

<b>Report to</b>	Sustainable development panel	<b>Item</b>
	23 July 2014	
<b>Report of</b>	Head of planning service	<b>6</b>
<b>Subject</b>	Main town centre uses and retail frontages SPD – draft for consultation	

---

## Purpose

This report is about the draft *Main town centre uses and retail frontages supplementary planning document* (SPD). Members are asked to consider and agree the document for public consultation before it is finalised and formally adopted in the autumn alongside the emerging *Development management policies plan*. The document provides additional detailed advice and guidance to support policy DM20 of the plan, dealing in particular with the approach to be taken when considering and determining planning applications for the change of use of shops in different parts of the city centre.

## Recommendation

To comment on the *Main town centre uses and retail frontages supplementary planning document* before publication as a draft for consultation for a period of six weeks, commencing as soon as reasonably practicable after the date of this meeting.

## Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority A prosperous city and the service plan priority to implement the local plan for the city.

## Financial implications

None

Ward/s: The SPD will implement planning policy specific to the city centre, taking in parts of Mancroft, Thorpe Hamlet and Town Close wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Stonard – Environment and transport

## Contact officers

Mike Burrell, planning team leader (policy)	01603 212529
---	--------------

Jonathan Bunting, planner (policy)	01603 212162
------------------------------------	--------------

## Background documents

None

# Report

## Introduction

1. This report presents the *Main town centre uses and retail frontages supplementary planning document* (SPD) for members to consider and agree as a draft for consultation. The SPD provides essential detail to implement emerging policy DM20 of the *Development management policies plan* which is nearing adoption. Policy DM20 sets out criteria for the assessment of planning applications for changes of use in the defined retail areas and retail frontages within the city centre – these being the primary area, secondary areas and the large district centres of Magdalen Street/Anglia Square and Riverside.
2. The proposed document and its parent policy provide a consistent framework to ensure that planning decisions involving the change of use of commercial premises in the central shopping areas are made positively and flexibly, to promote beneficial changes and resist harmful ones. It will also make clear to developers, businesses and other stakeholders how the policy will be applied in different areas. The priority will be to safeguard the core retail function of the most important shopping streets in the centre, whilst accepting a diversity of beneficial new uses and supporting services to ensure the long term vitality and viability of other areas.
3. The draft document is attached as Appendix 1.

## National and local policy context

4. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states in paragraph 23 that planning policies should be “positive, promote competitive town centre environments, ... provide for customer choice and a diverse retail offer, and reflect the individuality of town centres”. Local authorities are required to “define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, based on a clear definition of primary and secondary frontages in designated centres, and set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations”.
5. The Joint Core Strategy (JCS) was adopted in March 2011, with amendments adopted in January 2014 by the three local planning authorities in the Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNPD). The plan covers the period from 2008 to 2026.
6. Policy 11 of the JCS states that its regional centre role of Norwich city centre will be strengthened and that the retail, cultural and leisure facilities offered in the city will be expanded and enhanced through intensification of retail uses in the primary retail area and its expansion if necessary. The policy also promotes the strengthening of specialist shopping areas in secondary areas of the city centre.
7. Policy 19 promotes the strengthening of the large district centres (LDCs) at Anglia Square/Magdalen Street/St. Augustine’s and at Riverside, which are at the second level of the retail hierarchy headed by the city centre.
8. The *Development management policies plan* provides the detail to implement the strategic policies of the JCS in Norwich, including specific local policies to protect the vitality, viability and retail function of the city centre and district and local centres in

accordance with national policy. In particular, policy DM18 sets out the main principles for the assessment of planning applications for new development for shopping and other main town centre uses<sup>1</sup> while policy DM20 contains a number of detailed criteria to be applied when assessing proposals for change of use away from retail. The extent of the primary retail area, secondary areas and large district centres within the city centre is shown on the local plan policies map.

### Why is SPD needed?

9. As part of its overall approach to managing change in the centre, the city council's planning policies not only establish the extent of the primary and secondary areas and large district centres, but also divide those areas into smaller sub-areas – called *frontage zones* – made up of groups of streets with a particular character and function. The most important of these have their key sections protected as *defined retail frontages*. An important principle of policy DM20 is the ability to safeguard against the loss of shops by requiring that the proportion of *measured ground floor frontage* in A1 retail use in a particular zone should not fall below a specified minimum. In this way different policy approaches can be applied to different areas according to their character and function and the relative importance of retaining shopping – as opposed to supporting a wider diversity of uses - in each area. However Policy DM20 itself does not specify the thresholds to be applied in each area. Rather it states that the proposals for change of use should not result in *the proportion of A1 retail uses at ground floor level falling below an indicative minimum proportion which is justified as necessary to support the continued retail function of that frontage zone*.
10. Because the nature of the “high street” is changing so rapidly, it was not considered appropriate to specify this level of detail in a planning policy which would be in use until 2026 and would be difficult to change other than through a procedurally complex review of the entire plan. Instead, the specific thresholds and policy approaches to be applied in each area are set out in this SPD, which can be reviewed more rapidly in response to changing circumstances or where monitoring shows evidence of need for a change in approach.

### Key points

11. The SPD provides detailed guidance on the approach to be taken in each area of the centre when planning applications come forward for change of use of premises. It includes a brief description of the character and function of different areas of the centre defined in the Development Management Policies DPD and how these areas may evolve and develop in the future. It provides more detail on individual “frontage zones” within the primary retail area and each of the secondary shopping areas as well as the large district centres of Magdalen Street/Anglia Square and Riverside. For most areas it provides a guideline figure for the minimum proportion of frontage in A1

---

<sup>1</sup> *Main town centre uses* are those uses and activities which national policy requires should be located within town centres and other defined centres as a first preference. They include retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment facilities the more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, night-clubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres, and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

retail use considered appropriate to maintain vitality, viability and retail function in each zone. These indicative minima will be used in assessing and determining planning applications for change of use under policy DM20.

12. It also takes account of advice in national planning policy and practice guidance on ensuring the vitality of town centres, providing local guidance on the policy approach to temporary flexible uses and the impact of particular non-retail uses (including residential uses) within shopping streets.

13. Some key policy objectives set out in the SPD are:

- In the **core frontage zones** – the main pedestrian area of the Walk, Castle Mall and Chapelfield - a high proportion of retail frontage should be maintained. The indicative minimum here is 80%.
- In **other areas of the centre**, in particular the Lanes and secondary areas such as St Benedict's, Magdalen Street and Anglia Square – there would be more emphasis on promoting a diversity of uses including cafes, restaurants and uses supporting the early evening economy. The minimum retail threshold specified varies between zones.
- The beneficial use of upper floors for a range of uses (including residential uses) is strongly supported in most areas, subject to other local plan policies.
- In areas which do not have a defined retail frontage, specific guidance is given on the approach to be taken. In Elm Hill, for example, the emphasis would be on protecting retail and commercial uses at ground floor level which contribute to the attractiveness and vitality of the area for tourists and visitors.
- Concentrations of uses which would break up the coherence of retail frontages or result in extensive areas of “dead frontage” at ground floor level – such as amusement centres and betting shops – would be discouraged.
- A small number of frontage zones have a distinctly different character – these include Riverside Retail Park (a large district centre) and Sainsburys at Brazen Gate (a secondary shopping area in its own right). These are characterised by large retail units rather than traditional shops and do not have a defined frontage. Instead, decisions on proposals for new development and change in these areas will be made in accordance with policy DM18 and other policies of the local plan.

## Conclusions and next steps

14. As stated in the document, officers are confident that policy DM20 of the Development Management Policies Plan, supported by this SPD, will provide a sound basis for the future management of change in defined shopping frontages and other areas of the centre to maintain their vitality, viability and diversity in the long term.

15. Subject to any changes requested by the panel, this draft of the Main Town Centre Uses and Retail Frontages SPD will be issued for public consultation for a six week period (in accordance with the requirements of the Statement of Community Involvement). Comments and suggestions for change will be assessed and incorporated, as appropriate into the final version of the document which will then be

reported back to a future meeting of this panel before being reported to Cabinet for possible adoption (alongside the development management policies plan) during the autumn.

Report of Head of planning service to Sustainable development panel, 23 July 2014  
Main town centre uses and retail frontages SPD

Annex 1



Norwich City Council Local Plan

## **Main Town Centres and Retail Frontages Supplementary Planning Document**

July 2014



## Summary

This supplementary planning document (SPD) supports and interprets policy DM20 of the Norwich Development Management Policies DPD and policy 11 of the Greater Norwich Joint Core Strategy (JCS) relating to the development, expansion and positive management of uses in Norwich city centre. In particular, policy DM20 seeks to protect the retail function of key shopping streets by ensuring that shops continue to make up the majority of the primary shopping area, resisting the loss of retailing where possible and ensuring that the proportion of street frontage devoted to shopping in each area does not fall below a specified minimum level which would threaten its vitality and viability. The policy also encourages a range of beneficial supporting services such as cafés and restaurants contributing to the diversity and attractiveness of the city centre for residents and visitors.

The SPD includes a brief description of the character and function of different areas of the centre defined in the Development Management Policies DPD and how these areas may evolve and develop in the future. It provides more detail on individual “frontage zones” within the primary retail area and each of the secondary shopping areas as well as the large district centres of Magdalen Street/Anglia Square and Riverside. For most areas it provides a guideline figure for the minimum proportion of frontage in A1 retail use considered appropriate to maintain vitality, viability and retail function in each zone. These indicative minima will be used in assessing and determining planning applications for change of use under policy DM20.

It also takes account of advice in national planning policy and practice guidance on ensuring the vitality of town centres, providing local guidance on the policy approach to temporary flexible uses and the impact of particular non-retail uses (including residential uses) within shopping streets.



# 1. Introduction

1.1 National planning policy in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires local authorities to *plan positively, to support town centres to generate local employment, promote beneficial competition within and between town centres, and create attractive, diverse places where people want to live, visit and work*. In particular they 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 frontages in designated centres, and set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations.*

1.2 For many years, as part of its planning strategy for shopping generally and the city centre in particular, Norwich City Council has successfully implemented a suite of planning policies to proactively manage changes of use in city centre shopping areas. This generally successful policy approach aims to protect the viability of shopping areas and support the retail function of key shopping streets by safeguarding against the loss of shops whilst encouraging vitality and diversity in secondary and specialist shopping areas. Such an approach is fully in accordance with the support for town centres in national policy and implements policy 11 of the Joint Core Strategy for Norwich, Broadland and South Norfolk. Policy 11 makes provision for:

- *expanding the use of the city centre to all, in particular the early evening economy and extending leisure and hospitality uses across the city centre, with late night activities focussed in identified areas;*
- *enhancing its retail function, providing for a substantial expansion of comparison retail floorspace of varied types and size of unit to provide a range of premises. This will be achieved through intensification of uses in the primary retail area and if necessary through its expansion; other shopping areas within the centre will be strengthened to provide for retail diversity, with a particular focus on enhancing the character of specialist retailing areas and markets.*

1.3 JCS policy 11 recognises the increasingly important role of leisure and early evening economy uses in Norwich city centre and the need to support its vitality, diversity and attractiveness. Whilst emerging policy provides the general parameters for managing change, local policies and supplementary guidance are able to give further advice on qualitative issues, such as the contribution that specialist retailing and evening economy uses make to particular areas of the

centre and the considerations that will be important in the council's decision making process when assessing individual proposals for change of use and new development.

## **2. Local policy background**

- 2.1 The council remains committed to a strong, vibrant and competitive city centre for the foreseeable future. However, the nature of the shopping experience and the role of the "high street", in Norwich as elsewhere, is rapidly changing with the growth of online shopping and the contraction of the retail sector in town and city centres. In spite of this national shift in shopping patterns, Norwich remains a thriving, vibrant and diverse regional shopping destination with a broad and distinctive retail offer and strong visitor appeal. As such, the city has been very successful up to now in resisting the retail decline which has affected many towns and cities in the UK, remaining for most of the past decade in the top ten retail destinations nationally. This has been due in no small part to a positive and proactive retail planning strategy which has encouraged new shopping development in the city centre, prevented the wholesale exodus of shops and supported environmental improvements such as the refurbishment of Norwich Provision Market and enhancement and promotion of speciality and independent shopping in the Norwich Lanes. Secondary shopping areas and large district centres such as Magdalen Street have undergone something of a renaissance more recently with the introduction of numerous speciality shops, cafés and other businesses serving the needs of a diverse and growing ethnic population.

### **The Development Management Policies Plan**

- 2.2 The adopted Development Management Policies Plan builds on the successful approach of previous local plans to ensure that the city centre continues to thrive as a successful shopping and visitor destination in a period of rapid change. It includes locally specific policies to ensure that development and investment for retail and other main town centre uses is positively managed and directed to achieve maximum benefits for the city centre, taking account of the overall strategy for the centre in JCS policy 11 and the requirement to ensure the vitality of town centres in the NPPF.
- 2.3 Policy DM20 of the Development Management Policies Plan, which this SPD supports, is the successor to policies SHO10 and SHO11 in the City of Norwich Replacement Local Plan 2004. It takes the same general approach as the previous Local Plan in identifying individual frontage zones in the city centre within which the proportion of A1 retail use (shops) is assessed and monitored. The zones may be either self-contained areas (as with most of the secondary shopping area) or sub-areas within the primary shopping area. Most, but not all, of the frontage zones have defined retail frontages (streets or sections of street) where it is important to maintain a proportion of retail use at ground floor level to promote

an attractive and vibrant shopping experience for shoppers and visitors. The policy approach seeks to resist ground floor uses with “dead frontages” which will detract from the attractiveness and vitality of the area, while encouraging beneficial uses in upper floors and basements. Some of the defined frontages and zone boundaries have changed in comparison with the 2004 plan to reflect new development and change in the character and function of different parts of the centre. The new policy also accepts main town centre uses as defined in national policy, subject to their impact on vitality and viability.

- 2.4 This policy approach to management of uses is a longstanding one. Although the detailed boundaries of these zones have been redrawn and/or simplified periodically, the approach remains focused on small areas, allowing for each part of the Primary Area (and other parts of the central shopping area) to maintain its distinct character, retail diversity and functional coherence, without potentially harmful concentrations of non-retail uses being allowed to develop in any one location.

- 2.5 Policy DM20 is reproduced in Appendix 1. In relation to frontage zones it states:

*Within the defined primary and secondary retail areas and Large District centres, non-retail uses in classes A2, A3, A4, A5 and other main town centre uses will be permitted where:*

*a) they would not have a harmful impact on the vitality and viability of the area and on the individual street; and*

*b) within retail frontages defined on the Policies Map, **where they would not result in the proportion of A1 retail uses at ground floor level falling below an indicative minimum proportion which is justified as necessary to support the continued retail function of that frontage zone.***

*The indicative minimum thresholds used in support of this policy will be set out in a supplementary planning document and will be reviewed flexibly as necessary in response to objective evidence of retail market trends and changes in the character and function of the central shopping area over the plan period.*

- 2.6 The advantage of setting out these thresholds in SPD, rather than specifying them in the body of the policy, is that SPD can be easily amended within the remainder of the plan period (to 2026) should any change in circumstances make this necessary, whereas reviewing the policy itself involves a more complex and lengthy procedure.

- 2.7 In preparing policy DM20, the council has been conscious of the rapidly evolving nature of the shopping experience, the diversification of and increased role of supporting services and leisure uses in the high street (such as cafés and restaurants) the growth of online shopping, which could eventually lead to a greatly reduced role for traditional high street retail formats, and the ongoing deregulation of the planning system by central government which seeks more

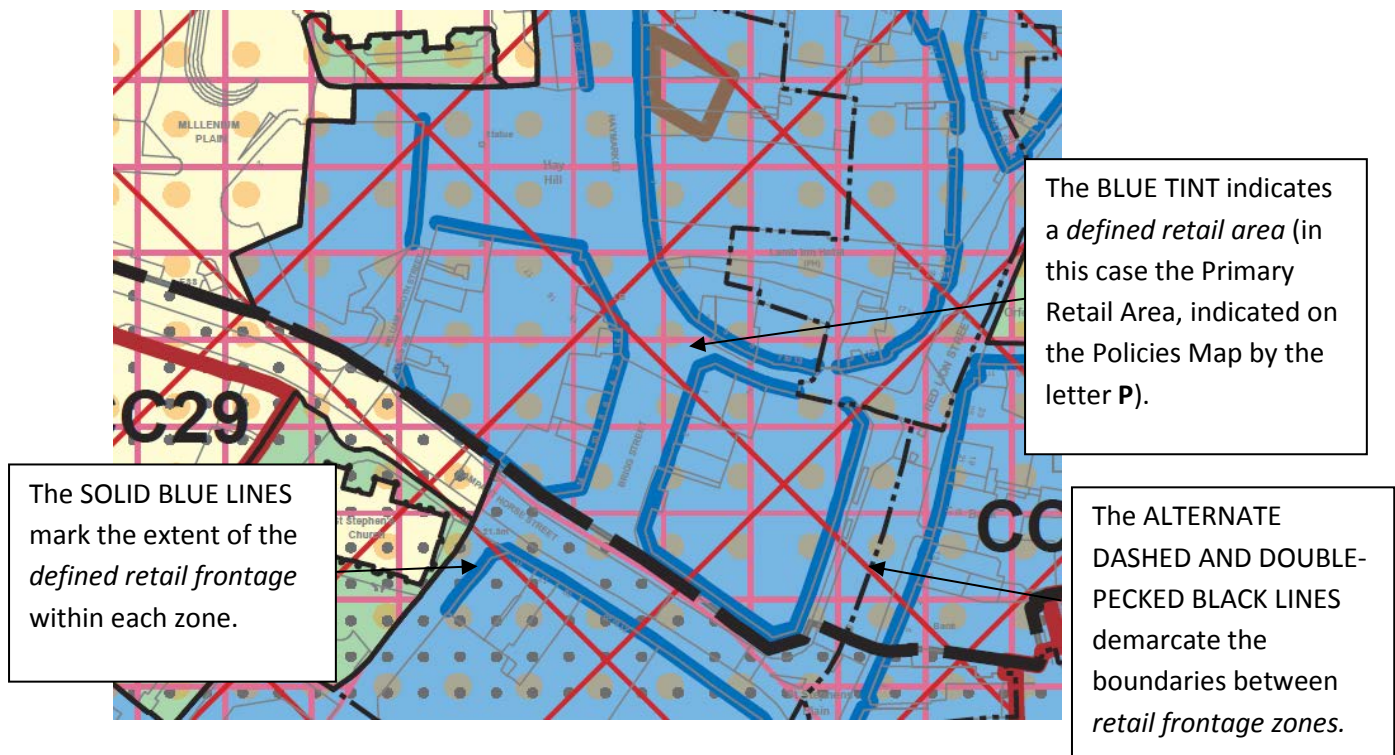
flexibility to encourage greater use of underused and vacant premises. This is discussed in paragraph 20.6 of the DM plan.

### How is the proportion of retail use calculated?

- 2.8 To support local plan policy, maintain a record of new development and change over time and assist the local plan monitoring process, the city council maintains a database of shops and other uses within the city centre and local and district centres. City centre premises which are located within defined retail frontages shown by solid blue lines on the policies map are assigned a ground floor frontage length in metres, measured from a map base. Inactive frontages (blank walls with no shopfront, or separate entrances to upper floors and basements, are generally excluded). Premises which fall outside the defined frontages, and premises solely on upper floors or in basements, have a defined frontage length of zero. The total length of defined ground floor frontage can therefore be aggregated and the proportion of premises which are in A1 retail and non-retail use calculated for each zone. These figures form the basis of the analysis contained in the city council's regular retail monitoring reports.

**Figure 1**

Illustrative example of defined retail areas, retail frontages and retail frontage zones on the Norwich Local Plan Policies Map



- 2.9 In assessing the health of the city centre, the use of ground floor frontage length has been adopted as a basis for monitoring, rather than other indicators such as the amount of retail floorspace or the number of shop units as it is straightforward to monitor and provides a consistent basis to assess the vitality and viability of individual streets and areas. It is considered that it is the effect of the shop frontage presented to the street which has the most obvious impact on overall character, diversity and vitality. This being so, the indicative minimum percentage threshold for non-retail uses applied by policy DM20 is calculated on the basis of measured length of ground floor frontage, rather than any measure of internal retail floorspace.

### **Responding to changes in national policy**

- 2.10 Although the requirement to support the vitality of town centres in the NPPF remains paramount, the direction of travel in national policy favours local policies which offer flexibility in the use of premises within town centres and suburban centres. Such a flexible approach helps to support economic regeneration, attract new uses and broaden consumer choice in centres which are perceived to be failing, helping to stem the often chronic decline in the shopping function of many towns and cities. Norwich has been generally resilient to the most recent economic downturn largely as a result of its very broad and distinctive retail offer and the historically successful application of strategic and local policies to proactively manage and promote the city centre.
- 2.11 Ongoing planning deregulation is likely to significantly influence the way changes of use are managed and assessed through this SPD, and in fact may change the definition of retail use itself. Provisions in the 2013 Use Classes Order already enable a wide range of smaller premises to be put into one of a number of temporary “flexible uses” for a period of two years, subject to prior notification of the proposed use to the city council, without requiring formal planning permission or affecting the lawful use of the premises as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order. Use classes A1 (Retail), A2 (Financial and Professional Services), A3 (Restaurants/Cafes), A4 (Drinking Establishments), A5 (Hot Food Takeaways), B1 (Offices), D1 (Non-residential Institutions) and D2 (Assembly and Leisure) may change under these provisions to a use falling within either A1 (Retail), A2 (Financial and Professional Services), A3 (Restaurants/Cafes) and B1 (Offices).
- 2.12 To acknowledge these new provisions when applying policy DM20, the city council will need to determine proposals according to whether they result in the permanent loss of shops, taking account of the current lawful planning use of premises irrespective of any temporary flexible use which is occupying them. Thus (for example) premises with a lawful use as a shop (use class A1) but which are occupied on a two year temporary basis as a café will be deemed to be in A1 retail use. To assist in the monitoring of these temporary uses, the database also records the date the temporary use commenced and its intended end date.

- 2.13 In August 2013 the government consulted on options for a further round of changes to the General Permitted Development Order. These could allow (for example) changes of use of smaller A1 retail or A2 financial and professional services premises to housing without the need for planning permission. It is proposed that these provisions would not apply in conservation areas, so in theory would not directly affect the city centre, although in practice the likelihood is that refusal of permission for any such change within the centre would need to be based solely on conservation reasons.
- 2.14 Although no detailed response has yet been published on the results of the 2013 consultation, the government announced in April 2014 that it would consult on a number of further prospective changes to the General Permitted Development Order and Use Classes Order. The further changes could bring banks and building societies (currently in the Financial and Professional Services use class A2) within the same class as retail shops (A1). They could also see betting shops, which are currently in use class A2, made a separate *sui generis* use, meaning that planning permission would always be needed to establish a betting shop or change a betting shop to an alternative use. This prospective change responds to widespread concerns over the proliferation and perceived harmful impacts of betting shops on town centres and the lack of planning controls over them.
- 2.15 If the present legislative provisions for temporary uses are extended or the categorisation of different use classes should change permanently in law, the council's policy approach may need to be clarified through future reviews of this SPD. This will be particularly important if the definition of what constitutes a retail use is expanded to include uses such as banks, which are not currently regarded as retail.

### 3. Using this SPD

- 3.1 The rapid pace of change – both in legislation and on the ground – means that the council’s approach to managing uses in the centre through policy DM20 and this SPD needs to be flexible and responsive over the plan period. To this end the city council carries out regular annual health checks of the city centre shopping areas to monitor how the primary and secondary areas are changing and developing over time, with the current occupancy, usage and shop type of each premises, its net floorspace and its ground floor frontage length (where applicable) recorded in a database. This enables reports to be generated for each individual zone of the central shopping area showing the proportion of each frontage zone in A1 retail use and non-retail use at any particular time, as well as other indicators such as the overall level of retail vacancy in different parts of the city centre, the split between convenience and comparison goods shopping and the different categories of shop within those groups. The city centre was last surveyed in April 2014.
- 3.2 Similar audits are undertaken for the suburban district and local centres outside the city centre, although these are not covered in this SPD. The council reports annually on the findings of these retail surveys through the Norwich city centre shopping floorspace monitor and local and district centre retail monitors. These reports can be found on the council’s website on the Annual Monitoring Report page:  
<http://www.norwich.gov.uk/Planning/PlanningPolicy/Pages/AnnualMonitoringReport.aspx>
- 3.3 The purpose of the SPD is to assist decision making by setting out
- the level of vacancy in defined ground floor frontages within each zone,
  - the current split between retail and non-retail use in each defined frontage (where a defined frontage exists).
  - the indicative minimum proportion of ground floor frontage which planning decisions should seek to maintain in each zone to ensure continued vitality and viability.
  - Further guidance on how proposals for change will be assessed, including for those zones where no ground floor frontage is defined.
- 3.4 In the Primary area, frontage zones have been categorised into
- *core frontages* – the main pedestrian priority and pedestrian streets and the two purpose built malls where high street multiple stores, department stores and larger shops generally predominate, and

- *other frontages* which may be characterised by smaller shops, local independent and speciality retailers and supporting services such as cafes and restaurants, many of which are open into the evening. These include parts of the Norwich Lanes and the network of pedestrian streets between Gentlemans Walk and the Castle.
- 3.5 The secondary areas and large district centres vary in character ranging from historic shopping streets with particular retail specialisms to purpose built self-contained shopping areas such as Riverside Retail Park and the Sainsbury foodstore at Brazen Gate.

#### **How have the policy thresholds been chosen?**

- 3.6 In selecting the indicative minimum proportion of frontage to be maintained in A1 retail use in different zones (where one are specified), the council has taken a number of factors into account. These include: the relative significance of high street shopping in the zone concerned and its contribution to vitality and viability of the centre as a whole, recent changes in the character and function of zones (including the balance between retail and non-retail uses and supporting services) and the scope for flexibility and further diversification of uses, particularly in areas where vacancy rates are high.
- 3.7 For the core frontages of the Primary area the proportion of frontage which it is desirable to maintain in A1 retail use has been set as an indicative minimum of **80%**. This appears to be a relatively high benchmark but is lower than specified in previous local plan policies. It recognises the critical importance of shops in these zones but gives scope for further diversification. In Castle Mall and Chapelfield the defined retail frontages are confined to the main retail levels of the centres concerned with restaurants, cafes and other services on other levels which do not generally have defined frontages – consequently the proportion of shops in the defined frontages in these centres is expected to remain high by definition.
- 3.8 For other areas of the centre the indicative minima vary according to location and will allow for a more flexible and diverse range of uses to be introduced within ground floor premises to complement the shopping offer as these areas change and develop. The council would welcome comments on the thresholds chosen and in particular whether they are appropriate to protect the shopping function of different areas.



## 4. Frontage Zone definitions

- 4.1 The following city centre frontage zones and large district centres are defined in the Development Management Policies plan and listed in Appendix 4 of the plan document. The boundaries of the each area and frontage zone are shown on the Policies Map but not named or labelled individually on the map. The reference numbers used in the plan reflect those used in the city council's shops database and in the City Centre Retail Monitor.

	<b>Primary retail area core frontage zones</b>
<b>PC01</b>	Gentlemans Walk/Haymarket/Brigg Street
<b>PC02</b>	Castle Mall (defined frontages on White Lion Street and Castle Meadow levels)
<b>PC03</b>	Chapelfield (defined frontages on lower/upper merchants hall levels)
	<b>Frontage zones in the rest of the primary retail area</b>
<b>PR01</b>	Back of the Inns/Castle Street area
<b>PR02</b>	The Lanes East (Bedford Street/Bridewell Alley area)
<b>PR03</b>	St Stephens Street/Westlegate
<b>PR04</b>	Castle Meadow north
<b>PR05</b>	Chapelfield Plain
<b>PR06</b>	Timberhill/Red Lion Street
	<b>Secondary retail areas</b>
<b>SR01</b>	The Lanes West (Pottergate/Dove Street/Lower Goat Lane area)
<b>SR02</b>	Upper St Giles
<b>SR03</b>	St Benedicts
<b>SR04</b>	Elm Hill
<b>SR05</b>	London Street (east)
<b>SR06</b>	Brazen Gate
	<b>Large District Centres</b>
<b>LD01</b>	Anglia Square, Magdalen Street and St Augustine's Street
<b>LD02</b>	Riverside

## The Core Frontage Zones

### PC01 – Gentlemans Walk/Haymarket/Brigg Street

These three historic streets together form the pedestrianised core of Norwich's primary shopping area. The area is attractive and busy during the day, characterised by:

- Large department and multiple stores with extensive frontages (Marks and Spencer, Debenhams, Primark, Next).
- High street chain and specialist retailers (W H Smith, HMV, Top Shop)
- A number of supporting services including two banks and several national chain coffee/sandwich shops and cafés.
- The 200-stall open Provision Market with a wide range of local independent retailers trading six days a week. The Provision Market, refurbished in 2005, is located within this zone but is not part of the defined retail frontage. Vacancies within the market have been increasing in recent years.

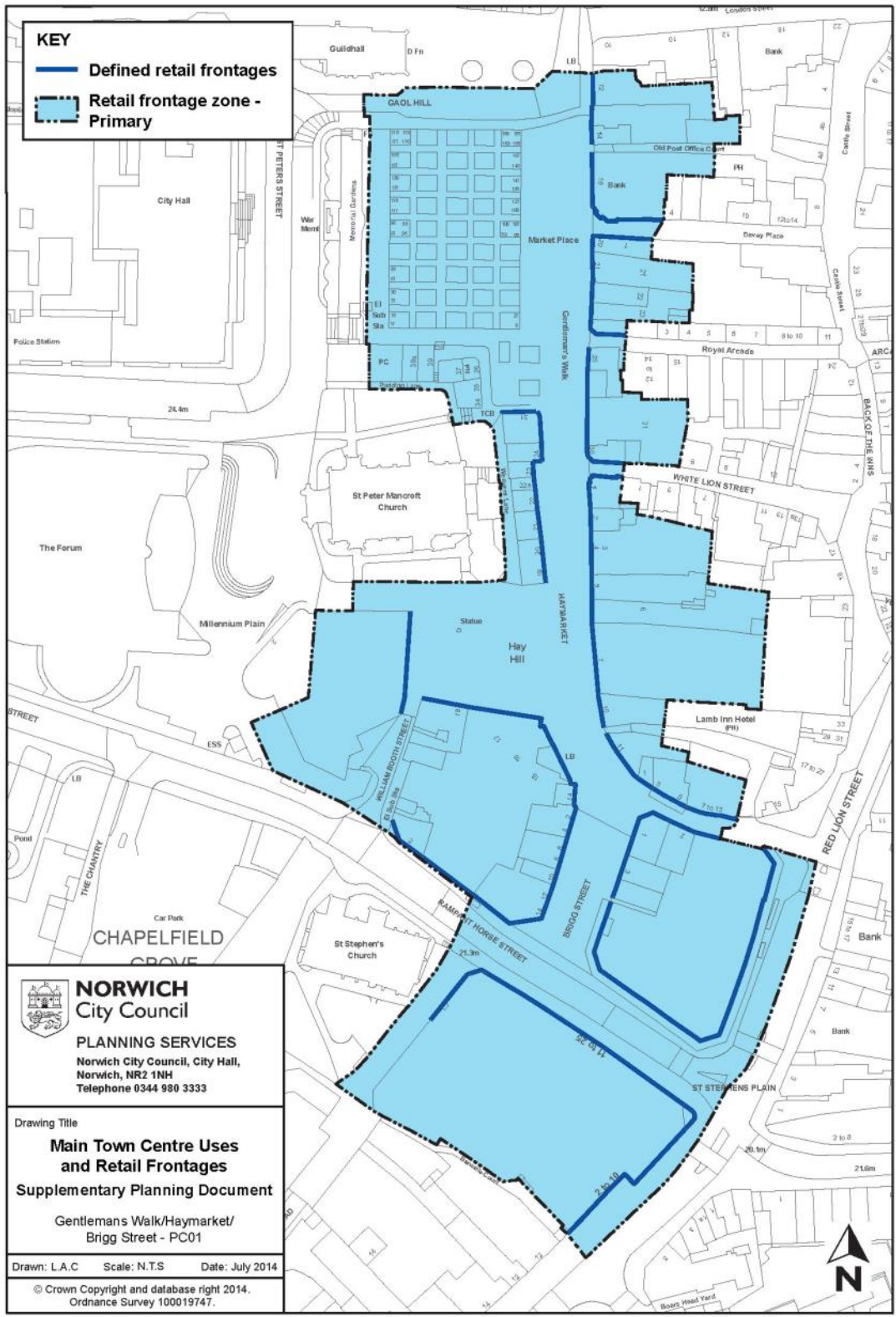
The Gentleman's Walk area has a high concentration of shopping floorspace and has been the main focus of traditional high street retailing in Norwich for many years, although activity in the evening is still fairly limited other than on late night shopping days (usually Thursday). This may be due to the dominance of larger retail premises which do not generally extend their opening hours beyond the early evening and which are not well suited to more flexible use. Vacancy is more persistent in smaller shop units which may struggle to attract retail tenants able to afford prime rents, thus there may be scope to accept a wider range of uses in smaller premises to support the evening economy. The presence of the Provision Market and large department and multiple stores, some of which have very extensive frontages, means that this part of the centre is likely to retain its important shopping role and key shopping attractions for residents and visitors and remain a focus of new retail investment and enhancement for the foreseeable future. Ongoing traffic management measures in the area are likely to reduce volumes of traffic and improve conditions for pedestrians in Rampant Horse Street and St Stephens Street in the early part of the plan period.

The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone PC01:

<b>Percentage vacant units:</b>	<b>8.5 percent</b>
<b>Percentage vacant floorspace:</b>	<b>1.9 percent</b>
<b>Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:</b>	<b>872.9 metres</b>
<b>Measured ground floor frontage retail/non retail split*:</b>	<b>88.4 percent A1 retail frontage</b>
	<b>11.6 percent non retail frontage</b>

In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and shopping character of zone **PC01**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use should seek to

- maintain an indicative minimum of **80%** of defined retail frontage in A1 retail use at ground floor level;
- seek to retain larger units of over 150 m<sup>2</sup> in retail use but accept a broader range of uses in smaller premises at ground floor level, particularly where monitoring shows persistent concentrations of vacancy in small units both within and outside of defined frontages;
- extend the use of vacant and underused upper floors for a range of beneficial uses, especially cafés restaurants and bars supporting the evening economy, subject to other policies of the local plan. Residential uses will be supported where consistent with policies DM2, DM12 and DM13.
- Promote uses which increase public activity and pedestrian footfall in these areas in the early evening, and;
- Discourage concentrations of non-retail uses which would result in continuous runs of inactive ground floor frontage (for example betting shops and amusement centres).





## PC02 – Castle Mall

Castle Mall is the older of the two purpose built covered shopping centres within Norwich and was opened in 1993, the Vue Cinema being added later. Following its recent acquisition by Infrared Retail, a major programme of refurbishment is planned which is expected to redesign Level 4 of the mall (accessed from Timberhill) with a greater focus on cafés and restaurants, with a number of other internal and external works programmed throughout the scheme. External remodelling of the White Lion Street pedestrian entrance has already been approved but considerable potential remains to enhance the design of the development and improve its functional relationship with neighbouring areas. The refurbishment of Westlegate Tower for residential flats includes new commercial development on the Timberhill frontage and a new pedestrian link from Timberhill to Westlegate which should increase pedestrian activity in the area and will be of benefit to the Timberhill frontage of Castle Mall.

Defined retail frontages within Castle Mall are Level 1 (White Lion Street) and Level 2 (Castle Meadow). The shopping levels above this are focused mainly on restaurants, cafes and other non-retail uses and are not part of the defined retail frontage. The basement level currently occupied by TK Maxx is also excluded from the frontage definition.

The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone PC02:

<b>Percentage vacant units:</b>	<b>18.9 percent</b>
<b>Percentage vacant floorspace:</b>	<b>14.1 percent</b>
<b>Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:</b>	<b>875.1 metres</b>
<b>Measured frontages retail/non retail split (levels 1 and 2):</b>	<b>95.6 percent A1 retail frontage</b>
	<b>4.4 percent non retail frontage</b>

Currently, there is a relatively high proportion of vacant units within Castle Mall. The majority of empty units on the main retail levels were previously in use as shops. In the context of ongoing refurbishment and recent change of management of the development there may be scope to introduce more flexibility in the use of the main retail levels to increase occupancy although it is suggested that A1 retail use should remain the main focus.

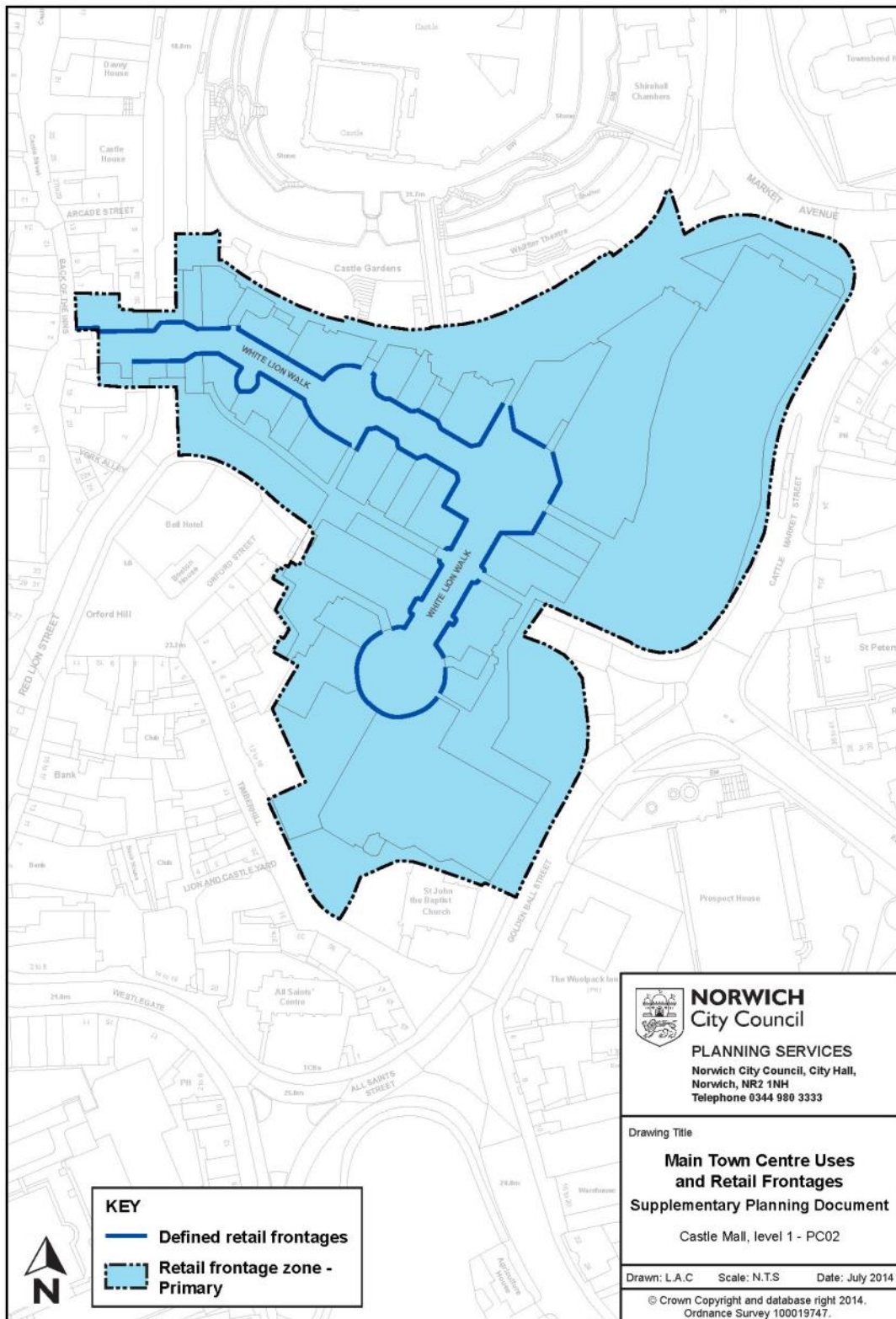
In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and shopping character of zone **PC02**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use will

- Seek to maintain an indicative minimum of **80%** of defined retail frontage in A1 retail use on Levels 1 and 2 of Castle Mall, which will allow for some further

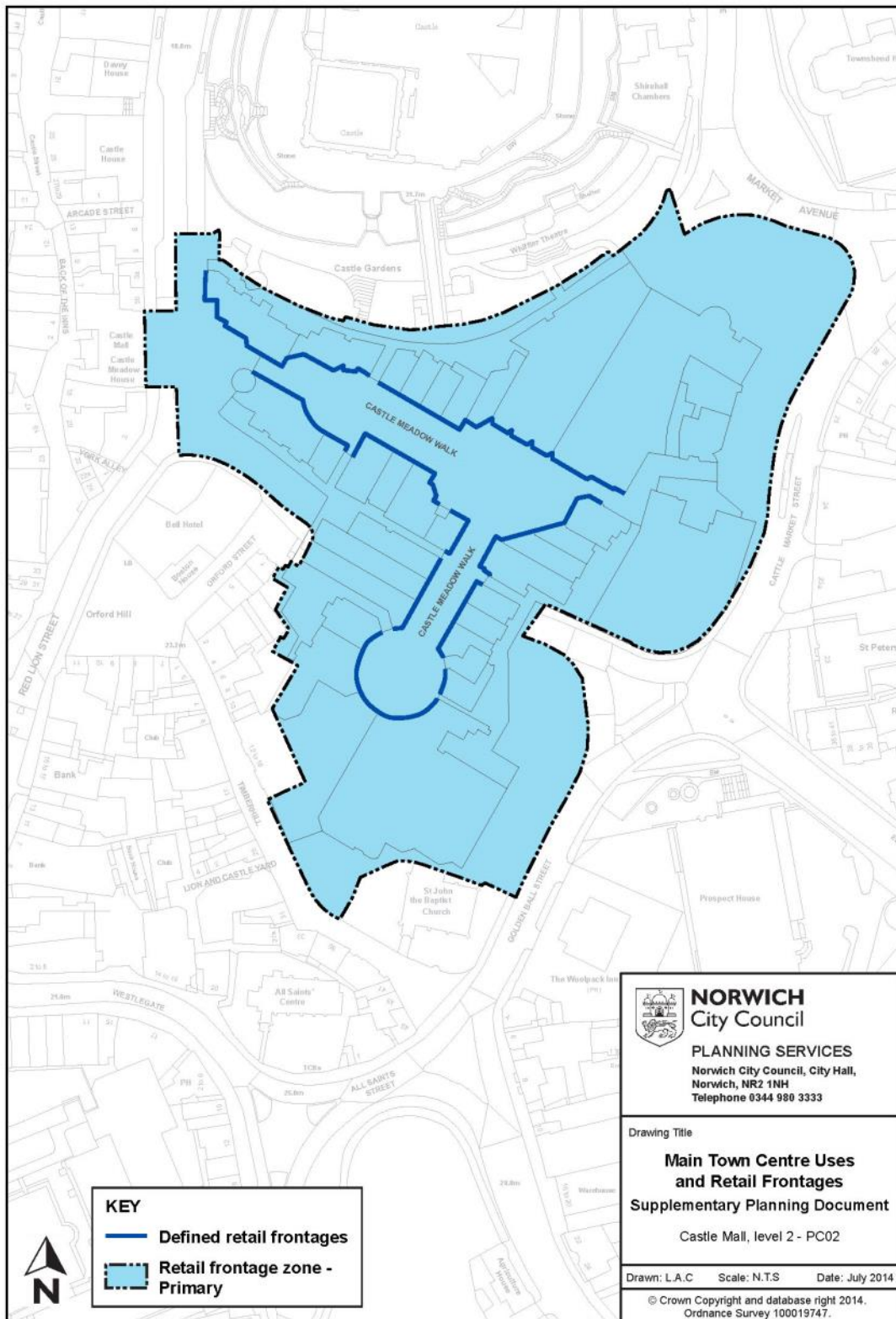
diversification of use where this can help to address long term vacancy or promote vitality;

- Support wider diversification of uses on other levels with more efficient and innovative use of public space;
- support the extended use of Level 4 (Timberhill) for early evening economy uses such as restaurants and cafés;
- improve the functional relationship of the Mall with adjoining public areas, in particular St John's Plain and Castle Green, and;
- so far as reasonably practicable, retain existing community services that are accommodated in the Mall in accordance with DM policy DM22.

The council will continue to work closely with the Mall owners and managers to ensure that planned improvements to Castle Mall as a whole deliver maximum benefits for shoppers.







## PC03 – Chapelfield

Chapelfield is the newer of the two covered shopping malls in Norwich, dating from 2005. Owned and operated by Intu Properties, it accommodates a varied range of high street retailers and a separate food court (the Dining Terrace) on the top level.

Defined retail frontages within Chapelfield are (1) the lower shopping level accessed from St Stephens Street, comprising St Stephens Arcade and Lower Merchants Hall and (2) the upper shopping level accessed from Chantry Road, comprising the Crescent and Upper Merchants Hall. The top floor dining terrace is not part of the defined retail frontage. Chapelfield Plain, the open square to the north, forms a separate frontage zone (PR05) for the purposes of policy DM20.

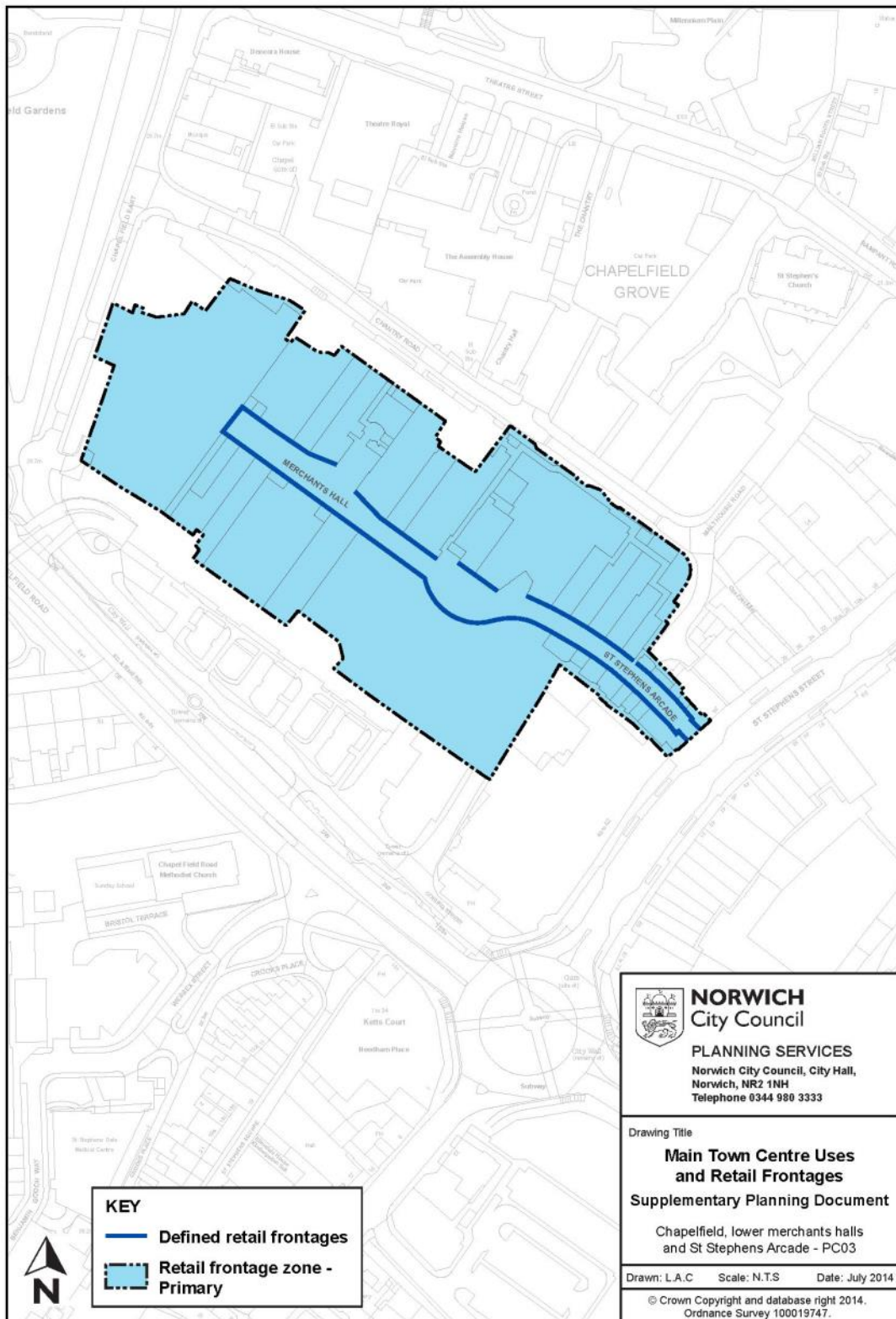
The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone PC03:

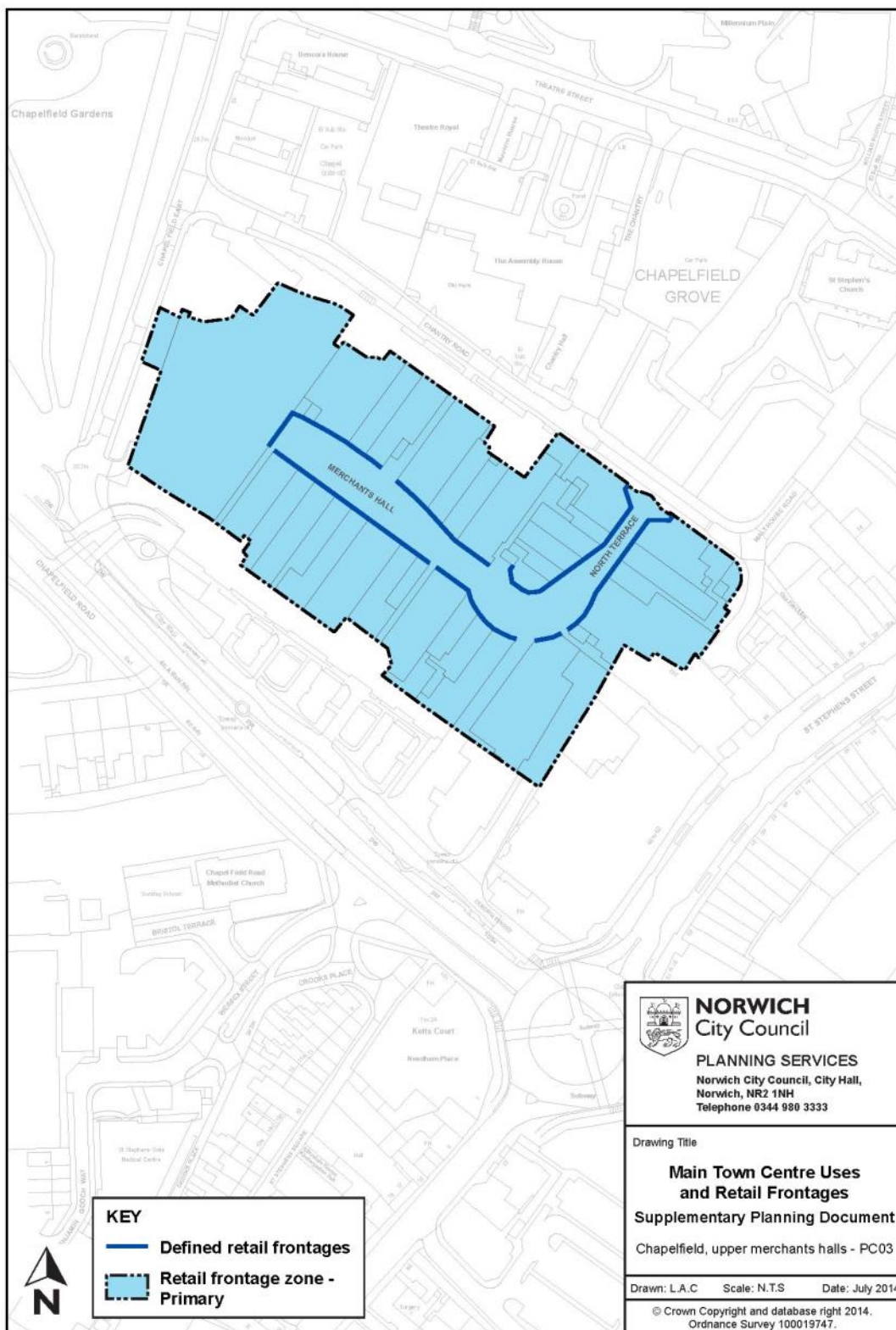
Percentage vacant units:	12.3 percent
Percentage vacant floorspace:	3.9 percent
Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:	686.0 metres
Measured frontages retail/non retail split (levels 1 and 2):	97.2 percent A1 retail frontage
	2.8 percent non retail frontage

Within the main retail levels of Chapelfield, the vacancy rate is relatively low as a proportion of floorspace but is significantly higher when measured as a proportion of shop units. This would suggest that (as with Castle Mall) vacancies are concentrated in smaller units. In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and shopping character of zone **PC03**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use should:

- seek to maintain an indicative minimum of **80%** of defined retail frontage in A1 retail use on the main retail levels of Chapelfield, which will allow for some further diversification of use in smaller units where this can help to address long term vacancy or promote vitality, and;
- Support further improvements to the internal layout and setting of Chapelfield which enhance its attractiveness and usability for shoppers.

The council will continue to work closely with Chapelfield's owners and managers to ensure that future improvements to the scheme will deliver maximum benefits for shoppers.





**KEY**

- Defined retail frontages
- Retail frontage zone - Primary

**NORWICH**  
City Council

PLANNING SERVICES  
Norwich City Council, City Hall,  
Norwich, NR2 1NH  
Telephone 0344 980 3333

Drawing Title  
**Main Town Centre Uses  
and Retail Frontages**  
Supplementary Planning Document  
Chapelfield, upper merchants halls - PC03

Drawn: L.A.C    Scale: N.T.S    Date: July 2014  
© Crown Copyright and database right 2014.  
Ordnance Survey 100019747.



## Frontage Zones in the remainder of the primary area

### PR01 – Back of the Inns/Castle Street area

This frontage zone covers the network of historic pedestrian streets between Gentleman's Walk and the Castle, including Back of the Inns, Castle Street, White Lion Street, the Royal Arcade and Davey Place. This part of the centre offers a varied range of speciality retailers (mainly in smaller units) and in recent years a number of other complementary services have been introduced such as Jamie's and Bill's Restaurants, the Virgin Money Store and Patisserie Valerie, adding to the vitality of the area and extending activity into the early evening. Vacancy rates are currently low and the area is well frequented by shoppers because of its position between two important attractions (the Castle and the Market Place) and the proximity of Castle Mall and speciality shopping in the Royal Arcade. It is considered that there is further potential to expand supporting services such as cafes and restaurants in this area and extend its use into the early evening, albeit that the introduction of pavement cafes would be unsuitable in some parts of the area where streets are narrow .

The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone PR01.

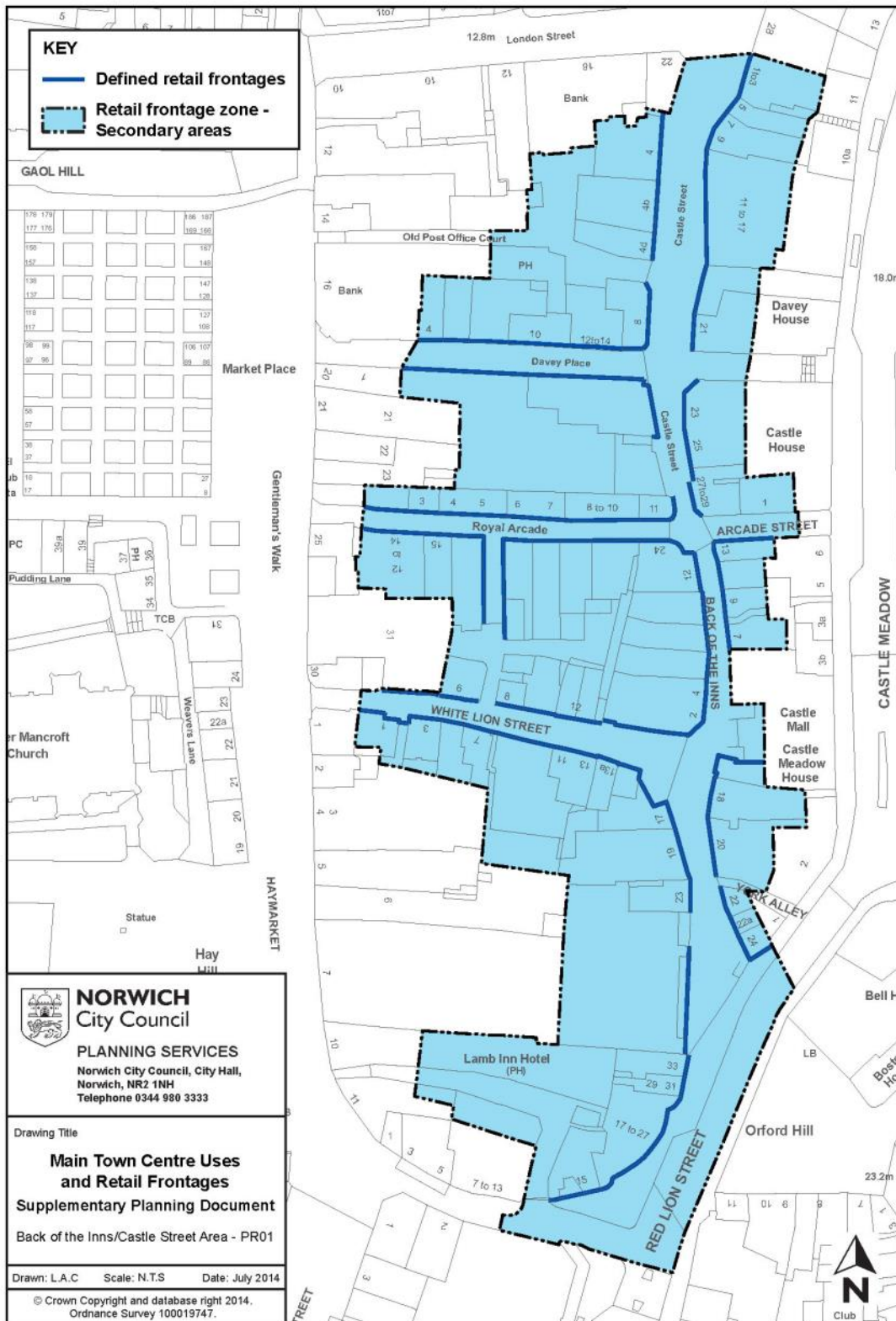
Percentage vacant units:	5.6 percent
Percentage vacant floorspace:	4.4 percent
Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:	729.6 metres
Measured frontages retail/non retail split:	71.9 percent A1 retail frontage 28.1 percent non retail frontage

In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and shopping character of zone **PR01**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use will:

- Seek to maintain an indicative minimum of **65%** of defined retail frontage in A1 retail use, aiming to retain larger units with more extensive frontages in retail use but encouraging greater diversity in smaller units under 150 m2;
- give particular support to expanding evening economy uses such as cafés and restaurants throughout the area, including on upper floors, provided this can be achieved without restricting access for service vehicles or compromising pedestrian safety;
- Promote uses which increase public activity and pedestrian footfall in these areas in the early evening;
- Discourage concentrations of non-retail uses which would result in continuous runs of inactive ground floor frontage (for example betting shops and amusement centres), and;

- Support the further enhancement and improvement of the Royal Arcade and its historic setting.

To support this approach further enhancement of the public realm including (for example) enhanced paving and lighting would be beneficial particularly in those areas where paving schemes are becoming dated. There may be scope for funding for such initiatives either through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or the Norwich Business Improvement District (BID) business rate levy.



## PR02 – The Lanes East

The Norwich Lanes is a thriving area of great historic character and visitor appeal, emerging in recent years as a centre for speciality and local independent shops, cafes and restaurants and other community enterprises. The local plan does not treat the Lanes as a single entity for planning purposes, rather, the area extends across a number of separate frontage zones in the primary and secondary retail areas. In comparison with the 2004 Replacement Local Plan (which pre-dated the Lanes initiative) zone boundaries are now defined to better reflect the Norwich Lanes as a self-contained area and to identify the most important shopping streets within it. In applying policy DM20 decisions will need to consider the overall impact of changes of use on the Lanes as a whole as well as the impact on the zone concerned.

The “Lanes East” area comprises the network of historic, largely pedestrianised streets to the north and north-east of the Market Place including Bedford Street, the western part of London Street, Swan Lane, Bridewell Alley, St Andrews Hill and the southern end of Exchange Street. It forms the eastern half of the Norwich Lanes, an area characterised by speciality and local independent retailing in mainly historic smaller premises but including the large local independent department store of Jarrolds. The area offers a relatively small number of other services supporting the evening economy such as pubs and restaurants, which in this zone are concentrated in the Bedford Street and Exchange Street areas. The Bridewell Museum and St Andrews Church and the nearby St Andrews Hall and Cinema City are important visitor and leisure attractions in the north of the area. Conversion of retail and office premises in Bridewell Alley and St Andrews Street for exhibition space and classrooms has recently been approved as part of the ongoing expansion of the nearby Norwich University of the Arts (NUA).

The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone PR02.

<b>Percentage vacant units:</b>	<b>5.2 percent</b>
<b>Percentage vacant floorspace:</b>	<b>1.0 percent</b>
<b>Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:</b>	<b>1151.2 metres</b>
<b>Measured frontages retail/non retail split:</b>	<b>81.0 percent A1 retail frontage</b>
	<b>19.0 percent non retail frontage</b>

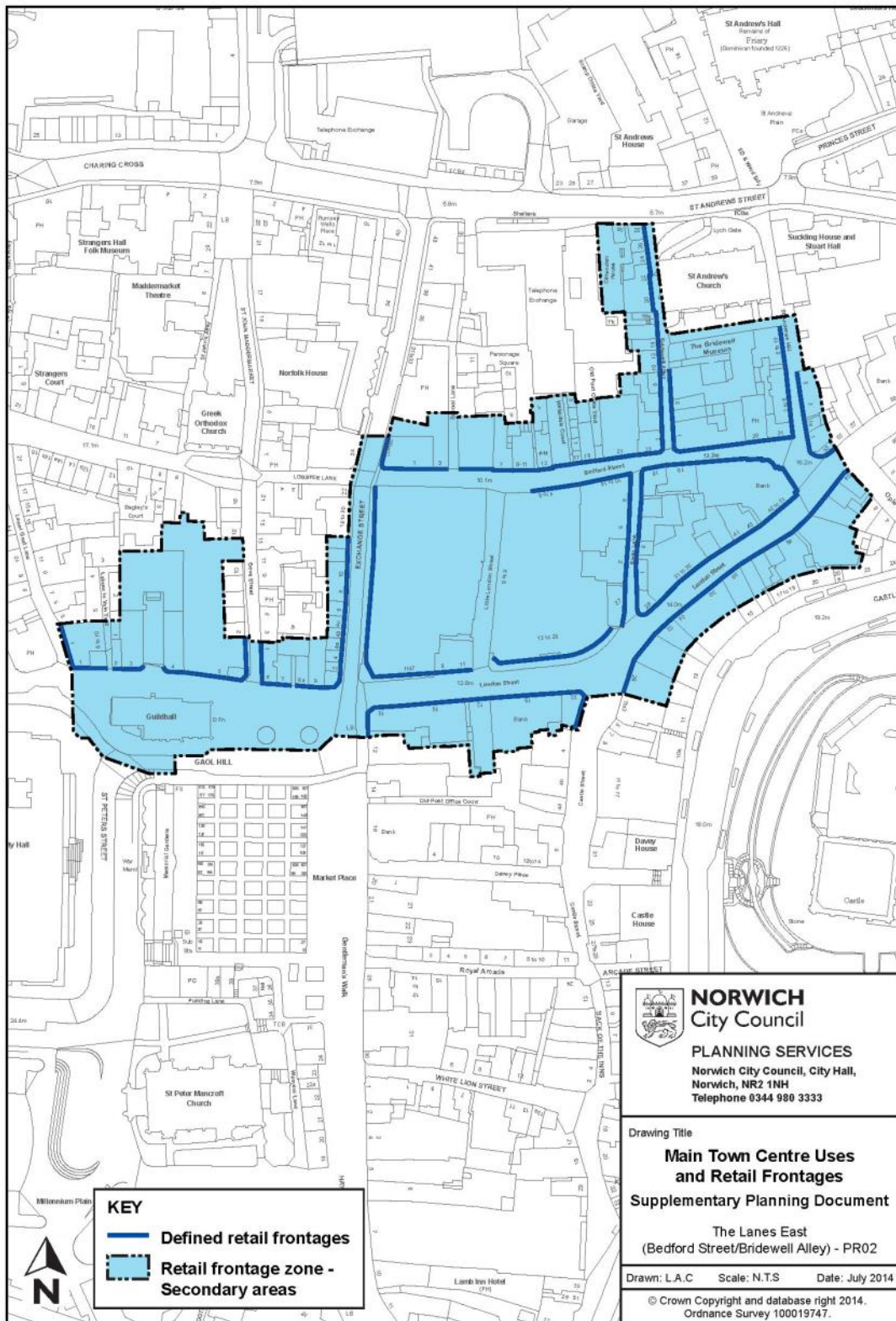
Shop vacancy rates in this zone are generally low. The focus of the area is expected to remain on speciality and independent shopping but there may be scope to introduce additional uses supporting the early evening economy and encourage complementary uses in upper floors, following the recent example of the Norwich Gym at Little London Street (housed in part of the former Habitat store). The expansion of the NUA should be of benefit



to this area through greater pedestrian footfall and potentially greater activity in the early evening.

In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and shopping character of zone **PR02**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use will

- Seek to maintain an indicative minimum of **70%** of defined retail frontage in A1 retail use;
- continue to support proposals for speciality and local independent retailing complementing the historic character and visitor appeal of the area;
- support the further expansion of cafes and restaurants particularly in London Street and Bedford Street, where this can be achieved without harmful impact on historic character, ease of access for pedestrians or servicing requirements;
- Discourage concentrations of non-retail uses which would result in continuous runs of inactive ground floor frontage (for example betting shops and amusement centres), and;
- support complementary uses in upper floors, including further expansion of educational and leisure uses where appropriate and consistent with other local plan policies.



### PR03 – St Stephens Street/Westlegate

This frontage zone comprises St Stephens Street and immediately adjoining areas (with the exception of Marks and Spencer), Westlegate, and the north end of All Saints Green taking in the extensive frontage to the flagship John Lewis store.

St Stephens was redeveloped in the 1950s and 1960s and is characterised mainly by larger shop units with a mix of high street multiples (BHS, W H Smith) and lower value budget retailers such as Poundland and Wilkinsons toward its south end where one of the main entrances to Chapelfield is also situated. St Stephens Street is one of two main stops for city bus services in the centre. Westlegate is the main pedestrian route linking St Stephens with John Lewis although the width of the footway is restricted and the shop units on its southern side are partly vacant. Surrey Street and Queens Road connect St Stephens Street with the Bus Station respectively at its northern and southern ends. Traffic management measures to be implemented in the medium term will restrict St Stephens Street to buses, cycles and service access, remove through traffic from Westlegate altogether and introduce cycle priority measures in Surrey Street. This should significantly improve conditions for shoppers. The ongoing refurbishment of Westlegate House includes a direct pedestrian route from the north side of Westlegate to Timberhill which will improve linkages between the St Stephens area and Castle Mall.

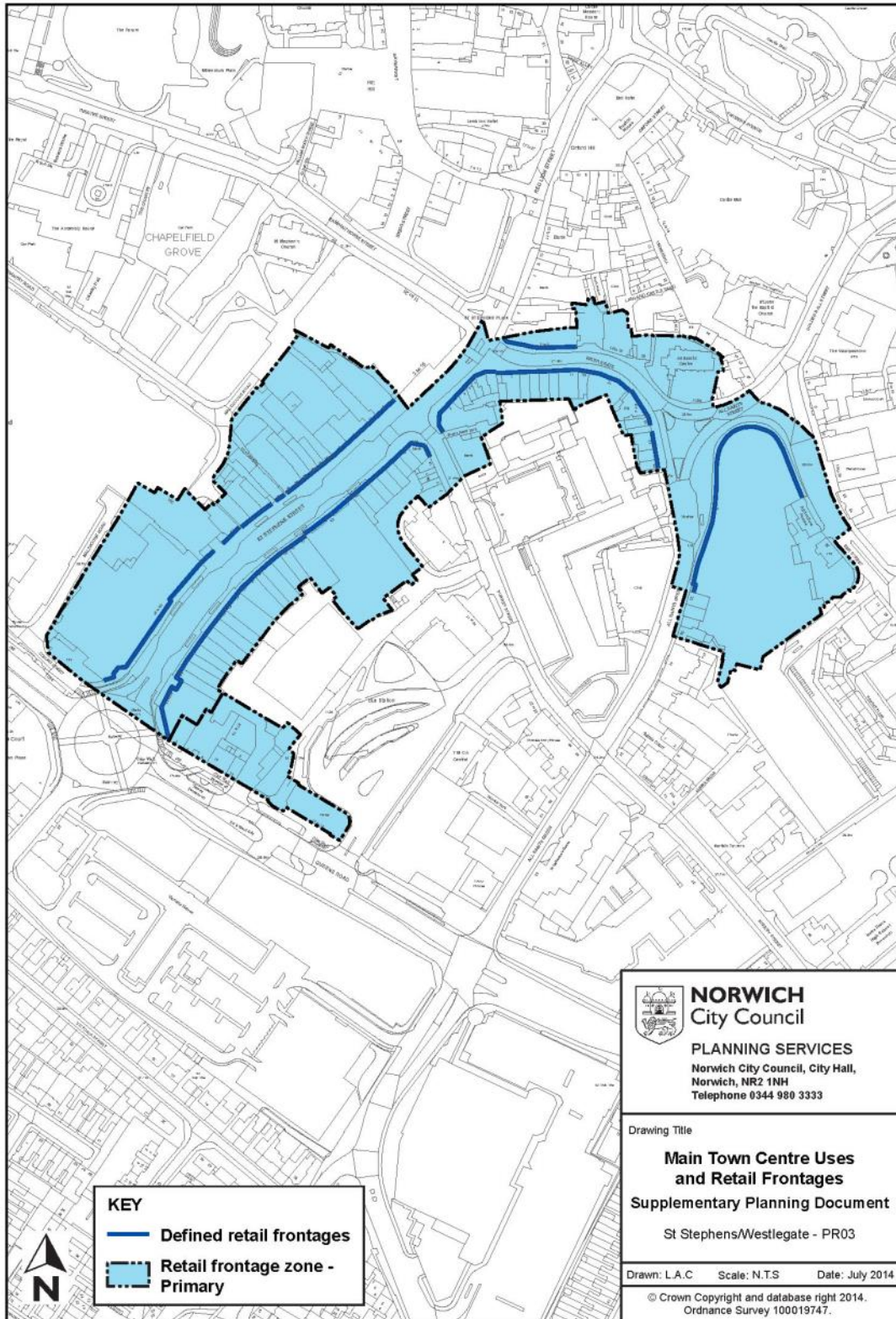
The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone PR03.

<b>Percentage vacant units:</b>	<b>15.6 percent</b>
<b>Percentage vacant floorspace:</b>	<b>2.1 percent</b>
<b>Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:</b>	<b>822.4 metres</b>
<b>Measured frontages retail/non retail split:</b>	<b>85.2 percent A1 retail frontage</b>
	<b>14.4 percent non retail frontage</b>

Shop vacancy in this zone is very low in terms of floorspace but this is due to the presence of John Lewis and other retailers in very large units. St Stephens is expected to remain a major bus interchange, however as the area becomes more pedestrian friendly there may be opportunities for a more diverse range of services to complement its current focus on high street multiple and value retailers. The St Stephens Area Outline Masterplan proposes comprehensive redevelopment in the longer term. This is also promoted by policy CC31 of the Site Allocations Plan (as proposed to be modified) which also allows for incremental development and refurbishment of shop units on the east side of St Stephens Street in conjunction with re-use of upper floor offices, making provision for a potential direct pedestrian link to the Bus Station if this is technically feasible and viable.

In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and shopping character of zone **PR03**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use will

- seek to maintain an indicative minimum of **80%** of defined retail frontage in A1 retail use, focusing the majority of retailing in St Stephens Street;
- support refurbishment and reconfiguration of existing large unit shops throughout the area;
- Discourage concentrations of non-retail uses which would result in continuous runs of inactive ground floor frontage (for example betting shops and amusement centres);
- support (where feasible and viable) redevelopment of the 1960s shop premises on the east side of St Stephens Street in accordance with site allocations plan policy CC31, including the provision of improved pedestrian links to the Bus Station, and;
- support further diversification of uses in Westlegate (including cafes and restaurants making provision for outdoor seating) when reduction in traffic volumes and pedestrian priority measures make this practicable.





## PR04 – Castle Meadow North

This zone comprises the historic built frontage of Castle Meadow alongside the Castle Mound, running north of Arcade Street up to (and including) the south side of Opie Street. Castle Meadow is the second main stop for local bus services in the primary retail area and the traffic is restricted to buses, taxis and cycles: part of the “green transport spine” connecting Norwich rail station with the central shopping area. The zone is one of long term change with service uses - in particular financial and professional services uses, travel agents and cafés - complementing a range of speciality and value retailers. A number of larger premises have frontages to both Castle Meadow and either Castle Street or London Street.

As a somewhat transitional, mixed use street, consideration has been given in preparing the DM policies plan to redefining Castle Meadow as a secondary retail area. However its retention as part of the primary area is felt to be justified because of:

- its importance as a public transport hub;
- its position close to a main pedestrian entrance to Castle Mall and the major visitor attraction of the Castle and Castle Gardens;
- existing pedestrian routes and activity links to the important neighbouring shopping areas of London Street and Castle Street, and;
- the presence of national multiple retailers such as Boots and Waterstones.

However, to encourage greater flexibility of uses in future the plan does not define a retail frontage for Castle Meadow and this SPD does not require a minimum proportion of retail use to be maintained.

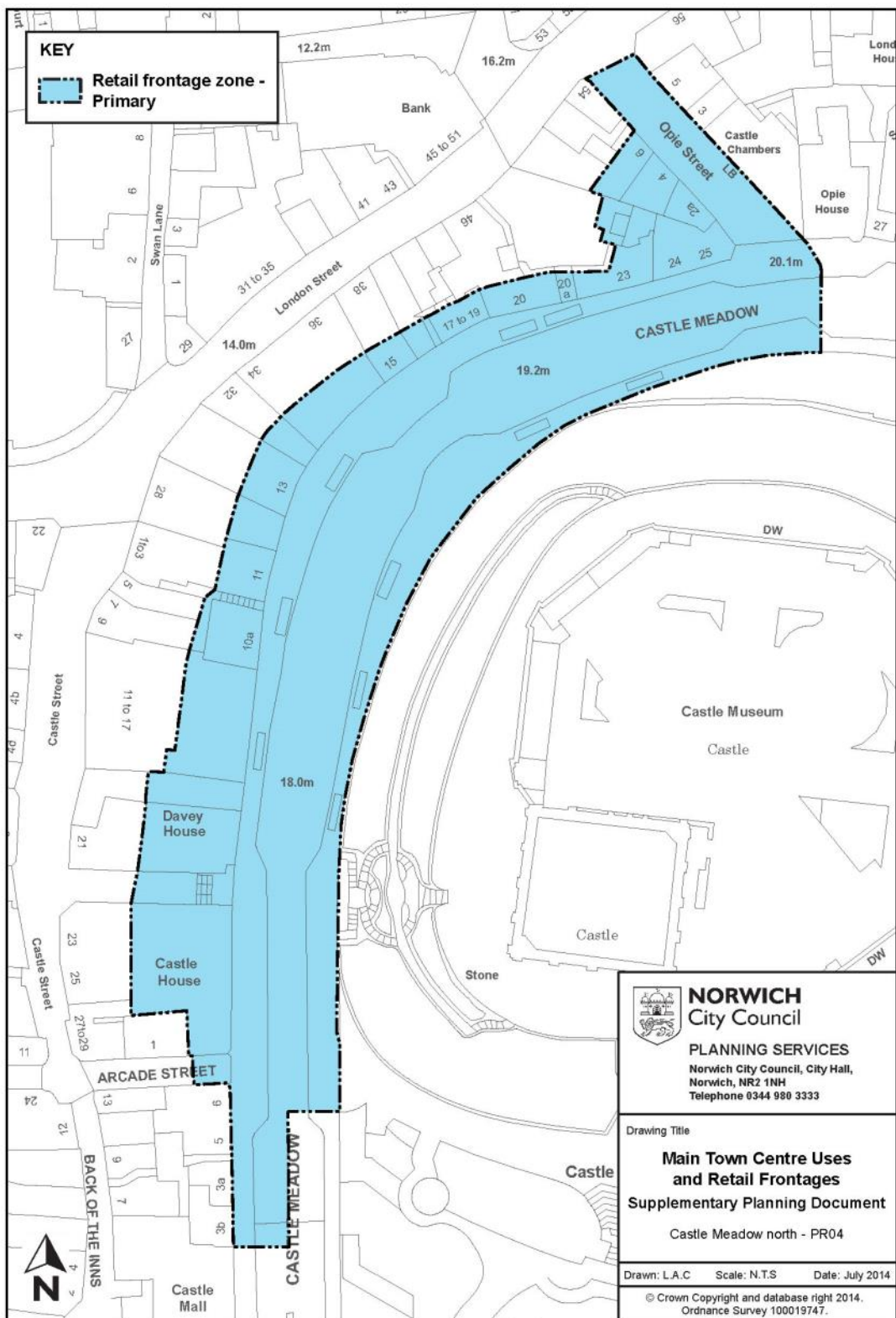
The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone PR04.

<b>Percentage vacant units:</b>	<b>20.0 percent</b>
<b>Percentage vacant floorspace:</b>	<b>30.0 percent</b>
<b>Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:</b>	<b>0.0 metres</b>
<b>Measured frontages retail/non retail split:</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>

The zone is relatively small and vacancy rates at ground floor level relatively high, although this is skewed by the presence of some larger vacant units such as 7 Castle Meadow which has never been occupied following its refurbishment for a planned bar/restaurant use more than ten years ago. There is also a substantial amount of vacant and underused space in upper floors in larger former office premises such as Davey House, which has previously been subject to approved proposals for conversion to flats and a hotel.

In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and character of zone **PR04**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use will

- Strongly support proposals for the refurbishment and enhancement of existing shop premises in Castle Meadow to improve the somewhat dated appearance of many units;
- Encourage the beneficial reuse of vacant premises at ground floor level for a broader range of main town centre uses (including temporary flexible uses) and community and educational, leisure, arts and entertainment uses. This may include cafes, restaurants, travel information centres and travel agencies which benefit from a location adjoining the Castle Meadow bus stops, and;
- Strongly support proposals for the reuse of redundant and underused upper floors, including for residential use. Decisions on such proposals will need to take account of development management policy DM19 (when the proposal involves the loss of office space) and policy DM32 (requiring new housing in the primary shopping area to be car-free).





## PR05 – Chapelfield Plain

Chapelfield Plain is an irregular, open pedestrian square situated to the north of Chapelfield and Chantry Road and forming the outdoor part of the Chapelfield shopping centre completed in 2005, the majority of which falls within separate frontage zone PC03.

This small self-contained zone accommodates a mix of shops, cafés and restaurants, reflecting its intended function as an outdoor café quarter to complement the shopping offer in the main part of Chapelfield. Currently, the smaller block on the western side of the Plain (units 408-410) is occupied by cafés and restaurants, while the larger block on the eastern side (units 401 -407) has a mix of shops and cafés. A number of separate routes link Chapelfield Plain with the main part of the primary shopping area to the north and the cultural quarter around the Forum, including an informal pedestrian route through Chantry Car Park, the attractive footpath route through St Stephens Churchyard and the alternative route around the southern edge of the churchyard leading into Malthouse Road alongside the new wing of Marks and Spencer. It is currently fully occupied with no vacancies recorded.

Policy CC29 of the Site Allocations Plan makes provision for the eventual redevelopment of the Chantry Car Park site, accepting a mix of retail, café, leisure, art and entertainment uses on ground floors and mixed uses (including retail and/or offices) on upper floors, with open space in the southern part of the site.

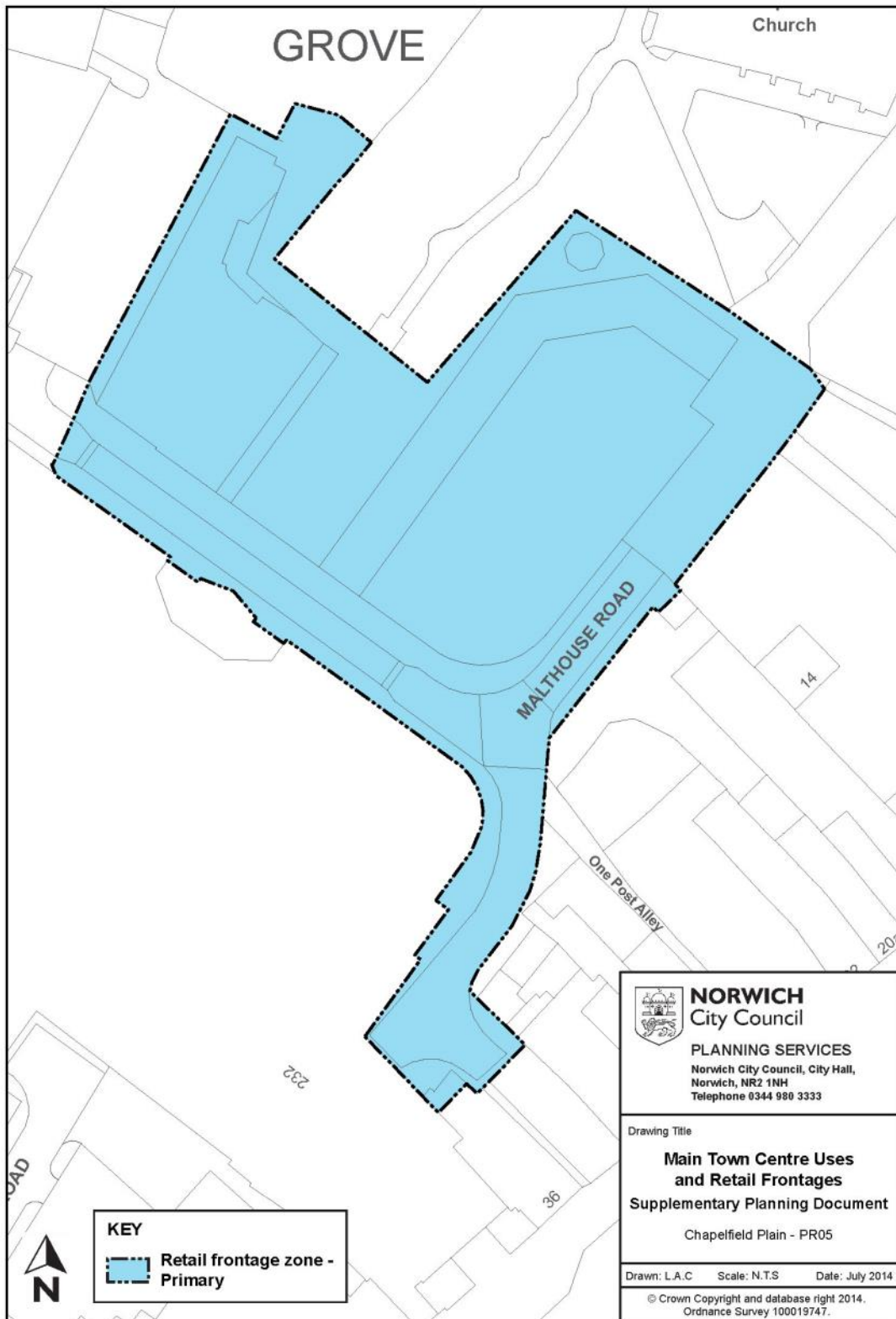
The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone PR05.

<b>Percentage vacant units:</b>	<b>0.0 percent</b>
<b>Percentage vacant floorspace:</b>	<b>0.0 percent</b>
<b>Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:</b>	<b>0.0 metres</b>
<b>Measured frontages retail/non retail split:</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>

To encourage flexibility of uses in future the plan does not define a retail frontage for Chapelfield Plain and this SPD does not require a minimum proportion of retail use to be maintained. However, it would be beneficial to retain a proportion of shops in this area to provide an effective link between Chapelfield and the main part of the primary shopping area.

In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and character of zone **PR05**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use will:

- Support a beneficial mix of retail uses and supporting services in Chapelfield Plain whilst seeking to retain the majority of shopping on its eastern side to reinforce the pedestrian route and activity links along Malthouse Road to Rampant Horse Street;
- Ensure that proposals for development on the Chantry Car Park site in accordance with site allocations plan policy CC29 are effectively integrated with existing uses Chapelfield Plain and enhance the pedestrian route through the site to the Forum;
- Support enhancements to the public realm in Chapelfield Plain which increase its attractiveness and usability for shoppers and visitors, and;
- Support proposals for temporary uses and activities within the area, in particular speciality markets and public entertainment events.



## PR06 – Timberhill/Red Lion Street

This zone is a diverse, mixed use area including the speciality retail and bar/restaurant quarter of Timberhill and Orford Hill, the east side of Red Lion Street and Orford Yard characterised by restaurants and financial service uses and the southern end of Castle Meadow which offers a range of value retailers and other supporting services. The zone lies between the core of the primary shopping area and Castle Mall, whose upper levels are reached from Timberhill via the attractive open pedestrian square of St Johns' Plain. Timberhill is an attractive historic shopping street which has benefited from sympathetic new development in recent years both in association with Castle Mall and on other sites. Large scale public realm improvements were carried out in the early 1990s, although it remained somewhat isolated from the rest of the primary area because it was effectively an "island" surrounded by main traffic routes on the city's one way system and, as a consequence, it would benefit from measures to attract more shoppers and visitors. Traffic management and bus/cycle priority measures are expected to significantly reduce traffic levels in the area in the medium term, enabling the closure of Rampant Horse Street and Westlegate to general traffic, improving connections to the rest of the primary retail area and (as part of the Westlegate House development) introducing an improved route between Westlegate, Timberhill and Castle Mall. In anticipation of these accessibility improvements the zone has been defined to extend beyond Timberhill further to the east to take in premises at the north end of Ber Street and the Woolpack Inn in Golden Ball Street.

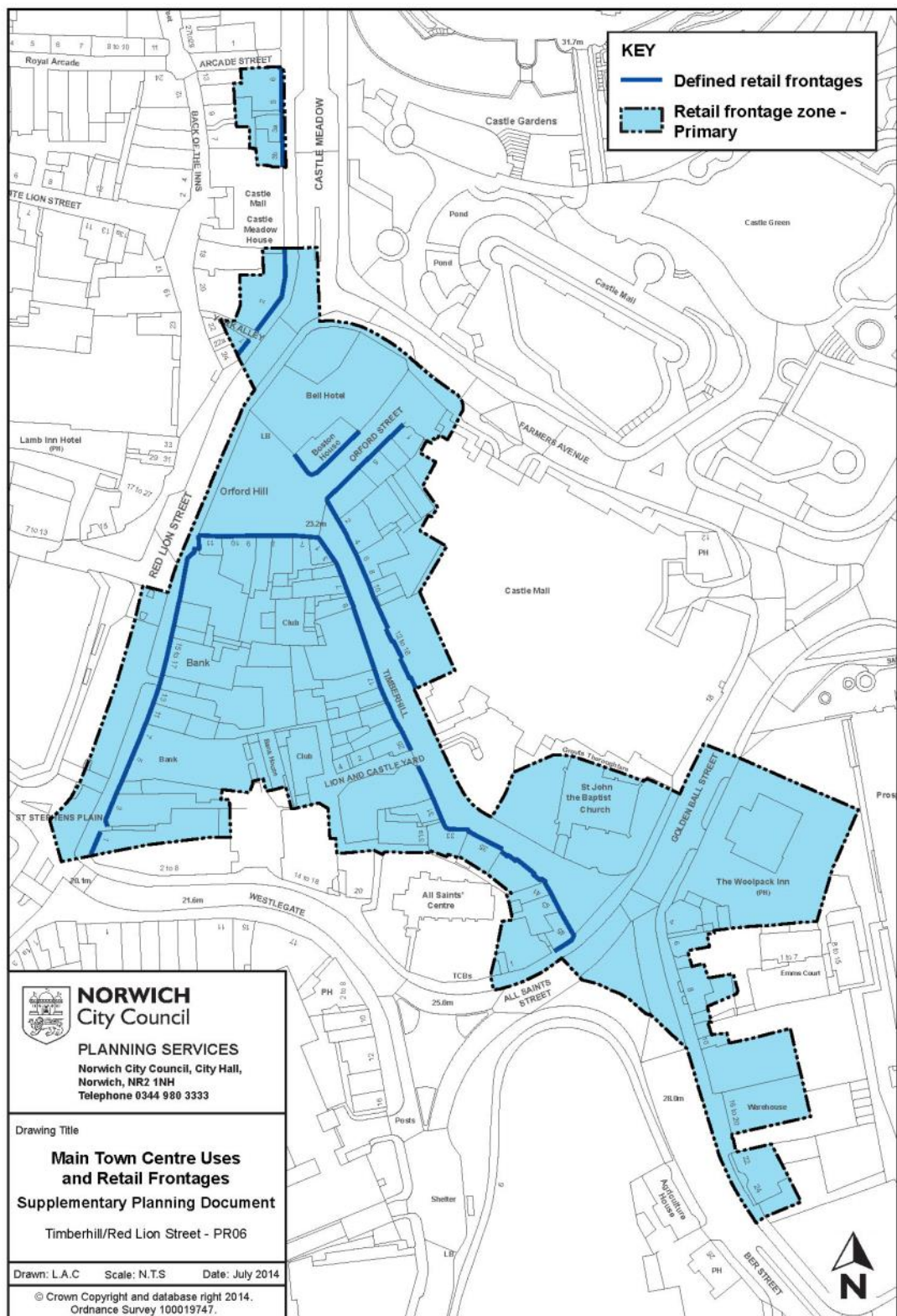
The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone PR06.

<b>Percentage vacant units:</b>	<b>5.7 percent</b>
<b>Percentage vacant floorspace:</b>	<b>6.3 percent</b>
<b>Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:</b>	<b>436.0 metres</b>
<b>Measured frontages retail/non retail split:</b>	<b>70.2 percent A1 retail frontage</b>
	<b>29.8 percent non-retail frontage</b>

In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and character of zone **PR06**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use will

- seek to maintain an indicative minimum of **60%** of defined retail frontage in A1 retail use;
- encourage and support proposals for speciality and local independent retailing and early evening economy uses throughout the area, in particular uses which increase activity and pedestrian footfall in Timberhill;

- support the retention of diverse range of uses in Red Lion Street including extending the use of upper floors for beneficial and complementary uses (including residential use), and;
- Discourage concentrations of non-retail uses which would result in continuous runs of inactive ground floor frontage (for example betting shops and amusement centres).



## Frontage Zones in the secondary areas

### SR01 – The Lanes West

This area is part of the Norwich Lanes situated to the north and west of the Market Place including Guildhall Hill, Lower and Upper Goat Lane, Dove Street, St John Maddermarket, the north end of Exchange Street and the pedestrian priority section of Pottergate. This part of the Lanes area offers a mix of local independent shops and service supporting the evening economy – restaurants and bars predominating in Pottergate, Exchange Street and St Andrews Street. Previously this part of the centre has been regarded as a secondary area although this is not a reflection of its relative importance and its character is essentially similar to the streets further to the east, albeit with a higher proportion of smaller local independents and fewer larger stores.

The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone SR01.

Percentage vacant units:	3.3 percent
Percentage vacant floorspace:	1.2 percent
Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:	367.3 metres
Measured frontages retail/non retail split:	81.6 percent A1 retail frontage
	18.4 percent non-retail frontage

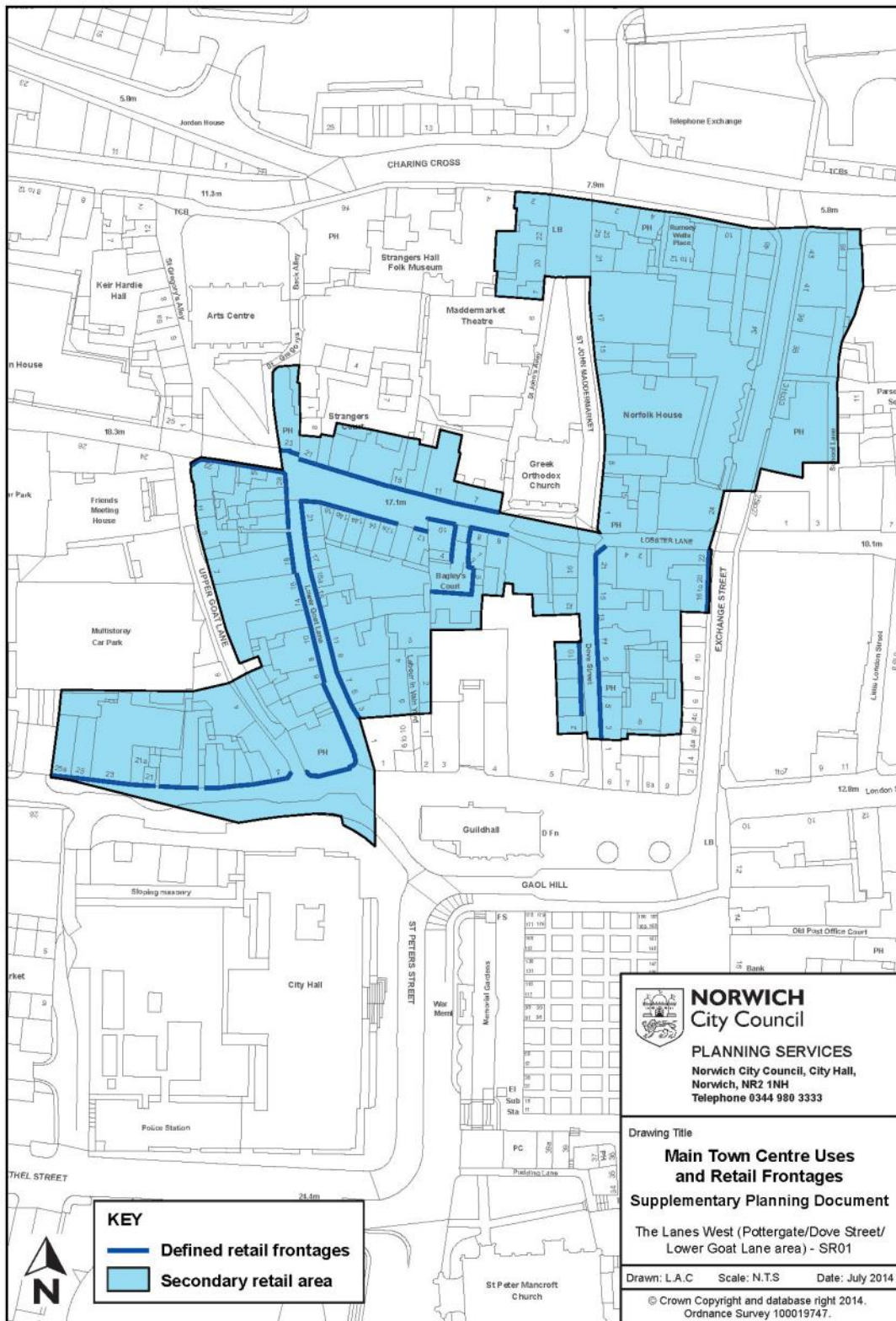
Shop vacancy rates in this zone are fairly low, currently, although there has been a high turnover of businesses. There are also pockets of vacancy in the streets in the northern part of the area of more mixed character where no retail frontage is defined. The focus of the area is expected to remain on speciality and independent shopping with scope for complementary uses supporting the evening economy.

In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and shopping character of zone **SR01**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use will:

- Seek to maintain an indicative minimum of **70%** of defined retail frontage in A1 retail use;
- continue to support proposals for speciality and local independent retailing complementing the historic character and visitor appeal of the area;
- support the further expansion of cafes and restaurants with other main town centre uses supporting the evening economy, community uses and temporary flexible uses;
- Discourage concentrations of non-retail uses which would result in continuous runs of inactive ground floor frontage (for example betting shops and amusement centres), and;

- support complementary uses in upper floors, including residential use where consistent with policies DM2 and DM12 and DM13.





## SR02 – Upper St Giles Street

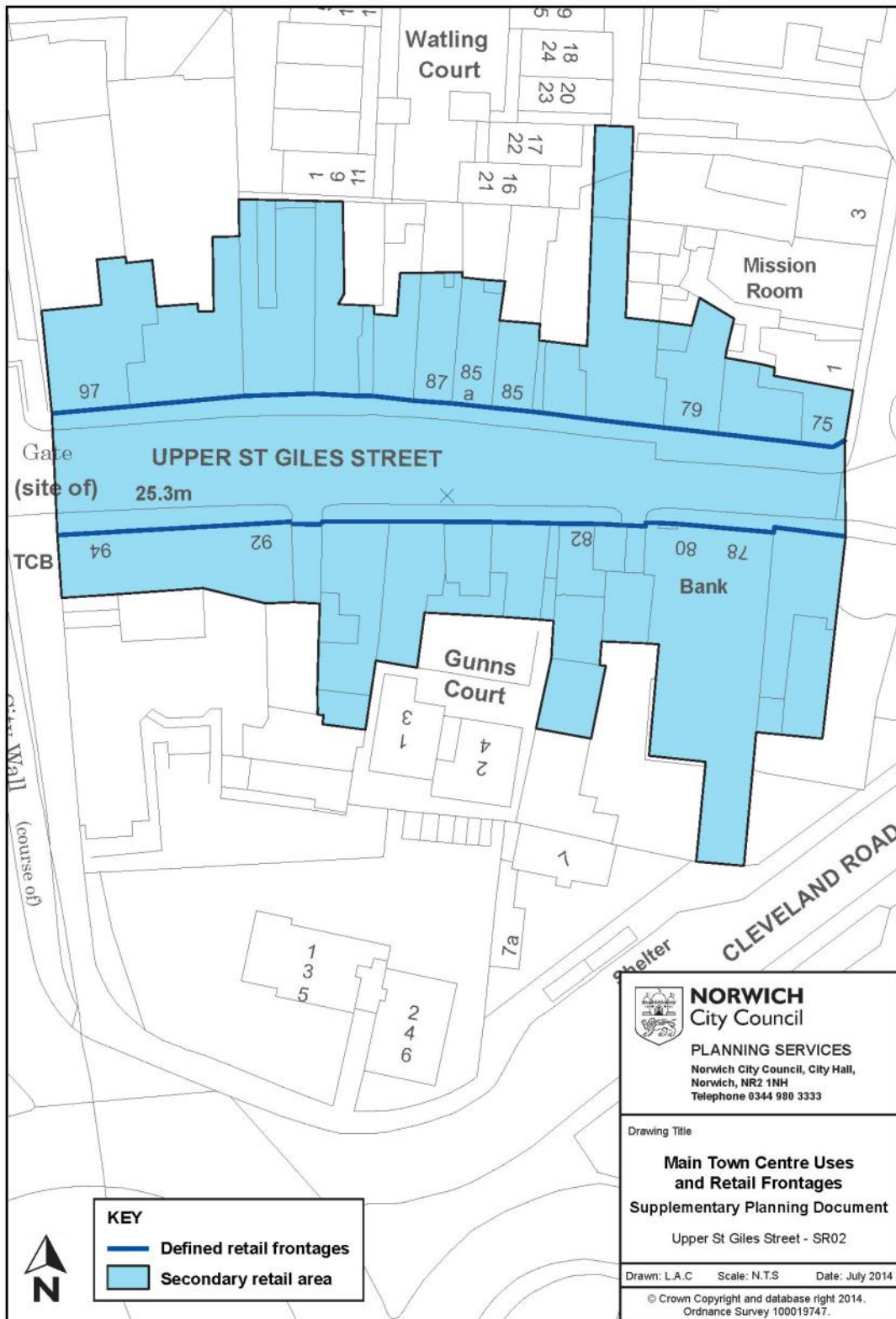
Upper St Giles Street is a small self contained specialist shopping area of great historic character at the western end of the Norwich Lanes, adjoining the 14th century St Giles' Church. Formerly a somewhat declining area it has recovered in recent years as a fashionable upmarket shopping street offering a range of specialist local independent shops, galleries cafes delicatessens and restaurants. Premises are well used with residential flats in many upper floors. A language school now occupies former office and bank buildings on the south side.

The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone SR02.

<b>Percentage vacant units:</b>	<b>0.0 percent</b>
<b>Percentage vacant floorspace:</b>	<b>0.0 percent</b>
<b>Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:</b>	<b>134.8 metres</b>
<b>Measured frontages retail/non retail split:</b>	<b>65.4 percent A1 retail frontage</b>
	<b>34.6 percent non-retail frontage</b>

In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and shopping character of zone **SR02**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use will:

- Seek to maintain an indicative minimum of **60%** of defined retail frontage in A1 retail use;
- continue to support proposals for speciality and local independent retailing complementing the historic character and visitor appeal of the area;
- support the further expansion of hospitality uses supporting the evening economy, complementary main town centre uses, community uses and temporary flexible uses;
- Discourage concentrations of non-retail uses which would result in continuous runs of inactive ground floor frontage (for example betting shops and amusement centres), and;
- support complementary uses in upper floors, including residential use where consistent with policies DM2 and DM12 and DM13.



## SR03 – St Benedicts Street area

This zone is a westward continuation of zone SR01 and the majority of the area falls within the Norwich Lanes. It comprises St Benedicts Street, the retail frontage to St Gregory's Alley and the Cathedral Retail Park, which adjoins St Benedict's Street at its western end (no frontage is defined for the retail park). St. Benedict's is a long established historic secondary shopping area which offers a diverse range of speciality shops, cafes and community uses, also including four of the city's 32 medieval churches, now used variously as cultural and exhibition centres and music and arts venues. St. Benedict's has benefited from long term regeneration initiatives and more recent redevelopment for housing. It has developed a strong focus on music, alternative culture and the evening economy with cafes and restaurants predominant toward its eastern end. The Cathedral Retail Park dates from the 1980s and accommodates a number of bulky goods retailers. Despite being planned as complementary to the more traditional shopping offer in St Benedicts at the time, its integration with St Benedicts itself is poor. The adjoining Barn Road Car Park site is allocated in the Site Allocations Plan (site specific policy CC24) for mixed retail, housing and office development with public car parking reprovided on site.

The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone SR03.

Percentage vacant units:	5.5 percent
Percentage vacant floorspace:	4.8 percent
Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:	644.1 metres
Measured frontages retail/non retail split:	65.4 percent A1 retail frontage
	36.1 percent non-retail frontage

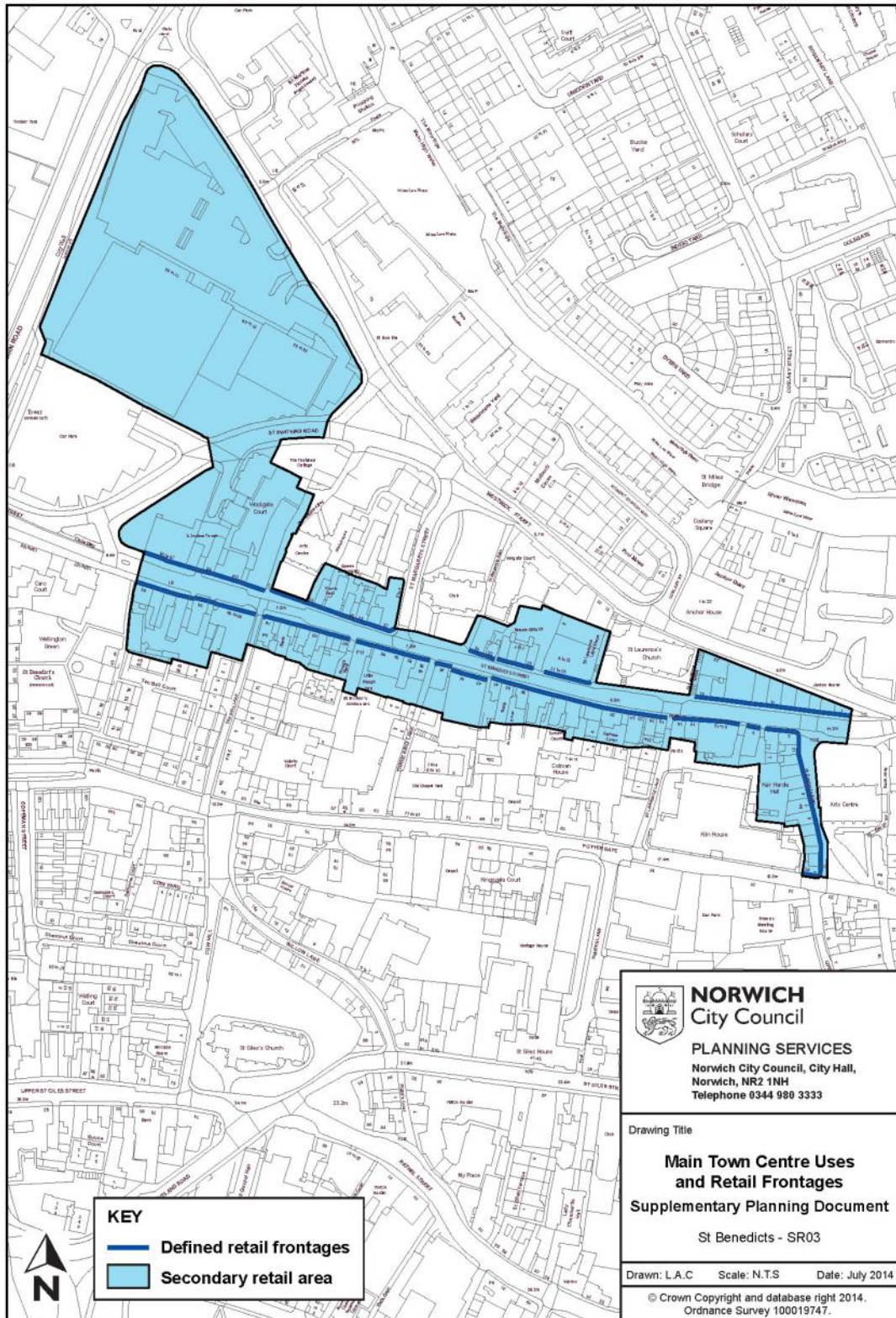
In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and shopping character of zone **SR03**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use will:

- Seek to maintain an indicative minimum of **60%** of defined retail frontage in A1 retail use;
- continue to support proposals for speciality and local independent retailing complementing the historic character and retail function of the area;
- support the further expansion of hospitality uses supporting the evening economy complementary main town centre uses, community uses and temporary flexible uses;
- Discourage concentrations of non-retail uses at ground floor level which would result in continuous runs of inactive frontage (including residential use);
- support complementary uses in upper floors, including residential use where consistent with policies DM2 and DM12 and DM13;

- Consider proposals for new development and change of use in the Cathedral Retail Park in accordance with policy DM18 of the DM Policies Plan.

The Site Allocations Plan proposes redevelopment of the adjoining Barn Road Car Park site in accordance with Site Allocations Plan policy CC24, with preference being given to new uses at ground floor level which will complement and reinforce the vitality, viability and retail function of the St Benedicts Area frontage zone and the Lanes area as a whole.





## SR04 – Elm Hill/Wensum Street

Elm Hill is one of the most important tourist/visitor attractions in Norwich but is separated from the majority of the central retail area. The attractive medieval cobbled street has great historic character and considerable visitor appeal, with a mix of private houses, shops and cafes in listed and other historic premises lining it on both sides. A series of historic courts and alleys connect the street with the Riverside Walk and Elm Hill gardens behind. The neighbouring Wensum Street, running from Tombland adjoining the cathedral to Fye Bridge, is on the main bus route into the city centre from the north. It is a more obviously commercial area with a mix of bars, restaurants, speciality and value retailers. This area of the city centre has benefited from an increase in residential population through major new housing development in recent years particularly in and around Quayside immediately to the east. Other major attractions such as the Cathedral, St Andrews and Blackfriars Halls and a tourist riverbus service running from Elm Hill Quay are in easy reach.

Historically Elm Hill (and to a lesser extent, Wensum Street and Tombland) has been a traditional centre for antique and craft shops and galleries, but in recent years the focus of speciality retailing has shifted more obviously to the Norwich Lanes. Some former shop premises in Elm Hill have been converted to living accommodation and greater diversity of supporting services has been introduced, particularly pubs, bars, cafe bars and restaurants in and around Wensum Street and beyond. The Norwich University of the Arts is based nearby, and its continuing expansion will attract more activity into the area and present opportunities for additional facilities and services appealing to NUA students.

The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone SR04.

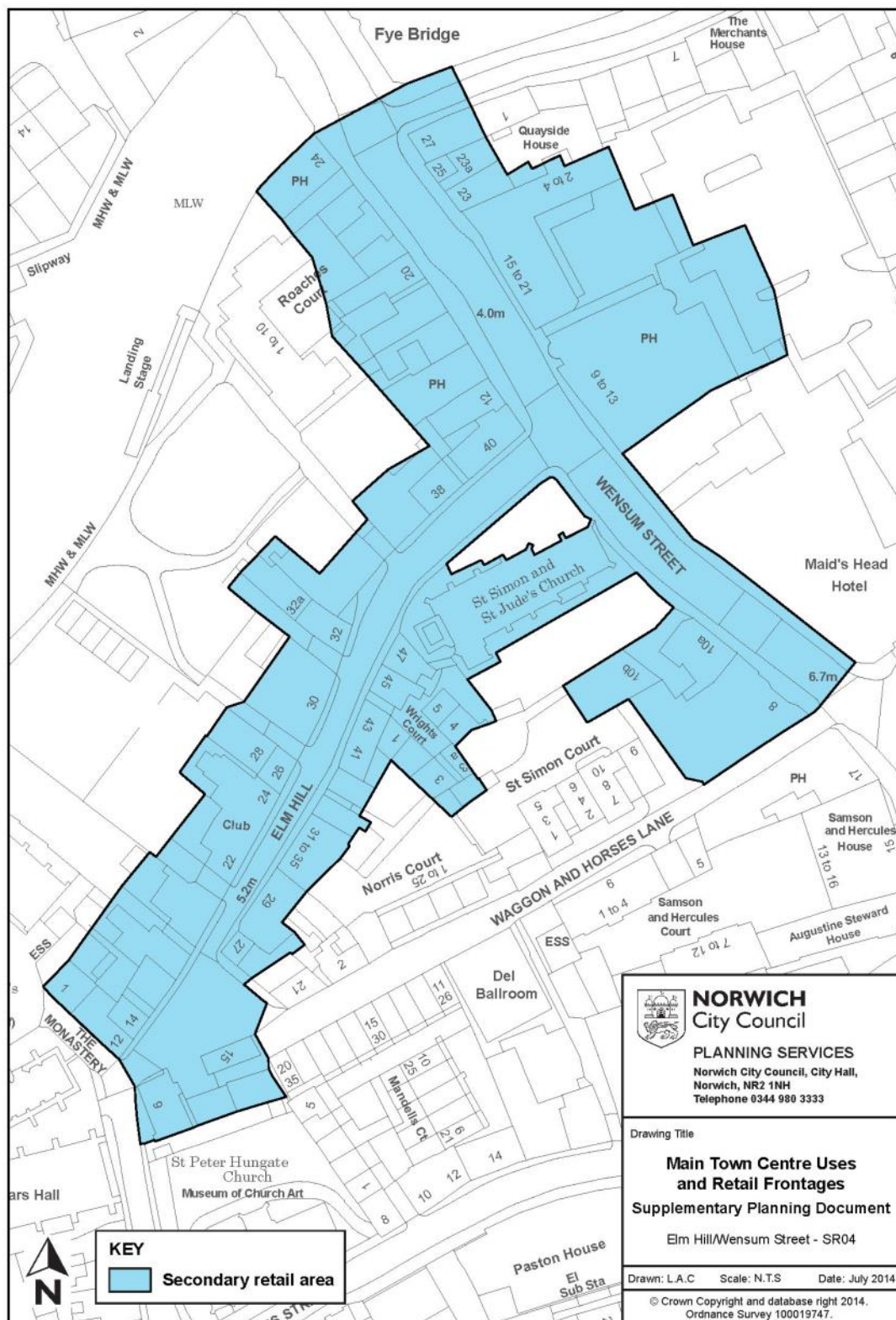
<b>Percentage vacant units:</b>	<b>4.2 percent</b>
<b>Percentage vacant floorspace:</b>	<b>2.6 percent</b>
<b>Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:</b>	<b>0.0 metres</b>
<b>Measured frontages retail/non retail split:</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>

The character and historic built form of Elm Hill means that shops and commercial premises are interspersed with private houses, resulting in a discontinuous and fragmented frontage at ground floor level. For this reason policy DM20 does not define a specific retail frontage in this area. To deliver maximum benefits for the area it would be beneficial to support the management of uses in the zone through this SPD with specific investment to help raise the profile of the area, for example more effective signage and visitor publicity, public realm improvements and other measures to attract and retain shoppers and visitors.

In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and shopping character of zone **SR04**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use will:

- Aim to maintain the focus of Elm Hill on speciality retailing appealing to tourists and visitors, seeking to retain non-residential uses and supporting services at ground floor level to ensure its continued vitality and viability as a visitor destination;
- Where consistent with other local plan policies, support the introduction of further early evening economy uses and hospitality uses in Wensum Street and Tombland (however it should be noted that late night uses will not be permitted in this area);
- Determine proposals for hospitality and early evening economy uses in accordance with policy DM23, giving particular attention to the need to protect residential amenity and avoid localised increases in noise and disturbance;
- Avoid concentrations of non-retail uses at ground floor level which would result in continuous runs of inactive frontage (including residential use), and in particular;
- Resist the loss of shops and other commercial uses on street frontages to provide visual continuity and contribute to the overall attractiveness and vitality of the area.





## SR05 – London Street East

This secondary retail area comprises the pedestrianised section of London Street east of Bedford Street and takes in the north side of Opie Street and 27 Castle Meadow (the Open Studio). London Street is the main pedestrian route from the primary shopping area to the Cathedral. Although technically part of the speciality and local independent shopping area of the Norwich Lanes this part of London Street is slightly remoter from the main shopping areas and has for many years been a more diverse area. Banks, building societies and financial services uses, as well as some cafes and restaurants, complement its retail offer. The proportion of shops to other main town centre uses at ground floor level is approximately half and half: consequently no retail frontage is defined in this zone.

This end of London Street functions as a transitional area between the primary shopping area, the commercial office quarter around the Cathedral and the expanding evening economy area of bars, clubs and pubs around Queen Street and Upper King Street leading into the Late Night Activity Zone centred on Prince of Wales Road. As such, it would be possible for the street to evolve in a number of directions – either to reinstate its traditional role as a stylish shopping street, to become mainly a cafe quarter or to become an extension of the financial services area around Bank Plain. The proximity of the Open music, art and entertainment venue at Bank Plain (and its associated studio) means that there is a growing emphasis on late night entertainment in the area which has led to some late night clubs and bars in upper floors in London Street – however, current planning policy seeks to contain such uses within the Late Night Activity Zone further to the east and a significant increase of such uses in this area could be problematic, eroding the retail function of the street and reducing activity and vitality during the day.

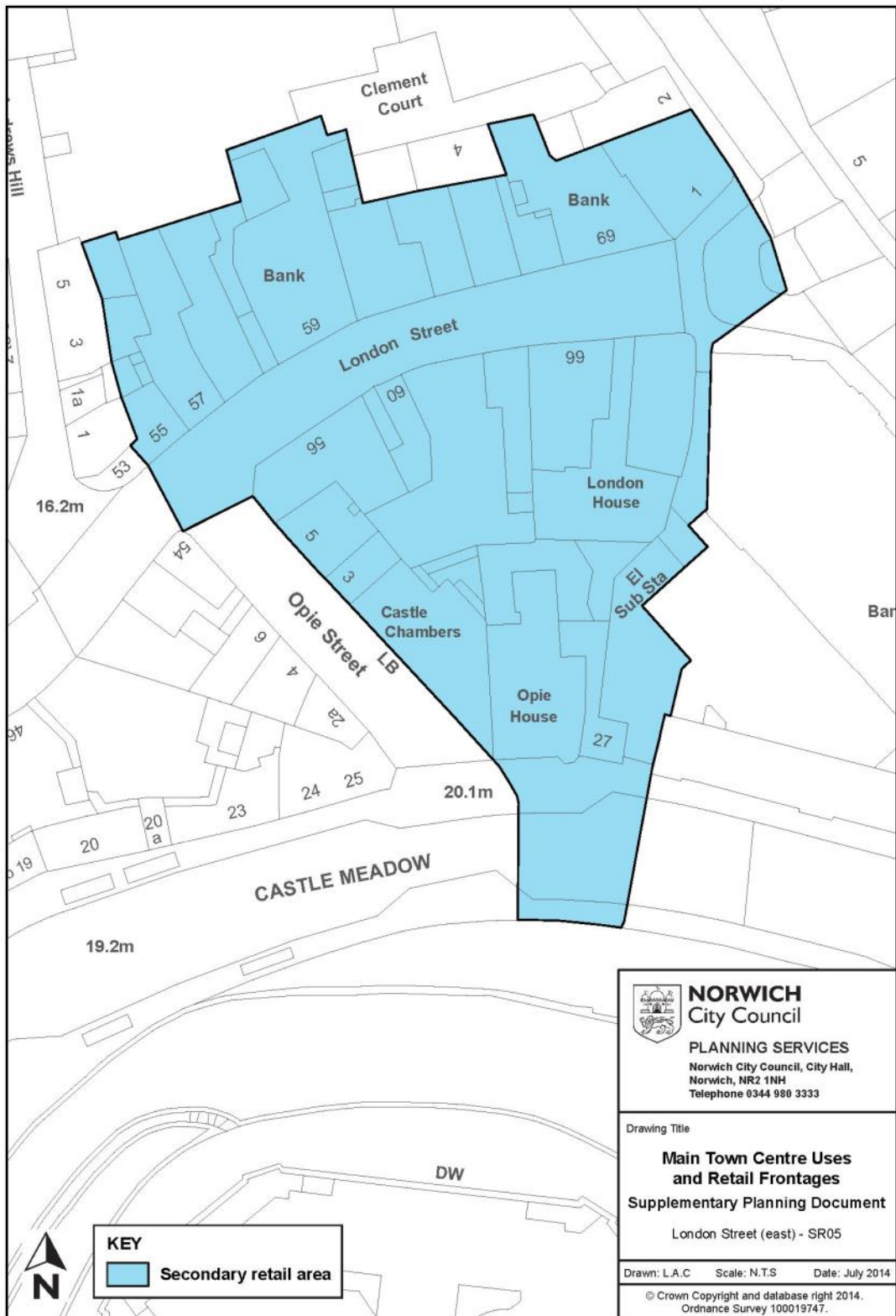
The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone SR04.

<b>Percentage vacant units:</b>	<b>4.2 percent</b>
<b>Percentage vacant floorspace:</b>	<b>2.6 percent</b>
<b>Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:</b>	<b>0.0 metres</b>
<b>Measured frontages retail/non retail split:</b>	<b>Not applicable</b>

In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and shopping character of zone **SR05**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use will:

- continue to support proposals for speciality and local independent retailing complementing the historic character of the area;

- support the further expansion of hospitality uses supporting the early evening economy, complementary main town centre uses, financial services uses, community uses and temporary flexible uses;
- Discourage concentrations of non-retail uses which would result in continuous runs of inactive ground floor frontage (for example betting shops and amusement centres), and;
- support complementary uses in upper floors, including residential use where consistent with policies DM2 and DM12 and DM13, whilst generally resisting late night bar and club uses, which in accordance with policy DM23 will not generally be permitted in this area.



## **SR06 – Brazen Gate**

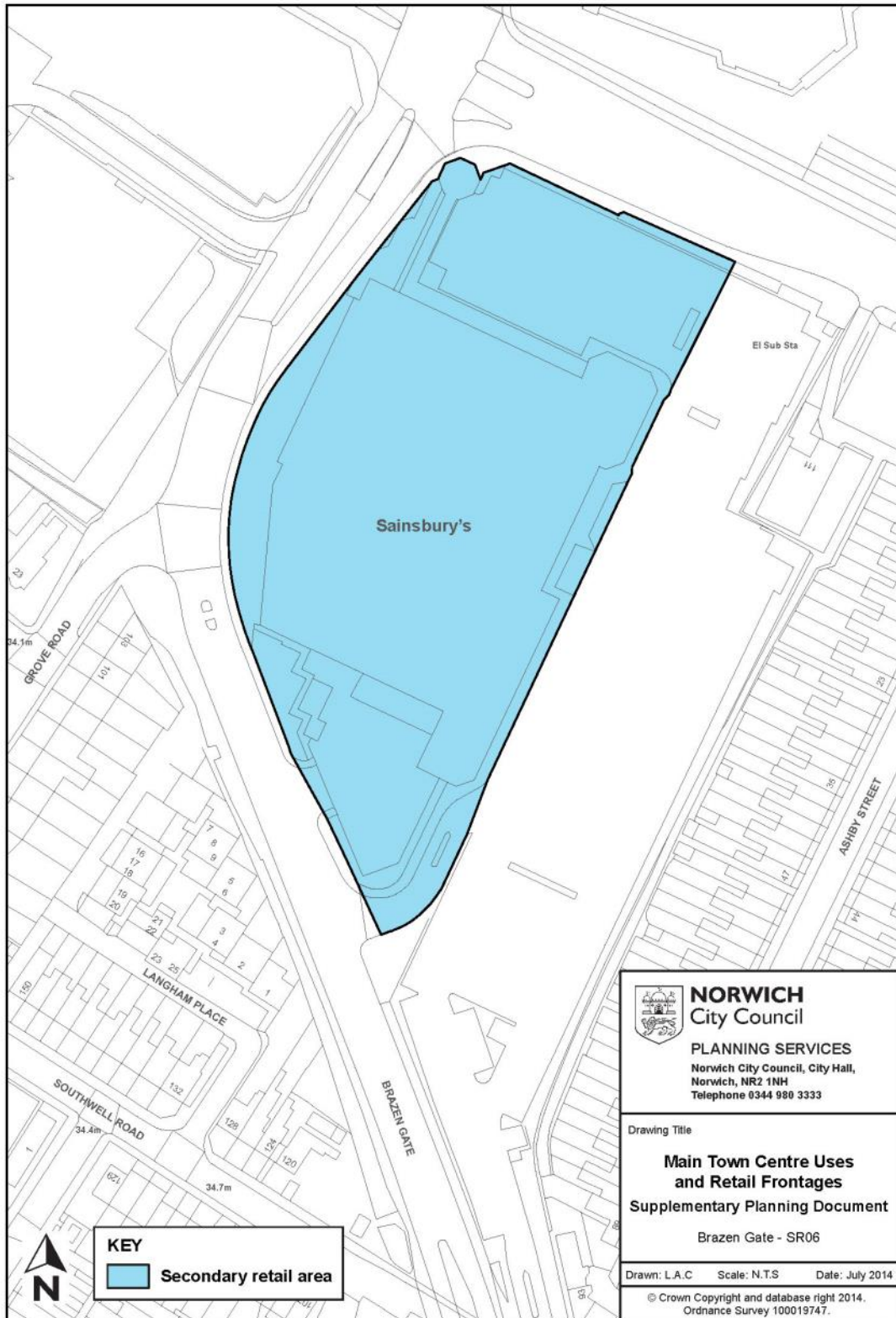
Brazen Gate, to the south of the inner ring road on the southern fringe of the city centre, is defined in the Greater Norwich Joint Core Strategy and the development management policies plan as a secondary shopping area in its own right. It currently accommodates a large Sainsburys food store and no other shop units.

No retail frontages are defined in this zone.

In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and retail function of zone **SR06**:

- planning applications for new development, change of use and variation of conditions on the existing Sainsbury store will be assessed and determined in accordance with policy DM18 of the plan and the hierarchy of centres as set out in policy 19 of the JCS.





## Large district centres

### LD01 – Magdalen Street/Anglia Square

The Magdalen Street/Anglia Square Large District Centre is situated in the northern part of the city centre north and south of the Inner Ring Road, comprising the historic areas of Magdalen Street and St Augustine's Street and the 1970s built neighbourhood shopping centre of Anglia Square. It is an extensive area of varied character and functions both as a district shopping centre meeting day to day shopping needs and a specialist area with a particular focus on specialist ethnic and value retailers, restaurants and the evening economy. Having been in long term decline there has been a recent recovery in activity although pockets of vacancy remain in the northern end of Magdalen Street and in parts of St Augustine's Street, where some ground floor shops have been converted to residential use. The introduction of traffic management measures and a one way gyratory system has significantly enhanced the environment of St Augustine's Street and improved conditions for pedestrians and shoppers.

Anglia Square is allocated in the adopted Northern City Centre Area Action Plan (NCCAAP) (policy AS1) for major retail and mixed use regeneration. Planning permission was granted in March 2013 for a two-phase regeneration scheme comprising a foodstore and new retail units, flats, food and drink uses, leisure uses, refurbished office space and parking. Following the sale of the site to Threadneedle Investments in 2014, this scheme is unlikely to proceed in its approved form although the new owners are committed to a beneficial regeneration of Anglia Square and new proposals are expected to be brought forward in the near future.

Changes of use within the Large District Centre are currently assessed and determined under policy LU2 of the adopted NCCAAP. It requires that the proportion of A1 retail uses at ground floor level should not fall below 70% (this threshold has already been breached), prohibits the change of use of ground floor shop units to residential use during the period of construction of Anglia Square and requires developers to justify such proposals thereafter. For the avoidance of doubt, Policy DM20 of the Development Management Policies Plan supported by this SPD will **supersede** policy LU2 when both documents are adopted.

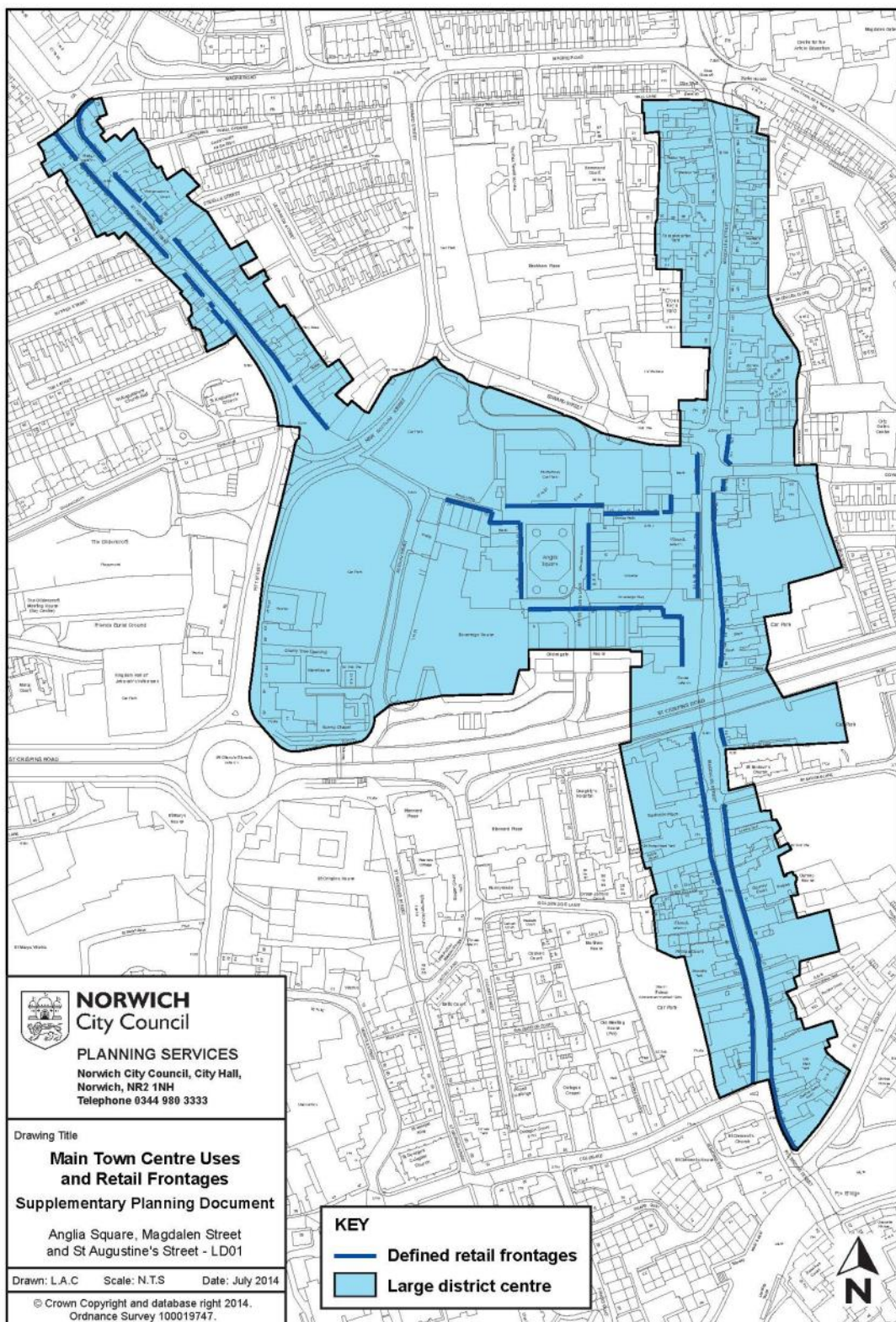
The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone LD01.

Percentage vacant units:	10.8 percent
Percentage vacant floorspace:	8.9 percent
Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:	1167.3 metres
Measured frontages retail/non retail split:	67.1 percent A1 retail frontage 32.9 percent non-retail frontage

In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and shopping character of zone **LD01**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use will:

- Seek to maintain an indicative minimum of **60%** of defined retail frontage in A1 retail use;
- continue to support proposals for speciality and local independent retailing complementing the historic character and retail function of the area;
- support the further expansion of hospitality uses supporting the evening economy complementary main town centre uses, community uses and temporary flexible uses;
- Discourage concentrations of non-retail uses at ground floor level which would result in continuous runs of inactive frontage (including residential use);
- support complementary uses in upper floors, including residential use where consistent with policies DM2 and DM12 and DM13;
- Consider proposals for change of use of ground floor premises to residential use on a case by case basis and accept them where consistent with policies DM2, DM12 and DM13 and other relevant local plan policies. In assessing such proposals, account will be taken of the impact of individual changes on the vitality, viability and diversity of the street and the large district centre as a whole. Preference will be given to proposals which would result in a designated or locally identified heritage asset or other long-term vacant building being brought back into beneficial use where it is demonstrated that those benefits could not be delivered by retaining a retail use, and;
- During the period of construction of the Anglia Square development the council will seek to resist the loss of ground floor retail and commercial premises to residential use to protect the vitality, viability and retail function of the area.





## **LD02 – Riverside**

Riverside, to the east of the city centre, is defined in the Greater Norwich Joint Core Strategy and the development management policies plan as a freestanding large district centre. It currently accommodates a retail warehouse park of around 17,000 sq.m net and a small number of ground floor commercial units fronting Broadland Court.

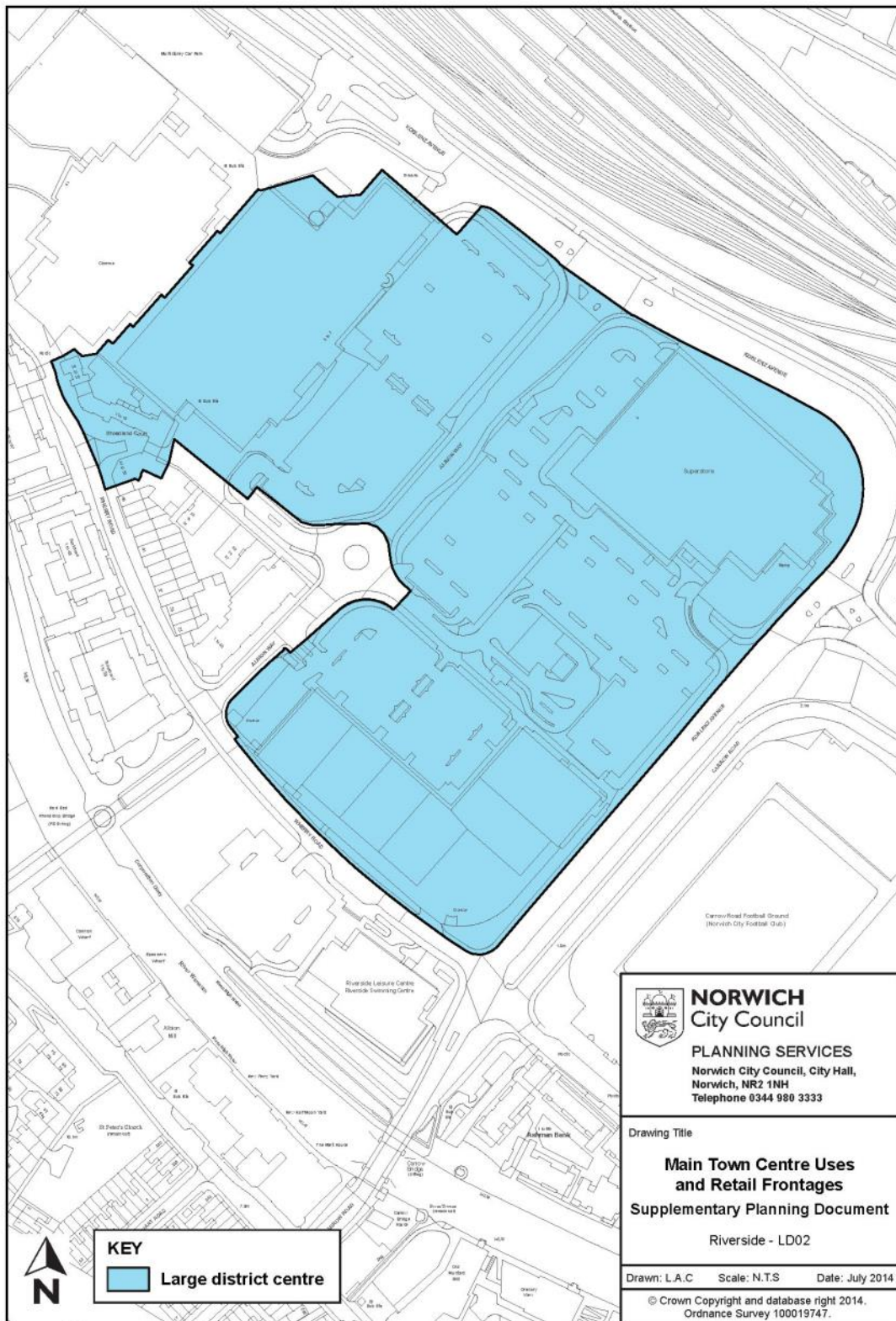
No retail frontages are defined in this zone.

In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and retail function of zone **LD02**:

- planning applications for new development, change of use and variation of conditions on the existing retail warehouses within the retail park will be assessed and determined in accordance with policy DM18 of the plan and the hierarchy of centres as set out in policy 19 of the JCS.

Policy DM18 requires that there will be no further retail development at the Riverside Large District Centre unless it provides sustainable transport improvements to significantly enhance accessibility by public transport and pedestrian and cycle linkages from the retail park to the primary and secondary retail areas, sufficient to offset any potentially harmful impacts on traffic congestion and highway safety arising from additional trip generation associated with the new development.

In practical terms, proposals for minor development which would have no implications for traffic generation would not be subject to the policy.



 <b>NORWICH</b> City Council <b>PLANNING SERVICES</b> Norwich City Council, City Hall, Norwich, NR2 1NH Telephone 0344 980 3333	Drawing Title <b>Main Town Centre Uses  and Retail Frontages</b> <b>Supplementary Planning Document</b> Riverside - LD02
	Drawn: L.A.C    Scale: N.T.S    Date: July 2014 © Crown Copyright and database right 2014. Ordnance Survey 100019747.



## **5. Conclusions and next steps**

- 5.1 Norwich City Council's integrated, proactive approach to planning for shopping has been crucial in delivering the range and quality of shopping experience which exists in Norwich today, and has secured its continuing vitality and viability as a thriving retail and visitor destination for the region in the face of many complex development pressures. Careful and responsible management of change in defined shopping areas through the planning process has been and should continue to be fundamental to this strategy.
- 5.2 The council is confident that policy DM20 of the Development Management Policies Plan, supported by this SPD, will provide a sound basis for the future management of change in defined shopping frontages and other areas of the centre to maintain their vitality, viability and diversity in the long term.
- 5.3 Following consultation on this draft version of the SPD, comments and suggestions for change will be assessed and incorporated, as appropriate into the final version of the document. It will then be adopted alongside the development management policies plan during the autumn.

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **Development Management Policy DM20**

#### **Policy DM20**

##### **Managing change in the primary and secondary retail areas and Large District Centres**

##### **Defined retail frontages**

Within the defined primary and secondary retail areas and Large District centres, permanent changes of use to classes A2, A3, A4, A5, and other main town centre uses, will be permitted where:

- a) they would not have a harmful impact on the vitality and viability of the area and on the individual street; and
- b) within retail frontages defined on the Policies Map, where they would not result in the proportion of A1 retail uses at ground floor level falling below an indicative minimum proportion which is justified as necessary to support the continued retail function of that frontage zone.

The indicative minimum thresholds used in support of this policy will be set out in the Main Town Centre Uses and Retail Frontages supplementary planning document. The supplementary planning document will be prepared in accordance with the timescales set out in the Local Development Scheme 2014, adopted alongside this plan and reviewed flexibly as necessary in response to objective evidence of retail market trends and changes in the character and function of the central shopping area over the plan period.

In assessing proposals for change of use within defined retail frontage zones, the proportion of A1 retail use in that frontage will be calculated taking account of any other proposals in the same zone permitted but not implemented.