision for less able residents, street planting and furniture and enhanced surface materials.

Diversity of Uses

- 5.181 Experian GOAD do not undertake regular surveys of Chudleigh town centre and therefore we undertook our own survey in 2016 and Table 5.19 below compares the results of this survey against the 2009 land use data collected for the 2010 Teignbridge Retail and Leisure Study.

Table 5.19: land use profile of Chudleigh town centre, 2009 & 2016

Sector	2009			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	6	16.2	9.5	4	12.1	9.4
Comparison	14	37.8	44.0	9	27.3	39.5
Service	11	29.7	33.8	14	42.4	37.9
Other	1	2.7	1.3	1	3.0	1.2
Vacant	5	13.5	11.4	5	15.2	12.2
Total	37	100	100	33	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

- 5.182 Table 5.19 above indicates that there has been a reduction in the number of surveyed retail units in Chudleigh, from 37 in 2009 down to 33 in 2016. There has been reductions in the number of convenience and comparison goods retail units and a rise in the number of surveyed service uses. The proportions of service and convenience goods businesses in the centre are above their respective national averages whilst the proportion of comparison goods retailers has remained below the national average over the period 2009-2016.
- 5.183 Vacancies within the centre of Chudleigh have remained constant at 5 units between 2009 and 2016 and have remained above the national average over this period.

Retailer Representation

- 5.184 The two national multiple retailers in Chudleigh are Co-op and a Lloyds pharmacy. The Co-op store comprises the main convenience goods store in the town and is located on Market Way. It extends to 257sq m net sales and therefore is predominantly orientated towards top-up food shopping trips. Its attractiveness is increased by the adjacent surface level car parking area at Market Way. Other convenience goods stores in the centre include a greengrocer, confectioner and a Spar convenience store.
- 5.185 Comparison goods retailers in the centre include a pet shop, DIY store, gift shop, charity/secondary goods stores and art/antiques stores. There are no high street banks in the centre and service uses include a number of health and beauty uses and takeaways.

Accessibility

- 5.186 The main off-street car park in Chudleigh town centre is the Town Hall car park on Market Way. This car park has 131 spaces and is a pay and display facility, located adjacent to the Co-op foodstore. There are also a small number of on-street parking spaces on Fore Street.
- 5.187 Bus stops in Chudleigh town centre are located on Fore Street and Market Way. The bus service stopping on Fore Street (No.39) also visits Exeter, Newton Abbot and Bovey Tracey, whilst the Market Way service (No.182) travels to Kingsteignton and Newton Abbot.

Customer Views & Behaviour

- 5.188 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Chudleigh town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.
- 5.189 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is able to attract approximately 15% of all first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 2b residents (the zone in which the town centre lies), with 13% visiting the Co-op on Market Way, with a large proportion of zone 2b residents visiting the Tesco on Newton Road (33%) or the Lidl on Newton Road near Kingsteignton (19%).
- 5.190 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a less popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 9% for zone 2b. In a similar way to zone 2b's main food shopping behaviours, 25% of residents are drawn to the Tesco on Newton Road and 16% to the Lidl on Newton Road.
- 5.191 However, for top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that Chudleigh plays a much greater top-up role, with 69% of zone 2b residents using the town centre for this type of shopping, with 63% of the market share using the Co-op on Market Way.
- 5.192 Understandably, Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts a very limited market share of food shopping trips from any other survey zones.
- 5.193 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Chudleigh. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table shows that Chudleigh plays a very small role for comparison goods shopping for zone 2b residents (and the wider survey area), with health and beauty products the only comparison goods category achieving a market share of over 10% (58%).

5.194 Table 2 indicates that the majority of residents within Chudleigh's core catchment tend to do their comparison goods shopping in either Exeter City Centre or Newton Abbot town centre.

Pedestrian Flows

5.195 During our visits to Chudleigh town centre during the course of completing this study, we observed the different levels of pedestrian flow throughout different parts of the defined town centre. During these visits we observed that the busiest areas were around the Co-op store on Market Way and along the northern side of Fore Street. These observations are in line with the observations of the 2010 Teignbridge Retail and Leisure Study and again indicate that the Co-op is likely to be one of the popular reasons for visiting the town centre.

Environmental Quality

5.196 The character of Chudleigh, including its central area, results not only from the historic buildings within it but also from a combination of features that help their setting. These include a combination of open spaces and its valuable landscape setting, including the glimpses from Fore Street of the open countryside beyond.

5.197 The fire of 1807 has had a significant impact on the architectural style of Chudleigh town centre, with many buildings possessing a late Georgian / early Victorian period style, leading to a cohesive character. A small number of earlier buildings remain, many with thatched roofs, on Fore Street and New Exeter Street. There are a number of listed buildings throughout the town centre and Conservation Area, although not a significant amount, which is again likely to be due to the rebuilding of the centre after the fire of 1807.

5.198 The quality of the built environment within the town centre is generally good, with evidence of on-going maintenance to buildings and public spaces. Many buildings along Fore Street are placed at the back pavement and are 2/3 storey's in height, which gives the street an enclosed feel. Pavement areas are relatively wide throughout the centre and there is a pedestrian crossing on Fore Street.

Occurrence of Crime

5.199 Table 5.20 below shows the level of crime, by type of crime, in Chudleigh town centre for the period October 2015-September 2016.

Table 5.20 – crime types in Chudleigh (October 2015 – September 2016)

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	7
Bicycle theft	0
Burglary	4
Criminal damage	6
Drugs	0
Other crime	0
Other theft	1
Possession of weapons	0
Public order	1
Robbery	0
Shoplifting	12
Theft from the person	0
Vehicle crime	1
Violent offences	5

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

5.200 Table 5.21 below shows the trend in total crimes per month over the October 2015-September 2016 period.

Table 5.21 – crime month-by-month in Chudleigh (October 2015-September 2016)

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	4
August 2016	4
July 2016	3
June 2016	1
May 2016	2
April 2016	3
March 2016	2
February 2016	4
January 2016	4
December 2015	5
November 2015	3
October 2015	2

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

Summary

The commuter town of Chudleigh benefits from a strong representation of convenience and service retailers compared to the national average although it is unable to retain a large proportion of main food shopping trips due to the size of stores present. The centre is more popular for top-up food shopping, with the Co-op on Market Way remaining a popular top-up food shopping choice. In terms of comparison goods retailers, there is a distinct lack of national multiple retailers, primarily due to the small retail units available, and the town's vacancy rate remains above the national average. As such the centre's market penetration for comparison goods shopping is low, with the health and beauty sector the only comparison goods category achieving a market share of over 10%. Chudleigh is therefore considered to be a modest performing centre.

6. The Health of Defined Town Centres in East Devon District

- 6.1 This section of the Study provides information and analysis on the health of the main town centres in East Devon District. These centres are: Honiton, Axminster, Seaton, Ottery St Mary, Exmouth and Sidmouth. Our review of each of these centres follows the same structure as the health checks in the previous section (Teignbridge) and examines available information on the health check indicators listed at paragraph 5.2.

Honiton Town Centre

Structure of the centre

- 6.2 Honiton lies 17 miles to the north-east of Exeter and is located in the central part of East Devon District. The town centre is linear in nature and runs along High Street which, until the A30 bypass was constructed, was the main route through the town. The adopted East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031 defines a Town Centre Shopping Area which stretches along High Street from its junction with Silver Street in the east to the point where High Street crosses a watercourse called The Gissage. New Street, from High Street to Jerrard Close is also included in the town centre boundary. There is also a defined primary shopping frontage which stretches from the junction of High Street and Silver Street to High Street's junction with Dowell Street. The northern part of New Street is also included.
- 6.3 The orientation of Honiton's long linear High Street has long been associated with its historic role as a coaching stop on the route between Exeter and London and several former coaching inns remain. In addition, Honiton has historically been associated with the lace industry and is also currently well known for the high number of antique shops throughout the centre.
- 6.4 Strategy policy 23 of the adopted Local Plan outlines the future development strategy for Honiton, which includes, in relation to the town centre,
- "priority (will be given) to the enhancement of the environment and promotion of business opportunities in the town centre shopping area defined on the inset plan to provide the focus for jobs, shops, tourism, leisure and recreation"

Diversity of Uses

6.5 In order to analyse the diversity of land uses in Honiton town centre, we have utilised Experian GOAD's regular land use surveys (from 2009 and 2013) and supplemented this with undertaken in August 2016 to ensure all data is up to date. Table 6.1 shows the land use data for these three years:

Table 6.1: land use profile of Honiton town centre, (2009-2016)

Sector	2009			2013			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	22	12.8	9.5	21	12.1	9.0	17	9.8	9.4
Comparison	92	53.5	44.0	91	52.3	40.4	90	51.7	39.5
Service	45	26.2	33.8	51	29.3	37.0	54	31.0	37.9
Other	2	1.2	1.3	2	1.2	1.2	2	1.2	1.2
Vacant	11	6.4	11.4	9	5.2	12.4	11	6.3	12.2
Total	172	100	100	174	100	100	174	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

6.6 Table 6.1 indicates that there has been a gradual decline in the number and proportion of convenience goods retailers within Honiton town centre over the period 2009-2016. In 2009, there were 22 convenience goods retailers which was a similar level recorded in the 2007 East Devon Retail Study. However, by 2016, the number of convenience goods retailers had fallen to 17. During the survey years of 2009 and 2013, the proportion of convenience goods retailers in Honiton was above the national average, although the recent decline has now brought it in to line with the current national average.

6.7 There has also been a small decrease in the number and proportion of comparison goods retailers in the town centre between 2009 and 2016. However, throughout this period of time the proportion of comparison good retailers within the town centre has continued to remain above the national average. In 2016, the proportion of comparison goods retailer stood at 51.7%, significantly above the national average of 39.5 %.

6.8 In contrast, Table 6.1 indicates that the number service based retailers in Honiton town centre has risen over the period 2009 and 2016 from 45 to 54. However, throughout this time period the proportion of service goods retailers has continued to remain below the national average, although the gap between the two has reduced in recent years.

Retailer Representation

- 6.9 Within the convenience goods retail sector, the largest retailer is a Co-op store, located within the Lace Walk shopping area to the north of High Street. This store extends to 996sq m net and sells a reasonably wide variety of convenience goods, including fresh, frozen and pre-packaged food items along with beers, wines and spirits. The store is located adjacent to a large surface level car parking area which enables it to be used for both main and top-up food shopping purposes.
- 6.10 Adjacent to the Co-op store on Lace Walk is an Iceland frozen food store. The Iceland store extends to 418sq m net and also benefits from the adjacent large car parking area. Elsewhere in the town centre there is a Budgens store on the southern side of High Street, extending to 300sq m net. This store, which does not have an adjacent car parking area is likely to concentrate on serving top-up food shopping needs. Other convenience goods retailers in the town centre include health food stores, a butcher, bakers, an off-licence and a delicatessen.
- 6.11 Within the comparison goods sector, there are a number of national multiple retailers, including WH Smith, Store Twenty One, The Original Factory Shop, Boots, Specsavers and Card Factory. There are a large amount of local independent comparison goods retailers in the centre, selling a reasonably wide selection of comparison goods. Over half of all retail units in the centre are comparison goods retailers and the sectors which have proportions above the national average include furniture (due to the high number of antiques traders), books, arts and crafts, gift shops, toys and hobbies, jewellers and charity, pets and other specialist comparison goods retailers. The proportion of clothing and fashion goods retailers in the town centre is below the national average.
- 6.12 Within the service sector, three national high street banks are represented: Barclays, NatWest and Lloyds. Other national multiple retailers include Costa and Coffee#1. As noted above, the proportion of service uses in Honiton town centre has consistently been below the national average over the past several years. A closer examination of the different types of service uses within the centre indicates that it is the café, restaurant and take-away sector which is particularly under-provided for⁷, with other services (including financial institutions, estate agents and health/beauty uses) reasonably commensurate with their respective national averages.

Out-of-Centre Retail Provision

- 6.13 There are a number of foodstores and supermarkets located outside of Honiton town centre. The largest of these is a Tesco supermarket located on Sidmouth Road which extends to 2,365sq m net sales and is served by a large surface level car parking area. The store sells a wide range of

⁷ 11.5% of units, against a national average of 17.3%

convenience goods, along with a small comparison goods offer. Several years ago, Tesco proposed the relocation and enlargement of its existing store to Ottery Moor Lane, on the site of the former Rainbow retail store and surrounding warehouse/industrial premises. Planning permission was refused at appeal due to the likely impact on the health of Honiton town centre. Since the refusal of permission, the Rainbow store on Ottery Moor Lane has closed down.

6.14 Other foodstores in Honiton include Lidl and ALDI foodstores. These are located in close proximity on the western side of the town, on Exeter Road close to the A30. The ALDI store is the closer of the two stores to the town centre and extends to 1,075sq m net. The Lidl store extends to 1,196sq m net and is located adjacent to the junction of Exeter Road and Heathpark Way.

6.15 There are also two small retail parks located on Heathpark Way. Heath Retail Park accommodates Argos, Homebase and Carpetright stores and provides around 3,900sq m (gross) retail floorspace. Honiton Retail Park accommodates Countrywide Farmers, Screwfix and a furniture retailer, and provides around 1,700sq m (gross) retail floorspace.

Vacancies

6.16 Table 6.1 indicates that the number of vacancies in Honiton town centre has remained at a similar level between 2009 and 2016, at 11 units. There was a decrease to nine units by the time of the 2013 land use survey, although this has increased to 11 units by 2016. At 2016, around 6% of all surveyed units in Honiton town centre were vacant which is half the national average level. This sits alongside a decline in the town's VenueScore rating over the same period. There are no particular concentrations of vacancies in the centre.

Accessibility

6.17 In and around Honiton town centre there are a number of off-street car parking areas. These are:

- Dowell Street (long stay) – 78 spaces
- Lace Walk (long stay) – 39 spaces
- Lace Walk (short stay) – 197 spaces
- Silver Street (long stay) – 90 spaces
- King Street (short stay) – 35 spaces
- New Street North (long stay) – 28 spaces
- New Street South (long stay) – 54 spaces
- Honiton Station (long stay) – 65 spaces

6.18 There are a number of bus stops along High Street, although the most central ones for the town centre are close to Lace Walk. Bus services which visit these stops also travel to Exeter, Ottery St Mary, Taunton, Seaton and Taunton and a less regular service which visits Sidmouth. There is also a Honiton town service which travels to Tesco and Heathpark.

6.19 Honiton has a train station which is located to the south of the town centre, around a ten minute walk from the core retail area. The station is on the main London Waterloo to Exeter line, and visited by train services which also stop at Feniton, Cranbrook, Axminster, Crewkerne and Yeovil.

Customer Views & Behaviour

6.20 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Honiton town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.

6.21 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is only able to attract approximately 3% of all first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 7 residents (the zone in which the town centre lies), with most visiting the out of centre stores near Honiton (80%), including the Tesco on Battishorne Way (50%), the Lidl at Heathpark Service Station (19%) or Aldi on Exeter Road (11%).

6.22 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a slightly more popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 10% for zone 7, with 27% of residents using the Tesco on Battishorne Way for their other main food shop.

6.23 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that Honiton plays a stronger role, with 20% of zone 7 residents using the town centre for this type of shopping. However, 54% of the market share for zone 7 residents is going to stores near, but outside Honiton Town Centre.

6.24 Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts a limited market share of food shopping trips from other survey zones, with only a minor proportion of market share coming from the surrounding two zones of 4c, 6a and 6b.

6.25 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Honiton. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table shows that Honiton town centre plays a reasonably strong role in terms of comparison goods shopping, particularly for zone 7 and some of the neighbouring zones.

6.26 Zone 7 commands a market share of 25% furniture, household textiles and soft furnishings, 23% for household appliances, 42% for DIY goods, 71% for health and beauty products and 62% for books, CDs and DVDs.

6.27 Table 2 indicates that the majority of residents within Honiton's core catchment tend to do their comparison goods shopping in Exeter City Centre.

Pedestrian Flows

6.28 During our various visits to the town centre, we have observed levels of pedestrian vitality in different parts of the centre. In line with the results of the 2008 East Devon Retail Study, we have continued to observe high levels of vitality throughout different parts of High Street and along Lace Walk. This indicates the popularity of shops and other services throughout different parts of the centre. Pedestrian flows along New Street were comparatively lower reflecting its role as more of a secondary shopping street.

6.29 Whilst the A30 Honiton by-pass has taken a considerable amount of traffic out of the town centre, High Street continues to accommodate high levels of traffic particularly at peak times. Therefore, the various signal-controlled pedestrian crossing along the length of High Street provide a very important aide to pedestrian movement around the centre.

Environmental Quality

6.30 The defined boundary of Honiton town centre follows a similar area to the town's Conservation Area, which was designated in 1972. The town centre presents the appearance of a late 18th and early 19th century market town, with High Street following the alignment of the original Fosse Way between Exeter and Lincoln.

6.31 The buildings along either side of High Street are provided in largely continuous terraced frontages, with buildings generally 2-3 storeys in height. A considerable number of the buildings along High Street, particularly its central part, are listed. There are some notable buildings including St Paul's church, which provides one of the few breaks in the terraced frontages and the several former coaching inns.

6.32 Pavement areas along either side of High Street are generally wide and are able to accommodate pedestrian flows at peak times, although these areas are narrowed on market days. Overall, despite the presence of a large amount of traffic and on-street parking areas, High Street is considered to be an imposing and attractive central focus for the centre of Honiton, with the significant length of the street adding to this character. New Street is much more modestly proportioned, with two storey buildings and a much narrower vehicle highway.

Occurrence of Crime

6.33 In order to understand the occurrence of crime within Honiton, we have obtained data from Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary. This is shown in Table 6.2 below for the period of October 2015 to September 2016 and is broken down by crime type:

Table 6.2 – crime types in Honiton (October 2015 – September 2016)

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	63
Bicycle theft	2
Burglary	6
Criminal damage	15
Drugs	2
Other crime	2
Other theft	10
Possession of weapons	1
Public order	11
Robbery	0
Shoplifting	33
Theft from the person	1
Vehicle crime	4
Violent offences	45

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police

6.34 Table 6.3 below shows the trend in total crimes per month over the October 2015 and September 2016 period.

Table 6.3 – crime month-by-month in Honiton (October 2015- September 2016)

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	5
August 2016	8
July 2016	16
June 2016	13
May 2016	24
April 2016	20
March 2016	33
February 2016	9
January 2016	8
December 2015	16
November 2015	21
October 2015	22

Source: Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

Summary

6.35 In summary, Honiton is considered to remain a reasonably healthy town centre. It has a reasonable range of convenience retailers, however the centre faces considerable competition from large out of centre stores such as Tesco, Lidl and Aldi. Honiton town centre plays a stronger role for top-up food shopping, although over half of local residents are still using stores outside of the town centre. Honiton has a reasonably strong representation of comparison goods retailers, and the centre is particularly well represented by furniture (due to the high number of antique traders), books, arts and crafts and gift shop retailers. However, retail units outside the town centre create a certain amount of competition and the majority of local residents continue to shop in Exeter city centre for their comparison goods. The centre also benefits from a below-average proportion of vacant units.

Exmouth Town Centre

Structure of the centre

- 6.36 Exmouth is the largest town in Devon and grew significantly during the 18th century with the introduction of the railway and its increasing popularity for tourism. Its two miles of sandy beaches are a particular draw.
- 6.37 The town centre lies in the south-western part of the settlement close to the sea and the estuary of the River Exe. The proposals map in the East Devon Local Plan 2013-2031 defines a Town Centre Shopping Area and primary frontages both of which cover a similar area, including Exeter Road, Parade, Albion Street, Rolle Street, the Magnolia Walk Shopping Centre, High Street, Queen Street and Chapel Hill.
- 6.38 Within the East Devon Local Plan, Strategy policy 22 sets out the development strategy for Exmouth and in relation to the town centre, promotes significant new investment in retail and commercial facilities and the improvement of links between the town centre and seafront along Bath Road. The Local Plan also makes reference to a masterplan for the town centre and seafront area which was produced in 2010 by LDA Design. Parts of the masterplan are being implemented although the Local Plan recognises that some of its provisions will need to be re-evaluated and, as a consequence, a new or refreshed masterplan will be produced.
- 6.39 The Local Plan also makes reference to the potential for the London Inn car park, former gasholder site and post office site on Union Street to provide new retail and commercial development, together with short stay car parking, to support the regeneration of the town centre.

Diversity of Uses

- 6.40 Land use data for Exmouth town centre has been obtained from Experian GOAD for 2011 and 2014 and an updated land use survey was undertaken by GVA in August 2016. Table 6.4 shows the land use data for these three years.

Table 6.4: land use profile of Exmouth town centre, 2011 to 2016

Sector	2011			2014			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	25	9.1	8.6	29	10.3	9.0	29	10.4	9.4
Comparison	118	43.1	41.5	124	44.1	40.4	121	43.5	39.5
Service	104	38	35.1	110	39.2	37.0	112	40.3	37.9
Other	1	.4	1.2	1	1.2	1.2	1	0.4	1.2
Vacant	26	9.5	13.7	17	6.1	12.4	15	5.5	12.2
Total	274	100	100	281	100	100	278	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

- 6.41 Table 6.4 indicates that there has been a small rise in the number of surveyed retail units in Exmouth town centre over the period 2011-2016, from 274 to 278 (peaking at 281 in 2014). This total number of units makes Exmouth one of the two largest town centres covered by this Study (the other being Newton Abbot), excluding Exeter city centre.
- 6.42 Over the period 2011-2016, there has been an increase in the number and proportion of convenience goods retailers in Exmouth town centre from 25 to 29. The increase in the proportion of convenience goods retailers in the centre is reflective of the national trend and throughout this time period the proportion of convenience goods retailers in Exmouth has continued to remain slightly above the national average (10.4% in 2016, against a national average of 9.4%).
- 6.43 There has also been a small rise in the number of comparison retailers in Exmouth town centre between 2011 and 2016, although the rise occurred between 2011 and 2014, following which there was a small decrease from 124 to 121 between 2014 and 2016. Throughout this period, the proportion of comparison goods retailers within Exmouth town centre has continued to remain above the national average (43.5% in 2016, compared with the national average of 39.5%).
- 6.44 The number of services uses in the town centre has also increased between 2011 and 2016 from 104 units to 112 units. Throughout this time period the proportion of service uses within Exmouth town centre has remained above the national average (40.3% in 2016, compared with a national average of 37.9%).

Retailer Representation

- 6.45 Within the convenience goods sector, the largest retailer in Exmouth town centre is a Co-op store located on Magnolia Walk, which is a pedestrianised shopping area. The store extends to 939sq m net and sells a reasonably wide range of convenience goods, including fresh, frozen and pre-

packaged products. The store is likely to perform primarily a top-up food shopping function, although some main food shopping trips are also likely to be undertaken. The Co-op does not have a dedicated customer car parking area, although the store is a short walk from the London Inn car park to the east of Magnolia Walk.

- 6.46 Other convenience goods retailers in Exmouth town centre include an Iceland store (418sq m net) on the Parade and a Tesco Express (191sq m net) on Rolle Street. Neither store has a dedicated customer car park and both are likely to be attractive primarily for top-up food shopping.
- 6.47 There are also a number of independent convenience good retailers within the town centre, including a number of green grocers and bakers.
- 6.48 Exmouth has the highest number of national multiple comparison goods retailers of any of the town centres in East Devon. Multiple retailers include: New Look, Sports Direct, Boots, WH Smith, Superdrug, Peacocks, M&Co and Clarks. These national retailers are generally located in Magnolia Walk, the Parade and Rolle Street. However, in relation to the size of the town and surrounding area's population, its retail offer remains relatively small.
- 6.49 Overall, Exmouth town centre has a higher proportion of comparison goods retailers than the national average. The individual sectors which allow Exmouth to out-perform the national average are the electrical, toys/sports/hobbies and charity/pet/other specialist comparison goods retailer sectors. The sectors which under-perform the national average are the clothing, health/beauty, DIY, furniture and jewellery sectors.
- 6.50 Within the service sector there are a number of the national high street banks and building societies including Halifax, Santander, Nationwide, NatWest Bank and Barclays and the overall proportion of financial institutions (4.3%) is slightly higher than the national average (3.9%). The proportion of cafes, restaurants and takeaways within Exmouth town centre is slightly lower than the national average (16.2%, compared within 17.3%) and businesses present include Costa, Café Nero, Domino's Pizza, Prezzo and Subway. There is also a higher than average proportion of estate agents (6.1%) compared with the national average (4.0%).

Out-of-Centre Retail Provision

- 6.51 There are a number of out of centre convenience and comparison goods stores within Exmouth including:
- There is a large Tesco supermarket on Salterton Road, in the eastern part of the Exmouth urban area. The store extends to 3,392sq m net sales, within 2,202sq m devoted to the sale of convenience goods, 750sq m devoted to comparison goods sales and 440sq m for the

checkouts/customer service area. Proposals to extend the store in 2008 and 2010 to circa 4,900sq m net sales have not been implemented.

- Also on Salterton Road is a Lidl foodstore. This extends to 1,272sq m net sales, with around 80% of the sales area being used for convenience goods sales. The store is served by an adjacent free customer surface level car parking area.
- Further to the east along Salterton Road are a collection of retail units at Liverton Business Park, including The Range (2,500sq m gross), Halfords (464sq m), Pets at Home (464sq m), Carpetright (464sq m) and Home Bargains (circa 2,500sq m).
- An M&S Simply Food supermarket located on Royal Avenue near to the railway station (c.1,486 sq.m net sales).

Vacancies

6.52 Table 6.4 indicates that there has been a decrease in the proportion of vacant units in Exmouth town centre between 2011 and 2016, from 26 units in 2011 to 15 units in 2016. This is a noticeable improvement in the number of voids in the town centre and a clear sign of the demand from businesses for town centre space.

6.53 Throughout this time period the proportion of vacant units has continued to remain below the national average. In 2016, the proportion of vacant units in Exmouth town centre remained significantly below the national average of 12.2%, at 5.5%.

Accessibility

6.54 In line with the size and role of the town centre, Exmouth has a large number of off-street parking facilities. These are:

- Town Hall (long stay) – 39 spaces
- Camperdown Terrace (long stay) – 39 spaces
- London Hotel (short stay) - 150 spaces
- Imperial Road (short stay) – 241 spaces
- Imperial Road recreational Ground (long stay) - 65 spaces
- Estuary (long stay) – 159 spaces

6.55 The London Hotel car park is the most central car park for shoppers and frequently reaches capacity. Therefore, any implementation of the Local Plan aspiration for redevelopment of the car park and the wider area needs to carefully consider the overall impact on car parking capacity across the wider town centre area. The other two large car parks are located on the western edge of the town centre, adjacent to the estuary, with pedestrians required to cross

Imperial Road / Marine Way, which are busy highways. There are also a number of on-street parking spaces, most notably on Albion Street, Rolle Street and Exeter Road.

- 6.56 The main collection of bus stops in Exmouth town centre are along the Strand and Rolle Street. These stops are located in close proximity to the core retail area and are visited by frequent bus services travelling to Exeter, Topsham, Budleigh Salterton, Sidmouth and also an Exmouth town service which circulates the urban area (including the town centre, Brixington, Hulham and Littleham).
- 6.57 Exmouth train station is located to the west of the main town centre but within walking distance of the main shopping area. The station is also connected to the town's main bus station. The station is visited by local services, run by Great Western Railway, travelling to Exeter, Dawlish, Teignmouth, Torquay, Paignton and Barnstaple.
- 6.58 Exmouth also benefits from connection the Exe estuary cycle route which ends in Exmouth and connects to Exeter and Dawlish.

Customer Views & Behaviour

- 6.59 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Exmouth town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.
- 6.60 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is able to attract approximately 18% of all first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 3 residents (the zone in which the town centre lies), with many visiting the out of centre Tesco store on Salterton Road (55%).
- 6.61 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a slightly more popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 21% for zone 3, with 29% of residents using the Lidl on Dinan Way and 14% using the Tesco on Salterton Road.
- 6.62 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that Exmouth plays a stronger role, with 44% of zone 3 residents using the town centre for this type of shopping. However, 43% of the market share for zone 3 residents is still going to out of centre stores around Exmouth including the Tesco on Salterton Road (17%) and the Tesco Express on Churchill Road (8%).
- 6.63 Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts a limited market share of food shopping trips from other survey zones, with only a minor proportion of market share coming from the nearest surrounding two zones of 4b and 5.

- 6.64 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Exmouth. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table shows that Exmouth town centre plays a reasonably minor role in terms of comparison goods shopping, which includes zone 3.
- 6.65 Zone 3 commands a market share of 84% for health and beauty goods and 64% for books, CDs and DVDs. However, Exmouth commands a market share of less than 25% for all other comparison goods categories within zone 3.
- 6.66 Table 2 indicates that the majority of residents within Exmouth's core catchment tend to do their comparison goods shopping in Exeter City Centre, except for DIY and gardening products, where 58% of residents in zone 3 shop at the B&Q at Liverton Retail Park.

Pedestrian Flows

- 6.67 Our visits to Exmouth town centre during the course of completing this Study have identified that Magnolia Walk is generally the busiest part of the town centre in terms of pedestrian footfall. This is unsurprising given the pedestrianised nature of this street. The Strand and Rolle Street are generally the next busiest locations, due to the presence of a number of key town centre retailers and a number of bus stops. The location of the bus station, railway station and key car parks on the western side of the town centre also leads to reasonable levels of pedestrian flow across Marine Way and Imperial Road.

Environmental Quality

- 6.68 The growth of Exmouth as a Victorian seaside resort is clearly evident from the character of parts of the town centre and the surrounding area. The town centre has a mixed physical environment, with some distinct areas. The area around the Strand and the northern end of Rolle Street provides a focal point for the centre, including a triangular open space (centred upon the war memorial) which has been subject to significant improvements in its hard and soft landscaping in recent years. This area is surrounded by 3 storey terraced buildings which provide an attractive enclosure to this space.
- 6.69 The other parts of Rolle Street continue the Victorian terrace style and the street becomes much more enclosed by the 3 storey properties on either side. A similar character can be found in the surrounding streets, including High Street.
- 6.70 The Strand has a different character, with a wider mixture of building styles, including some post-war additions which do not make a positive contribution to this part of the town centre. The character of the Parade is also affected by the presence of a high amount of traffic, although

there are wide pavement areas which help to minimise the conflict between pedestrians and vehicles.

- 6.71 The Magnolia Walk area is a post-war shopping development which links the Strand and Rolle Street and is generally well maintained. Whilst the appearance of this development is now rather dated, it does provide a reasonably pleasant and good proportioned shopping street.

Occurrence of Crime

- 6.72 Data on reported crime levels within Exmouth town centre has been obtained from Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary. This is shown in Table 6.5 below for the period October 2015-September 2016 and is broken down by crime type:

Table 6.5 – crime types in Exmouth (October 2015 – September 2016)

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	118
Bicycle theft	6
Burglary	7
Criminal damage	22
Drugs	10
Other crime	1
Other theft	22
Possession of weapons	0
Public order	24
Robbery	0
Shoplifting	74
Theft from the person	4
Vehicle crime	1
Violent offences	118

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

- 6.73 Table 6.6 below shows the trend in total crimes per month over the October 2015- September 2016 period.

Table 6.6 – crime month-by-month in Exmouth (October 2015- September 2016)

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	37
August 2016	40
July 2016	41
June 2016	30
May 2016	29
April 2016	27
March 2016	44
February 2016	25
January 2016	39
December 2015	33
November 2015	17
October 2015	45

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

Summary

6.74 Exmouth is the largest town in Devon, is a popular tourist destination with its traditional seaside resort characteristics and remains a healthy centre with a good range of convenience, comparison and service retailers. Despite the range of convenience retailers, the centre is unable to retain a large proportion of main and top-up food shopping market share for local residents due to the size and type of retailer present within the town centre, and the majority of local shoppers continue to use the Tesco on Salterton Road. In terms of comparison goods shopping, the centre continues to perform reasonable well despite its proximity to Exeter and out of centre retail warehouse units. The low vacancy rate, and large number of national multiple comparison goods retailers both suggest the town centre is healthy.

Sidmouth Town Centre

Structure of the centre

- 6.75 Sidmouth is one of the most attractive seaside towns on the south coast of England, having developed from a small market and fishing town into a very popular tourist resort in the 18th and 19th centuries. The town is framed in a narrow valley (of the River Sid) which opens to the sea and sheltered from the east and west by imposing red sandstone cliffs.
- 6.76 The adopted East Devon Local Plan defined a Town Centre Shopping Area and a Primary Frontage which both cover a very similar area. This includes Fore Street, Old Fore Street, New Street and a significant length of High Street up to its junction with All Saints Road and Radway in the north.
- 6.77 Strategy policy 26 of the Local Plan does not provide a specific site/land use allocations for Sidmouth town centre although part of the strategy identifies the enhancement of the environment and promotion of business opportunities in the town centre. The supporting text to strategy policy 26 notes that a key aim is to conserve and enhance the built environment and historic qualities of Sidmouth, especially in the town centre and seafront and continue to promote these as assets for visitors to the town and key resources for residents.

Diversity of Uses

- 6.78 Table 6.7 below provides data on the land use profile of Sidmouth town centre for the years 2011, 2013 and 2016. The 2011 and 2013 data has been taken from Experian GOAD's regular land use surveys of the centre and this has been supplemented by a survey undertaken by GVA in August 2016. The area covered by the land use survey covers a very similar area to the defined Town Centre Shopping Area in the adopted East Devon Local Plan.

Table 6.7: land use profile of Sidmouth town centre, 2011-2016

Sector	2011			2013			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	22	12.2	8.6	22	12.2	9.0	23	12.4	9.4
Comparison	95	52.5	41.5	93	51.7	40.4	99	53.5	39.5
Service	57	31.5	35.1	60	33.3	37.0	57	30.8	37.9
Other	0	0	1.2	7	0.6	1.2	1	0.5	1.2
Vacant	7	3.9	13.7	4	2.2	12.4	4	2.2	12.2
Total	181	100	100	180	100	100	185	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

- 6.79 Table 6.7 indicates that there has been a small increase in the number of convenience goods retailers within Sidmouth town centre and this rise occurred between 2013 and 2016. Throughout this time period, the proportion of convenience goods retailers has continued to remain above the national average. At 2016, the proportion of convenience goods retailers in the centre was 12.4%, compared with the national average of 9.4%.
- 6.80 The number of comparison goods retailers has also risen over the period 2011-2016, although there was a fall between 2011-2013 and then a rise from 2013-2016. Throughout this time period the proportion of comparison goods retailers in Sidmouth town centre has continued to remain well above the national average. At the time of the 2016 land use survey, the proportion of comparison goods retailers in Sidmouth town centre was 53.5%, compared to a national average of 39.5%.
- 6.81 The number of service uses within the town centre increased from 57 in 2011 to 60 in 2013, before decreasing to 57 in 2016. Throughout this period of time, the proportion of service uses within Sidmouth town centre has continued to remain below the national average. In 2016, 30.8% of all surveyed retail units in Sidmouth were occupied by service uses, compared to the national average of 37.9%.

Retailer Representation

- 6.82 Within the convenience goods sector, the largest retailer in Sidmouth town centre is a Co-op on the eastern side of High Street, opposite Blackmore Drive. The Co-op store extends to 240sq m and sells a relatively modest range of convenience goods, including fresh and pre-packaged goods. The store does not have a dedicated customer car park and, when combined with its size, is likely to appeal to top-up food shopping purposes.

- 6.83 A short distance to the north of the Co-op is a Tesco Express convenience store. The store has a net sales area of circa 182sq m and is also likely to appeal to top-up food shopping. In addition to these two national multiple retailers, there is a reasonably wide selection of other local independent traders, including a greengrocer, bakers, a butcher, delicatessen, a convenience goods store, health food shop and an off-licence.
- 6.84 Within the comparison goods sector there are a number of national multiple retailers including M&Co, Fat Face, Crew Clothing, Joules, Edinburgh Woollen Mill, The Original Factory Shop, Mountain Warehouse and New Look. For a town of this size, Sidmouth has a reasonably high number of national multiple retailers, reflecting its popularity as a visitor/tourist destination.
- 6.85 Due to the higher than national average proportion of comparison goods retailers in Sidmouth town centre, it is unsurprising that a large number of the sub-categories also have proportions of retailers which are in excess of the national average. These include clothing and footwear retailers, gifts shops, furniture retailers (due to the presence of a number of antique retailers), jewellery stores and books/arts/crafts. Notable local independent traders include the Fields of Sidmouth department store.
- 6.86 Within the service sector a number of the national high street banks and building societies are represented, including: Santander, Natwest, HSBC, Barclays and Lloyds. A reasonably wide selection of food and drink outlets are presents, including a number of cafes and restaurants which attract custom from tourists/visitors, although it is perhaps surprising that the proportion of food/drink service uses is below the national average (15.7%, compared with 17.3%) given the role and function of Sidmouth. Indeed, all service use categories, apart from estate agents, have a proportion of uses which are below their respective national averages. Given that the town centre as a whole has a very low vacancy level (see below), the lower proportion of service uses is likely to be a product of the high level of demand for premises from comparison goods retailers.

Out-of-Centre Retail Provision

- 6.87 Outside of the town centre there are two supermarkets within the wider urban area of Sidmouth: Waitrose and Lidl. The Waitrose store lies adjacent to Stowford Rise on the northern edge of the Sidmouth urban area. The store has been extended in recent years and now has a net sales area of 2,096sq m. It sells a wide range of fresh, refrigerated, frozen and pre-packaged convenience goods, along with a beers, wines and spirits section. The store is served by an adjacent surface level customer car parking area.
- 6.88 The Lidl store lies on Woolbrook Road and has a net sales area of circa 929sq m. The store focuses on selling a limited number of lines of convenience goods along with partially changing comparison goods offer. The store has an adjacent surface level customer car parking area.

6.89 In addition to these stores, there is a Wyevale Garden Centre located to the north-western edge of the town, selling plants and garden related items. The garden centre also has a small restaurant and cafe on site.

Vacancies

6.90 Sidmouth town centre has, for over a decade, had a low level of vacancies. Within the 2008 East Devon Retail Study, the proportion of vacancies within the centre was, during the period 2004-2007, between 1%-2% of all surveyed units. Table 6.7 above indicates that vacancies rose to 7 units in 2011, which was equivalent to 4% of all surveyed units. Whilst this is the highest level of vacancy in the centre for a number of years, it was still only one third of the national average for vacancies in town centres and, in any event, the number of vacancies has since declined to 4 units in 2016. This is equivalent to only 2% of all surveyed units and therefore only one sixth of the national average. This fall in vacancies over the past five years indicates that Sidmouth continues to be very popular location for retail businesses.

Accessibility

6.91 There are four main off-street car parking facilities in and around Sidmouth town centre, at:

- Roxburgh (short stay) – 75 spaces
- Ham East (short stay) – 74 spaces
- Ham West (short stay) – 190 spaces
- Mill Street (short stay) – 34 spaces

6.92 Due to its topographic profile and urban form, Sidmouth has been subject to traffic congestion in its central and seafront areas for many years. The adopted Local Plan indicates that the better management of road space, in order to alleviate congestion, is a key priority, along with the potential for opening up further pedestrianisation. Fore Street and the southern part of High Street are one-way streets (with a north to south direction of flow) and, due to their narrow nature and congestion, traffic speeds are generally low. There is also some on-street parking along these streets, which is generally in high demand.

6.93 For those travelling to the town centre by bus, there are no bus stops within the main shopping streets. The closest stops are located along All Saints Road, Station Road, the Triangle and Salcombe Road. These stops are visited by services which travel to Exeter, Budleigh Salterton, Feniton, Seaton, Sidbury, Ottery St Mary, Beer, Honiton and Sidford.

Customer Views & Behaviour

- 6.94 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Sidmouth town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.
- 6.95 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is able to attract approximately 10% of all first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 5 residents (the zone in which the town centre lies), with many visiting the out of centre stores of Waitrose on Stowford Rise (34%) or Lidl on Woolbrook Road (28%).
- 6.96 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a slightly more popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 14% for zone 5 residents, with 61% of residents using the Waitrose or Lidl stores.
- 6.97 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that Sidmouth plays a slightly stronger role, with 24% of zone 5 residents using the town centre for this type of shopping. However, 51% of the market share for zone 5 residents is still going to out of centre stores around Sidmouth.
- 6.98 Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts a limited market share of food shopping trips from other survey zones, with a negligible proportion of market share coming from the nearest surrounding zones.
- 6.99 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Sidmouth. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table identifies that Sidmouth town centre plays a reasonably small role in terms of comparison goods shopping, which includes zone 5.
- 6.100 Table 2 indicates that 70% of residents within zone 5 use Sidmouth town centre to buy their health and beauty goods. In addition, Sidmouth town centre commands a market share of 36% for books, CDs and DVDs, 37% for glassware and jewellery, 32% for household appliances and 27% for clothes, footwear and other fashion goods from residents within zone 5.
- 6.101 Table 2 indicates that the majority of residents within Sidmouth's core catchment within zone 5 tend to do their comparison goods shopping in Exeter City Centre.

Pedestrian Flows

- 6.102 During our visits to Sidmouth during the course of completing this Study, we have observed levels of pedestrian vitality in different parts of the town centre. In general, the southern parts of the town centre were the busiest areas during weekday and weekend visits, particularly along Fore

Street and Old Fore Street. However, relatively high levels of vitality were also observed in other parts of the centre, including along High Street. This is reflective of the popularity of Sidmouth as a tourist destination, with the town becoming very busy during the summer months.

Environmental Quality

6.103 Sidmouth is a coastal resort of architectural and historic interest in terms of its representation of Regency and mid Victorian development, much of which has been carefully preserved. This character extends beyond the core town centre area, and the seafront, at the southern end of the town centre, provides an Esplanade which is a defining characteristic of the town. Whilst the core retail area itself is very tight knit, there are a number of significant open spaces in the surrounding area, which also contribute to the character of the town.

6.104 In relation to the core retail area, the northern and southern parts have different characteristics. The northern part of High Street suffers from traffic congestion and whilst there is an attractive grouping of buildings at the junction with Vicarage Road and Salcombe Road, other areas of the northern part of High Street are moderately attractive. In particular, a number of modern infill developments do not make a positive contribution to the street scene.

6.105 However, the southern part of High Street and Fore Street offer a much more attractive townscape, with a number of listed buildings and many shop fronts which are well preserved. Throughout its entire length, Fore Street and High Street are narrow, providing an intimate character, which is emphasised along Fore Street and Old Fore Street as the street becomes narrower and the buildings retain a higher quality. Old Fore Street is a pedestrianised street which provides for a relaxed pedestrian environment.

Occurrence of Crime

6.106 In order to understand the occurrence of crime within Sidmouth town centre, we have obtained data from Devon & Cornwall police Constabulary. This is shown in Table 6.8 below for the period October 2015 and September 2016 and is broken down by crime type:

Table 6.8 – crime types in Sidmouth (October 2015 – September 2016)

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	54
Bicycle theft	0
Burglary	10
Criminal damage	15
Drugs	0
Other crime	0
Other theft	8
Possession of weapons	0
Public order	5
Robbery	0
Shoplifting	14
Theft from the person	2
Vehicle crime	1
Violent offences	22

Source: Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

6.107 Table 6.9 below shows the trend in total crimes per month over the October 2015 and September 2016 period.

Table 6.9 – crime month-by-month in Sidmouth (October 2015 and September 2016)

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	9
August 2016	24
July 2016	19
June 2016	11
May 2016	12
April 2016	10
March 2016	7
February 2016	7
January 2016	7
December 2015	16
November 2015	4
October 2015	5

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

Summary

6.108 Sidmouth remains an attractive town centre and a popular tourist destination, and is therefore one of the key retail locations in East Devon. The town centre boasts a strong representation of comparison goods retailers and above average proportion of convenience goods retailers. However, the centre struggles to retain a large proportion of main and top-up food shopping trips from the local population due to the size of stores present, clearly catering for tourists' demands. This is also the case for comparison goods shopping market share which remains low. However, vacancies in the centre are currently very low, which suggests the centre and its function is still an attractive location for retailers.

Seaton Town Centre

Structure of the centre

- 6.109 The town of Seaton is located on the coast to the east of Sidmouth and Beer and within East Devon Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The adopted East Devon Local Plan describes the town's two main functions as a residential base, popular with retired people and commuters, and as a traditional seaside resort. Over the past decade, Seaton has been affected by the closure of the Lyme Bay Holiday Park, with the site cleared and partially redeveloped for a Tesco supermarket and residential accommodation. Recently it is also the location of the new Jurassic Coast visitor centre and the stop line way cycle route, which is under development.
- 6.110 The proposals map of the adopted East Devon Local Plan defines a primary frontage along Fore Street, Queen Street and Marine Place. There is also a Town Centre Shopping Area which covers these streets and also Cross Street, the eastern end of Beer Road, Harbour Road, the Co-op store on the Underfleet and the new Tesco supermarket (and adjacent car parking area).
- 6.111 Strategy policy 25 of the East Devon Local Plan notes, in relation to the town centre:

"The enhancement of the existing fabric and character of the town, including design improvements and expansion of commercial opportunities in waterfront areas (sea wall and esplanade and harbour and estuary) will underpin Seaton's developing role as a year-round holiday destination. Priority will be given to the enhancement of the environment and the promotion of business opportunities within the Town Centre to improve the attraction of the town for residents, visitors and businesses".

Diversity of Uses

- 6.112 In order to analyse the diversity of land uses in Seaton town centre, we have used Experian GOAD's land use surveys from 2010 and 2014 and undertaken our own survey in August 2016. The land use data for these three years is contained in Table 6.10 below:

Table 6.10: land use profile of Seaton town centre, 2010-2016

Sector	2010			2014			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	10	8.9	8.6	13	10.7	9.0	13	10.8	9.4
Comparison	50	44.3	41.5	50	41.0	40.4	51	42.5	39.5
Service	36	31.9	35.1	48	39.3	37.0	48	40.0	37.9
Other	2	1.8	1.2	2	1.6	1.2	2	1.7	1.2
Vacant	15	13.3	13.7	9	7.4	12.4	6	5.0	12.2
Total	113	100	100	122	100	100	120	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

- 6.113 Over the period 2010-2016, the number of surveyed retail units in Seaton town centre grew from 113 to 120. Part of this increase will have been due to the opening of the Tesco supermarket on Harbour Road.
- 6.114 Table 6.10 indicates that the proportion of convenience goods retailers in Seaton town centre increased between 2010 and 2014, before remaining at the same between 2014 and 2016. In 2010, there were 10 convenience goods retailers in the town centre, which grew to 13 in 2014 and 2016. In 2010, the proportion of convenience goods retailers in Seaton town centre was commensurate with the national average although the latest survey data indicates that the proportion is now slightly higher than the national average.
- 6.115 Over the period 2010-2016, the number of comparison goods retailers in Seaton town centre has remained relatively static although there was a small increase of one unit between 2014 and 2016. Throughout this period, the proportion of comparison goods retailers has remained slightly above the national average. At the time of the 2016 survey, comparison goods retailers occupied 42.5% of all surveyed retail units in the town centre, which compares to a national average of 39.5%.
- 6.116 The most significant change in the land use profile of the town centre over the period 2010-2016 has been a large increase in the number of service uses. In 2010, there were 36 service uses in the centre, although this has risen to 48 by the time of the 2016 GVA land use survey. In 2010, the proportion of service uses in the town centre was below the national average (35%) at 31.9%, although the rise over the past several years has now led to the proportion of service uses in Seaton to be above the national average (40.0% compared with 38%).

Retailer Representation

- 6.117 Within the convenience goods sector, the two largest retailers are Tesco and Co-op with supermarkets on the eastern side of the town centre. The Tesco store opened in November 2011 and followed a series of supermarket proposals on the eastern side of Seaton town centre over the past decade. The Tesco store extends to 3,148sq m net and sells a wide range of fresh and pre-packaged convenience goods. Around two thirds of the store is devoted to convenience goods, with the remaining part of the store selling comparison goods along with accommodating a Costa cafe. The store is served by a large surface level car park to the east, along with a petrol filling station. To the west of the store is a large area of new public realm which has been provided as part of the Tesco development. It provides an attractive and direct link between the store and the southern end of The Underfleet (including a pedestrian controlled signal crossing).
- 6.118 Until 2011, the Co-op store on Underfleet was the largest supermarket in Seaton. The store has a net sales area of 791sq m and sells a reasonably wide range of convenience goods. A modest sized customer car park wraps around the western and southern edges of the store.
- 6.119 Other convenience goods retailers within the town include along with two butchers, an oriental food store, a bakery and newsagent/convenience stores.
- 6.120 Within the comparison goods sector, national multiple retailers include a Boots on Marine Place and an Original Factory Shop (which replaced the Rainbow household goods store) on Harbour Road. The remainder of retailers comprise local independent traders and include a modest range of charity shops, furniture and household goods retailers, pharmacies, clothing retailers, toy and gift shops. Given the role and function of Seaton, a number of these retailers have orientated their product offer to serve the tourist/visitor market. The proportion of books/arts/crafts, furniture, gifts and charity/pet/specialist comparison goods retailers in Seaton are above their respective national averages, whilst the proportion of clothing/fashion, jewellery and electrical goods retailers are below their respective national averages.
- 6.121 Service uses in Seaton town centre include a Lloyds bank on Marine Place, although the branch of Natwest on Fore Street has now closed. The dominant part of the service sector in Seaton is cafes, restaurants and takeaways. These businesses occupy one fifth (20%) of all surveyed units in the town centre, which is above the national average for such uses of 17%. This is unsurprising given the tourism role of Seaton and the appeal that food and drink premises are likely to have to day and staying visitors.

Out-of-Centre Retail Provision

- 6.122 The only notable retail store outside of Seaton town centre and the seafront area is a small Londis convenience store on Primrose Way in the northern part of the town.

Vacancies

6.123 The number and proportion of vacancies within Seaton town centre has decreased between 2010 and 2016. In 2010 there were 15 vacancies, which was equivalent to 13.3% of all surveyed units in the centre and commensurate with the national average at that time. By 2016, the number of vacant units had fallen to 6, which is equivalent to 5% of all surveyed units and well below the current national average of 12.2%.

Accessibility

6.124 For those visiting Seaton town centre by car, there are a number of car parking facilities available around the town centre. These are:

- Orchard – 168 spaces
- Seaton Town Hall – 30 spaces
- Harbour Road – 316 spaces

6.125 Bus stops in Seaton town centre are located along Marine Place, The Underfleet and Queen Street. These stops are visited by circular town service, calling at stops around Seaton, along with longer distance services visiting Exeter, Honiton, Sidford, Sidbury, Colyford, Axminster and Sidmouth.

Customer Views & Behaviour

6.126 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Seaton town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.

6.127 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is able to attract approximately 74% of all first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 6a residents (the zone in which the town centre lies), with a large proportion of the residents using the Tesco on Harbour Road to do their main food shop (69%).

6.128 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a less popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 30% for zone 6a residents.

6.129 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that Seaton plays a reasonably strong role, with 52% of zone 6a residents using the town centre for this type of shopping. The table also identifies that approximately 30% of residents in zone 6a carry out their top up food shopping in Colyton (also located within zone 6a).

- 6.130 Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts a small market share of food shopping trips from other survey zones (particularly to the Tesco on Harbour Road), namely zones 6b, 16 and 17.
- 6.131 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Seaton. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table identifies that Seaton town centre plays a reasonably small role in terms of comparison goods shopping, including for residents within its core catchment of survey zone 6a.
- 6.132 Table 2 indicates that 65% of residents within zone 6a use Seaton town centre to buy their Books, CDs and DVDs. In addition, Seaton town centre commands a market share of 56% for health and beauty goods, 29% for glassware and jewellery, 30% for DIY goods and 20% for household appliances. For other comparison goods, the table identifies the majority of zone 6a residents tend to shop in Exeter City Centre, Honiton or Sidmouth.

Pedestrian Flows

- 6.133 Within the 2008 East Devon Retail Study, Fore Street was found to be the busiest part of the town centre in terms of pedestrian flow. Our observations of the town centre as part of the preparation of this Study indicate that Fore Street and the northern part of Marine Place remain the busiest locations although the Tesco supermarket in the eastern part of the town centre has had a positive impact upon the amount of pedestrian vitality in this part of the town centre including a greater degree of linkages.

Environmental Quality

- 6.134 There are a number of contrasting styles within Seaton town centre. The more historic parts of the centre are around Queen Street and Fore Street (linked by Cross Street) and represent much of pre-resort settlement. These streets sit on an area of rising ground leading up from the seafront and accommodate 2/3 storey 19th century buildings. The quality and maintenance of buildings along these streets varies, although they provide the most characterful part of the centre. Vehicles travel along both Queen Street and Fore Street although the highway and pavement areas share the same materials which tends to slow traffic speeds and provide for a more pleasant pedestrian environment.
- 6.135 The seafront is a mixture of 19th and 20th century buildings, many of which do not make a positive contribution to the character of the seafront, and the eastern part of the town centre is also characterised by lower density 20th century development which varies in quality and appearance.

Occurrence of Crime

6.136 We have obtained crime data from Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary for Seaton town centre for the period between October 2015 - September 2016. In Table 6.11 below this is broken down by crime type, whilst Table 6.12 shows the level of reported crimes month-by-month over this period.

Table 6.11 – crime types in Seaton (October 2015 – September 2016)

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	42
Bicycle theft	1
Burglary	13
Criminal damage	10
Drugs	2
Other crime	0
Other theft	14
Possession of weapons	0
Public order	10
Robbery	0
Shoplifting	4
Theft from the person	0
Vehicle crime	2
Violent offences	19

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

Table 6.12 – crime month-by-month in Seaton (October 2015- September 2016)

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	7
August 2016	5
July 2016	18
June 2016	15
May 2016	14
April 2016	11
March 2016	5
February 2016	5
January 2016	3
December 2015	12
November 2015	10
October 2015	12

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

Summary

6.137 Seaton’s land use profile reflects its predominant function as a popular tourist destination and seaside town. The centre features an above average representation of convenience, comparison and service retailers, with a particularly high representation of cafes, restaurants and takeaways. The largest convenience goods retailer is Tesco, which attracts both main and top-up food shopping trips and helps the centre to attract over half of first choice local main food and top-up food trips. In addition, the proportion of books/arts/crafts/gifts retailers are all above their respective national averages, further reflecting the centre’s key function and market share of the centre in this range of comparison goods categories. The centre also benefits from a low vacancy rate.

Ottery St Mary Town Centre

Structure of the centre

- 6.138 Ottery St Mary lies to the west of Honiton and to the north of Sidmouth. It was once the largest town in East Devon and has historically been associated with being a market and manufacturing centre. Ottery is described in the East Devon Local Plan as a “very attractive and long established small town, with a historic core of great architectural value”. It is world renowned for the annual Tar Barrels festival which is held within the town on 5 November each year.
- 6.139 The East Devon Local Plan defines a Town Centre Shopping Area and a primary frontage in Ottery. The Town Centre Shopping Area covers the wider area including Sandhill Street, Jesu Street, Gold Street, Mill Street, Hind Street, Broad Street and Brook Street. The primary frontage covers the eastern side of Mill Street, Gold Street and Broad Street.
- 6.140 Strategy No.24 of the Local Plan notes that Ottery will see development focused on meeting local needs and making the town a more vibrant centre. In relation to the town centre, the strategy notes that:
- “.....give priority to the enhancement of the environment and the promotion of business opportunities within the Town Centre Shopping area defined on the Ottery St Mary inset plan to improve the attraction of Ottery St Mary for residents, visitors and businesses”.

Diversity of Uses

- 6.141 Table 6.13 below outlines the pattern of land uses in Ottery town centre for 2010, 2014 and 2016. These years have been chosen as it provides a picture of town centre land uses both before and after the opening of the Sainsburys supermarket, on Hind Street, in October 2011. The 2010 and 2014 land use data is provided by Experian GOAD and the 2014 survey has been updated by GVA in our own survey undertaken in August 2016.

Table 6.13: land use profile of Ottery St Mary town centre, 2010-2106

Sector	2010			2014			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	9	13.0	8.6	11	15.1	9.0	12	16.7	9.7
Comparison	30	43.5	41.5	30	41.1	40.4	27	37.5	39.5
Service	20	29.0	35.1	23	31.5	37.0	22	30.6	37.9
Other	2	2.9	1.2	2	2.7	1.2	1	1.4	1.2
Vacant	8	11.6	13.7	7	9.6	12.4	10	13.9	12.2
Total	73	100	100	73	100	100	72	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

6.142 Table 6.13 indicates that there has been an increase in the number and proportion of convenience goods retailers in Ottery St Mary town centre between 2010 and 2016. In 2010, there were 9 convenience goods retailers in the centre, which comprised 13% of all surveyed units in the centre. By 2016, the number of convenience goods retailers had risen to 12, with part of this increase due to the introduction of Sainsburys, with convenience retailers now occupy 16.7% of all retail units. Throughout the period 2010-2016 the proportion of convenience goods retailers in the town centre remained above the national average.

6.143 Following no change in the number of comparison goods retailers between 2010-2014, there has been a decrease from 30 to 27 between 2014 and 2016. This fall mirrors the trend for falling comparison goods retailers nationally. At the time of 2016 survey, 37.5% of all surveyed units were occupied by comparison goods retailers which is slightly below the national average of 39.5%.

6.144 There has also been an increase in the number of service uses in the town centre, from 20 in 2010 to 22 in 2016 (although the number of uses did peak at 23 in 2014). Despite this increase, which has mirrored the trend nationally for an increasing proportion of service uses in town centres, the proportion of service uses in Ottery St Mary town centre has continued to remain below the nation average.

Retailer Representation

6.145 As noted above, a Sainsburys supermarket opened in Ottery St Mary town centre in 2011. The store is located to the north of Hind Street and was developed on the site of a former orchard and walled garden, adjacent to a Council-operated surface level car park. The store lies a short walking distance from the defined primary frontages and extends to 1,858sq metres. It sells a wide range of convenience goods products and a small selection of comparison goods. A key

rationale for granting planning permission for this unit in 2010 was the need to retain a greater amount of convenience goods shopping trips within the Ottery area.

- 6.146 Other convenience goods retailers include a small Co-op food store on Yonder Street, along with a Costcutter convenience store on Mill Street. Local independent traders include two butchers, an off licence, a greengrocer and a bakery.
- 6.147 The range of comparison goods retailers in Ottery St Mary town centre is modest and comprises local independent traders. Retailers include those selling, books, flowers, computer equipment, cards, furniture, hardware and decorating supplies, household goods and a jeweller.
- 6.148 Within the service sector, the town centre accommodates just one high street bank (Lloyds), following the closure of the branch of Natwest on Silver Street, and a number of independent service sector retailers. Independent service uses consists of a number of cafes, restaurants and take-away restaurants, along with a travel agent and two estate agents.

Out-of-Centre Retail Provision

- 6.149 The most significant retail use outside of Ottery St Mary town centre is Otter Nurseries, located on Gosford Road. This is a large garden centre complex which also sells clothing, gifts, arts and crafts, furniture and homewares. It also incorporates a café/restaurant.

Vacancies

- 6.150 As table 6.13 indicates, the number of vacancies in Ottery St Mary town centre has increased over the period of 2010-2016 from 8 to 10 this year. At the time of the 2016 survey, the proportion of vacant units represented 13.9% of all retail units in the town centre, which is higher the national average of circa 12.2%. There are instances of vacancies throughout the centre although there are now a number of vacancies along Mill Street.
- 6.151 This increase in the number of vacancies, coincides with the introduction of the Sainsburys store on Hind Street, although the recently vacated units previously sold items such as gifts, jewellery, furniture and an electrical goods store. Therefore, there is not a significant trading overlap between these former stores and Sainsburys although we consider that EDDC should monitor this situation to ascertain whether the closures are in any way connected with Sainsburys, including whether the new supermarket is having an effect on vitality levels across the rest of the town centre.

Accessibility

- 6.152 There are three main off-street car parking areas in and around Ottery town centre, at Hind Street (connected with the Sainsburys store) (137 spaces), Canaan Way (125 spaces) and Brook Street

(33 spaces). The car park at Hind Street has historically been the most popular facility in the town centre and has been extended to cope with the demands of the adjacent Sainsburys store. There are also a number of on-street spaces, including those on Mill Street.

- 6.153 A number of bus stops are located in and around the town centre. The most central stops are located on Hind Street and Broad Hind Street, with further stops on Silver Street and Mill Street. Services visiting these stops travel to Cranbrook, Exeter, Feniton, Sidmouth, Whimble and Honiton. There is also an Ottery town service which circulates the urban area on a regular basis.
- 6.154 Ottery St Mary does not have a railway station, although there is a station three miles to the north at Feniton. This station is served by Great Western Railway services running between London Waterloo and Exeter St David's.

Customer Views & Behaviour

- 6.155 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Ottery St Mary town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.
- 6.156 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is able to attract approximately 66% of all first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 4c residents (the zone in which the town centre lies), with a large proportion of the residents using the Sainsbury's store on Hind Street to do their main food shop (60%). The next most popular main food shop destination for zone 4c residents is the Aldi on Exeter Road outside Honiton (13%).
- 6.157 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a less popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 38% for zone 4c residents.
- 6.158 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that Ottery St Mary town centre plays a strong role, with 82% of zone 4c residents using the town centre for this type of shopping.
- 6.159 Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts a small market share of food shopping trips from other survey zones (particularly to the Sainsbury's on Hind Street), namely zones 4a and 7.
- 6.160 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Ottery St Mary. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table identifies that Ottery St Mary town centre plays a reasonably small role in terms of comparison goods shopping, including for residents within its core catchment of survey zone 4c.
- 6.161 Table 2 indicates that 78% of residents within zone 4c use Ottery St Mary town centre to buy their health and beauty products. In addition, the town centre commands a market share of 53% for

books, CDs and DVDs, 31% for glassware and jewellery, 42% for DIY goods and 25% for audio-visual equipment. For other comparison goods, the table identifies the majority of zone 4c residents tend to shop in Exeter City Centre.

Pedestrian Flows

- 6.162 In the 2008 East Devon Retail Study, Mill Street was found to be the busiest location within Ottery St Mary town centre. On our visit to the centre during the course of completing the current Study we have observed pedestrian vitality in different parts of the centre. We consider that the eastern end of Mill Street and Broad Street are generally the busiest parts of the town centre during the week and weekend, although the introduction of the Sainsburys supermarket on Hind Street has reinforced pedestrian activity levels in this part of the town centre.

Environmental Quality

- 6.163 The central part of Ottery St Mary has a network of streets which appear to be of medieval origin. St Mary's Church, located on the northern edge of the town centre, is the building with which the town is most immediately associated and dominates the skyline around the central area.
- 6.164 The quality of buildings around the centre is mixed. Mill Street has few buildings of distinction and has, in part, a tired appearance. Indeed, there may be some correlation between this appearance and the loss of retail uses from this area in recent years. Broad Street has a collection of more attractive buildings which make a positive contribution to the street scene, whilst Gold Street and Silver Street have a number of listed buildings. Throughout the town centre, the streets are very narrow and many have been turned into one-way streets in order to cope with traffic levels and provide some on-street parking.

Occurrence of Crime

- 6.165 Tables 6.14 and 6.15 below outline the levels of recorded crime in Ottery St Mary town centre. Table 6.14 provides details of reported crimes, by type, and Table 6.15 provides data on crime levels on a month-by-month basis between October 2015 and September 2016.

Table 6.14 – crime types in Ottery St Mary, October 2015 – September 2016

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	17
Bicycle theft	1
Burglary	1
Criminal damage	6
Drugs	1
Other crime	0
Other theft	2
Possession of weapons	0
Public order	1
Robbery	0
Shoplifting	4
Theft from the person	1
Vehicle crime	4
Violent offences	10

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

Table 6.15 – crime month-by-month, October 2015- September 2016

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	4
August 2016	2
July 2016	5
June 2016	9
May 2016	4
April 2016	4
March 2016	2
February 2016	2
January 2016	3
December 2015	5
November 2015	8
October 2015	0

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

Summary

6.166 Ottery St Mary is a small yet functional town centre within the central part of the district. The town centre has an above average representation of convenience goods, and attracts over half of local main and top-up food trips, primarily due to the recently developed Sainsbury's on Hind Street, which has had a significant impact upon food shopping patterns. The range of comparison goods retailers in the centre is modest and comprises local independent traders with little/none national multiple retailers. The overall proportion of comparison goods and service retailers both fall below the national average, which reflects the relatively small market share of the centre in a range of comparison goods categories. The vacancy rate has increased to above the national average since the last retail study was undertaken. At the present time, it is unclear whether the development of the Sainsburys store has had an effect on changes in vacancies and this will be an area for EDDC to monitor going forwards.

Axminster Town Centre

Structure of the centre

6.167 Axminster lies in the north-eastern part of East Devon District, close to the border with West Dorset and South Somerset. The town is a key employment base in East Devon and has been famous for

many years for the manufacturing of carpets. Within the adopted East Devon Local Plan, Axminster is identified for larger scale housing growth in the Local Plan, with an allocated extension of the town to the north and east including provision for 650 new homes.

6.168 Within the adopted Local Plan, the defined town centre area is located towards the western edge of the town close to the main railway line. The defined Town Centre Shopping Area covers West Street, Castle Street, Chard Street, Victoria Place, Lyme Street, Victoria Place, South Street and Church Street, along with the Tesco supermarket (and car park) at Shand Park. There is also a defined primary frontage which runs along West Street, Silver Street, Trinity Square, Chard Street and the southern end of Victoria Place.

6.169 Strategy No.20 of the adopted Local Plan notes the following in relation to Axminster town centre:

“give priority to the enhancement of the environment and promotion of business opportunities in the expanded town centre shopping area defined on the Proposals Map to provide the focus for jobs, shops and tourism. Promote the regeneration of the Webster Garage site and adjoining land to support commercial activity, enhance the public realm and address traffic congestion issues”.

Diversity of Uses

6.170 In order to analyse the diversity of land uses in Axminster town centre, we have used Experian GOAD’s regular land use surveys dated 2011 and 2014 and supplemented these with our own survey undertaken in August 2016. Table 6.16 shows the land use data for these three years:

Table 6.16: land use profile of Axminster centre, 2011-2016

Sector	2011			2014			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	11	11.0	8.6	10	10.1	9.0	10	10.6	9.4
Comparison	38	38.0	41.5	43	43.4	40.4	35	37.2	39.5
Service	34	34.0	35.1	34	34.3	37.0	35	37.2	37.9
Other	3	3.0	1.2	3	3.0	1.2	2	2.1	1.2
Vacant	14	14.0	13.7	9	9.1	12.4	12	12.8	12.2
Total	100	100	100	99	100	100	94	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

6.171 Over the period 2011 to 2016, the number of surveyed retail units in Axminster town centre declined from 100 to 94. This represents a decline of 6% and could be a sign of lower demand for business premises in the town and a contraction in the size of the town centre.

- 6.172 Table 6.16 indicates that the number of convenience goods retailers in Axminster town centre decreased slightly, from 11 to 10, between 2011 and 2016. This is in contrast to the national trend for a small increase in convenience goods uses in town centres across the country, although, despite this decline, the proportion of convenience goods retailers in Axminster has continued to remain above the national average. In 2016 convenience goods retailers occupied 10.6% of all surveyed retail units in the centre, compared with a national average of 9.4%.
- 6.173 Over the period 2011-2016 there has been a fluctuation in the number of comparison goods retailers. Between 2011-2014, the number of retailers rose from 38 to 43. This changed the proportion of comparison goods retailer from below to above the national average. However, between 2013 and 2016, the number of comparison goods retailers decreased to 35, leading to the town having a proportion (37.2%) which was again below the national average (39.5%).
- 6.174 Between 2011 and 2016 there has been little change in the number of service based uses within Axminster town centre, with an increase from 34 to 35 units between 2011 and 2016. Throughout this time period, the proportion of service uses within the town centre has been slightly below the national average, although the difference is not significant and has narrowed in recent years.

Retailer Representation

- 6.175 Within the convenience goods sector, the largest retailer is Tesco, who occupy a large supermarket in the western part of the town centre. The store extends to 1,561sq m net and sells a wide variety of fresh, refrigerated, frozen and pre-packages convenience goods, along with a small selection of comparison goods. The store is served by a 190 space surface level customer car park. The car park is limited to a two hours of free parking, although this enables customers to walk in to the rest of the town centre as part of a linked trip.
- 6.176 The other large convenience goods retailer within Axminster town centre is a Co-op on West Street. The store is served by a 150 space car park and extends to 828sq m net. There are also a small number of independent convenience goods retailers including the River Cottage delicatessen, a health food shop, bakers, newsagents and confectioner.
- 6.177 Within the comparison goods sector, retailers are generally local independents, including the Trinity House department store, a hardware shop, art shops, a cycle store and a number of charity shops. The only national multiple comparison goods retailer in the town centre is a Boots pharmacy on Trinity Square. Axminster has a proportion of arts and crafts, chemist/pharmacy, gifts and pet/charity shop/specialist comparison goods retailers which are above their respective national averages whilst the proportion of clothing/fashion, jewellery, sports and electrical goods retailers are below the national average.

6.178 Axminster town centre has a number of national high street banks and building societies such as Santander, Barclays, Lloyds and Natwest. The proportion of banks, building societies and estate agents is above the national average whilst the proportion of cafes, restaurants and takeaways in Axminster is below average. In particular, the national average for food and drink service premises is circa 17% and the proportion of such premises in Axminster, at the time of the 2016 survey, was circa 12%.

Out-of-Centre Retail Provision

6.179 A short distance to the south of Axminster town centre is a Pets at Home store, at the junction of West Street and King Edward Road. The store extends to 443sq m gross and has a small adjacent customer car parking area.

Vacancies

6.180 Over the period 2011-2016, the number of vacant units in Axminster town centre has fluctuated. Between 2011 and 2013 the number of vacant units fell from 14 to 9, although there has been a rise back to 12 vacancies by 2016. Therefore, whilst the proportion of vacant units in Axminster fell to below the national average in 2013, the proportion is now back to a level commensurate with the national average in 2016. This combines with a significant improvement in the town's VenueScore rating over the same period, as regeneration in the town continues.

Accessibility

6.181 There are a number of off-street car parking areas in and around Axminster town centre at:

- South Street (short stay) – 36 spaces
- Coombe Lane (long stay) – 87 spaces
- West Street – 150 spaces (adjacent to the Co-op store)
- Poplar Mount (long stay) – 76 spaces
- NCP car park at Lyme Street

6.182 As noted above, the Tesco supermarket at Shand Park also has a large surface level customer car park and whilst this facility has a time limit for parking, the time limit is sufficiently long (2 hours) to enable linked trips with the remainder of the town centre. However, it should be noted that there is a considerable difference in levels between the store and the rest of the town centre, which may discourage some shoppers from making the linked trip on foot. There are also some on-street parking spaces on West Street, South Street and Trinity Square.

6.183 There are a number of bus stops located around Axminster town centre, the main ones being on Trinity Square. These are visited by services travelling to Cranbrook, Ottery St Mary, Honiton, Weymouth, Lyme Regis, Seaton, Charmouth, Exeter and Taunton.

6.184 Axminster has a main line railway station which is located to the south west of the main town centre. The railway station is within a ten minute walk of the main shopping area. The station is served by trains running between London Waterloo and Exeter St David's, services are provided by Great Western Railway.

Customer Views & Behaviour

6.185 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Axminster town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.

6.186 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is able to attract approximately 46% of all first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 6b residents (the zone in which the town centre lies), with a large proportion of the residents using the Tesco store at Shand Park, West Street to do their main food shop (42%). The next most popular main food shop destination for zone 6b residents is the Tesco store on Harbour Road in Seaton (14%).

6.187 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a less popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 22% for zone 6b residents.

6.188 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that Axminster town centre plays a stronger role, with 54% of zone 6b residents using the town centre for this type of shopping. The second most popular destination for zone 6b residents to do their top up food shop is the Co-op on West Street, outside Axminster Town Centre (12%).

6.189 Table 1 also indicates that zone 16 (the adjacent zone to 6b to the east, is the only other zone in the survey area that attracts a small market share of food shopping trips to Axminster.

6.190 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Axminster. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table identifies that Axminster town centre plays a small role in terms of comparison goods shopping for both residents within its core catchment of zone 6b, and the wider survey area.

6.191 Table 2 indicates that 74% of residents within zone 6b use Axminster town centre to buy their health and beauty products. In addition, the town centre commands a market share of 34% for books, CDs and DVDs, however, the town centre fails to attract a market share of over 30% (with most below 20%) for the other comparison goods category. For other comparison goods, the

table identifies the majority of zone 6b residents tend to shop in Exeter City Centre or Honiton Town Centre.

Pedestrian Flows

- 6.192 During our visits to Axminster town centre as part of this health check exercise, we have observed different levels of pedestrian flow across the town centre. The busiest areas of the town centre are consistently around Trinity Square, the western end Lyme Street and the northern part of West Street.

Environmental Quality

- 6.193 The layout of Axminster town centre and the surrounding area reflects its Saxon origins, with the town growing during the 18th and 19th centuries due to the flourishing carpet works and coaching trade. The town centre has a large number of listed buildings particularly along Silver Street, Victoria Place, Lyme Street, South Street and some on Church Street. St Mary's Church provides a focal point for the town centre and is surrounded by a church yard and a number of retail and commercial premises. Much of the town centre is characterised by a close knit pattern of development in terrace form, sometimes forming straight, sometimes curving frontages. The quality of many of the buildings around Trinity Square, Silver Street and West Street is generally good, although outside of this 'core' retail area there are some areas for improvement, including the former Websters garage site on Lyme Street, which provides a negative impact upon this part of the town centre.

Occurrence of Crime

- 6.194 In order to understand the occurrence of crime within Axminster, we have obtained data from Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary. This is shown in Table 6.17 below for the period October 2015-September 2016 and is broken down by crime type:

Table 6.17 – crime types in Axminster (October 2015 – September 2016)

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	61
Bicycle theft	0
Burglary	9
Criminal damage	10
Drugs	5
Other crime	1
Other theft	9
Possession of weapons	1
Public order	3
Robbery	0
Shoplifting	21
Theft from the person	0
Vehicle crime	2
Violent offences	18

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

6.195 Table 6.18 below shows the trend in total crimes per month over the October 2015 to September 2016 period.

Table 6.18 – crime month-by-month in Axminster (October 2015- September 2016)

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	8
August 2016	17
July 2016	9
June 2016	13
May 2016	4
April 2016	11
March 2016	16
February 2016	12
January 2016	7
December 2015	12
November 2015	8
October 2015	23

Source: Devon & Cornwall Constabulary²⁰

Summary

6.196 In summary, Axminster is a reasonably healthy town centre. The current land use profile identifies the town has an above average proportion of convenience goods retailers including a large Tesco supermarket and a number of independent convenience goods retailers. However, the centre only attracts under half of first choice main food shopping trips from the local area, and just over half of top-up food shopping trips. In addition, Axminster has a slightly below average proportion of comparison and service goods retailers, although the retailers are largely dominated by local independents. The centre’s market penetration for comparison goods shopping is relatively low, although performs well in the health and beauty and CDs/books sectors. The vacancy rate falls slightly above the national average, but not high enough to be a significant cause for concern.

7. The Health of Defined Town Centres in Mid Devon District

7.1 This section provides a review of the health of the three main defined town centres in Mid Devon District: Tiverton, Cullompton and Crediton. Our review of the health of these three centres follows the same structure as the other assessments in Teignbridge and East Devon and includes, where salient information is available, data and analysis on the health check indicators listed by the Planning Practice Guidance (as outlined in paragraph 5.2 of this report). Where relevant, this section also refers back to the contents of the Mid Devon Retail Study 2012 which provided the most recent health check assessments of Tiverton, Crediton and Cullompton.

Tiverton Town Centre

Structure of the centre

7.2 Tiverton is the largest town centre in Mid Devon at the confluence of the Rivers Exe and Lowman. Its town centre is located in the western part of the urban area, close to the eastern bank of the River Exe. The adopted Policies Map, which is part of the Mid Devon Local Plan, provides three designations for Tiverton town centre: a town centre boundary, a primary shopping area boundary and a primary shopping frontage. The town centre boundary extends from Great Western Way in the south, to Bridge Street to the west, Newport Street in the north and the eastern end of Gold Street in the east.

7.3 The primary shopping area includes Bampton Street, Gold Street and Fore Street, the area surrounding Tiverton Market along with the Marks & Spencer Simply Food store on Phoenix Lane. The primary shopping extend along Fore Street, a small part at the western end of Gold Street and the southern half of Bampton Street.

7.4 The Mid Devon Local Plan site allocations document includes a number of site allocations in and around the town centre. These are:

- A site to the west of St Andrews Street is allocated (under Policy AL/TIV/12) for residential development (55 units).
- Policy AL/TIV/13 allocates land at William Street for a mixed use development comprising 45 dwellings and 1,000sq m of retail/office floorspace
- Policy AL/TIV/19 allocates 0.3 hectares of land at Phoenix Lane for 2,400sq m of retail, office and/or leisure floorspace within a high quality pedestrian shopping street.

- Policy AL/TIV/20 allocates 0.07 hectares of land at Bampton Street for 900sq m of retail floorspace to the provided in small shop units.

Diversity of Uses

7.5 Table 7.1 below provides a summary of the retail land uses and vacancies in Tiverton centre over the period 2011-2016. It utilises land use survey data Experian GOAD for 2011 and 2014, along with the results of a survey in the town centre undertaken by GVA in August 2016.

Table 7.1: land use profile of Tiverton town centre, 2011-2016

Sector	2011			2014			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	21	10.5	8.6	20	9.6	9.0	21	9.9	9.4
Comparison	89	42.4	41.5	96	46.2	40.4	98	46.0	39.5
Service	67	31.9	35.1	70	33.7	37.0	73	34.3	37.9
Other	3	1.4	1.2	4	1.2	1.2	3	1.4	1.2
Vacant	29	13.8	13.7	18	12.4	12.4	18	8.5	12.2
Total	210	100	100	208	100	100	213	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

- 7.6 Table 7.1 indicates that there has been little change to the number of convenience goods retailers in Tiverton town centre. The number of convenience goods retailers decreased, by one, between 2011 and 2014, before returning to 21 units by 2016. Throughout this time period the proportion of convenience goods retailers in Tiverton town centre has remained slightly above the national average.
- 7.7 Table 7.1 also indicates that there has been an increase in the number of comparison goods retailers in Tiverton town centre between 2011 and 2016, increasing from 89 to 98. Throughout this time period the proportional of comparison goods retailer has remained above the national average, with the gap between the two widening over this period.
- 7.8 The number and proportion of service based retailers has also increased in Tiverton town centre between 2011 and 2016, from 67 to 73. This increase in the proportion of service uses has mirrored the national trend for increases in this type of land use in town centres, although the proportion of service uses in Tiverton has continued to remain below the national average throughout this time period.

Retailer Representation

- 7.9 In the convenience goods sector, the largest food retailer within Tiverton town centre is a M&S Simply Food. The store extends to 730sq m net sales and is located to the south of Fore Street and the main shopping area on Phoenix Lane. The store is adjacent to a reasonably large surface level customer car park. Other convenience goods retailers consist of a number of independent retailers including a number of butchers, convenience stores, bakers and greengrocers. Until recently, there was a Budgens foodstore on Market Walk, who took over a former Co-op store. However, as part of a national round of closures, this store ceased trading in March 2017.
- 7.10 Within the comparison goods sector there are a number of national multiple retailers, including Argos, WH Smith, Timpson, The Works, Clarks, Poundstretcher, Peacocks, Edinburgh Woollen Mill, Dorothy Perkins and M&Co. Of the three Mid Devon towns, Tiverton has the highest amount of national multiple retailers. A large majority of these national multiples are located along Fore Street, Bampton Street and Market Walk.
- 7.11 In relation to the local independent comparison goods retailers in the town centre, the most notable and largest retailer is Banbury's, who operate a department store on Gold Street. The presence of Banbury's helps the town centre to record a higher than national average proportion of department and variety stores. Other sectors which have a proportion of retailers higher than the national average are the furniture, electrical, pets/charity/specialist comparison retailer, sports/hobbies and chemist/pharmacy sectors. The clothing/fashion, jewellery and DIY sectors have a proportion of retailers which is below the national average.
- 7.12 A number of the national high street banks are present in Tiverton town centre, including Lloyds, Natwest, HSBC and Barclays. Other national multiple service operators are Domino's Pizza, Subway and Costa. As noted above, the proportion of all service uses in Tiverton is commensurate with the national average and most of the sub-sectors also generally conformity their respective national averages. The one exception to this is the café/restaurant/ take-away sector which occupies 13.6% of all surveyed units, compared to a national average of 17.3%.

Out-of-Centre Retail Provision

- 7.13 Outside of the town centre, Tiverton has two large supermarkets: Tesco and Morrisons. The Tesco store lies on the eastern edge of the town centre and extends to 3,028sq m net sales. The store opened in October 2005 and sells a wide range of convenience goods, supplemented by a reasonable range of comparison goods. The store lies within reasonable walking distance of town centre shops.

7.14 The Morrisons supermarket lies adjacent to Kennedy Way to the north west of the town centre and extends to 2,230sq m net and provides a comparable retail offer to Tesco, albeit with a smaller comparison goods offer.

7.15 There are three further areas of out of centre retail units in Tiverton. There are Halfords (605sq m), Carpetright (605sq m) and Pets at Home (483sq m) stores on Kennedy Way, Homebase (2,455sq m) and B&M stores (2,300sq m) on Lowman Way and West Exe.

Vacancies

7.16 Table 7.1 indicates that the number of vacant retail units within Tiverton town centre has decreased between 2011 and 2016 from 29 to 18. In 2011 the proportion of vacant units remains slightly above the national average, a decrease in vacancies in both 2014 and 2016 has kept the proportion of vacant units in the town centre below the national average. At the time of 2016 survey, 8.5% of all surveyed units, which is around two-thirds of the national average of 12.2%.

Accessibility

7.17 There are a number of off-street car parking areas in Tiverton town centre. These are:

- Beck Square (short stay) – 36 spaces
- William Street (short stay) - 45 spaces
- Multi-Storey, Phoenix Lane (long stay) – 630 spaces
- Market Place (short stay) – 110 spaces

7.18 In addition, and as noted above, the Tesco supermarket to the east of the town centre is in walking distance of town centre shops and can be used by shoppers wishing to make a linked trip between both locations.

7.19 Some streets in the town centre also offer on-street parking, although spaces are generally limited. These streets include Bampton Street, Gold Street and Angel Hill.

7.20 Tiverton has a bus station which is located to the south of the core retail area and accessed from Phoenix Lane. Other bus stops can be found at Gold Street and Bampton Street. Bus services which visit these stops also visit Bickleigh, Silverton, Exeter, Cullompton, Taunton, Wellington and South Molton.

7.21 The nearest train station to Tiverton town centre is Tiverton Parkway. The station is located circa 8 miles to the east of the town and lies adjacent to the M5 motorway. The station is visited by services which travel to London Paddington, Penzance and other stations in Cornwall, Bristol, Exeter St David's and stations through Gloucester to Birmingham and on to Manchester Piccadilly.

Customer Views & Behaviour

- 7.22 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Tiverton town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.
- 7.23 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is only able to attract approximately 0.5% of all first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 9b residents (the zone in which the town centre lies), with the majority of the residents using the out of centre stores (86%) including the Morrisons on Kennedy Way (55%) and the Tesco on Blundells Way (31%).
- 7.24 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a slightly more popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 11% for zone 9b residents.
- 7.25 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that Tiverton town centre plays a relatively weak role, with only 14% of zone 9b residents using the town centre for this type of shopping. 77% of zone 9b residents were identified as using the out of centre stores, namely the Morrisons on Kennedy Way (30%) and Tesco on Blundells Way (41%).
- 7.26 Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts some market share for food shopping trips from the surrounding survey zones, in particular zones 8b, 8c, 9a and 18.
- 7.27 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Tiverton. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table identifies that Tiverton town centre plays a strong role in terms of comparison goods shopping, particularly for residents within its core catchment of survey zone 9b.
- 7.28 For example, 95% of all health and beauty shopping trips from the zone covering Tiverton's core catchment area (9b) flow to the town centre, and 80% of residents within zone 9b use Tiverton to buy their books, CDs and DVDs.
- 7.29 The town centre is also reasonably successful in attracting shopping trips in relation to other comparison goods. For example, Tiverton attracts a market share of 61% for glassware, tableware and jewellery, 63% for recreation and luxury goods, 63% for household appliances and 49% for furniture and soft furnishings.

Pedestrian Flows

- 7.30 Our visits to Tiverton town centre have included observations on the different levels of pedestrian flow throughout the centre. The highest levels of pedestrian flow were recorded as being along Fore Street, the southern end of Bampton Street and the western end of Gold Street. This corresponds with the core retail area in the town centre. There is also a reasonable level of pedestrian flow along Phoenix Lane due to the presence of the bus station and the town's main multi-storey car park.
- 7.31 Pedestrian flows along Fore Street are aided by the pedestrianised nature of this street, with only limited access for service vehicles and public transport. Public realm improvements have also been carried in recent years along Bampton Street and Gold Street, which has improved the quality of the pedestrian environment in these streets.

Environmental Quality

- 7.32 Most of Tiverton town centre is covered by a Conservation Area which was designated in 1973 and then extended in 1992 and again in 2005. The central area of the town is typified by densely developed frontages with substantial buildings many of which are three storeys. These are mainly built up to the back of the edge of the pavement. Fore Street still retains the characteristic of a wide open space once occupied by market cross and various shambles, whilst Bampton Street and Gold Street are narrower in nature and are busy not only with pedestrians but also with traffic and parking.
- 7.33 In 2006, the Pannier market was extensively refurbished, which has improved both the structural appearance of the market building and also the surrounding landscaping, cementing its role as one of the most iconic parts of Tiverton town centre.
- 7.34 Apart from the historic buildings which occupy the majority of the centre, there are some areas which provide a negative contribution, including Market Walk, which now appears dated. Better quality more recent additions to the built environment include at the northern end of Bampton Street and the District Council's offices on Phoenix Lane. The Rivers Lowan and Exe also provide an attractive contribution to the environment around the town centre.

Occurrence of Crime

- 7.35 In order to understand the occurrence of crime within Tiverton, we have obtained data from Devon & Cornwall Constabulary. This is shown in Table 7.2 below for the period October 2015 and September 2016 and is broken down by crime type:

Table 7.2 – crime types in Tiverton (October 2015 – September 2016)

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	128
Bicycle theft	6
Burglary	17
Criminal damage	50
Drugs	16
Other crime	7
Other theft	17
Possession of weapons	7
Public order	18
Robbery	4
Shoplifting	71
Theft from the person	5
Vehicle crime	8
Violent offences	89

Source: Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

7.36 Table 7.3 below shows the trend in total crimes per month over the October 2015 to September 2016 period.

Table 7.3 – crime month-by-month in Tiverton (October 2015- September 2016)

Month	Number of crimes
July 2016	19
June 2016	33
May 2016	26
April 2016	33
March 2016	41
February 2016	36
January 2016	35
December 2015	33
November 2015	23
October 2015	70
September 2015	39
August 2015	55

Source: Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

Summary

7.37 Tiverton continues to operate as the largest and most successful town centre in Med Devon, and contains a relatively large number of national multiple retailers. The town centre currently comprises an above average proportion of convenience and comparison goods retailers, and a slightly below average proportion of service retailers. In terms of convenience goods shopping, the centre struggles to retain a large market share for both main and top-up food shopping, with the majority of local residents using the out-of-centre Morrisons and Tesco stores. On the other hand, Tiverton retains a much larger market share for a range of comparison goods categories. In addition, vacancy rates have continued to fall since 2011 and 2014 which suggests the centre is increasing in popularity for traders and general vitality and viability. Overall, we consider Tiverton is a reasonably healthy town centre and continues to be an important asset to the retail hierarchy in Mid Devon.

Cullompton Town Centre

Structure of the centre

- 7.38 Cullompton is a medium sized market town to the west of Junction 28 of the M5 motorway, located in the central part of Mid Devon District. Cullompton is the second largest settlement in the mid Devon district, located 11 miles north of Exeter, and circa 20 miles south west of Taunton.
- 7.39 The adopted Local Plan policies map defines a town centre boundary and a Primary Shopping Area in Cullompton. The defined town centre boundary extends from the junction of Station Road, Higher Street and Higher Bull Ring in the north, southwards along Fore Street, stopping at the north-western part of Exeter Hill. The Primary Shopping Area extends along Fore Street from Higher Bull Ring to the junction of Fore Street, Cockpit Hill and Exeter Hill.
- 7.40 Most of the defined town centre boundary is covered by a Conservation Area.
- 7.41 The Local Plan policies map shows one site specific allocation: Lower Bull Ring (AL/CU/12). This allocates the magistrates court and former health centre for community facilities. This site has now been redeveloped to provide the Hayridge Centre, which is a library and community centre space with an adjacent surface level pay and display car park for circa 50 vehicles. The Hayridge centre has been an important catalyst for increasing footfall and regenerating Collompton town centre.
- 7.42 To the east of the town centre, a large area of land is allocated under Policy AL/CU/14 for an eastern relief road. The new road would connect Station Road to Meadow Lane and has been designed to improve traffic congestion and air quality within the town centre.

Diversity of Uses

- 7.43 Table 7.4 below provides a summary of the diversity of retail uses in Cullompton town centre. It uses Experian GOAD land use surveys from 2011 and 2014, supplemented by a GVA land use survey undertaken in August 2016.

Table 7.4: land use profile of Cullompton town centre, 2011-2016

Sector	2011			2014			2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience	5	5.8	8.6	8	9.6	9.0	9	11.1	9.4
Comparison	25	29.1	41.5	23	27.7	40.4	24	29.6	39.5
Service	29	33.7	35.1	34	41.0	37.0	34	42.0	37.9
Other	2	2.3	1.2	1	1.2	1.2	1	1.2	1.2
Vacant	25	29.1	13.7	17	20.5	12.4	13	16.5	12.2
Total	86	100	100	83	100	100	81	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

- 7.44 Table 7.4 indicates that the number of convenience goods retailers in Cullompton town centre has increased between 2011 and 2016 from 5 to 9. This increase has changed the relationship to the national average, with a below average level in 2011, followed by above average levels in 2014 and 2016. In 2016, convenience goods retailers occupied 11.1% of all surveyed units in Cullompton town centre, against national average of 9.4%.
- 7.45 Table 7.4 also indicates that there has been a small decrease in the number of comparison goods retailers in Cullompton town centre from 25 in 2011 to 24 in 2016. Throughout this time period the proportion of comparison good retailers has continued to remain significantly lower than the national average. In 2011, the proportion of comparison goods retailers accounted for 29.1% of Cullompton's retail units, compares to the national average of 41.5%. In 2016, 29.6% of all surveyed units were occupied by comparison goods retailers compared with the national average of 39.5%. Therefore, the gap between the local and national proportions has reduced.
- 7.46 In contrast to the decreases in the number of convenience and comparison goods retailers, there has been an increase in the number of service based retailers in Cullompton town centre from 29 to 34 between 2011 and 2016. In 2011, the proportion of service uses was below the national average of 35.1% at 33.7%, before moving above the national average in both 2014 and 2016.

Retailer Representation

- 7.47 The two national multiple convenience goods operators in Cullompton town centre are Co-op and Costcutter. Both occupy small units on the eastern side of Fore Street and both have a net sales area of around 100sq m. Neither store has any dedicated adjacent car parking and are likely to appeal to top-up food shopping purposes. Other independent convenience goods retailers in the town centre include two bakers, a convenience store, a butcher and a greengrocer.

7.48 All comparison goods retailers in Cullompton town centre comprise local independent businesses, including the sale of greeting cards, carpets, pet goods, household goods, a plants/flowers and an optician. The overall level of below (national) average comparison goods retailers is reflected in most of the sub-categories, apart from pet/charity/specialist comparison goods retailers, DIY/hardware retailers and florists.

7.49 Within the service sector there are, following the closure of Natwest, two national high street banks: Lloyds and Barclays. The remainder comprise a number of independent traders, with the proportion of estate agents/valuers and health/beauty businesses above their respective national averages. The proportion of café/restaurant/take-away businesses (13.6%) is below the national average (17.3%).

Out-of-Centre Retail Provision

7.50 Outside of the defined town centre boundary in Cullompton area there are a number of national multiple retailers. To the south of the centre, on Brook Road, are ALDI and Home Bargains stores. These retailers have re-occupied a site that was previously occupied by Somerfield/Co-op. These stores are in a retail terrace and are served by an adjacent surface level customer car parking area and lie a reasonably short walking distance from town centre shops. The ALDI store concentrates upon the sale of convenience goods, with a small comparison goods area, whilst the Home Bargains store has a broader mixture of comparison and convenience goods.

7.51 Located to the north-east of the town centre boundary is a reasonably large Tesco supermarket. The store extends to circa 1,000sq m net sales and stocks a wide range of fresh and pre-packaged convenience goods along with a reasonably small comparison goods offer. The store is served by a large surface level car parking area and petrol filling station.

Vacancies

7.52 Between 2011 and 2016, the number of vacant retail units in the town centre have fallen significantly from 25 to 13. In 2011, the proportion of vacant units in 2011 was at 29.1%, compared to the national average of 13.7%. In 2013, the proportion of vacant units continued to remain above the national average in 2016. There is no obvious explanation for the significant improvement in the number of vacant units in the centre, although the data from this Study and the previous 2012 Mid Devon Retail Study would suggest that vacancies were rising up to 2011, where they reached a peak, and it is possible that the centre has re-adjusted its retail and service offer following the opening of the large Tesco supermarket and the conversion of the former Co-op/Somerfield to ALDI and Home Bargains stores.

Accessibility

- 7.53 The two main off-street car parking areas in Cullompton town centre can be found at Forge Way (accessed off Station Road) and adjacent to the Hayridge Centre. The Forge Way car park, which is located in the north-eastern part of the centre, provides for around 110 spaces, whilst the Hayridge Centre provides circa 50 spaces. The central and southern parts of Fore Street are too narrow (with two way traffic flows) to provide on-street car parking, although some on-street parking provision can be found at Higher Bull Ring.
- 7.54 The two main areas of bus stops in Cullompton town centre are at Higher Bull Ring and the southern end of Fore Street, close to the Hayridge Centre. These stops are visited by services which connect Cullompton to Exeter, Tiverton, Uffculme, Sampford Peverell and Willand, along with a circular town service for Cullompton itself.
- 7.55 Tiverton Parkway train station is located approximately 8km from Cullompton. The station benefits from regular services to London Paddington, Penzance and other stations in Cornwall as well as Bristol, Exeter St David's and stations through Gloucester to Birmingham and on to Manchester Piccadilly.

Customer Views & Behaviour

- 7.56 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Cullompton town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.
- 7.57 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is unable to attract any market share for first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 8b residents (the zone in which the town centre lies). However, 84% of residents are doing their main food shop at the out of centre stores, in particular the Tesco on Station Road (54%) and Aldi on Brook Road (30%).
- 7.58 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a slightly more popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 3% for zone 8b residents.
- 7.59 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that Cullompton town centre plays a moderate role, with 21% of zone 8b residents using the town centre for this type of shopping. 67% of zone 8b residents were identified as using the out of centre stores, namely the Tesco on Station Road (30%) and Aldi on Brook Road (37%).
- 7.60 Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts some market share for food shopping trips from the surrounding survey zones, in particular zones 8a, 8c, 9a and 9b.

- 7.61 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Cullompton. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table identifies that Cullompton town centre plays a relatively weak role in terms of comparison goods shopping, particularly for residents within its core catchment of survey zone 8b.
- 7.62 For example, 76% of all health and beauty shopping trips from the zone covering Cullompton's core catchment area (8b) flow to the town centre, and 45% of residents within zone 8b use Cullompton Town Centre to buy their books, CDs and DVDs. However, the town centre attracts a much smaller market share (less than 30%) for all other comparison goods categories.
- 7.63 For other comparison goods, Table 2 identifies the majority of zone 8b residents tend to shop in Exeter City Centre or Tiverton Town Centre.

Pedestrian Flows

- 7.64 During our visits to Cullompton town centre whilst completing this health check assessment, we have observed the levels of pedestrian flow through different parts of the town centre. Generally, there is a reasonably even level of pedestrian flow along Fore Street and Higher Bull Ring although the central part of Fore Street usually has the highest level of flow. There is also a reasonable level of pedestrian flow from those people parking in the Hayridge Centre car park and walking into the town centre, and along Higher Mill Lane from the Forge Way car park.

Environmental Quality

- 7.65 Cullompton is a linear town centre, running from north to south. Fore Street, Higher Bull Ring and Exeter Hill have densely developed continuous frontages, some of which are broken up by openings into rear courts. There is also plenty of evidence of the original burgage plots either side of Fore Street and on the eastern side of the town centre is the mill stream which has been utilised over many centuries by various industries in the town and provides a quiet and peaceful area away from the busy core retail area.
- 7.66 The commercial properties along Fore Street and Higher Bull Ring are varied in architectural style, with many resulting from partial rebuilding following the several fires in the town. The majority of buildings within the main town centre consist of red brick and render, other buildings are formed of cob and stone, contrasting coloured bricks or a mix of materials.
- 7.67 The town centre changes character as it moves from north to south. The Higher Bull Ring area is arguably the more attractive part of the town centre, with wider pavement areas and mature trees on either side of the highway. Moving southwards, the street becomes narrower, with the loss of vegetation and narrower pavement areas. Here the street feels more enclosed and the quality of the buildings on either side of the street also becomes less consistent.

Occurrence of Crime

7.68 Tables 7.5 and 7.6 below show the types of reported crimes in Cullompton town centre for the period October 2015 to September 2016 and also the number of crimes on a month-by-month basis.

Table 7.5 – crime types in Cullompton (October 2015 – September 2016)

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	25
Bicycle theft	0
Burglary	1
Criminal damage	8
Drugs	2
Other crime	1
Other theft	6
Possession of weapons	0
Public order	3
Robbery	0
Shoplifting	5
Theft from the person	1
Vehicle crime	0
Violent offences	30

Source: Devon & Cornwall Constabulary

Table 7.6 – crime month-by-month in Cullompton (October 2015 to September 2016)

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	7
August 2016	6
July 2016	5
June 2016	5
May 2016	11
April 2016	9
March 2016	12
February 2016	6
January 2016	5
December 2015	4
November 2015	5
October 2015	7

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

Summary

7.69 In summary, we consider Cullompton is currently performing as a reasonably healthy town centre. The proportion of convenience goods retailers falls slightly above the national average, but the centre is unable to retain a large proportion of main and top-up food shopping trips due to the size of stores available, with the majority opting to use the Tesco or Aldi stores outside the town centre. The proportion of comparison goods retailers falls below the national average which is reflected in the low market share of the centre across most of the comparison goods categories and the leakage of shopping trips to Exeter. Although the proportion of service retailers falls above the national average, the centre has a below average representation of cafes and restaurants, which if present could make a significant contribution to the 'staying power' of the town and its overall vitality and viability. The vacancy rate has declined significantly since 2011 and 2013, however, it still remains above the national average. All of this indicates a modest level of performance for the centre.

Crediton Town Centre

Structure of the centre

- 7.70 Crediton lies in the south-western part of Mid Devon District and to the north-west of Exeter, with the two settlements linked by the A377. The defined town centre is linear in nature and runs east-west along High Street. The Mid Devon Local Plan policies map defines town centre and primary shopping area boundaries, along with the primary shopping frontage area.
- 7.71 The defined town centre boundary extends from 85 High Street in the west and St Redvers House in the east. It also includes an area of public open space to the north of High Street (on Market Street) and a car parking area to the south of High Street. The defined primary shopping area extends from 104 to 144 High Street, whilst the primary shopping frontage runs along the northern edge of High Street (between North Street and Searle Street) and the southern side of High Street between numbers 4-36. All of the defined town centre, apart from the car park to the south of High Street, lies within a defined Conservation Area.
- 7.72 Part (g) of Policy COR15 of the Mid Devon Core Strategy notes the following in relation to Crediton town centre:

“Manage the town centre so that economic regeneration and heritage reinforce each other by promoting new homes, shops, leisure, offices and other key town centre uses which are well designed and contribute to vitality and viability including an additional 2,100 square metres of convenience and 1,350 square metres of comparison net retail floorspace by 2016 in accordance with the sequential and other PPS6 retail policy considerations”.

Diversity of Uses

- 7.73 Table 7.7 below provides a summary of the latest town centre land use survey undertaken by MDDC in Summer 2016. We have classified the raw land use data from MDDC’s survey on the basis of Experian GOAD’s classification system in order to provide conformity with the other town centre health check assessments.

Table 7.7: land use profile of Crediton town centre.

Sector							2016		
	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave	No.	%	Ave
Convenience							14	14.9	9.4
Comparison							39	41.5	39.5
Service							29	30.9	37.9
Other							1	1.1	1.2
Vacant							11	11.7	12.2
Total							94	100	100

Source: Experian GOAD and GVA land use surveys

7.74 Table 7.7 indicates that Crediton town centre had, at the time of the 2016 land use survey, 14 convenience goods retailers. This equates to around 15% of all surveyed retail units in the town centre and is above the national average of 9.4%. The proportion of comparison goods retailers in Crediton (41.5%) is also slightly above the national average of 39.5%. In contrast, the proportion of service uses in the town centre (30.9%) is below the national average of 37.9%.

Retailer Representation

7.75 Within the convenience goods sector, the town centre has small Co-op and Tesco Express stores. The Tesco Express store extends to 185sq m and we estimate that the Co-op store extends to circa 150sq m net. Other convenience goods retailers include a number of bakeries, delicatessens, a butcher, a greengrocer and a newsagent.

7.76 The only national multiple comparison goods retailer within Crediton town centre is a Boots pharmacy on High Street. Amongst the other 38 comparison goods retailers in the centre, at the time of the 2016 survey, were a number of antique and second hand goods shops, a small number of clothing retailers, another pharmacy, several charity shops and a book shop.

7.77 There are two national high street banks in Crediton: Natwest and Lloyds. Other local independent service traders include several health and beauty units, a number of cafes, restaurants and takeaways and a small number of estate agents.

Out-of-Centre Retail Provision

7.78 The majority of convenience goods retail floorspace is located outside of Crediton town centre and comprising a Morrisons store on Mill Street and a Tesco supermarket at Well Parks. The out-of-centre Tesco stores is the latest addition to the food retail sector in Crediton and extends to circa 3,500sq m of net sales floorspace and is able to cater for a wide range of shopping needs,

including both main and top-up food shopping and the store also possesses a large comparison goods section. Prior to the opening of the Tesco store, the Morrisons store, which was previously a Somerfield, was the largest food store in Crediton, at 1,300sq m net sales. Both stores have adjacent surface level free customer car parking areas.

- 7.79 There are no other national multiple comparison goods retailers in out-of-centre locations although there is an Eakers DIY and home improvement unit on Marsh Lane to the east of the town centre.

Vacancies

- 7.80 Table 7.7 above indicates that, at the time of the 2016 land use survey, there were 11 vacant units in Crediton town centre. This equates to 11.7% of all surveyed units in the town centre and is slightly below the national average of 12.2%. The 2016 level of vacancies is slightly below the 12 vacancies recorded for 2012 in the 2012 Mid Devon Retail Study and continues the improving trend of lower vacancy levels (from a peak of 17 vacancies in 2009).

Accessibility

- 7.81 For those travelling to Crediton town centre by car, the main off-street car park is located to the south of High Street at Town Park. It has a parking capacity for 190 vehicles and is a short walk from the core retail area. There is also a small pay and display car park at The Burrowe in the northern part of the town centre. In addition, there are also a number of on-street spaces along High Street and on Market Street.
- 7.82 Most of the bus stops in Crediton town centre are located along High Street, although there is also a stop on St Saviours Way. The stops on High Street are visited by regular services to Exeter, although destinations include Chumleigh, Cheriton Bishop, Lapford and South Zeal.
- 7.83 Crediton railway station is located on the south-eastern edge of the urban area, close to the Tesco supermarket. The station is visited by services which run between Barnstaple, Exeter and Exmouth. A bus link connects the railway station to the main town centre.

Customer Views & Behaviour

- 7.84 The 2016 household survey provides detailed information on food and non-food shopping habits associated with Crediton town centre. The survey information has been summarised and can be found in Tables 1 (food shopping) and 2 (non-food shopping) at Appendix B.
- 7.85 With regards to convenience goods shopping, Table 1 indicates that the town centre is only able to attract a market share of 7% for first choice main food shopping trips from Zone 10b residents (the zone in which the town centre lies). However, 81% of residents are doing their main food shop

at the out of centre stores, in particular the Tesco at Wells Park (56%) and Morrisons on Mill Street (25%).

7.86 Table 1 also confirms that the town centre is a slightly more popular destination for second choice main food shopping with a market share of 17% for zone 10b residents.

7.87 For top-up food shopping, Table 1 confirms that Crediton town centre plays a stronger role, with 33% of zone 10b residents using the town centre for this type of shopping. 60% of zone 10b residents were still identified as using the out of centre stores, namely the Tesco at Wells Park (31%), Morrisons on Mill Street (21%) and Co-op on Burston Road (8%).

7.88 Table 1 also indicates that the town centre attracts some market share for food shopping trips from the surrounding survey zones, in particular zones 10a and 10c.

7.89 In relation to comparison goods shopping, Table 2 at Appendix B provides the market share of the various in-centre and out-of-centre shopping destinations across Crediton. The data is broken down into the various comparison goods categories used by the 2016 household survey. The table identifies that Crediton town centre plays a reasonably strong role in terms of comparison goods shopping, particularly for residents within its core catchment of survey zone 10b.

7.90 For example, 85% of all health and beauty shopping trips from the zone covering Crediton's core catchment area (10b) flow to the town centre, and 61% of residents within zone 10b use Crediton Town Centre to buy their books, CDs and DVDs. In addition, 59% of zone 10b residents use the town centre to buy glassware, tableware and jewellery, 48% use the town centre to buy DIY and hardware/gardening products, and 49% use Crediton to buy household appliances.

7.91 For other comparison goods such as clothing and audio/visual equipment, the table identifies the majority of zone 10b residents tend to shop in Exeter City Centre.

Pedestrian Flows

7.92 During our visits to Crediton town centre as part of the completion of this health check assessment, we have observed the different levels of pedestrian flow in the various parts of the town centre. During our weekend and weekday visits the area along High Street between the Tesco Express store (in the west) and the junction with Market Street (in the east) were observed to be the busiest location.

Environmental Quality

7.93 The majority of the town centre lies within a Conservation Area which was designated in 1981 and extended in 1990. High Street is a gently curving street, which contains some of the tallest buildings in the Conservation Area, at 3 storeys. The buildings along High Street are arranged in

continuous frontages on both side of the street and the general quality of buildings (and their maintenance) is of good quality. The buildings along High Street provide a good sense of enclosure to the street and many are listed (dating back to the 18th and 19th centuries). Whilst the quality of some buildings has been affected by poor shop front alterations, many original shop fronts survive and contain a number of original 19th century features.

- 7.94 Pavement areas in the centre are generally good quality although vary in width along the length of High Street. There is a lack of pedestrian controlled signal crossings, with pedestrians required to find gaps in the traffic in order to access both sides of High Street.

Occurrence of Crime

- 7.95 Table 7.8 below outlines the level and type of reported crime in Crediton town centre over the period October 2015 to September 2016:

Table 7.8 – crime types in Crediton (October2015 – September 2016)

Crime Type	
Anti-social behaviour	38
Bicycle theft	1
Burglary	2
Criminal damage	5
Drugs	0
Other crime	1
Other theft	3
Possession of weapons	0
Public order	0
Robbery	0
Shoplifting	9
Theft from the person	0
Vehicle crime	1
Violent offences	18

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

7.96 Table 7.9 below shows the trend in reported total crimes on a month-by-month basis over the October 2015- September 2016 period

Table 7.9 – crime month-by-month in Crediton (October 2015 - September 2016)

Month	Number of crimes
September 2016	5
August 2016	4
July 2016	6
June 2016	2
May 2016	11
April 2016	8
March 2016	8
February 2016	6
January 2016	4
December 2015	11
November 2015	10
October 2015	3

Source: Devon & Cornwall Police Constabulary

Summary

Crediton is performing as a reasonably healthy town centre despite its proximity and access to Exeter city centre. The centre is well represented by convenience goods retailers which includes a Co-op and Tesco Express, however, due to their size the majority of the centre’s main and top-up food market share is leaking to the out of centre Tesco and Morrisons stores. Crediton also has an above average proportion of comparison goods retailers which predominantly comprise independent antique and second hand goods shops, which is reflected in the high market share of the centre for these comparison goods categories. Despite the centre having a below average representation of service goods retailers, Crediton still boasts two national high street banks and a number of cafes, restaurants and takeaways. The vacancy rate also remains below the national average.



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Appendix I
Study Area
Plan



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Appendix II
Convenience
and
comparison
market share

