



Sustainable development panel

Date: **Wednesday 23 July 2014**
Time: **9am**
Venue: **Committee room, City Hall**

Panel members:

Councillors:

Stonard (chair)
Sands (M) (vice chair)
Ackroyd
Bremner
Boswell
Herries
Jackson
Stammers

For further information -

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Democratic services
City Hall
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AGENDA

Page No.

1. Apologies

To receive apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of interest

(Please note that it is the responsibility of individual members to declare an interest prior to the item if they arrive late for the meeting).

3. Minutes

5

To agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on 25 June 2014.

4. Representations on local plan modifications **9**
(Report of the head of planning services)

Purpose - To comment on the proposed representations on the local plan modifications, on behalf of the council.

5. Retail monitor **23**
(Report of the head of planning services)

Purpose - To consider the June 2014 Retail Monitor and note the success of Norwich City Centre as a retail destination with low vacancy rates compared to national vacancy rates.

The Retail Monitor is the council's monitoring report advising of vacancy rates and changes of shop type across the city. Monitoring ensures that the council can measure the implementation of policies on retail monitoring and consider whether to implement them in a more flexible manner taking into consideration market demands and trends.

6. Main town centre uses and retail frontages SPD – draft for consultation **55**
(Report of the head of planning services)

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.

7. Climate change local **125**
(Report of the executive head of strategy, people and democracy)

Purpose - This report is for the panel to consider Norwich City Council's first annual Climate Local commitments.

15 July 2014



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SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PANEL

9.00am to 11.00am

25 June 2014

Present: Councillors Stonard (chair), Sands (M) (vice chair), Ackroyd, Boswell, Bremner, Herries, Jackson, Grahame (substitute for Councillor Boswell)

Apologies Councillors Stammers

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Stonard as chair for the ensuing civic year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR

RESOLVED to appoint Councillor Sands (M) as vice chair for the ensuing civic year.

3. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Councillor Stammers. Councillor Grahame attended in her place.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. MINUTES

RESOLVED to agree the minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2014.

6. LOCAL AND STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE

The policy team leader (planning) presented the report.

In response to a member's question, the head of planning explained that the current live planning application for the Deal Ground was unaffected as outline planning consent had been given.

Discussion ensued around the subject of a school or similar premises being constructed on site with parking facilities. A member suggested that the council might wish to put covenants in place regarding the raising of funds via car parking, but the head of planning services said that there would be very limited parking on site. He added that in relation to construction of new schools, practice within the county was to insist on two parking places per primary class.

In response to a member's question regarding potential increased traffic on Bluebell Road, the planning team leader (policy) said that this had been discussed with transport experts who considered that access would be acceptable and should not cause a significant increase.

In response to a member's question, the policy team leader (planning) explained that the plans for Bartram Mowers included allocated space around it to ensure that the site was not extended all the way up to the floodplain. This would allow access to a walk from which it would be possible to view the site of special scientific interest. He confirmed that consultation was ongoing and would last until 31 July, adding explained that his department had directly contacted those who had raised concerns previously, thus giving them a further opportunity to raise any issues. He added that there had been plenty of interest in the Bartram Mowers site.

In response to a member's question, the planning team leader (policy) explained that since the county council acted as the leading flood authority, any reports of surface water flooding not included on the current flooding map could be reported directly to them. He said he would provide reporting details to the members.

RESOLVED

- 1) to note the report; and,
- 2) for the policy team leader (planning) would circulate details to members on how to contact the county council to notify them of additions to the city flood map.

7. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The planner (policy) presented the report. He explained that the development scheme would examine various aspects of the city centre and that numerous options would be examined such as the balance of shops, restaurants, coffee shops etc. He added that the document produced could be reviewed as and when required.

In response to a member's question, the chair confirmed that, given the changes in government legislation affecting city centres across the country, plenty of response had been given by the sustainable development panel to consultations as well as direct communication with several government departments. He said that the aim was to protect both the retail and heritage aspects of the city.

The head of planning services explained that no significant interest had been shown in the development community led neighbourhood plans by local communities. He added that there was a limit on what the council could do to encourage people to

come forward, adding that the impetus needed to come from the community itself. He explained that if the councillors were aware of people interested who wished to register a neighbourhood forum, they could come forward and talk to the planning department. He emphasised that the role of the council would be to ensure that closed, prejudicial groups did not guide the process to the exclusion of other community members.

RESOLVED to note the report.

**8. INTEGRATED WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES:
QUARTERLY UPDATE NO 2 2014**

The environmental service development manager presented the report.

In response to a member's question, he explained that large stickers would be available and placed over the lists currently printed on recycling bins. This would effectively let city residents know what could now be included in their recycling collection.

He confirmed that the student door-knocking campaign would continue and that calendars of collection dates go out to all people. Work would continue with the student union to ensure that recycling by students was maximised.

In response to a member's question he said that Tetra Paks® were currently not encouraged for recycling, however, if they did end up mixed with the recycling, the operators would collect and recycle these. A close watch was being kept on the market for recycled Tetra Paks®, which may well influence the way in which they are recycled in future.

In response to a member's question, the environmental service development manager explained that the possibility of providing subsidised food waste caddy liners was not feasible due to high administration costs. However, he did say that the option of distributing free liners was being explored.

RESOLVED to note the report.

CHAIR

Report to Sustainable development panel
23 July 2014
Report of Head of planning service
Subject Representations on local plan modifications

Item

4

Purpose

To comment on the proposed representations on the local plan modifications, on behalf of the council.

Recommendation

To comment on the proposed representations for submission to the local plan examination inspector.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority A prosperous city and the service plan priority to deliver the local plan for Norwich and decent housing for all.

Financial implications

There are no direct financial consequences for the council.

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Stonard – Environment development and transport

Contact officers

Judith Davison 01603 212529

Graham Nelson 01603 212530

Background documents

None

Report

Background

1. The council is nearing the end of a lengthy period of plan preparation. Public examination hearings were held in February and March 2014 into the soundness and legal compliance of the council's two draft local planning documents – the Site Allocations and Site Specific Policies DPD ('Site Allocations plan') and the Development Management Policies DPD ("DM Policies plan"). Once adopted, these plans and the accompanying Policies map will supersede the 2004 City of Norwich Replacement local plan, and will form part of the development plan for Norwich along with the adopted Joint core strategy and Northern city centre area action plan.

Proposed main modifications

2. Following the hearing sessions, the inspector has proposed a set of 'main modifications' to each plan (ie. those changes which he considers are required to make the plan sound and capable of adoption). The main modifications effectively summarise the Inspector's conclusions so far on policies and site allocations, but are proposed without prejudice to the Inspector's final conclusions in his report.
3. The main modifications are currently subject to public consultation, until 31st July, along with sustainability appraisal (SA) of the modifications for each plan. The proposed modifications and SA reports are set out in full on the council's website: <http://www.norwich.gov.uk/YourCouncil/Consultations/Pages/NewLocalPlan.aspx>. Minor (or 'additional') modifications are provided on the website for information only; these comprise minor editing changes or factual updates and are not part of the consultation.
4. The consultation is being conducted by the council on behalf of the Inspector. He will receive all valid representations made during the consultation period, and will take account of them in his final report. The Inspector is only likely to change his mind about the main modifications if new or substantive evidence is provided through the consultation process.

Council representations

5. The majority of the main modifications were proposed by the council in response to objections made to the plans during the Regulation 19 'soundness' consultation. Proposed modifications were reported to members prior to submission in April 2013, and later at November Sustainable Development Panel; final iterations were agreed in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Environment and Development prior to the public examination hearings (in accordance with the scheme of delegation agreed at Council on 26th March 2013). The main modifications were discussed and agreed with the inspector as part of the examination process. However several proposed modifications were subject to change by, or were suggested by, the Inspector either during or after the public hearings. They are therefore referred to as 'Inspector's modifications' in this report, and relate to:
 - Land at Garden Street (CC11)
 - Deal Ground (R10)

- The Paddocks, Holt Road (R32)
 - Land west of Bluebell Road (R45)
 - Policy DM14 (Meeting the needs of gypsies and travellers and travelling show people)
6. The council can submit representations on the proposed modifications where they have been either changed or proposed by the Inspector. This report discusses the key comments which the council wishes to submit to the Inspector through the current consultation, or explains where a modification is considered acceptable, as appropriate.

Inspector's modification to Site Allocations plan policy CC11 - land at Garden Street (SA-MM4)

7. Norfolk County Council objected to policy CC11 in the Site Allocations plan on the basis that the site should be safeguarded as a potential site for a new primary school. The city council maintained that the original allocation for mixed use (housing and commercial) development should be retained, given the lack of up-to-date evidence of the need for a primary school in this location. Following the examination hearings at which the county council provided additional evidence of need, the Inspector requested the city council and county council to put forward their respective preferred policy wordings for a policy that could allow for a new school use for a temporary period. The Inspector then proposed the policy wording that appears in the main modification for consultation.
8. The Inspector's modification allows for the site to be considered temporarily for primary school provision: the county council is given a period of 4 years from adoption of this plan to undertake an assessment of alternative sites, establish whether a primary school is required on the site, and submit a planning application. Given the need for public car parking in the area, the modification requires the school development (as with the mixed use scheme) to make provision for replacement public car parking in the vicinity of the site through direct provision or a commuted sum to extend alternative existing car parks.
9. The policy as proposed to be modified is acceptable to the city council as it places the onus on the county council to justify the need for a primary school on the site within a prescribed period. If this is not complied with then the policy allows for the site to be developed for housing led mixed use development. The county council has already submitted a representation of support for the proposed modification.

Inspector's modification to Site Allocations plan policy R10 – Deal Ground (SA-MM16)

10. Norfolk County Council objected to policy R10 on a number of grounds, including the overall level of housing allocated (600 dwellings), lack of robust evidence to support the allocation, and impact on adjacent uses. Since the original objections were made planning permission has been granted for housing led mixed use development on the Deal Ground.
11. The county council conditionally withdrew several of its objections prior to the local plan examination hearings, as set out in the Statement of Common Ground available on the examination webpage
<http://www.norwich.gov.uk/Planning/Documents/SA5SCGNCCSubmissionMatter>

[Final.pdf](#)). The statement clarifies that the county council does not object to the principle of the allocation, and it furthermore acknowledges that significant progress is being made by the city council and the landowners to progress the scheme. However an outstanding county council objection to policy R10 was discussed at the hearings. The outstanding objection focused on the precise policy wording which was appropriate to address and mitigate potential environmental impacts from adjacent uses and activities on future occupiers of the site, and ensure that new development will not prejudice or place unreasonable restrictions on the continued operation of the adjacent safeguarded mineral railhead and associated asphalt plant. Both the policy wording and explanatory text is proposed to be amended in SA-MM16 to enable the design and layout of the development to reflect the findings of noise and other assessment in order to protect future residents, and to ensure that existing operations will not be prejudiced by the site's development. The revised policy wording also recognises that physical separation between new residents and existing development may be necessary to mitigate impacts.

12. Although the city council's position at examination was that the original (Regulation 19 plan) policy wording in R10 would not prejudice adjacent operators, the city council does not propose to make a representation to the modified policy; the proposed changes are essentially minor and in any case the Deal Ground has planning permission for development.

Inspector's modification to Site Allocations plan policy R32 – The Paddocks, Holt Road (SA-MM29)

13. The allocation of the Paddocks site (R32) in the Regulation 19 plan was for airport related uses, subject to the need for this land for airport operational purposes being demonstrated through a masterplan for the airport. The landowner objected to this policy on the basis that the airport authority has not made progress with a masterplan for airport development over a number of years. Following the public examination hearings Norwich International Airport (NIA) has confirmed its intention to start work on a masterplan in 2015. The inspector's proposed modification reflects this and allows for development of the site for general employment purposes in the event that an airport masterplan, endorsed by the city council and produced within 2 years of the plan's adoption, shows that the land is not required for airport operational uses. It will also allow for vehicular access to the site to be taken from the A140 Holt Road if it can be demonstrated that this can be achieved without unacceptable impacts on traffic or highway safety (the Regulation 19 version of the policy had required access to be taken from the rear via Gambling Close).
14. The policy as proposed to be modified is acceptable to the city council as it places the onus on NIA to bring forward its masterplan within a specified timescale, to clarify whether the site is or is not required for airport related uses. Furthermore, development of the site for general employment uses (if the site is not required for airport related development), will be subject to the resolution of access constraints.

Inspector's modification to Site Allocations plan policy R45 - land west of Bluebell Road (SA-MM33)

15. The council's position at the examination hearings was that this site should not be allocated, primarily due to potentially detrimental impact on the landscape and Yare Valley character area. This position was taken at Cabinet in July 2012, when Members agreed not to allocate the site in the Regulation 19 plan on the following grounds:
- Allocation is contrary to the council's long-term approach to resisting development encroaching into the Yare Valley;
 - The proposed development could potentially damage the landscape in a sensitive location on the slopes of the Yare Valley;
 - Whilst the policy (*at that time*) set out to minimise the impact of development by proposing single storey buildings it could not stipulate the height and scale of future development;
 - The proposal for housing for over-55s could set a precedent for more general housing; and
 - Residential development could lead to undesirable traffic generation.
16. Following the end of the public hearings, the inspector requested council officers and the objector to seek agreement on a policy wording for the allocation of this site, should he decide to allocate it in the plan following consultation. The proposed modification is based on the inspector's comments regarding the site (set out in his letter and attachments of 4th April available on the following webpage: <http://www.norwich.gov.uk/Planning/Pages/DMAndSAPoliciesPlans.aspx>) and on subsequent discussions with the objector.
17. The policy proposes that the site is included in the Site Allocations plan as a housing scheme for the over-55s which may include assisted living and/or extra care housing. The policy provides for new publicly accessible open space in the Yare Valley and provides opportunities for enhancing biodiversity. A key element of the policy as proposed is that a masterplan, to be produced by the applicant and agreed with the council, will guide the development to minimise the impact of the development on the character of the Yare Valley and important views.
18. The proposed modification has undergone sustainability appraisal (SA). The SA report states that whilst overall no significant positive or negative sustainability effects are identified for this allocation, development in this location would have adverse effects in terms of landscape impact. The site's location on the slopes of the Yare Valley, which defines the southern edge of the built up area of the city, is significant in landscape terms and provides a landscape buffer. The report acknowledges however that the proposed modification performs better in SA terms than the earlier (draft Regulation 19) policy, due to its emphasis on minimising impact on landscape and important views, delivery of improvements to public open space, and the requirement for a masterplan to support and guide development
19. In terms of housing numbers this site is not required to meet the target of 3000 additional units of housing to 2026 as set by Joint Core Strategy policy 4. The housing target is already met through the sites proposed to be allocated through

the main modifications excluding site R45, with a buffer of approximately 70 units above the 3000 requirement.

20. In conclusion, the Yare Valley is a unique and irreplaceable asset for the city of Norwich, providing for a linear country park linking the proposed country park at Bawburgh Lakes to the west of the city with the existing country park at Whitlingham to its east. Although the site's development would deliver housing for the elderly, such housing could be provided on any allocated housing site in the emerging local plan and this does not outweigh the harm to the landscape. Whilst the requirement in the revised policy for a masterplan to guide development may reduce impact on the Yare Valley it may not be possible to prevent significant harm and consequent reduction in the landscape buffer around the southern edge of the city.
21. Consequently the council proposes to make a representation to the main modification. This is set out in Appendix 1, objecting to the site's allocation chiefly on landscape grounds, and on the grounds that there is no need for an additional allocation in terms of housing numbers.

Inspector's modification to Policy DM14 - (DM-MM9)

22. The issue of gypsy and traveller provision is significant nationally with several plans recently found unsound due to lack of provision to meet established need. There is no allocation for gypsy and traveller provision in the Site Allocations plan, as a site to meet established need has not yet been identified. However policy DM14 in the Development Management Policies Plan as proposed to be modified states the council's intention to meet at least the objectively assessed need of 8 pitches by the end of 2016 through grant applications submitted by the end of this year. Failure to meet the end of 2014 target for grant applications would trigger the need for a short focussed local plan, to be produced within 2 years of adoption of the DM Policies plan. The wording of proposed main modification DM-MM9 was agreed by the Inspector and the council following discussions at the public examination.
23. The city council supports the Inspector's modification as a basis for meeting the established need for gypsy and traveller accommodation, and is actively working to develop funding bids to enable grant applications to be made this year.

Conclusions and next steps

24. Officers recommend that the Sustainable Development Panel agrees submission of 2 representations to the main modifications consultation: a representation of objection to the main modification for site allocation R45 (ref SA-MM33) and a representation of support to the main modification for policy DM14 (DM-MM9). The proposed content of both representations is set out in appendix 1.
25. The public consultation will conclude on 31st July. All representations will then be summarised and passed to the Inspector by late August to enable him to produce his report. This is likely to be published in early to mid-September.

26. Following that, a report will be taken to Cabinet and Council, in September if possible, seeking member approval to adopt both plans as modified by the Inspector in his report. The planning regulations provide no further opportunity to amend content, and accordingly the council will have the option either to adopt each plan or withdraw.
27. Significant progress has been made over recent months in the examination process, and the council is nearing the end of the plan preparation process. It is important that both plans are adopted as soon as possible to provide an up-to-date framework for planning decision making in Norwich so that planned growth can be managed sustainably.

APPENDIX 1

Draft representations

(a) Representation to SA-MM33 (policy R45)

Rep Number:

(For official use only)

SECTION B – Main Modifications:

Please fill in a separate form for each representation you wish to make.

NAME/ORGANISATION:	Norwich City Council
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Relevant documents:

- **Schedule 1a** – Site Allocations plan main modifications
- **Schedule 1b** – Development Management policies plan main modifications
- **Schedule 1c** – Policies map main modifications

1. Please specify which main modification this representation relates to:

MOD REF:	SA0MM33	POLICY/SI TE:	R45 Land west of Bluebell Road
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2. Please specify if you 'support' or 'object' to the modification *(mark with an X)*:

SUPPORT:		OBJECT:	X
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3. With the inclusion of the main modification do you consider the relevant plan or policies map to be legally compliant? *(mark with an X)*:

YES:	X	NO:	
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If you have answered 'no' to question 3 please explain why in the response box under question 6

4. With the inclusion of the main modifications do you consider the relevant plan or policies map to be sound? *(mark with an X)*:

YES:		NO:	X
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5. If you consider the documents as modified are unsound, please identify on the following page which soundness test(s) you think are failed (*mark with an X*):

Positively prepared – <i>the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development</i>	
Justified – <i>the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence</i>	X
Effective – <i>the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities</i>	
Consistent with national policy – <i>the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework</i>	

6. Please enter your full representation in the box below with any changes you feel are necessary to make the plan sound and/or legally compliant:
(NB Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

REPRESENTATION:

The city council objects to the proposed modification to allocate land west of Bluebell Road (R45) for housing development for the over-55s on the following grounds:

- (a) The proposed allocation would have an adverse impact on the landscape of the Yare Valley which is a unique and irreplaceable asset for the city of Norwich. The Yare Valley provides a section of unspoilt river valley wrapping around Norwich's southern flank which is valuable as a corridor for access to the open countryside and in landscape and biodiversity terms. Evidence prepared by the council for the local plan examination hearings concludes that new development in this area would change the landscape character of the Yare Valley green infrastructure corridor as defined in the Joint Core Strategy (policy 1), create a precedent for residential development in the valley and create a visual block between the development site and the river valley. The recent Sustainability Appraisal of the Main modifications states that development in this location would have an adverse sustainability effect in terms of impact on landscape, townscape and historic environment.

Although the proposed main modification introduces the requirement for a masterplan to support and guide development with the aim of minimising impact on landscape and important views, it still may not prove possible to prevent significant harm and consequent reduction in the landscape buffer around the southern edge of the city.

(b) The allocation of this site is not required to meet Norwich's target of 3000 additional units of housing to 2026. The housing target will be met through the sites proposed to be allocated through the main modifications excluding site R45, with a buffer of approximately 70 units above the 3000 requirement. Although the site's development would deliver housing for the elderly, such housing could be provided on any housing site allocated in the emerging plan and this is not considered to outweigh the potential harm to the landscape through development.

Please state if you wish to be notified when *(mark with an X)*:

The Inspector's report is published	
The document is adopted	

SIGNATURE:		DATE:	
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Please continue to Sections C and/or D where applicable

(b) Representation to DM-MM9 (policy DM14)

Rep Number:

(For official use only)

SECTION B – Main Modifications:

Please fill in a separate form for each representation you wish to make.

NAME/ORGANISATION:	Norwich City Council
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Relevant documents:

- **Schedule 1a** – Site Allocations plan main modifications
- **Schedule 1b** – Development Management policies plan main modifications
- **Schedule 1c** – Policies map main modifications

6. Please specify which main modification this representation relates to:

MOD REF:	DM-MM9	POLICY/SITE:	DM14
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7. Please specify if you 'support' or 'object' to the modification (*mark with an X*):

SUPPORT:	X	OBJECT:	
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8. With the inclusion of the main modification do you consider the relevant plan or policies map to be legally compliant? (*mark with an X*):

YES:	X	NO:	
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If you have answered 'no' to question 3 please explain why in the response box under question 6

9. With the inclusion of the main modifications do you consider the relevant plan or policies map to be sound? (*mark with an X*):

YES:	X	NO:	
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10. If you consider the documents as modified are unsound, please identify on the following page which soundness test(s) you think are failed (*mark with an X*):

Positively prepared – <i>the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development</i>	
Justified – <i>the plan should be the most appropriate strategy, when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence</i>	
Effective – <i>the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities</i>	
Consistent with national policy – <i>the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the Framework</i>	

7. Please enter your full representation in the box below with any changes you feel are necessary to make the plan sound and/or legally compliant:
(*NB Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary*)

REPRESENTATION:

The City Council supports main modification DM-MM9 to policy DM14 and is actively working to develop funding bids to enable grant applications to be made this year.

Please state if you wish to be notified when (*mark with an X*):

The Inspector's report is published	
The document is adopted	

SIGNATURE:		DATE:	
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Please continue to Sections C and/or D where applicable

Report to Sustainable development panel

23 July 2014

Report of Head of planning service

Subject Retail Monitor 2014

Item

5

Purpose

To consider the June 2014 Retail Monitor and note the success of Norwich City Centre as a retail destination with low vacancy rates compared to national vacancy rates.

The Retail Monitor is the council's monitoring report advising of vacancy rates and changes of shop type across the city. Monitoring ensures that the council can measure the implementation of policies on retail monitoring and consider whether to implement them in a more flexible manner taking into consideration market demands and trends.

Recommendation

That the sustainable development panel notes the low vacancy rates across Norwich in all areas and the city's success as a retail destination

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority a prosperous city.

Financial implications

There are no direct financial considerations. The retail success of the city centre will have financial implications for business rates.

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Stonard – Environment, development and transport

Contact officers

Mike Burrell, Planning Policy Team Leader 01603 212525

Sarah Ashurst, Planner (Policy) 01603 212500

Background documents

None

Report

Introduction:

1. The Retail Monitor is the council's monitoring report advising of vacancy rates and changes of shop type in the city. Monitoring ensures that the council can assess the implementation of its retail policies.
2. This report updates members from the last monitor in August 2013. The purpose of this report is to highlight to members the success of the city in terms of the current low retail vacancies. Members are asked to note this success but no further action is required.

National Policy and the Joint Core Strategy:

3. 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".
4. 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 (GNDP). The plan covers the period from 2008 to 2026.
5. Policy 11 of the JCS for Norwich city centre states that its regional centre role 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.
6. 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. The essential role of district and local centres in meeting everyday shopping needs is also supported.
7. Development Management policies provide the detail to enable the strategic aims above to be implemented and to protect the vitality and viability of centres. This is done through policies which apply specific thresholds in different retail areas of the city for the percentage of retail uses as opposed to other leisure and service uses typically found in centres.

Norwich: An Overview

8. Norwich city centre is a thriving retail and visitor destination and, in terms of retail spend and attractiveness, among the top fifteen retail centres nationally. The city centre is the most accessible and sustainable location in the greater Norwich area for retail, leisure, office, cultural and tourism related development.

9. Retail uses are critical in underpinning the city centre's continued vitality and viability. However, an appropriate diversity of other town centre uses such as restaurants, cafés, financial services, leisure and cultural uses and offices help to support the economic vitality and health of the city centre for people of all ages throughout the day and evening.
10. Regular monitoring of change in retail frontages ensures that any thresholds applied remain relevant and necessary. The survey data reported here was collected in April 2014. It should be noted that the data reported is based on the frontages as defined in Appendix 4 of the emerging Development Management Policies DPD, some of which differ from those in the existing Replacement Local Plan, adopted in 2004. The data collected in this retail monitor is therefore not directly comparable to the retail monitor results of 2013.
11. This retail monitor report will be used to inform the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on retail frontages and thresholds being reported separately to this meeting.
12. Conclusions and main issues will form part of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) published by the GNDP.

Main Findings of the Retail Monitor:

City centre:

13. The situation is generally very good with regard to retail vacancies, both in comparison to the vacancy rate in Norwich in recent years and to the national picture.
14. The vacant available floorspace in the city centre as a whole is 4.2%, a fall from 2013's figure of 5.3%. This has reduced significantly from the worst figure in the plan period of over 12% in 2010, and compares favourably to a national average of 12.2% (Local Data Company – February 2014). However, direct comparison with national rates is difficult due to methodological differences in different surveys.
15. The recent trend, of a reduction in total retail floorspace in the city centre overall since 2008, has not continued. The small increase in floorspace can be attributed to an update to data following the completion of the extension to Marks & Spencer.
16. Although the 2% decrease in retail floorspace since the start of the plan period runs counter to the aims of JCS Policy 11 to increase the amount of retailing in the city centre, it is in support of the policy's aim to increase other uses such as the early evening economy, employment and cultural and visitor functions to enhance vitality and viability.

Retail Vacancy:

17. The *floorspace* vacancy rate is 3.8% in the primary retail area. This is a significant decrease in vacant floorspace from the peak vacancy rate of 11.7% in 2010, but is marginally higher than the rate of 2.8% at the start of the plan period in 2008.

18. The current vacancy rate for retail *units* is 13.8%, the highest figure in the plan period. This negative trend, taking into consideration the reduction in the floorspace vacancy rates, implies that it is the smaller shops which are struggling in the primary area.
19. It will be important to establish whether the pattern of vacancy is concentrated in particular defined frontages or is spread more widely throughout the primary retail area.
20. The policy team is committed to investigating this issue further and the emerging Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Main Town Centre Uses and Retail frontages will, if necessary, advocate further flexibility in the application of the policy DM20 if a particular defined frontage is identified as having high levels of vacancy. If, however, a *widespread* pattern of vacancy is found then no further action will be taken.
21. The decrease in overall floor space by approximately 20,000 square metres in the plan period partially results from Riverside being removed from the primary area and re-designated as an LDC through the adoption of the JCS in 2011.

Retail Frontages:

22. Emerging policy DM20 divides the primary area into a number of smaller 'frontage zones' (as defined on the emerging policies map and as identified in appendix 4 to the emerging DM policies plan). The retail threshold to be applied in each of these areas, and within the secondary areas and large district centres where applicable, is set out in the Main Town Centre Uses and Retail Frontages SPD. Any threshold will be calculated with reference to the total length of ground floor frontage within the zone concerned. This measure is used, rather than floorspace or number of units, because the effect of the shop frontage presented to the street is considered to have the most obvious impact on overall character, diversity and vitality.

District and Local Centres

23. Emerging policy DM21 of the Development management policies plan establishes A1 retail use thresholds of 60% for district centres and 50% for local centres.
24. Vacancy rates in district and local centres have decreased from 2013 and are now 4.4% and 6.1% respectively. There have been increases in the total number of units which has skewed the vacancy figure, rather than the total number of vacant units decreasing.
25. The worst two performing district centres for vacancy rates in August 2013 were DC06: Earlham House and DC07: The Larkman. However, the April 2014 figures show a fall in vacancy rates compared to the previous year in these centres. At Earlham House significant work has been undertaken to improve the flatted dwellings surrounding the centre, the public open spaces and the retail units. The change at the Larkman centre can be attributed to the removal of a unit from the centre following conversion to residential, thereby reducing the number of total units which in turn pushes the vacancy percentage up.

26. The Aylsham Road/Mile Cross district centre is the second worst performing centre, with an 8.7% vacancy rate. It is hoped that the approved Morrison's food store, once built, will have a positive impact on the area as a whole. This centre is also close to exceeding the 40% non-retail threshold in policy DM21, currently standing at 39.1%.

Comparators:

27. Research has been carried out into Norwich's comparators and the availability of retail floorspace. The information presented here is taken from the Bidwells Databook for Spring 2014 which compares Norwich with Cambridge, Ipswich and Chelmsford. In addition, Oxford is now included in the databook survey. The data for Spring 2014 is displayed in the table below. As can be clearly seen, Norwich and Cambridge are the 2 most successful centres in the region.

28. Bidwells note that supply is higher in the secondary shopping areas, which although not defined as the same area as the City Council, supports the trends highlighted in our retail monitor (see paragraphs 29 and 30 of the retail monitor). Further, Chapelfield is noted as having the main supply of prime units when compared to Castle Mall. It will be interesting to note if and how this changes in future years following the investment being made by the new owners of Castle Mall.

29. In addition, Bidwells reported that Norwich's Prime Zone A rental value has risen for the first time in 5 years and now stands at £170 per sq ft. This is projected to continue to rise reaching circa £190 per sq ft by 2016. This is a strong indicator that the fortunes of the high street are changing.

Table 1: Available¹ retail floorspace in Norwich as compared to other regional centres (Source: Bidwells databook Spring 2014).

<u>Area</u>	<u>Vacancy rate</u>	<u>Date of survey</u>
Norwich	7%	Spring 2014
Cambridge	5%	Spring 2014
Ipswich	25%	Spring 2014
Chelmsford	16%	Spring 2014
Oxford	8%	Spring 2014

30. The databook highlights that take up and retailer demand reached their highest levels in 2 years with the most significant letting activity relating to 15,000 sq ft of floorspace at 13-25 London Street to Cosmos restaurants group. Planning permission has been granted for change of use from retail (A1) to restaurant (A3) use (see application number 13/00903/F for more information).

¹ 'Available' floorspace is defined in the Bidwells Retail & Leisure Databook as vacant floorspace that is actively being marketed for take up.

Next Stage:

31. The Retail Monitor 2014 will be published on the website following this meeting and will be circulated to all staff in Development Management and Economic Development. In addition, Norwich BID will also be notified of publication.

Appendix 1: Retail Monitor 2014



Norwich City Council Local Plan

Norwich City Centre Shopping Floorspace Monitor & Local & District Centres Monitor



June 2014

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Introduction

Policy background

1. 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”.
2. 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 (GNDP)². The plan covers the period from 2008 to 2026.
3. Policy 11 of the JCS for Norwich city centre states that its regional centre role 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.
4. Policy 19 promotes the strengthening of the large district centres (LDCs) at Anglia Square/Magdalen Street/St. Augustines and at Riverside, which are at the second level of the retail hierarchy headed by the city centre. The essential role of district and local centres in meeting everyday shopping needs is also supported.
5. Development Management policies provide the detail to enable the strategic aims above to be implemented and to protect the vitality and viability of centres. This is done through policies which apply specific thresholds in different retail areas of the city for the percentage of retail uses as opposed to other leisure and service uses typically found in centres.
6. This document provides monitoring details for 2013/2014 on these thresholds and on retail vacancy rates. This monitoring data is used both to assess the performance of policies and to enable their implementation.

Norwich: An Overview

7. Norwich city centre is a thriving retail and visitor destination and, in terms of retail spend and attractiveness, among the top fifteen retail centres nationally. The city centre is the most accessible and sustainable location in the greater Norwich area for retail, leisure, office, cultural and tourism related development.
8. Retail uses are critical in underpinning the city centre’s continued vitality and viability. However, an appropriate diversity of other town centre uses such as restaurants, cafés, financial services, leisure and cultural uses and offices help to support the economic

² The GNDP is made up of Broadland District Council, Norwich City Council and South Norfolk Council, working in partnership with Norfolk County Council and the Broads Authority

vitality and health of the city centre for people of all ages throughout the day and evening.

9. Regular monitoring of change in retail frontages ensures that any thresholds applied remain relevant and necessary. The survey data reported here was collected in April 2014. It should be noted that the data reported is based on the frontages as defined in Appendix 4 of the emerging Development Management Policies DPD, some of which differ from those in the existing Replacement Local Plan, adopted in 2004. The data collected in this retail monitor is therefore not directly comparable to the retail monitor results of 2013.
10. This retail monitor report will be used to inform the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on retail frontages and thresholds currently being prepared and likely to be consulted on later in 2014.
11. Conclusions and main issues will form part of the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) published by the GNDP.

Main Findings

1. City centre overview

12. The situation is generally very good with regard to retail vacancies, both in comparison to the vacancy rate in Norwich in recent years and to the national picture.
13. The vacant available floorspace in the city centre as a whole is 4.2%, a fall from 2013's figure of 5.3%. This has reduced significantly from the worst figure in the plan period of over 12% in 2010, and compares favourably to a national average of 12.2% (Local Data Company – February 2014). However, direct comparison with national rates is difficult due to methodological differences in different surveys.
14. The recent trend of a reduction in total retail floorspace in the city centre overall since 2008 has not continued. The small increase in floorspace can be attributed to an update to data following the completion of the extension to Marks & Spencer.
15. Although the 2% decrease in retail floorspace since the start of the plan period runs counter to the aims of JCS Policy 11 to increase the amount of retailing in the city centre, it is in support of the policy's aim to increase other uses such as the early evening economy, employment and cultural and visitor functions to enhance vitality and viability.
16. Table 1 provides city centre overview data on retail floorspace, enabling comparison over the time period of the plan:

Table 1

Norwich city centre – provision of A1 retail floorspace (totals) (sqm net)				
	<i>ALL</i>	<i>TRADING</i>	<i>VACANT</i>	<i>CONSTRUCTION/ REFURBISHMENT</i>
TOTAL FLOORSPACE				
April 2014	224,653	213,652	9,513	1,488
August 2013	224,109	208,779	11,849	3,481
January 2011	227,377	203,948	21,035	2,394
July 2010	227,949	198,379	28,315	1,255
January 2010	228,432	206,379	21,810	243
July 2009	229,509	208,674	20,579	256
July 2008	229,120	213,902	14,248	970
TOTAL SHOP UNITS				
April 2014	1,048	930	107	11
August 2013	1054	936	97	21
January 2011	1067	949	108	10
July 2010	1070	938	121	11
January 2010	1079	948	126	5
July 2009	1086	955	128	3
July 2008	1084	967	109	8
OVERALL SHOP VACANCY RATE		VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF ALL FLOORSPACE ((Vacant + Refurbishment) / All x 100)	VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF AVAILABLE FLOORSPACE³ (Vacancy / All x 100)	VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF ALL SHOP UNITS ((Vacant + Refurbishment) / All x 100)
April 2014		4.9%	4.2%	11.3%
August 2013		6.8%	5.3%	11.2%
January 2011		10.3%	9.3%	10.1%
July 2010		13.0%	12.4%	11.3%
January 2010		9.7%	9.5%	11.7%
July 2009		9.1%	9.0%	11.8%
July 2008		6.2%	6.2%	10.0%
OVERALL RETAIL FLOORSPACE CHANGE				
Since August 2013	Increased by 544sqm (0.2% increase)⁴			
Since July 2008	Decreased by 2.0%			

³ Not counting space which is under construction or refurbishment.

⁴ This is due to the addition of the new floorspace following the completion of the extension to Marks & Spencer.

2. The Primary Area

Retail vacancy

17. The extent of the primary area, containing the malls and main comparison goods stores, is shown on the map on page 22.
18. The *floorspace* vacancy rate is 3.8% in the primary retail area. This is a significant decrease in vacant floorspace from the peak vacancy rate of 11.7% in 2010, but is marginally higher than the rate of 2.8% at the start of the plan period in 2008.
19. The current vacancy rate for retail *units* is 13.8%, the highest figure in the plan period. This negative trend, taking into consideration the reduction in the floorspace vacancy rates, implies that it is the smaller shops which are struggling in the primary area.
20. It will be important to establish whether the pattern of vacancy is concentrated in particular defined frontages or is spread more widely throughout the primary retail area.
21. The policy team is committed to investigating this issue further and the emerging Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on Main Town Centre Uses and Retail frontages will, if necessary, advocate further flexibility in the application of the policy DM20 if a particular defined frontage is identified as having high levels of vacancy. If, however, a *widespread* pattern of vacancy is found then no further action will be taken.
22. Table 2 provides retail floorspace data for the primary area:

Table 2

Primary shopping area (excluding Riverside from 2013 onwards as removed by JCS Adoption in March 2011) – A1 retail floorspace (sqm net)				
	<i>ALL</i>	<i>TRADING</i>	<i>VACANT</i>	<i>CONSTRUCTION/ REFURBISHMENT</i>
TOTAL FLOORSPACE				
April 2014	155,884	149,059	5,865	960
August 2013	152,497	141,705	9,382	1,410
January 2011	173,789	157,817	13,967	2,005
July 2010	174,252	153,199	20,448	605
January 2010	174,525	160,541	13,909	75
July 2009	175,256	162,962	12,294	0
July 2008	175,028	168,511	6,434	83
TOTAL SHOP UNITS				
April 2014	579	499	74	6
August 2013	567	490	72	5
January 2011	574	524	45	5
July 2010	576	513	58	5
January 2010	578	524	53	1
July 2009	581	524	57	0
July 2008	584	537	46	1
OVERALL SHOP VACANCY RATE		VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF ALL FLOORSPACE <i>((Vacant + Refurbishment) / All x 100)</i>	VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF AVAILABLE FLOORSPACE ⁵ <i>(Vacancy / All x 100)</i>	VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF ALL SHOP UNITS <i>((Vacant + Refurbishment) / All x 100)</i>
April 2014		4.4%	3.8%	13.8%
August 2013		7.1%	6.2%	13.6%
January 2011		9.2%	8.0%	7.8%
July 2010		12.1%	11.7%	10.1%
January 2010		8.0%	8.0%	9.2%
July 2009		7.0%	7.0%	9.8%
July 2008		3.7%	3.7%	7.9%

⁵ Not counting space which is under construction or refurbishment.

Retail Frontages

23. Emerging policy DM20 divides the primary area into a number of smaller 'frontage zones' (as defined on the emerging policies map and as identified in appendix 4 to the emerging DM policies plan). The retail threshold applicable in each of these areas is yet to be set, but will be contained in the SPD, to be consulted on later in 2014. Any threshold will be calculated with reference to the total length of ground floor frontage within the zone concerned. This method of measurement takes account of the fact that the main impact on vitality of the street is the display area of shop windows, not necessarily the floorspace.
24. The Timberhill/Red Lion Street area is a new frontage zone resulting from consolidation of areas previously in separate frontages and the reclassification of some units from the secondary area to the primary area. At this time it is not possible to comment on the high levels of non-retail in this frontage, but future development proposals in this area will need to take account of any thresholds in the emerging SPD.
25. Table 3 provides data on the percentage of retail and non-retail uses in the primary area retail frontage zones in April 2014. This data will be used as the basis for establishing the new thresholds in the SPD.

Table 3

PRIMARY AREA REATAIL FRONTAGE ZONES			
Retail and Non-retail uses in April 2014			
FRONTAGE ZONE ⁶	TOTAL MEASURED FRONTAGE (M)	TOTAL NON-RETAIL FRONTAGE (APR 14)	% A1 RETAIL / NON A1 RETAIL SPLIT (APR 14) (Frontage)
<i>PRIMARY RETAIL AREA CORE FRONTAGE ZONES</i>			
PC01: Gentleman's Walk/Haymarket/Brigg Street	872.9	101.4	88.4% / 11.6%
PC02: Castle Mall (Levels 1 & 2)	875.1	38.3	95.6% / 4.4%
PC03: Chapelfield, upper & lower Merchants Hall and St Stephens Arcade	686.0	19.5	97.2% / 2.8%
<i>FRONTAGE ZONES IN THE REST OF THE PRIMARY RETAIL AREA</i>			
PR01: Back of the Inns/Castle Street area	729.6	204.9	71.9% / 28.1%
PR02: The Lanes east (Bedford Street/Bridewell Alley)	1151.2	218.7	81% / 19%
PR03: St Stephens Street/Westlegate	822.4	118.5	85.6% / 14.4%
PR04: Castle Meadow north	SEE FOOTNOTE 7		
PR05: Chapelfield Plain ⁷	SEE FOOTNOTE 7		
PR06: Timberhill/Red Lion Street	436.0	129.8	70.2% / 29.8%

⁶ See Section 9 for definitions and maps.

⁷ There is no defined frontage in this zone

3. The Secondary Area

26. Map 3 on page 24 shows the extent of the secondary area.

27. In the secondary area the vacant *unit* rate is 4.3%, the lowest rate in the plan period and significantly lower than the peak vacant unit rate of 11.2% in 2009. This shows that smaller independent shops in areas like the Norwich Lanes and St. Benedict's Street are thriving unlike those in the primary area.

28. The *floorspace* vacancy rate in the secondary area is 1.2%, the lowest figure in the plan period by a significant margin.

Table 4

Secondary Shopping Areas - A1 retail floorspace (sqm net)				
	<i>ALL</i>	<i>TRADING</i>	<i>VACANT</i>	<i>CONSTRUCTION / REFURBISHMENT</i>
TOTAL FLOORSPACE				
April 2014	21,958	21,569	273	116
August 2013	21,926	21,083	715	131
January 2011	17,785	16,612	878	295
July 2010	17,980	16,709	1,107	164
January 2010	18,076	16,788	1,189	99
July 2009	18,262	17,008	1,207	47
July 2008	18,167	17,604	1,022	81
TOTAL SHOP UNITS				
April 2014	185	177	5	3
August 2013	187	176	9	2
January 2011	190	174	13	3
July 2010	192	173	16	3
January 2010	194	173	18	3
July 2009	196	173	22	1
July 2008	194	176	15	3
OVERALL SHOP VACANCY RATE		VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF ALL FLOORSPACE <i>((Vacant + Refurbishment) / All x 100)</i>	VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF AVAILABLE FLOORSPACE ⁸ <i>(Vacancy / All x 100)</i>	VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF ALL SHOP UNITS <i>((Vacant + Refurbishment) / All x 100)</i>
April 2014		1.8%	1.2%	4.3%
August 2013		3.9%	3.3%	5.9%
January 2011		6.6%	4.9%	6.8%
January 2010		7.1%	6.6%	9.3%
July 2008		5.6%	5.7%	7.7%

⁸ Not counting space which is under construction or refurbishment.

4. Large District Centres

29. Limited direct comparison in changes over the plan period is possible for the LDCs as there have been changes to the areas covered with the re-designation of Riverside. Map 4 on page 24 shows the extent of the LDCs.
30. Vacant floorspace in the LDCs now stands at 2.4%. This is an increase on 2013's figure of 1%. However only 2 monitors have been produced since the re-designation of Riverside. Future monitoring will highlight any trends regarding vacancy.
31. Riverside continues to have a strong offer as a largely car based retail destination with historically low vacancy rates. However, emerging policy DM18 (Retail, leisure and other main town centre uses) of the Development management policies plan seeks to resist further development at Riverside unless it provides for "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."
32. The Anglia Square/Magdalen Street/St Augustine's LDC offers a diverse range of local convenience retailing and services, with only 10 vacant units out of 140, or 7.1%. This relatively low percentage vacancy rate compares favourably with the highest unit vacancy rates of up to 20.7% early in the plan period. Floorspace vacancy rates (3.2% in April 2014) also compare highly favourably against the highest rates of up to 18.8% early in the plan period.

Table 5

Magdalen Street / St Augustines Street / Anglia Square / Albion way (Riverside) – A1 Retail floorspace (sqm net) (including Riverside from 2013 onwards due to JCS adoption and re-designation)				
	<i>ALL</i>	<i>TRADING</i>	<i>VACANT</i>	<i>REFURBISHMENT</i>
TOTAL FLOORSPACE				
April 2014	32,647	31,594	784	269
August 2013	32,602	31,256	301	1,045
January 2011	18,314	14,934	3,311	69
July 2010	18,218	14,947	3,202	69
January 2010	18,239	14,811	3,359	69
July 2009	18,289	15,049	3,031	209
July 2008	18,139	15,017	3,031	91
TOTAL SHOP UNITS				
April 2014	140	130	8	2
August 2013	77	67	7	3
January 2011	135	107	27	1
July 2010	134	109	24	1
January 2010	135	106	28	1
July 2009	136	112	22	2
July 2008	135	111	22	2
OVERALL SHOP VACANCY RATE		VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF ALL FLOORSPACE <i>((Vacant + Refurbishment) / All x 100)</i>	VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF AVAILABLE FLOORSPACE ⁹ <i>(Vacancy / All x 100)</i>	VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF ALL SHOP UNITS <i>((Vacant + Refurbishment) / All x 100)</i>
April 2014		3.2%	2.4%	7.1%
August 2013		4.1%	1%	13%
January 2011		18.5%	18.1%	20.0%
July 2010		18.0%	17.6%	17.9%
January 2010		18.8%	18.4%	20.7%
July 2009		17.7%	16.6%	16.2%
July 2008		16.7%	16.8%	16%

⁹ Not counting space which is under construction or refurbishment.

5. Rest of the City Centre

- 33. This area covers all shops within the city centre but not included in the defined areas discussed above.
- 34. Since the 2013 retail monitor this now excludes St. Stephens Road and parts of Ber Street as a result of their re-designation following submission on the Development management policies plan.
- 35. Vacancy rates in terms of both the number of units and percentages in the rest of the city centre have declined slightly over the plan period. However, there has been a small increase since 2013.

Table 6

Rest of city centre – A1 Retail floorspace (sqm net)				
	<i>ALL</i>	<i>TRADING</i>	<i>VACANT</i>	<i>REFURBISHMENT</i>
TOTAL FLOORSPACE				
April 2014	14,164	11,430	2,591	143
August 2013	17,084	14,738	920	1,426
January 2011	17,400	14,495	2,880	25
July 2010	17,500	13,524	3,559	417
January 2010	17,593	14,240	3,353	0
July 2009	17,702	13,655	4,047	0
July 2008	17,786	13,310	3,761	765
TOTAL SHOP UNITS				
April 2014	144	124	19	1
August 2013	157	137	12	8
January 2011	168	144	23	1
July 2010	192	167	23	2
January 2010	172	145	27	0
July 2009	173	146	27	0
July 2008	171	143	26	2
OVERALL SHOP VACANCY RATE		VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF ALL FLOORSPACE <i>((Vacant + Refurbishment) / All x 100)</i>	VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF AVAILABLE FLOORSPACE¹⁰ <i>(Vacancy / All x 100)</i>	VACANCY AS A PROPORTION OF ALL SHOP UNITS <i>((Vacant + Refurbishment) / All x 100)</i>
April 2014		19.3%	3%	13.9%
August 2013		13.7%	5.4%	12.7%
January 2011		16.7%	16.6%	13.7%
July 2010		22.7%	20.3%	12.0%
January 2010		19.1%	19.1%	15.7%
July 2009		22.9%	22.9%	15.6%
July 2008		21.1%	22%	15.2%

¹⁰ Not counting space which is under construction or refurbishment.

6. District and Local Centres

36. Emerging policy DM21 of the Development management policies plan establishes A1 retail use thresholds of 60% for district centres and 50% for local centres.
37. Vacancy rates in district and local centres have decreased from 2013 and are now 4.4% and 6.1% respectively. There have been increases in the total number of units which has skewed the vacancy figure, rather than the total number of vacant units decreasing.

District Centres

38. Out of the 180 units in the 9 district centres, 8 units are vacant. This figure is the same as at January 2011 and August 2013. However, given the increase in the number of centres following policy changes, and as a result an increase in total units, the vacancy percentage has decreased from 8.7% to 4.4%. This figure is similar to the 3.1% vacancy rate in district centres at the start of the plan period.
39. The worst two performing district centres for vacancy rates in August 2013 were DC06: Earlham House and DC07: The Larkman. However, the April 2014 figures show a fall in vacancy rates compared to the previous year in these centres. At Earlham House significant work has been undertaken to improve the flatted dwellings surrounding the centre, the public open spaces and the retail units. The change at the Larkman centre can be attributed to the removal of a unit from the centre following conversion to residential, thereby reducing the number of total units which in turn pushes the vacancy percentage up.
40. The Aylsham Road/Mile Cross district centre is the second worst performing centre, with an 8.7% vacancy rate. It is hoped that the approved Morrisons food store, once built, will have a positive impact on the area as a whole. This centre is also close to exceeding the 40% non-retail threshold in policy DM21, currently standing at 39.1%.
41. Of the 180 units in the district centres, the percentage of non-retail units is 41.6%, lower than the 2013 and 2011 levels, despite the increase in numbers of units.
42. Four of the 10 centres have exceeded the 60% threshold for non-retail uses in emerging policy DM21:
- a. DC01 – Bowthorpe
 - b. DC03 – Eaton centre
 - c. DC04 – Plumstead Road
 - d. DC07 – The Larkman
43. In August 2013 policy thresholds were exceeded in 5 of the then 7 district centres. This has fallen to 4 of 10 district centres in April 2014.

Table 7 District Centres

DC ref	DC name	Total Units	Vacant units	% vacant	Non retail units	% non-retail	Commentary
DC01	Bowthorpe	17	1	5.9%	8	47.1 %	
DC02	Drayton Road	15	0	0%	4	26.7 %	
DC03	Eaton centre	19	0	0%	10	52.6 %	3 new units added including the Eaton Post Office.
DC04	Plumstead Road	32	1	3.1%	16	50%	5 new units added
DC05	Aylsham Road/Mile Cross	23	2	8.7%	9	39.1 %	
DC06	Earlham House	17	2	11.8%	4	23.5 %	Vacancy levels have fallen from 2013 following completion of the renovation works.
DC07	The Larkman	13	0	0%	6	46.2 %	1 unit removed following conversion to residential
DC08	Dereham Road/Distillery Square	37	2	5.4%	16	5.4%	Newly defined as a District centre. Boundary amended to remove Exeter Street car park – now developed for housing.
DC09	Hall Road	Not yet built.					
DC10	Sprowston Road/Shipfield	7	0	0%	2	28.6 %	Newly defined as district centre. Upgraded following completion of Aldi.
TOTAL		180	8		75		

Local centres

44. Table 8 below shows vacancy and non-retail units and percentages of units for the 28 local centres. Limited comparison is made to 2013 figures given the changes in boundaries, the addition of three new local centres, and the upgrading of Sprowston Road/Shipfield and Dereham Road/Distillery Square to district centres resulting from changes in policy in the emerging local plan.
45. Of the 327 units, the number of vacant units is 20, representing a vacancy rate of 6.1% compared to the 2013 figure of 9.7%.
46. The percentage of non-retail units fell to 39.4%, a decrease from 2013 when 40.6% was recorded. Whilst these figures are not directly comparable due to policy changes, they do show the strong performance of local centres across the city.
47. The DM21 policy threshold of not less than 50% retail has been exceeded in the following local centres:
- a. LC02: Hall Road / Queens Road
 - b. LC07: St Augustine's Gate
 - c. LC12: Woodcock Road
 - d. LC15: Sprowston Road/Silver Road
 - e. LC26: UEA
 - f. LC28: Magdalen Road/Clarke Road
 - g. LC29: Aylsham Road/Copenhagen Way, and;
 - h. LC30: St Stephens Road
48. The following local centres are recorded as having close to 50% non-retail. Any planning approvals for non-retail uses are likely to cause the policy threshold to be exceeded:
- a. LC06: Unthank Road and;
 - b. LC20: Colman Road, The Parade.

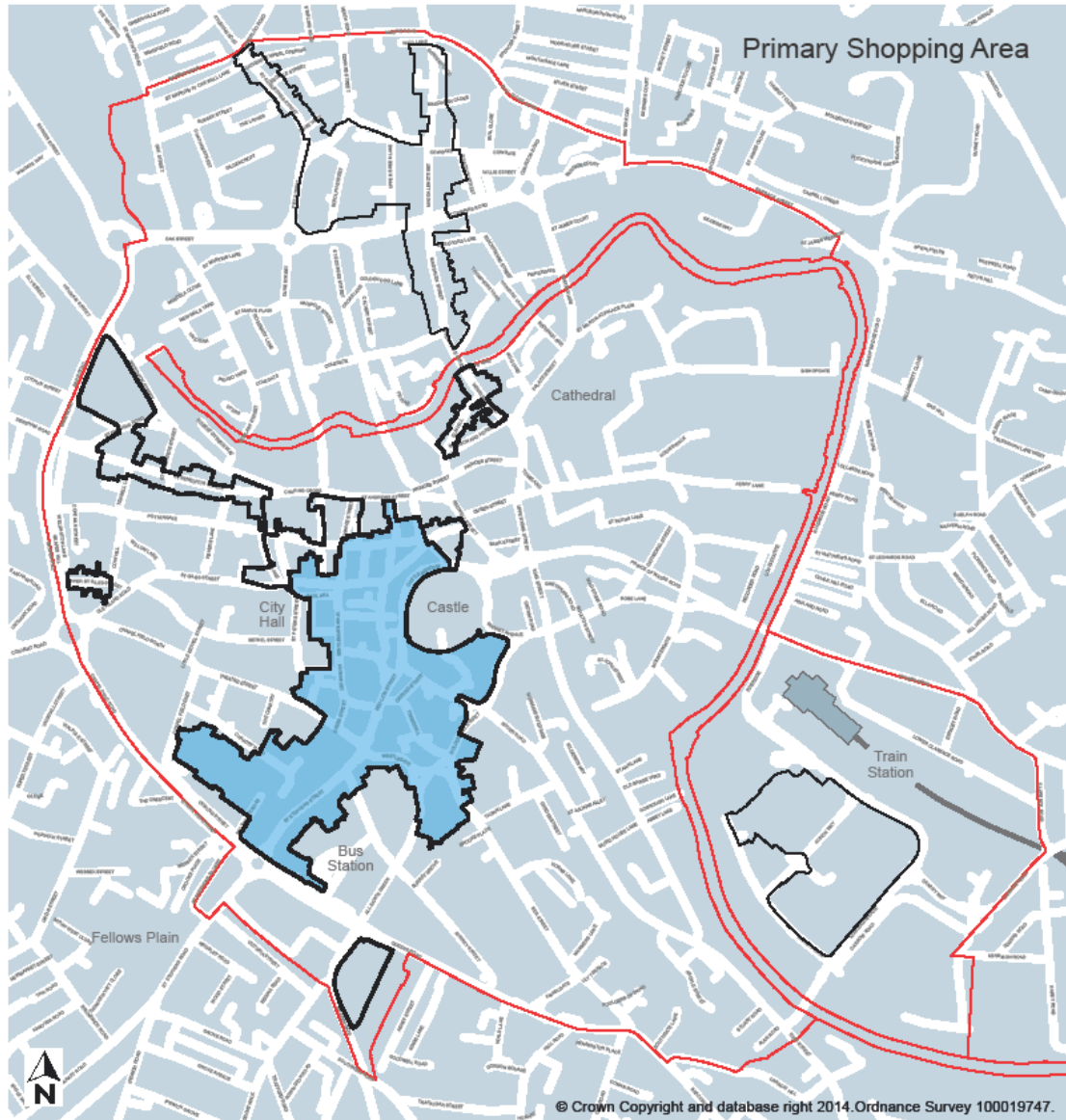
Table 8 Local Centres

LC ref	LC name	Total Units	Vacant units	% vacant	Non retail units	% non-retail
LC01	Hall Road/Trafalgar Street	7	0	0%	2	28.6%
LC02	Hall Road/Queens Road	28	4	14.3%	14	50.0%
LC03	Hall Road/Southwell Road	7	0	0%	3	42.9%
LC04	Grove Road	14	0	0%	5	35.7%
LC05	Suffolk Square	9	0	0%	4	44.4%
LC06	Unthank Road	42	4	9.5%	20	47.5%
LC07	St Augustine's Gate	7	1	14.3%	5	71.4%
LC08: Dereham Road/Distillery Square – Local centre upgraded to District centre.						
LC09	Aylsham Road/Junction Road	8	1	12.5%	0	0%
LC10	Aylsham Road/Glenmore Gardens	12	2	16.7%	5	41.7%
LC11	Aylsham Road/Boundary Road	12	1	8.3%	3	25%
LC12	Woodcock Road	6	0	0%	3	50%
LC13	Catton Grove Road/Ring Road	12	0	0%	3	25%
LC14	Magdalen Road	12	1	8.3%	5	41.7%
LC15	Sprowston Road/Silver Road	8	1	12.5%	4	50%
LC16: Sprowston Road/Shipfield – Local centre upgraded to District centre						
LC17	Bishop Bridge Road	7	2	28.6	2	28.6
LC18	Earlham West Centre	20	1	5%	8	40%
LC19	Colman Road/The Avenues	16	1	6.3%	4	25%
LC20	Colman Road, The Parade	11	1	9.1%	5	45.5%
LC21	Woodgrove Parade	10	0	0%	3	30%
LC22	St John's Close/Hall Road	10	0	0%	3	30%
LC23	Tuckswood centre	5	0	0%	1	20%
LC24	Witard Road, Heartsease	9	0	0%	3	33.3%
LC25	Clancy Road, Heartsease	5	0	0%	2	40%
LC26*	UEA	8	0	0%	6	75%
LC27*	Long John Hill	5	0	0%	1	20%
LC28*	Magdalen Road/Clarke Road	8	0	0%	4	50%
LC29*	Aylsham Road/Copenhagen Way	5	0	0%	4	80%
LC30*	St Stephens Road	12	0	0%	7	58.3%
TOTAL		327	20		129	

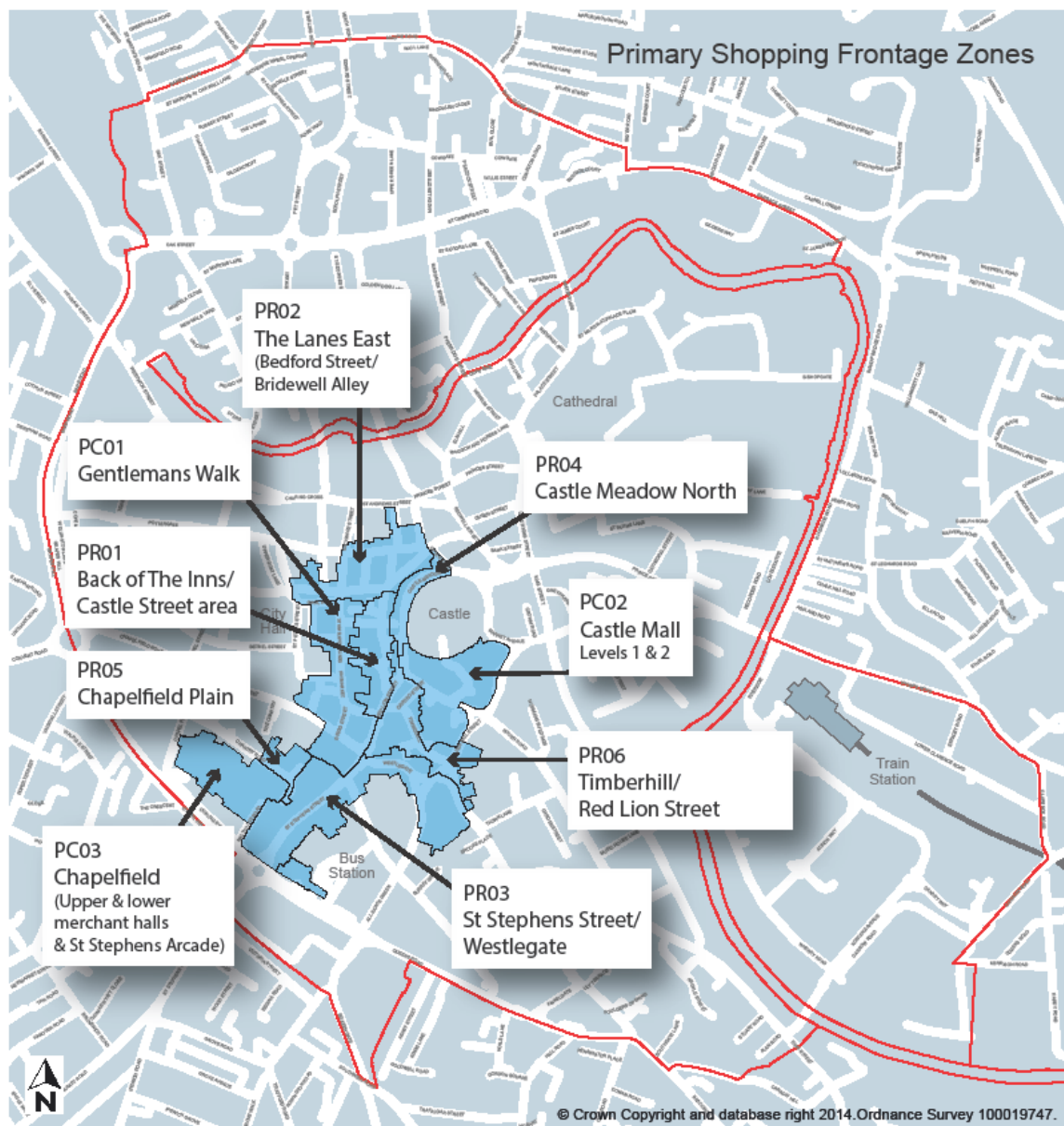
*Denotes new local centre

Supporting Maps:

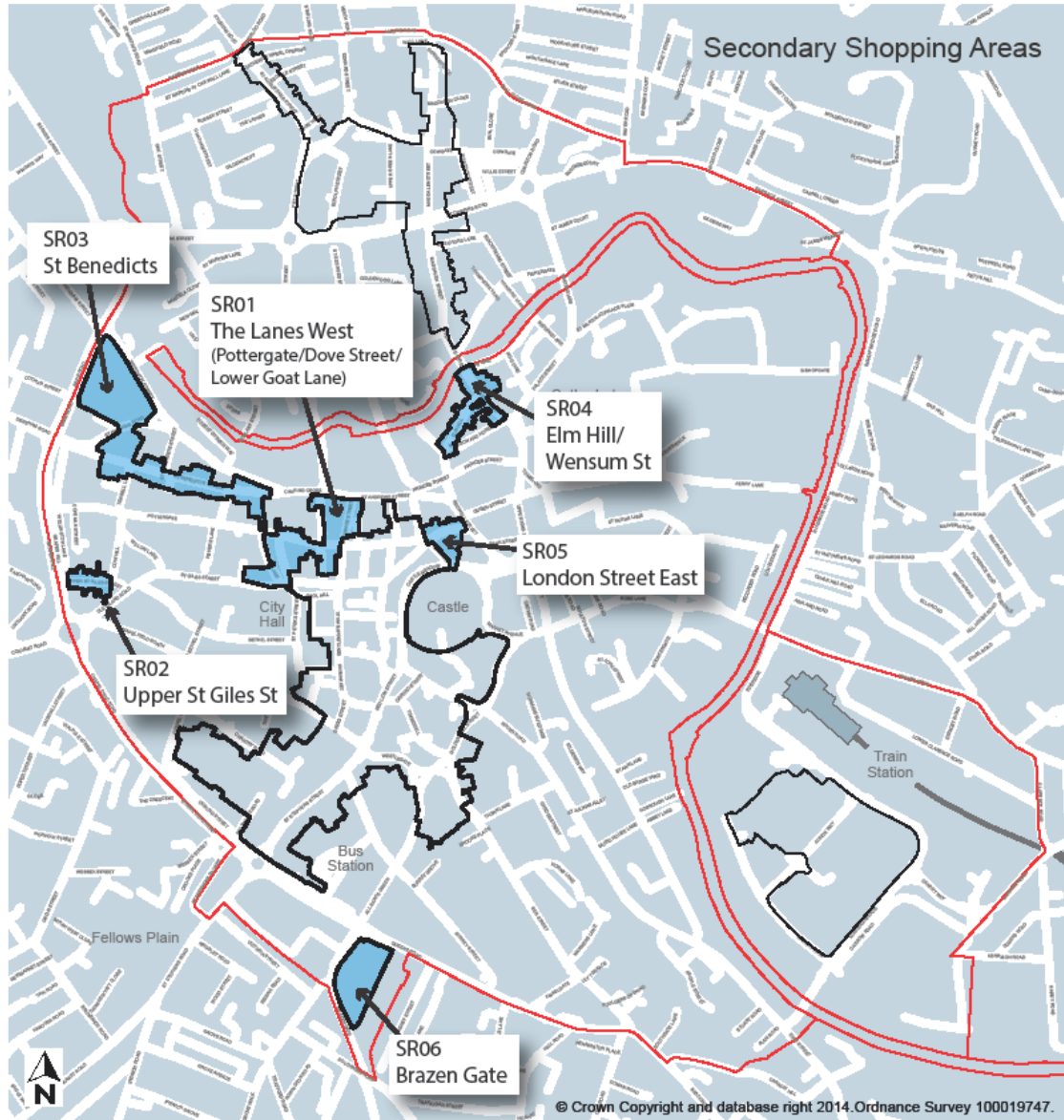
1. Primary shopping area



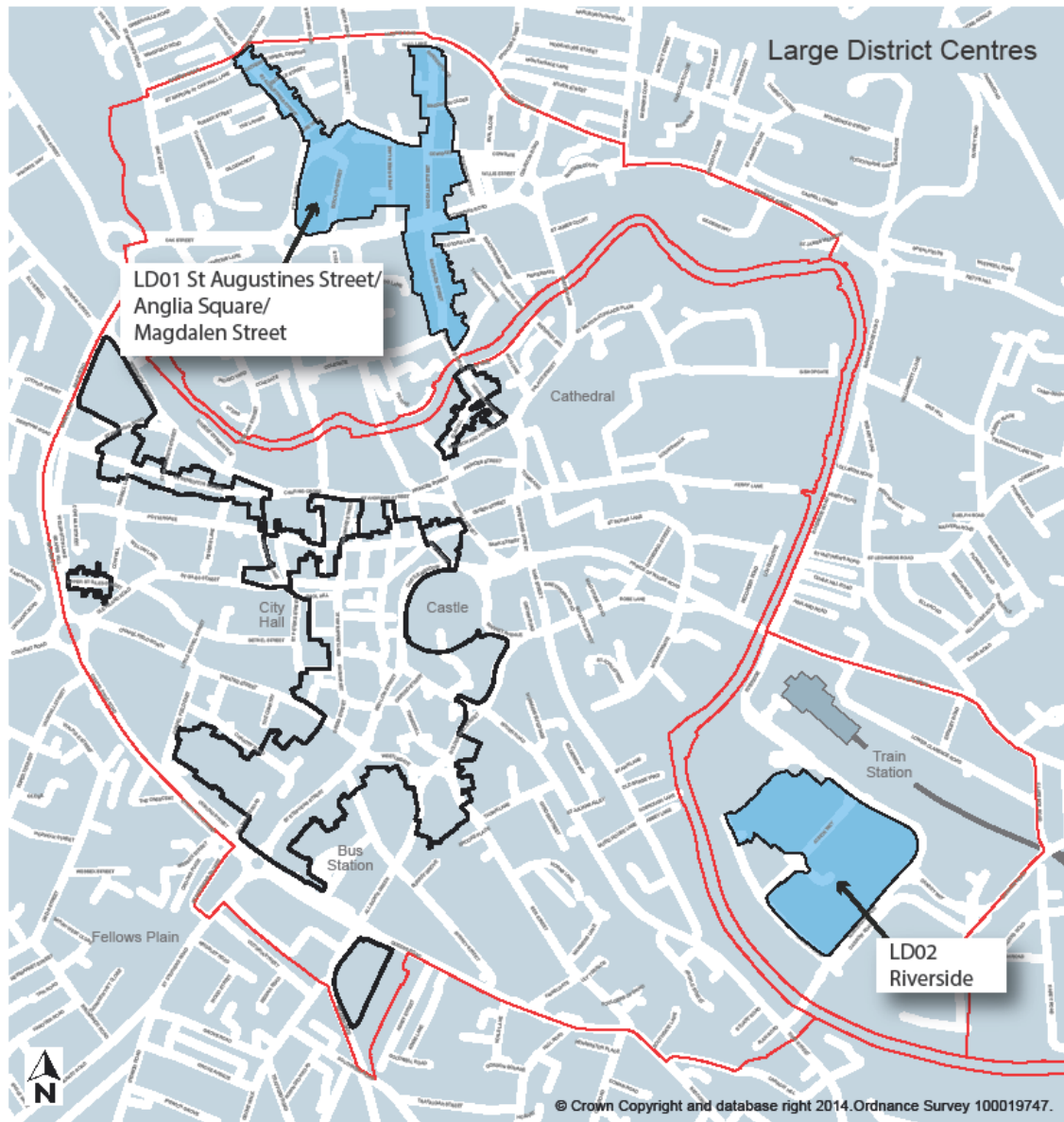
2. Primary area frontage zones:



3. Secondary shopping areas



4. Large district centres (Magdalen Street / Anglia Square / St Augustine's Street / Riverside)



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Report to	Sustainable development panel	Item
	23 July 2014	
Report of	Head of planning service	6
Subject	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

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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 (GNDP). 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 uses¹ 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

¹ *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

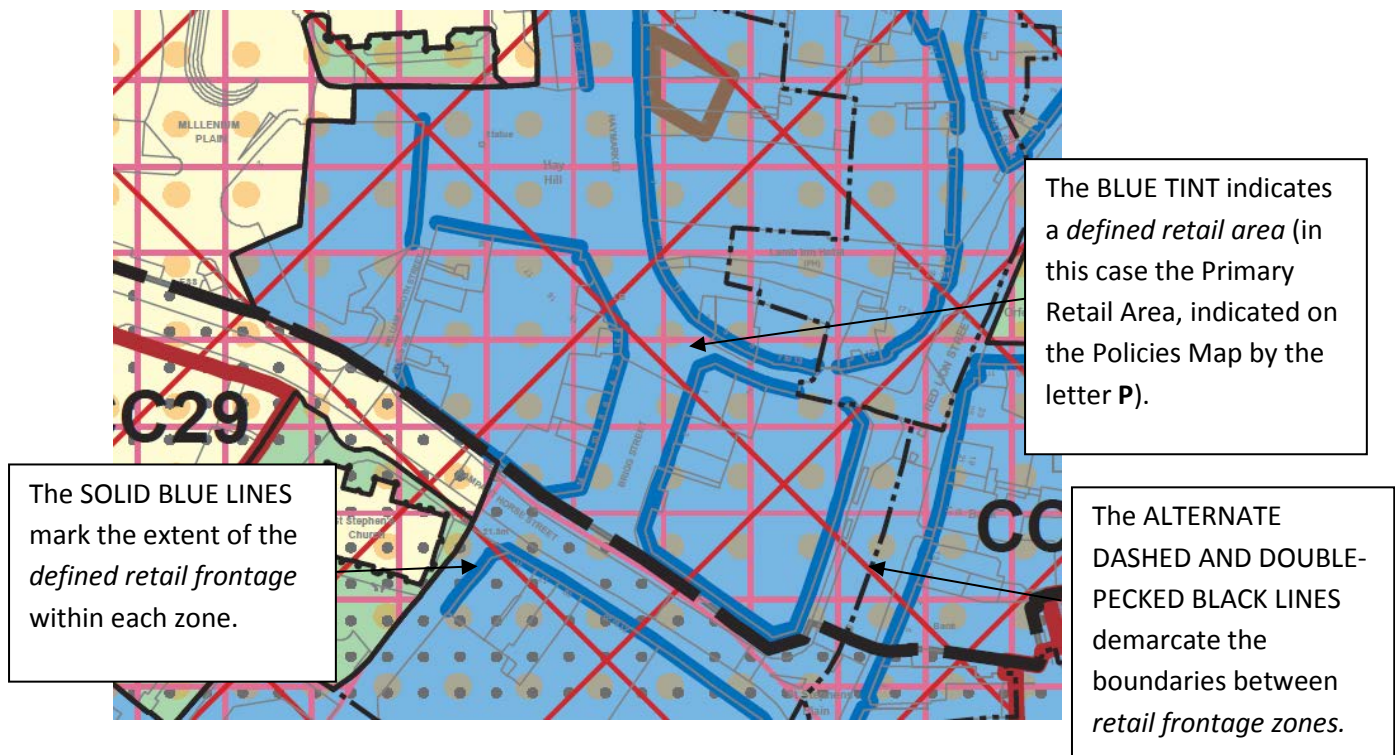
flexibility to encourage greater use of underused and vacant premises. This is discussed in paragraph 20.6 of the DM plan.

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.

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

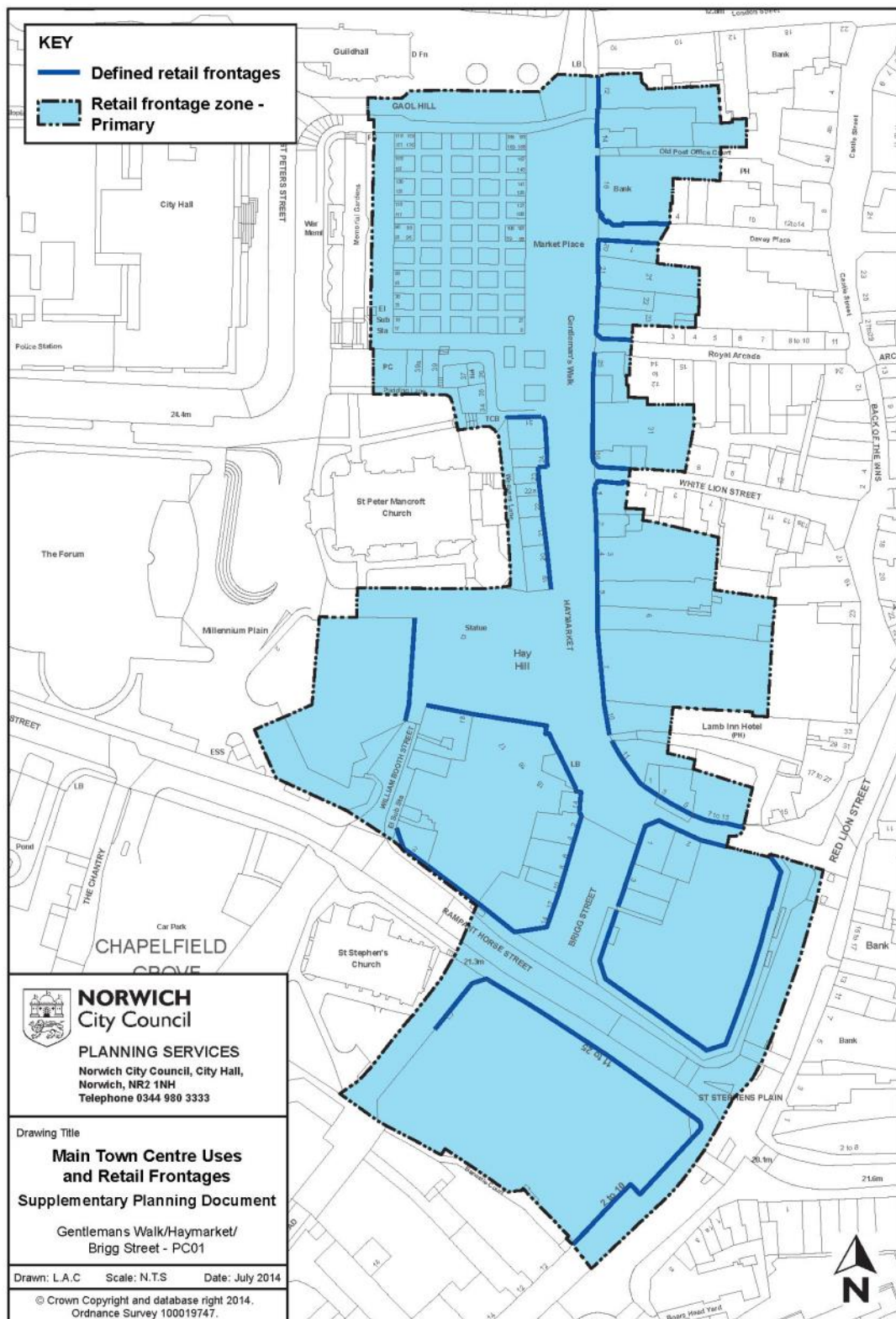
The Gentleman's Walk area has a high concentration of shopping floorspace and has been the main focus of traditional high street retailing in Norwich for many years, although activity in the evening is still fairly limited other than on late night shopping days (usually Thursday). This may be due to 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:

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

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 m² 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:

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

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.

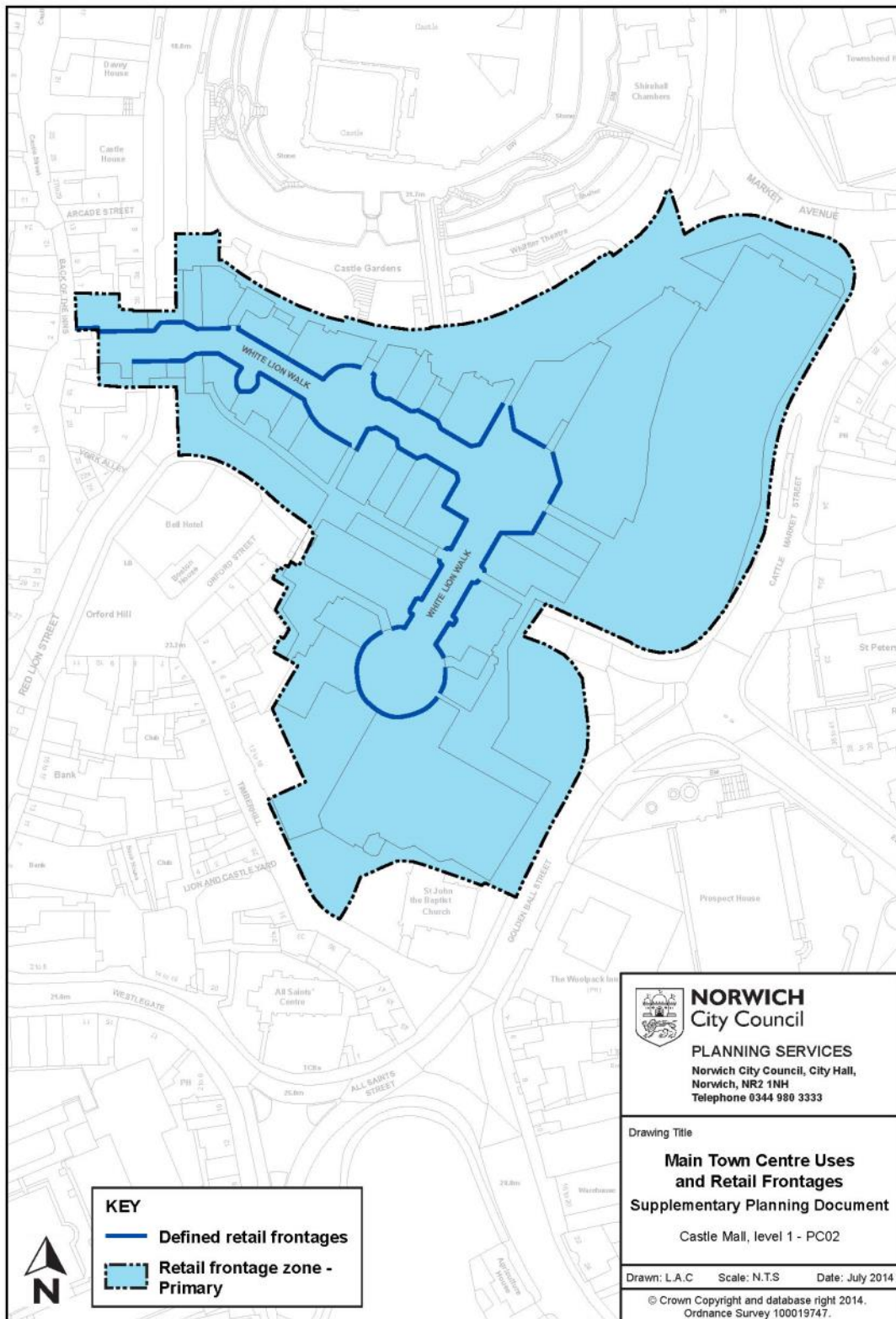
In order to maintain and support the vitality, viability and shopping character of zone **PC02**, decisions on planning applications for new development and change of use will

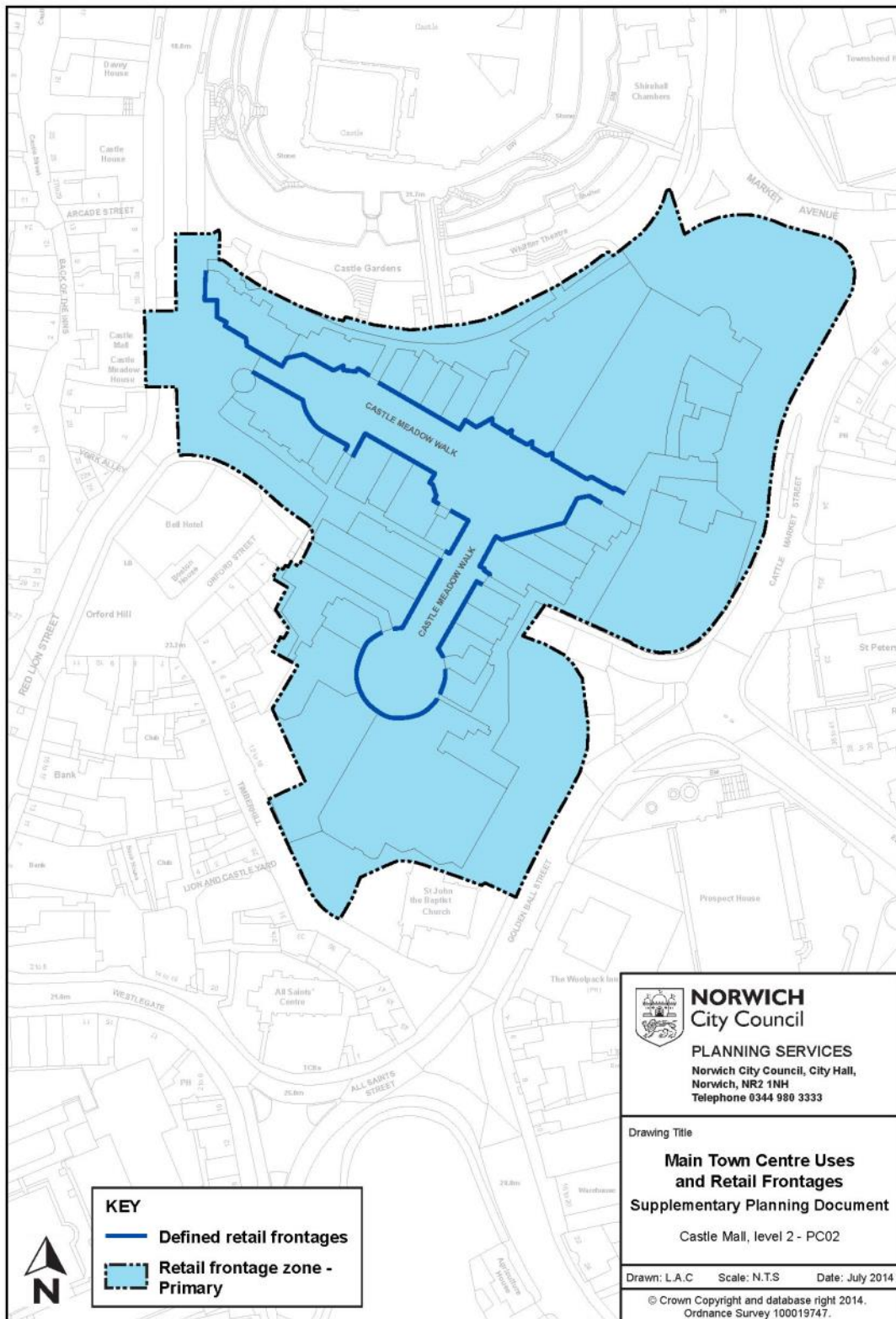
- Seek to maintain an indicative minimum of **80%** of defined retail frontage in A1 retail use on Levels 1 and 2 of Castle Mall, which will allow for some further

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.

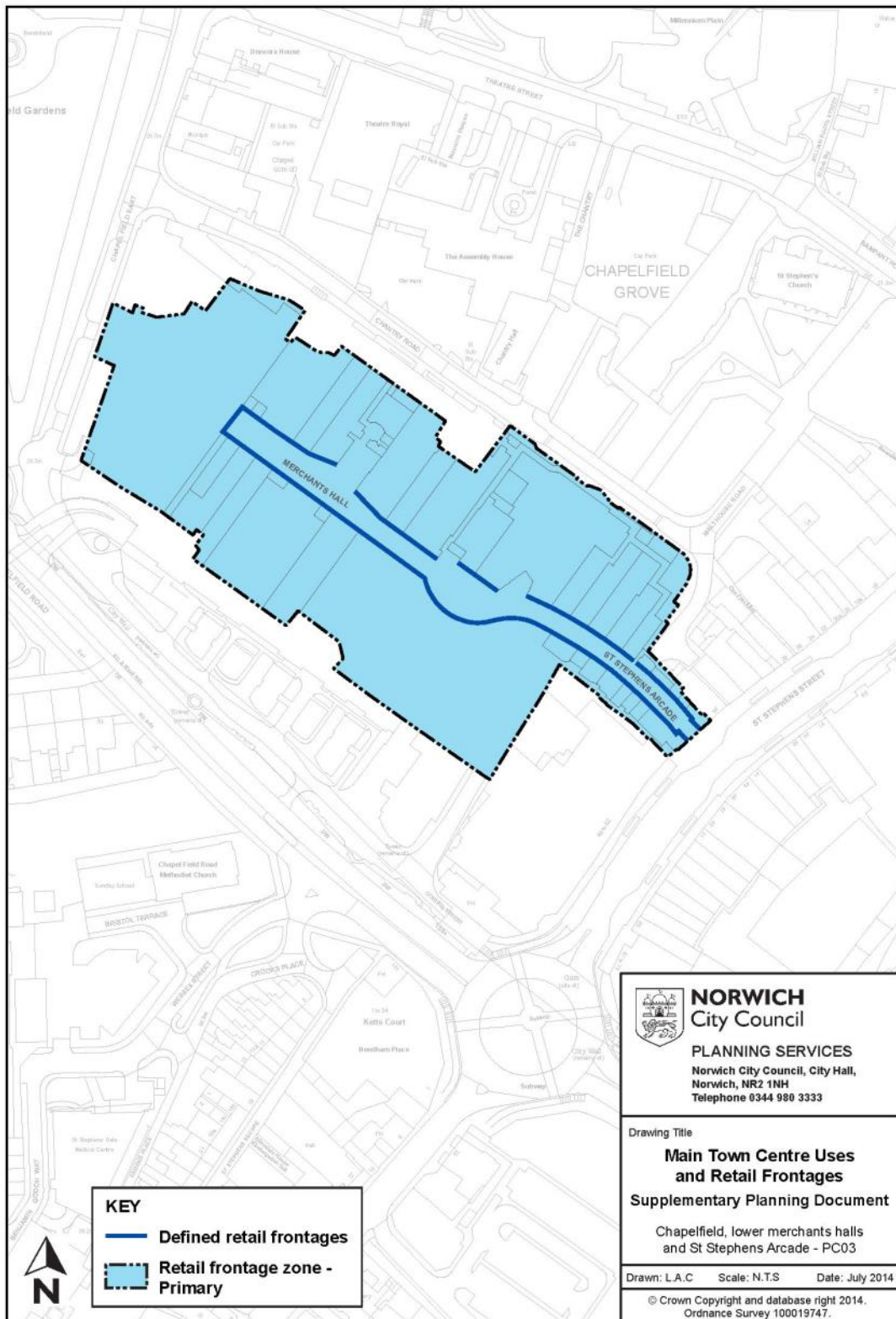
The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone PC03:

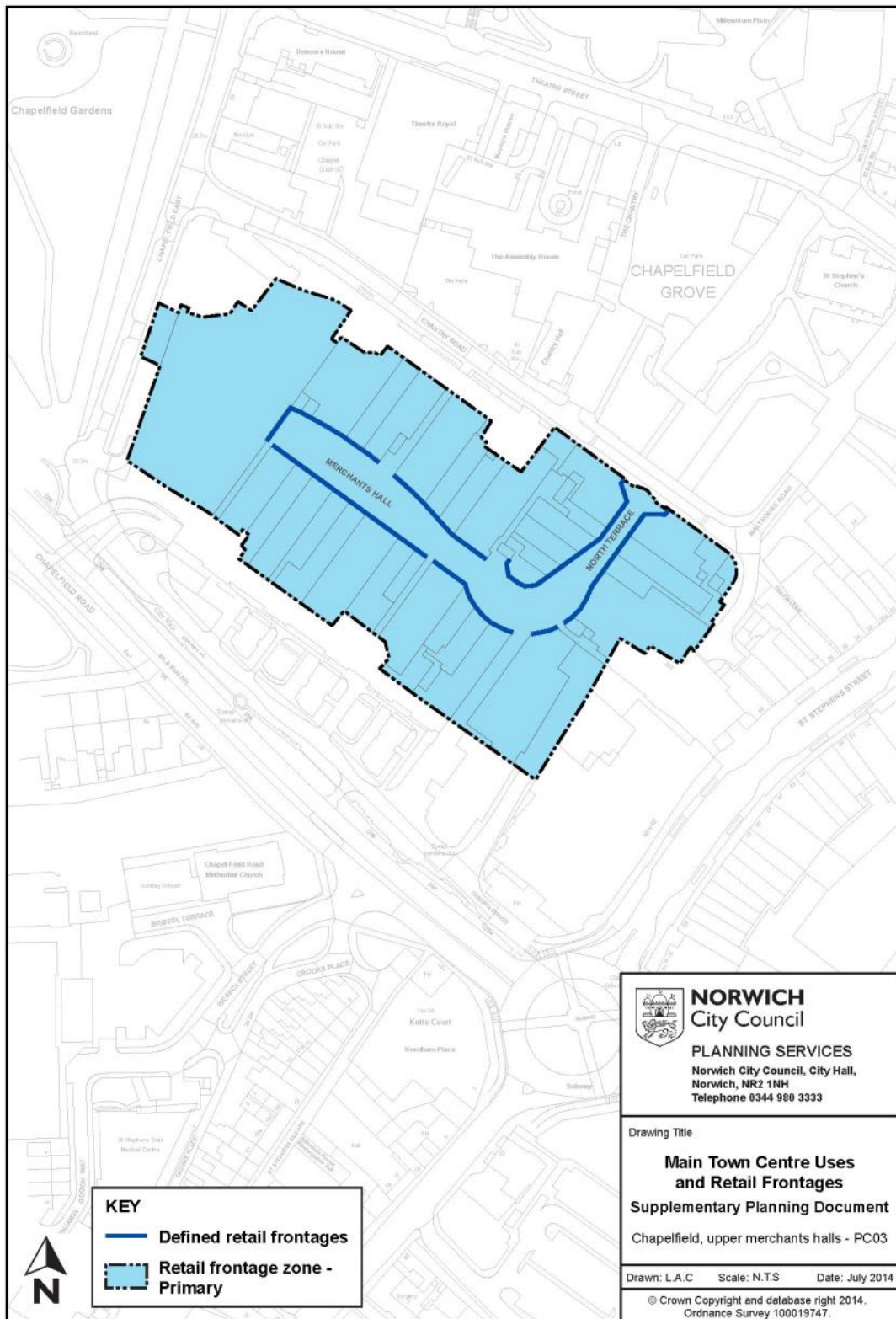
Percentage vacant units:	12.3 percent
Percentage vacant floorspace:	3.9 percent
Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:	686.0 metres
Measured frontages retail/non retail split (levels 1 and 2):	97.2 percent A1 retail frontage
	2.8 percent non retail frontage

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.





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.

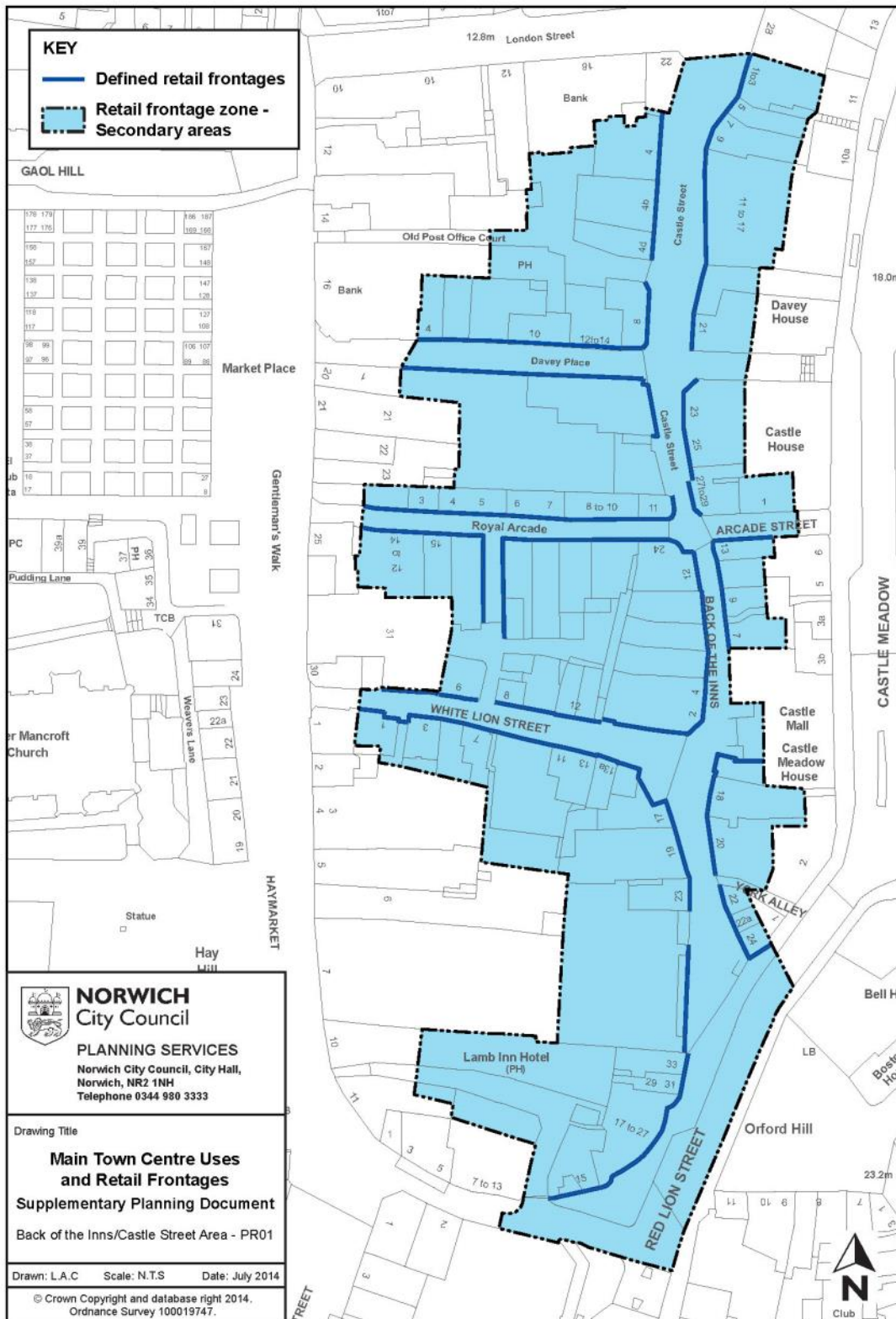
Percentage vacant units:	5.6 percent
Percentage vacant floorspace:	4.4 percent
Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:	729.6 metres
Measured frontages retail/non retail split:	71.9 percent A1 retail frontage 28.1 percent non retail frontage

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.

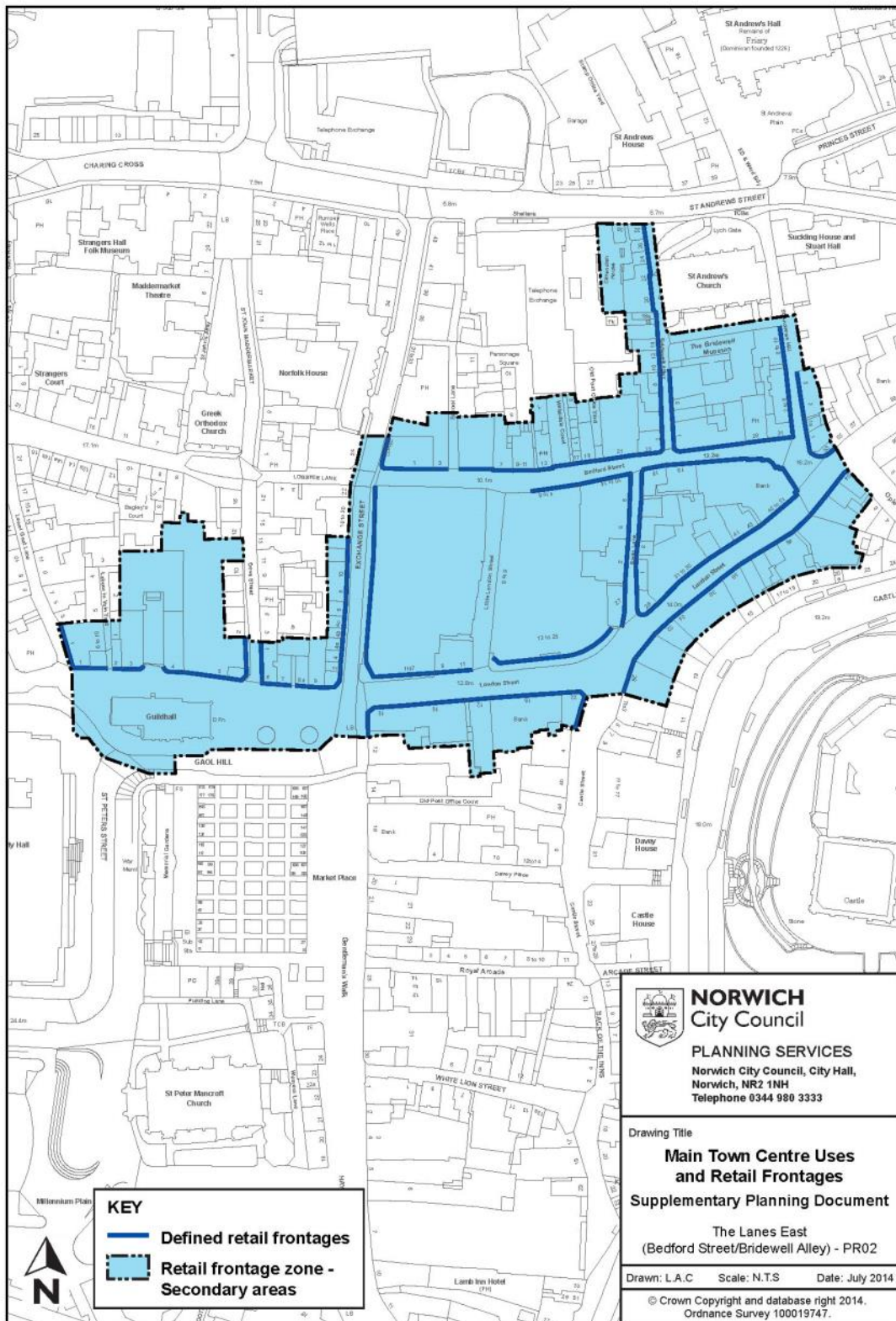
Percentage vacant units:	5.2 percent
Percentage vacant floorspace:	1.0 percent
Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:	1151.2 metres
Measured frontages retail/non retail split:	81.0 percent A1 retail frontage
	19.0 percent non retail frontage

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.

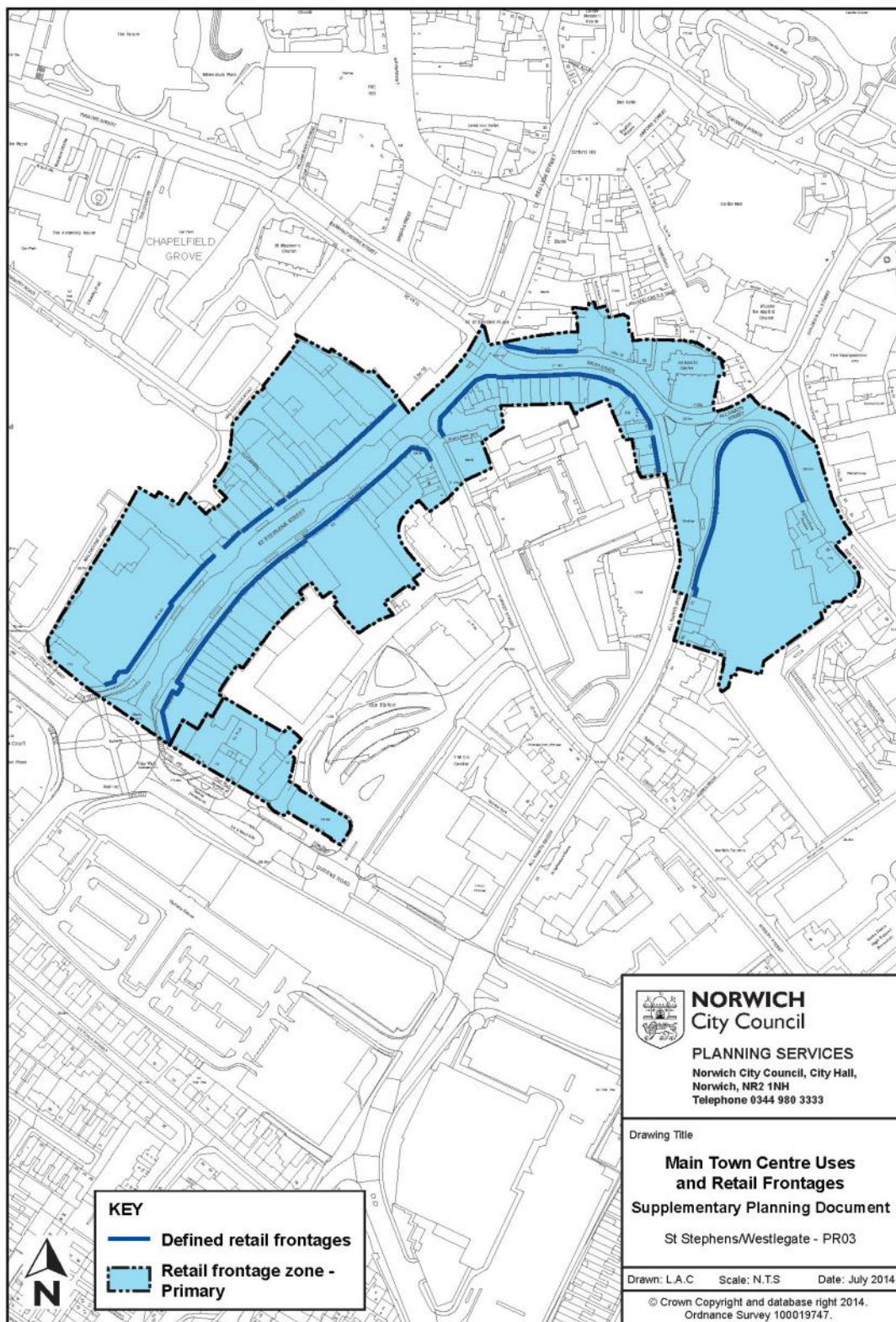
The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone PR03.

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

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.

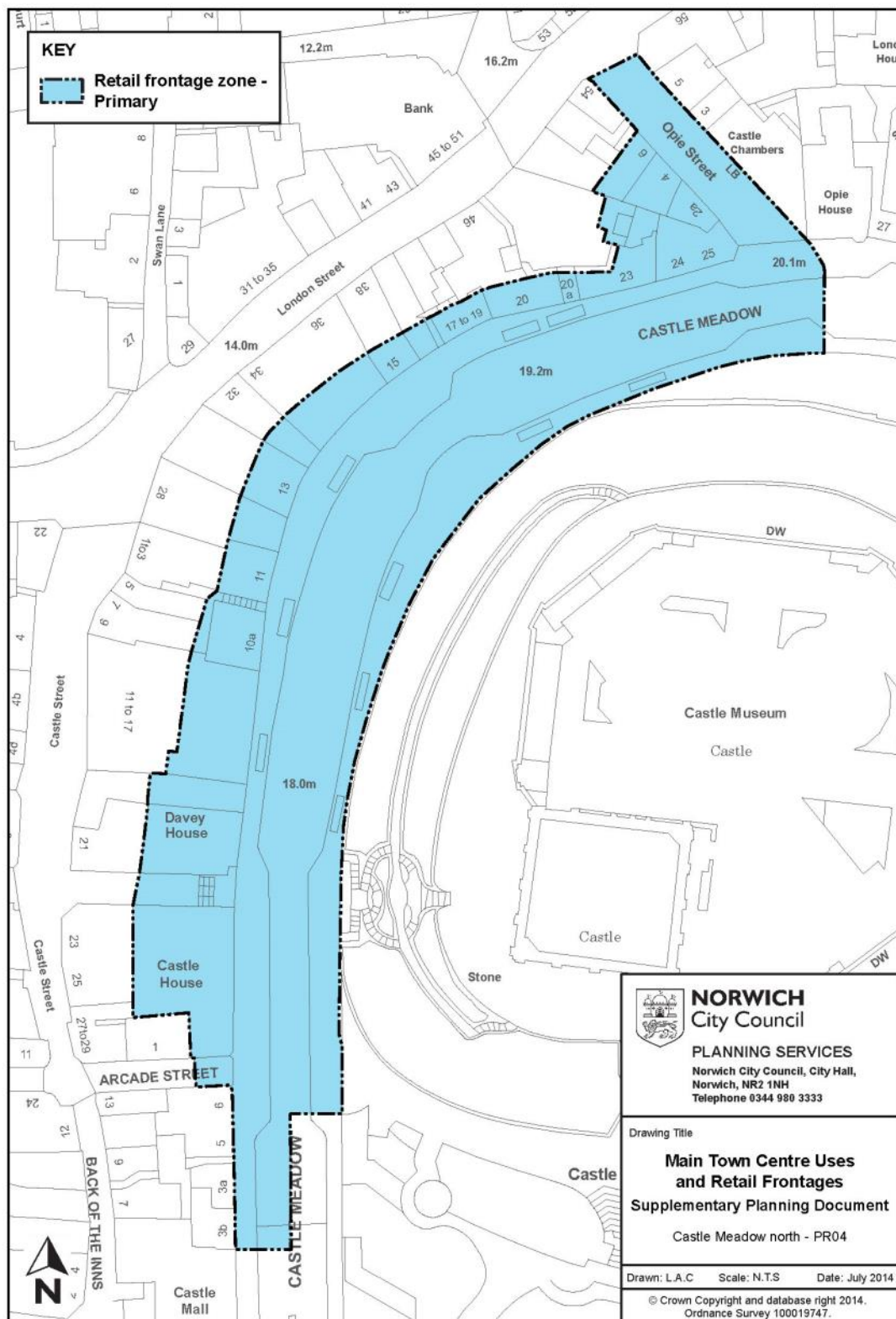
The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone PR04.

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

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.

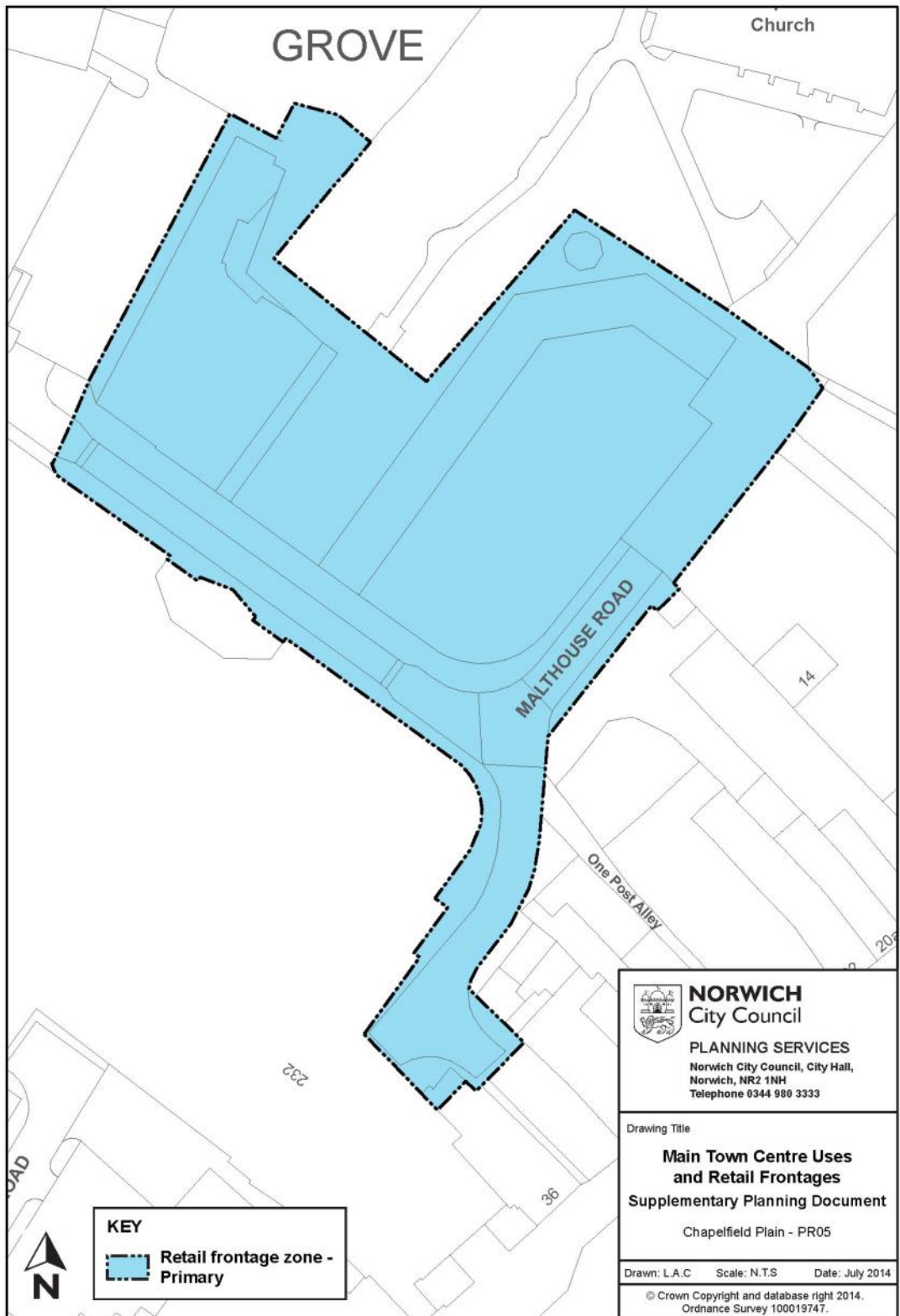
The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone PR05.

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

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.

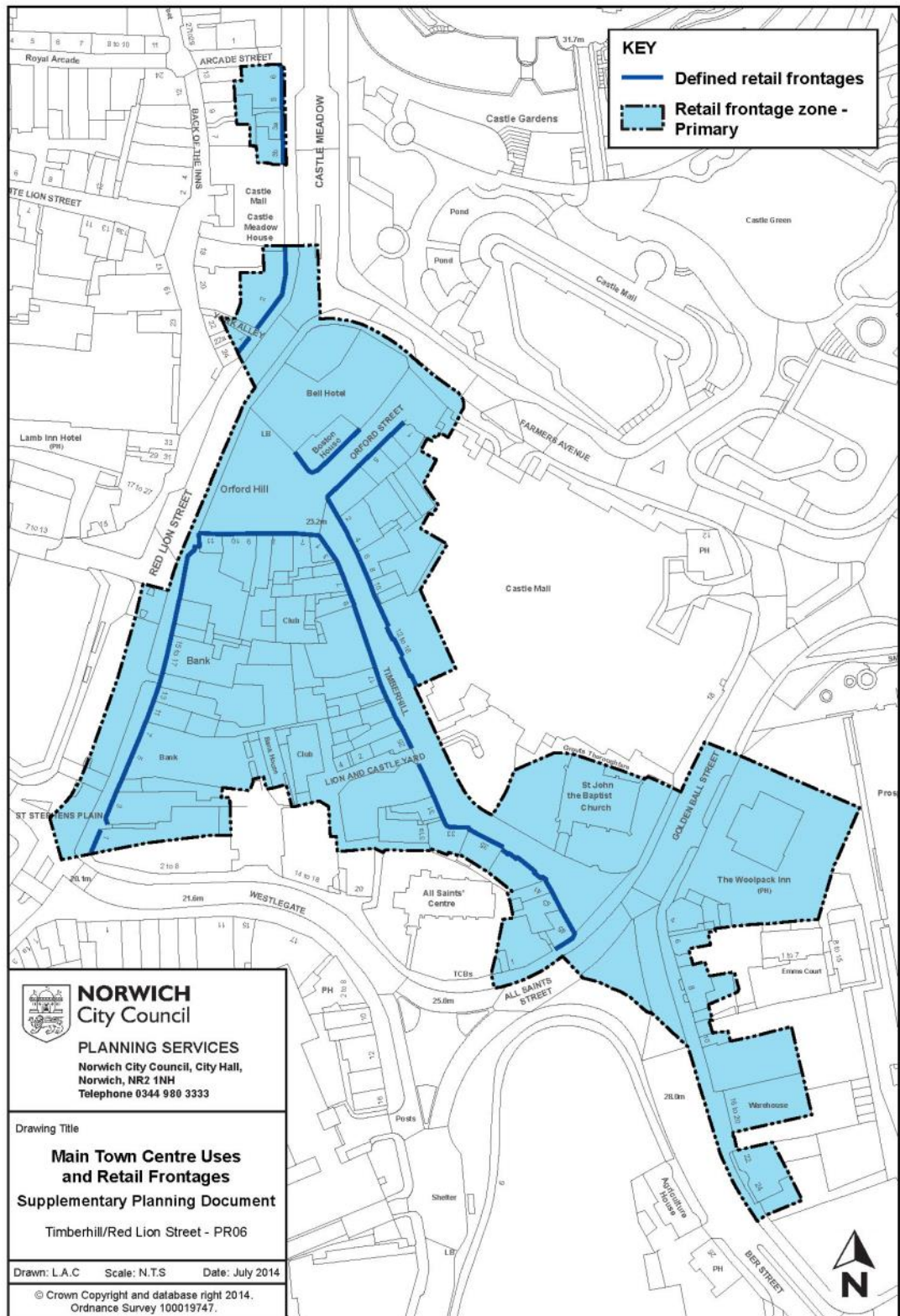
The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone PR06.

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

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.

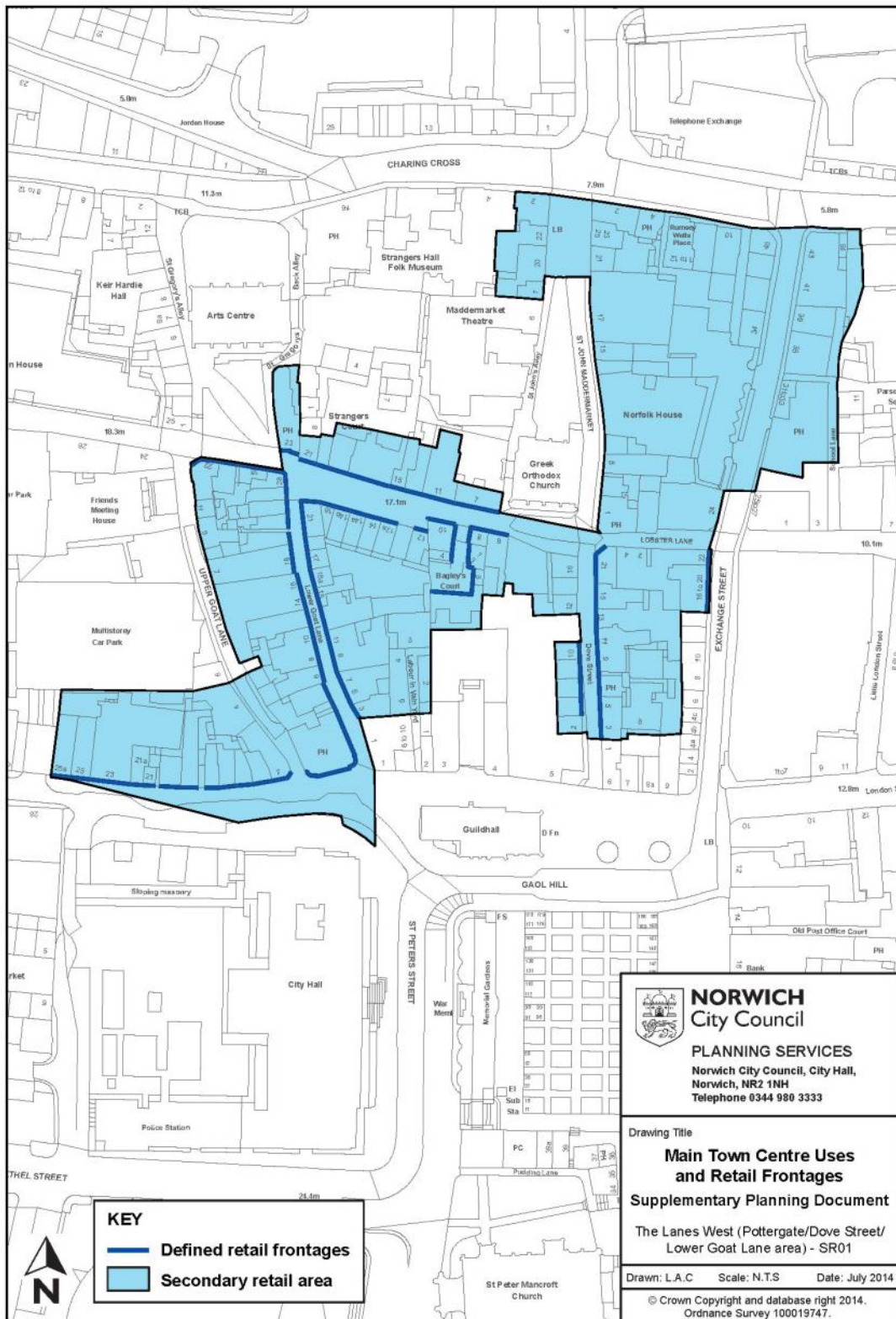
Percentage vacant units:	3.3 percent
Percentage vacant floorspace:	1.2 percent
Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:	367.3 metres
Measured frontages retail/non retail split:	81.6 percent A1 retail frontage
	18.4 percent non-retail frontage

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

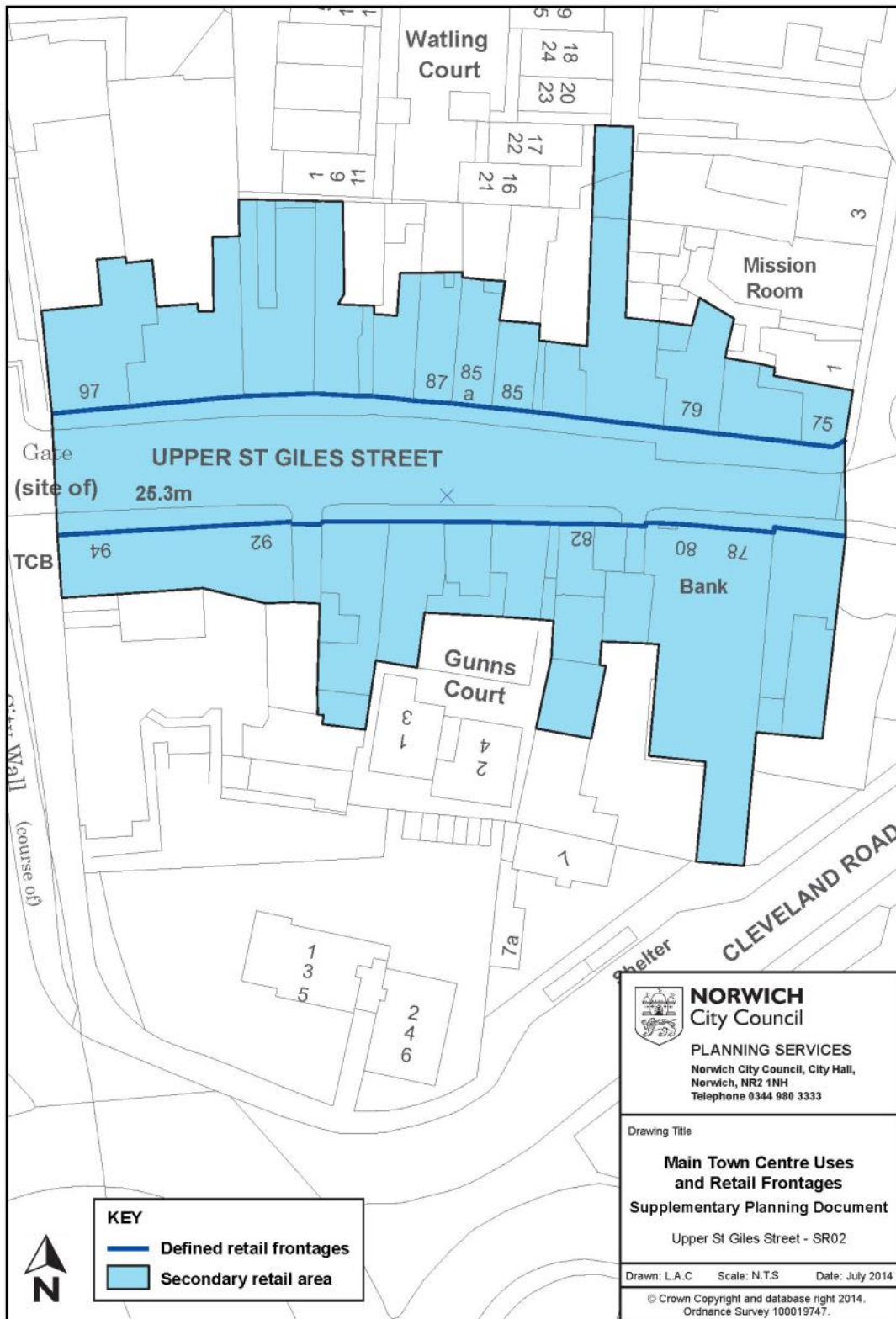
Upper St Giles Street is a small self contained specialist shopping area of great historic character at the western end of the Norwich Lanes, adjoining the 14th century St Giles' Church. Formerly a somewhat declining area it has recovered in recent years as a fashionable upmarket shopping street offering 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.

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

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.

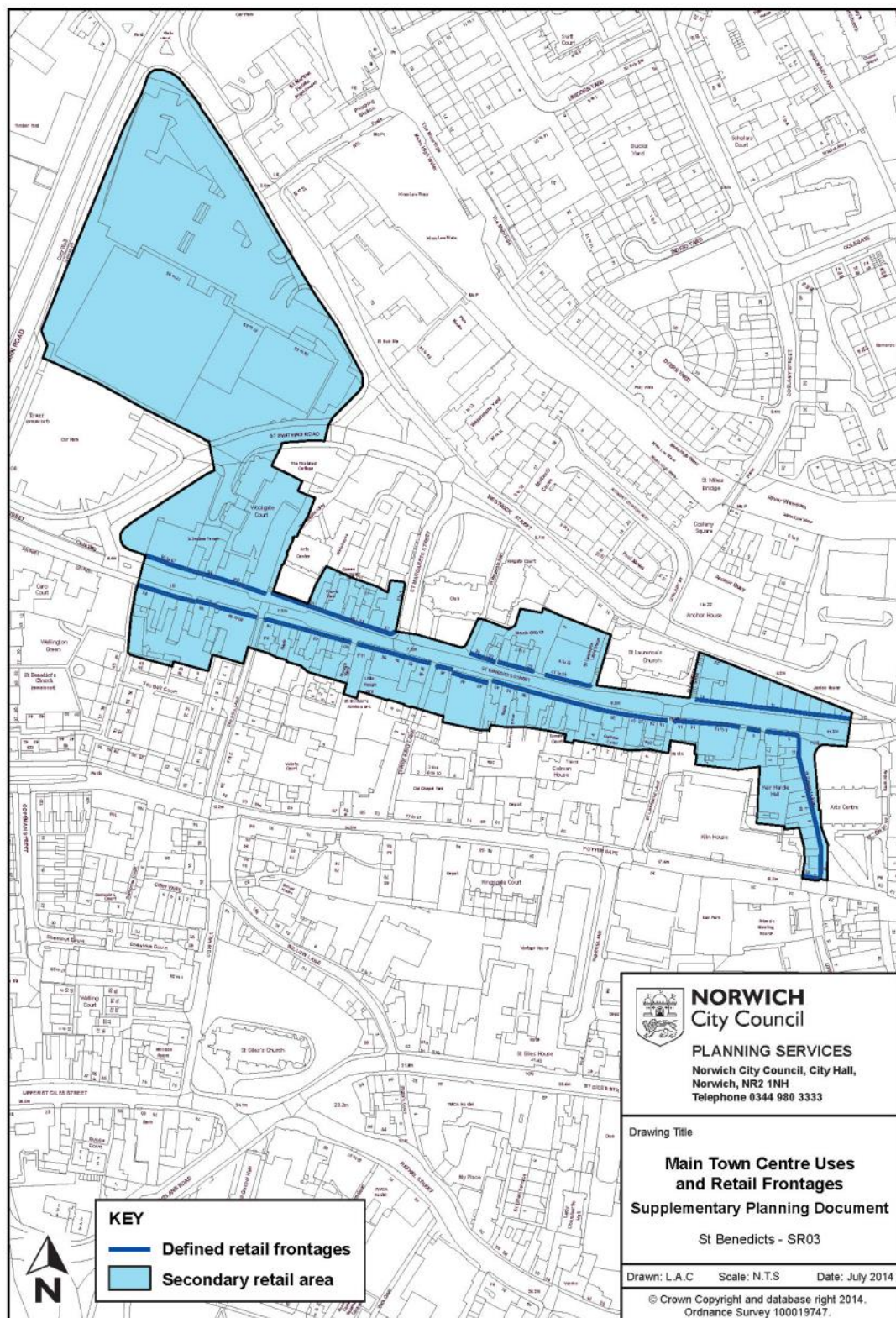
Percentage vacant units:	5.5 percent
Percentage vacant floorspace:	4.8 percent
Total length of defined retail frontage in this zone:	644.1 metres
Measured frontages retail/non retail split:	65.4 percent A1 retail frontage
	36.1 percent non-retail frontage

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.

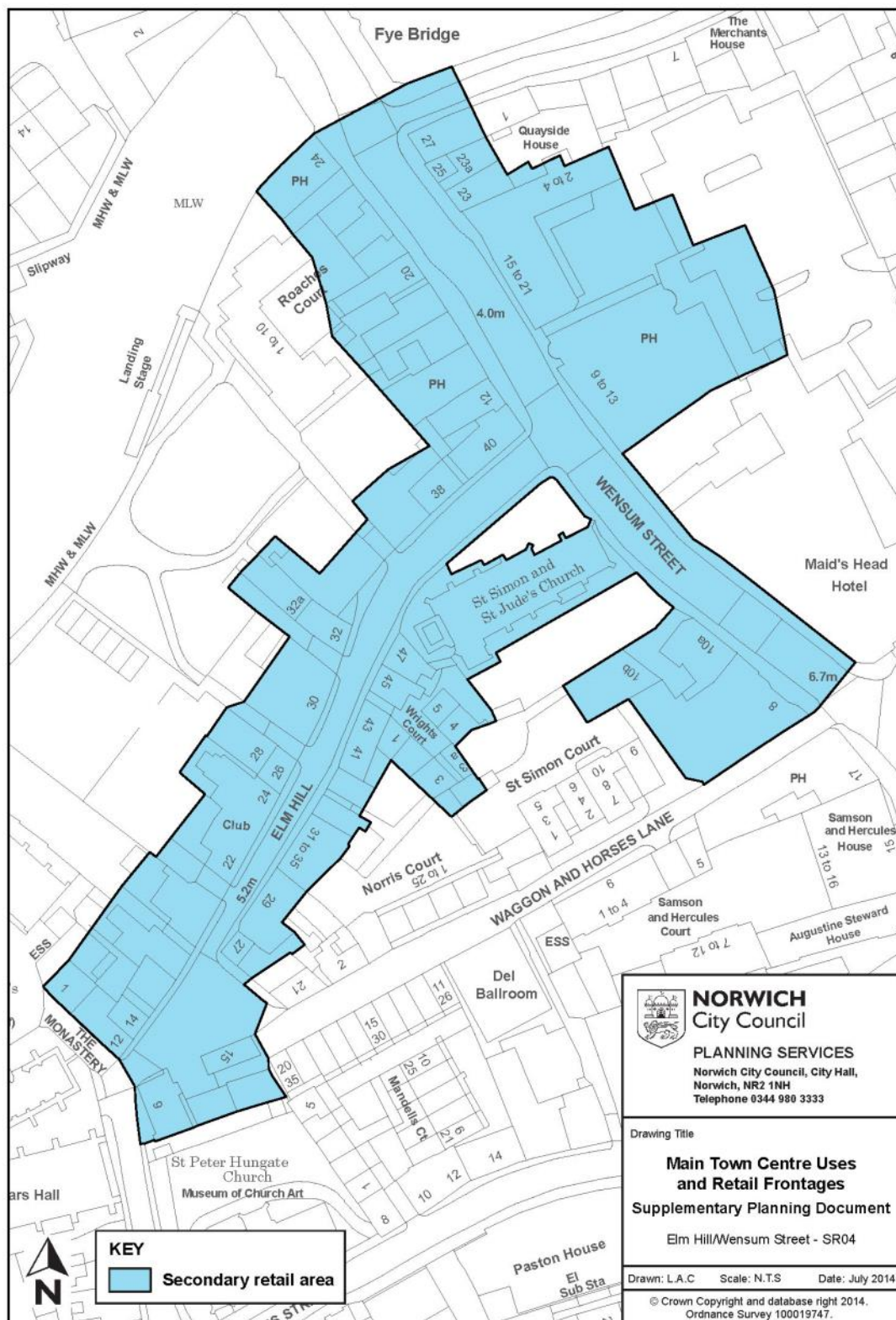
The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone SR04.

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

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.

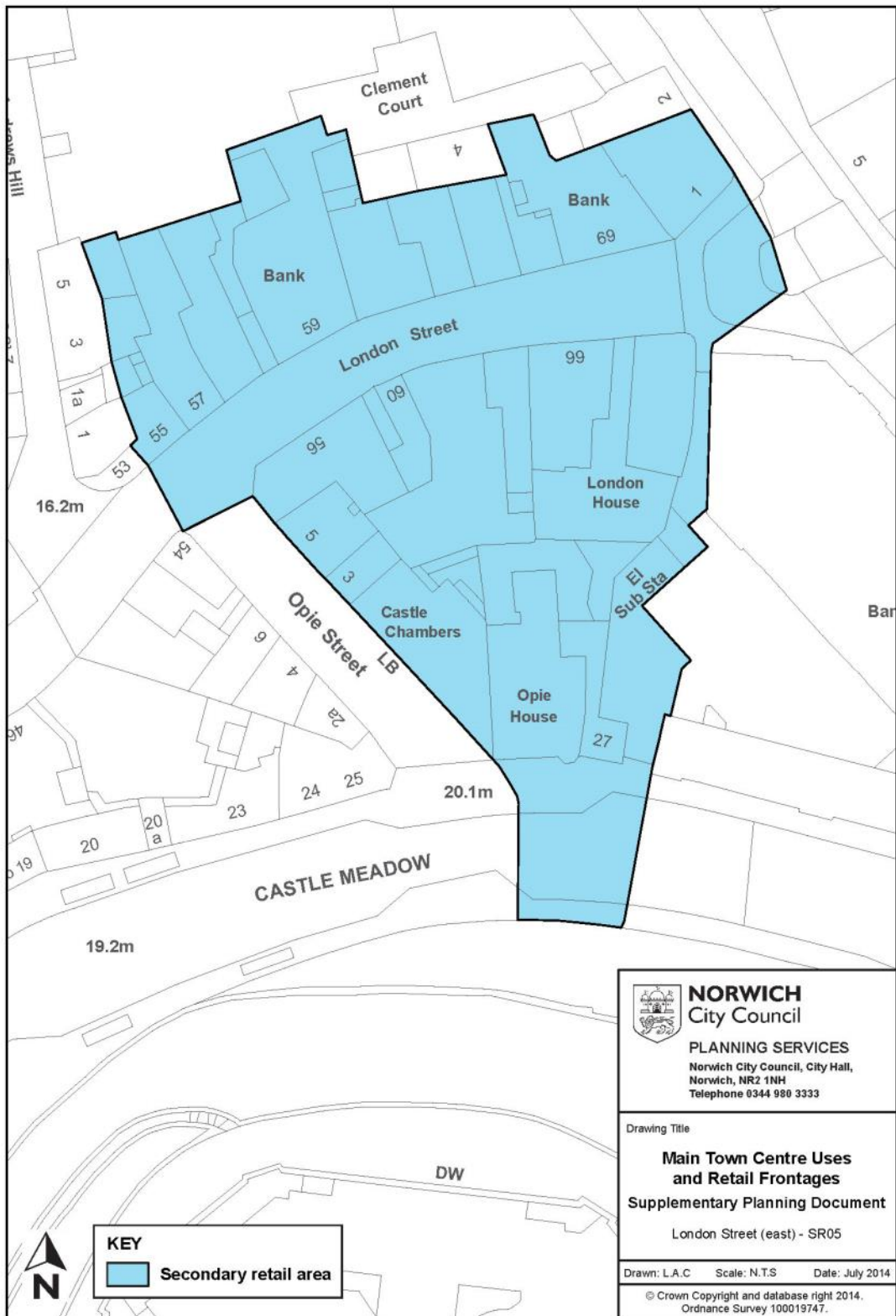
The survey of April 2014 showed the following analysis for frontages in core frontage zone SR04.

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

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.



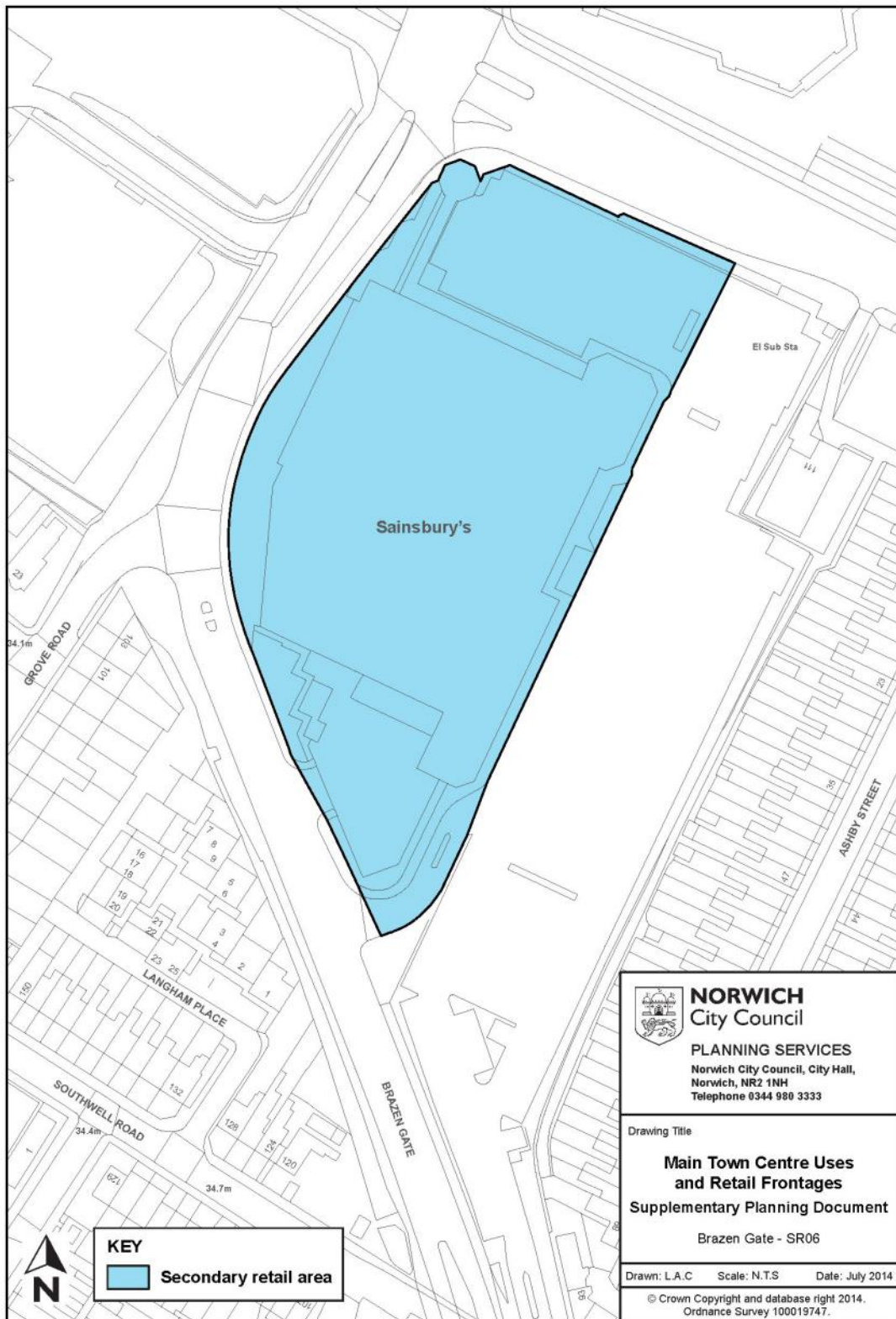
SR06 – Brazen Gate

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.

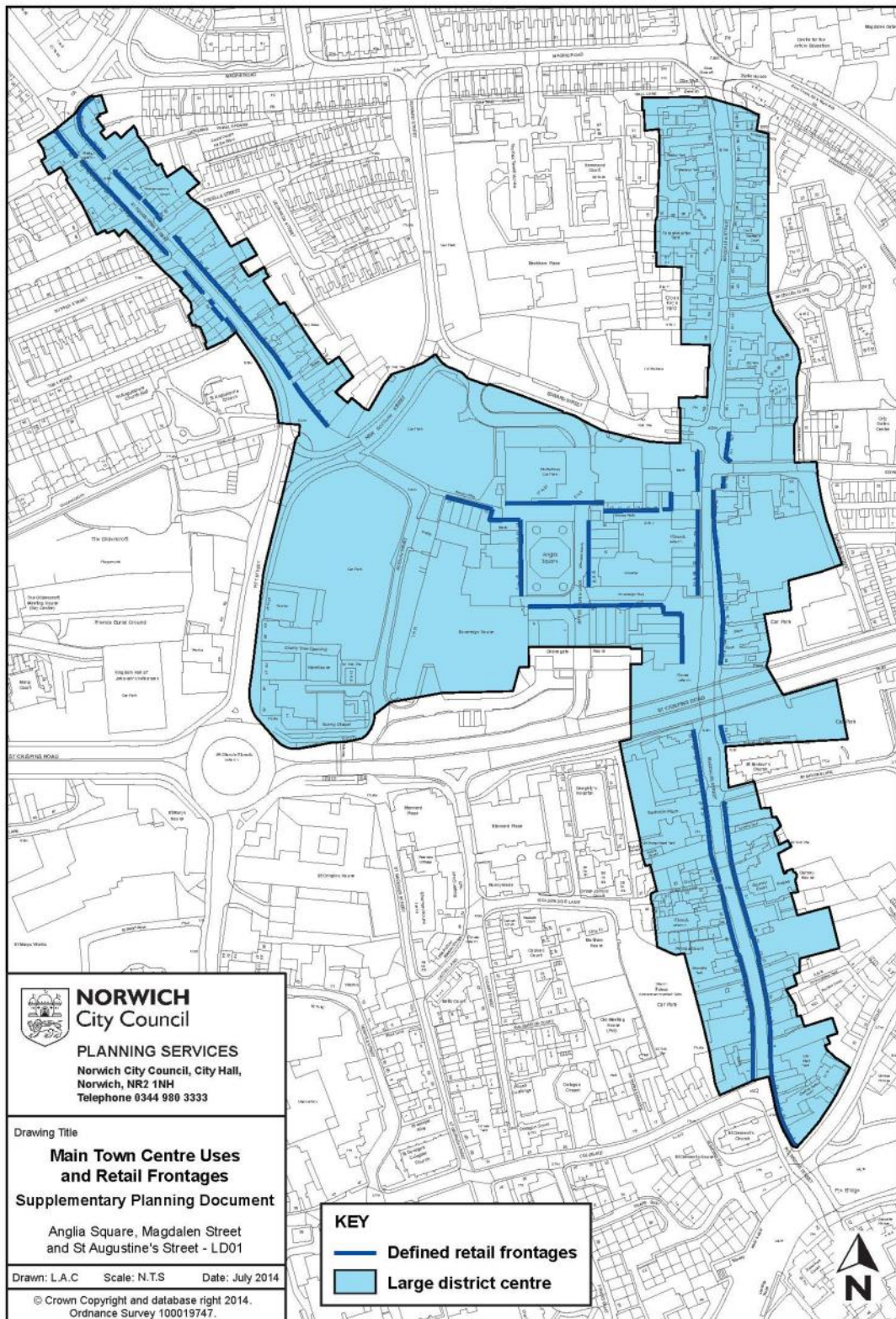
Changes of use within the Large District Centre are currently assessed and determined under policy LU2 of the adopted NCCAAP. It requires that the proportion of A1 retail uses at ground floor level should not fall below 70% (this threshold has already been breached), prohibits the change of use of ground 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.

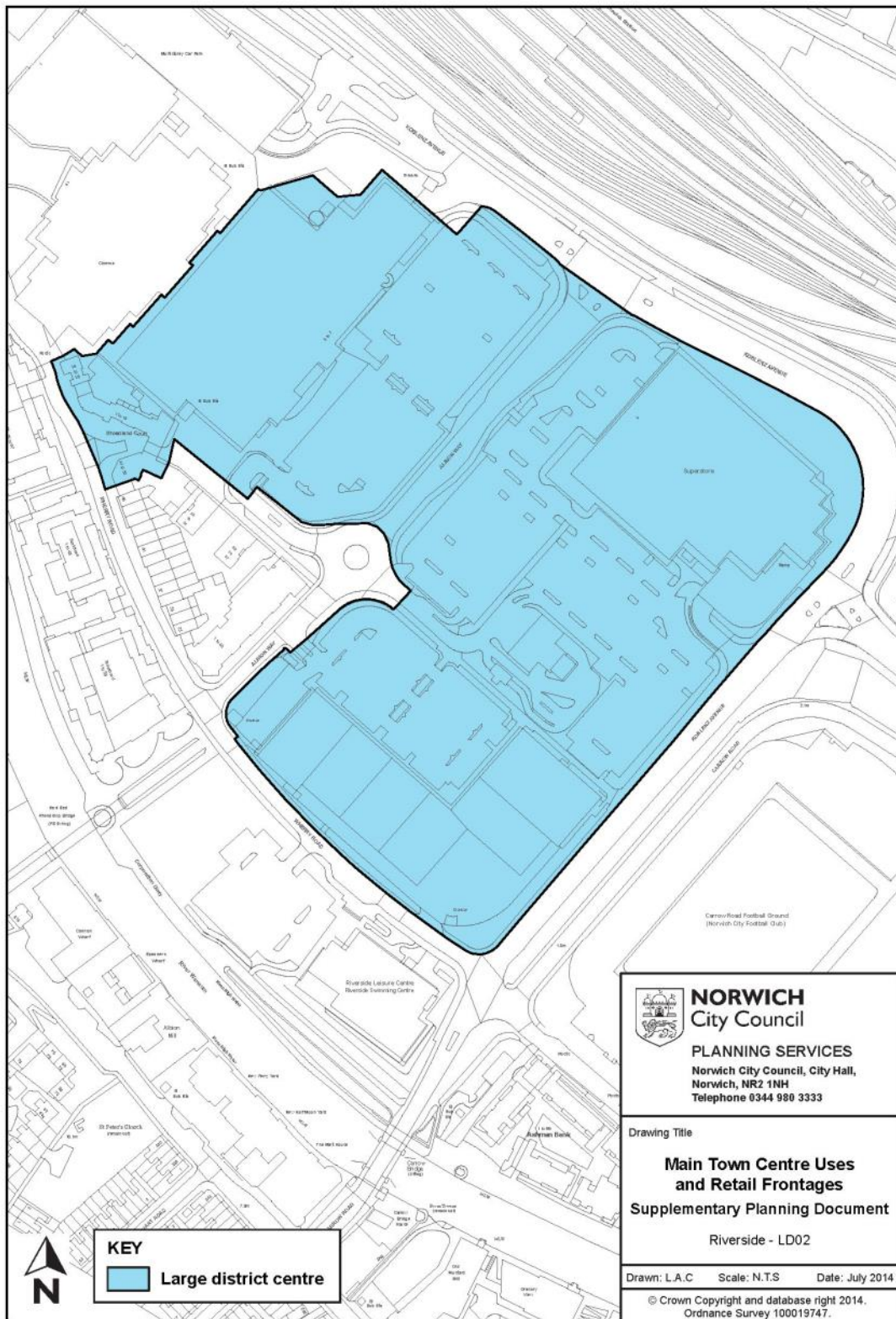
No retail frontages are defined in this zone.

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.



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.

Report to	Sustainable development panel	Item
	23 July 2014	
Report of	Executive head of strategy, people and democracy	7
Subject	Climate Local Commitments	

Purpose

This report is for the panel to consider Norwich City Council's first annual Climate Local commitments.

Recommendation

The panel is asked to consider the attached report.

Corporate and service priorities

The report helps to meet the corporate priority Value for money services and the service plan priority % reduction in the CO₂ emissions from local authority operations.

Financial implications

None.

Ward/s: All wards

Cabinet member: Councillor Stonard – Environment and transport

Contact officers

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Background documents

None

Report

Climate Local background

1. Climate Local was launched by the Local Government Association (LGA) in July 2012 and succeeds the Nottingham Declaration.
2. The Nottingham Declaration came in for some criticism nationally as it was mainly aspirational. Climate Local goes further than this and has added in an additional layer of accountability by requiring council's to annually publish progress against their commitments.
3. Following cabinet approval Norwich City Council signed up to the Climate Local Commitment in March 2014.
4. As of April 2014 87 local authorities (out of possible 345) have signed up to the Climate Local Commitment.

Climate Local Commitments and reporting

5. Within six months of signing the Climate Local Commitment each authority must draw up and publish a list of commitments.
6. We have drawn up a list of commitments which are attached. The 9 overarching commitments reflect those in the Annual Environmental Statement in order to ensure cohesion and efficiency across work-streams and services.
7. Each overarching commitment is underpinned by more specific detail on how we will deliver each commitment. These are detailed in the attached Appendix A.

Appendix A - **Norwich City Council – Climate Local Commitments:**

Number	Commitment to:
1	Reduce energy consumption on the council's estate
2	Reduce energy consumption in housing stock and private sector housing
3	Maximise the performance of the city's highway network through balancing the need to encourage economic growth with sustainable travel options
4	Make Procurement More Sustainable
5	Reduce and recycle
6	Ensure future developments are planned and built in a way which is sustainable and uses resources effectively and efficiently
7	To maintain and enhance the natural environment of Norwich
8	Reduce pollution
9	Provide leadership

Commitment 1 - Reduce energy consumption on the council's estate	
	We will deliver this commitment by:
A	Regularly reviewing the estate's potential for energy efficiency improvements
B	Continuing to deliver our Carbon Management plan - we aim to reduce our carbon emissions by 40% by 2018 (from a 2007/2008 baseline).
C	Measuring and publishing the council's carbon footprint annually on our website
D	Developing a tri- annual Environmental Strategy
E	Producing an annual Environmental Statement which details progress made against objectives set in the Environmental Statement.

Commitment 2 - Reduce energy consumption on housing stock and private sector housing	
	We will deliver this commitment by:
A	Implementing a programme to deliver energy efficiency measures in our housing stock and commercial stock
B	Working with our Green Deal partner to promote and deliver Green Deal and ECO energy efficiency measures across tenure under the council's Cosy City scheme.

Commitment 3 - Maximise the performance of the city's highway network through balancing the need to encourage economic growth with sustainable travel options	
	We will deliver this commitment by:
A	Providing high quality routes for cyclists and improved facilities for pedestrians
B	Improving the performance of bus services through the delivery of the bus rapid transport (BTR) network
C	Maintaining traffic flow on the highway network
D	Managing air quality and reducing carbon emissions associated with transport
E	Managing the council's fleet to make it fit for purpose – (this has already included a Fleet Review, the introduction of telemetry into all cars, the introduction of 4 electric cars into the fleet, tighter monitoring of fuel use)
F	Encouraging cycling amongst staff – (introduction of pool bikes for staff meetings, introduction of a Cycle to Work scheme, staff shower facilities, upgrades to the council's secure 24/7 cycle shed already completed)

Commitment 4 – Making Procurement More Sustainable	
	We will deliver this commitment by:
A	Buying goods and services in an ethical and sustainable way which optimises resources, providing value for money and quality goods and services
B	100% of the council's electricity continues to be sourced via a renewable energy tariff
C	Expanding the sustainability pre-tender checklist into the pre-qualification questionnaire (PQQ) and the business quality questionnaire (BQQ) to include a greater number of social, economic and environmental factors
D	Procuring locally sourced water for committee rooms
E	Ensuring that redundant ICT equipment is disposed of in a way that seeks to refurbish and resell the majority of the equipment, via the circular economy 'Raspberry Pi' project, and recycle any remainder
F	Implementing the business relationship and contract management strategy and toolkit for high value and critical contracts and including the requirement to monitor contractor's environmental management system (EMS) and carbon emissions. Seeking to expand the use of strategy and toolkit into high value/ low criticality core contracts in the future

Commitment 5 – Reduce and Recycle	
	We will deliver this commitment by:
A	Delivering a high performing recyclables and residual waste collection service for Norwich
B	Continually achieving a good recycling performance – (the best-performing authority in Norfolk for mixed dry recycling)
C	Continually achieving a good performance on waste minimisation – (the best-performing authority in Norfolk for the amount of waste produced per household)
D	Expanding the weekly waste food collection service to include collections from communal food waste facilities in many hard to reach areas
E	Providing food waste recycling to 19 Norwich schools
F	Introducing an energy efficient waste fleet operating on energy efficient zonal collection rounds
G	Using GIS and In-Cab monitoring to be able to map the most efficient and economical routes
H	Continuing to run media campaigns on waste reduction and recycling
I	Implementing the objectives in the waste management action plan 2013-2020
J	Ensuring every property has access to mixed dry recycling collections or is signposted to their nearest mixed dry recycling bring bank
K	Implementing recycling of WEEE, bulky items and cooking oil
L	Continuing to implement waste reduction initiatives
M	Continuing to develop student-specific waste and recycling campaigns

Commitment 6 – Ensure future developments are planned and built in a way which is sustainable and uses resources effectively and efficiently	
	We will deliver this commitment by:
A	Planning for sustainable development which ensures we can build for the future whilst preserving the heritage of our beautiful city
B	Developing detailed local plan environmental policies to protect and enhance biodiversity and green infrastructure
C	Adopting the Norwich Development Management Policies document (scheduled for adoption in September 2014)
D	Adopting the Norwich Site Allocations document (scheduled for adoption in September 2014)
E	Identifying areas at risk of flooding from heavy rainfall and potential mitigation measures
F	Implementing the Joint Core Strategy - the strategic planning framework for the Greater Norwich area for the next 15 years
G	Implementing the 'Making room' project to promote walking, cycling and public transport in the city centre
H	Implementing the City Cycle Ambition grant funded work to improve cycling infrastructure across the city

Commitment 7 – To maintain and enhance the natural environment of Norwich	
	We will deliver this commitment by:
A	Maintaining and enhancing the environment of Norwich to promote its community, health, wellbeing and ecological benefits
B	Working with local and national groups to enhance green spaces in the city through support, bringing areas back into management, removal of invasive plant species, planting of new trees and shrubs, species surveys, conservation work, tree-mapping
C	Implementing capital and annual management works funded by the Higher Level Stewardship scheme to improve the biodiversity value the sites concerned
D	Introducing conservation grazing where appropriate
E	Updating biodiversity information on the council's website
F	Investigating the viability of a project to improve the management of council owned woodlands
G	Working with volunteer groups to identify new funding sources
H	Completing the Open Spaces strategy
I	Completing the Tree Strategy review

Commitment 8 – Reduce pollution	
	We will deliver this commitment by:
A	Maintaining the street scene and all public spaces so that danger, pollution and noise are minimised
B	Redefining the boundaries of the air quality management areas into one larger area which allows for a more holistic approach to action planning
C	Identifying and implementing infrastructure changes to address traffic congestion areas
D	Drafting an action plan to set out measures to reduce Nitrogen Dioxide (NO ₂) levels through focussing on traffic issues as well as promoting cycling, walking and bus use
E	Ensuring that risks to land users from land contamination are minimised, together with those to controlled waters, property and ecological systems

Commitment 9 – Provide leadership	
	We will deliver this commitment by:
A	Leading by example and raising the profile of environmental issues and opportunities across the city to encourage residents and businesses to reduce their environmental impact
B	Completion of the council's Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) report – updated biannually, next due March 2015
C	Implementing the objectives in the councils Affordable Warmth strategy
D	Raising awareness and celebrating environmental school, business and community group eco- projects at the councils annual Eco Awards
E	Running a behaviour change campaign with council staff – One Small Step
F	Becoming the country's first city to run a collective switching scheme and consistently achieving the highest switching rates nationwide
G	Demonstrating our commitment to climate change by signing up to Climate Local
H	Working with households to promote greater energy efficiency and to alleviate fuel poverty through both the 'Cosy City' and 'Switch and Save' projects
I	Working with partners to deliver the ECO and Green Deal to residents through the council's Cosy City project
J	Implementing phase 2 of the council Carbon Management plan (working to reduce the councils carbon emissions by a further 11% or 40% total since the 2007/08 baseline)
K	Investigating funding opportunities to help residents to subsidise the cost of energy saving measures on their properties - most recently DECC Greener Communities funding
L	Developing partnerships with other councils and groups
M	Working with contractors to align their carbon emissions reduction targets to the council's targets. We monitor our contractors carbon emissions on an annual basis.
N	Signposting residents to information regarding action they can take to mitigate the impact of extreme weather events/increase climate change resilience

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