



Dorset Council

Town Centre Health Checks 2023/24

December 2025

Contents

Contents	2
1. Introduction	4
2. Beaminster Town Centre Health Check	9
3. Bere Regis Town Centre Health Check	12
4. Blandford Forum Town Centre Health Check.....	15
5. Bridport (Town Centre) Town Centre Health Check	18
6. Bridport (West Bay) Town Centre Health Check	21
7. Chickerell Town Centre Health Check.....	25
8. Corfe Castle Town Centre Health Check	28
9. Corfe Mullen Town Centre Health Check.....	31
10. Dorchester (Town Centre) Town Centre Health Check	34
11. Dorchester (Queen Mother Square, Poundbury) Town Centre Health Check ...	38
12. Ferndown Town Centre Health Check	41
13. Gillingham Town Centre Health Check	45
14. Lyme Regis Town Centre Health Check	49
15. Lytchett Matravers Town Centre Health Check	53
16. Marnhull Town Centre Health Check	56
17. Portland (Fortuneswell) Town Centre Health Check	59
18. Portland (Easton) Town Centre Health Check	62
19. Shaftesbury Town Centre Health Check.....	65
20. Sherborne Town Centre Health Check.....	68
21. Stalbridge Town Centre Health Check.....	71
22. Sturminster Newton Town Centre Health Check	74
23. Swanage Town Centre Health Check.....	77
24. Upton Town Centre Health Check.....	81
25. Verwood Town Centre Health Check	84
26. Wareham Town Centre Health Check.....	87
27. West Moors Town Centre Health Check.....	90
28 West Parley Town Centre Health Check	93
29. Weymouth (Abbotsbury Road) Town Centre Health Check	96
30. Weymouth (Littlemoor Centre) Town Centre Health Check	99
31. Weymouth (Lodmoor Hill) Town Centre Health Check	102

32. Weymouth (Southill) Town Centre Health Check.....	105
33. Weymouth (Wyke Regis, Portland Road) Town Centre Health Check.....	108
34. Weymouth (Town Centre) Town Centre Health Check.....	111
35 Wimborne Minster Town Centre Health Check.....	115
36. Wool Town Centre Health Check	118
37. Appendix: Definitions	122

1. Introduction

National Policy & Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Policy Guidance requires local authorities to undertake health checks of the town centres. These health checks are then used as evidence to support policies or land designations in the emerging Dorset Council Local Plan. References to town centres or centres apply to town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parade of shops purely of neighbourhood significance.

Purpose of Health Checks

Town centre health checks are a means of assessing the vitality, resilience and performance of town centres over time. Dorset Council has undertaken town centre health checks to assess all designated or proposed town, district and local centres across Dorset. This publication excludes larger sustainable villages.

The Planning Policy Guidance sets out a list of indicators which may be relevant when assessing the health of town centres:

- Diversity of uses
- Proportion of vacant street level property
- Commercial yields on non-domestic property
- Customer experience and behaviour
- Retail representation and intentions to change representation
- Commercial rents
- Pedestrian flows
- Accessibility
- Perception of safety and occurrence of crime
- State of town centre environmental quality
- Balance between independent and multiple stores
- Extent to which there is evidence of barriers to new businesses opening and existing businesses expanding
- Opening hours / availability / extent to which there is an evening and nighttime economy offer

It is intended that this research will specifically help to inform Dorset's emerging Local Plan policies on:

- Retail hierarchy
- Defining town centre boundaries and primary shopping areas
- Allocation of sites for main town centre uses

These are policy requirements for town centres set out in the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Policy Guidance.

Scope of study

This study has reviewed the current network and hierarchy of town, district and local centres in adopted Local Plans and those centres proposed in the Dorset Council Local Plan options consultation, 2021.

Table 1: The Network and Hierarchy of Centres in Adopted Local Plans¹

Category	Adopted Centres
Town Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blandford Forum • Bridport (Town Centre) • Dorchester (Town Centre) • Ferndown • Gillingham • Lyme Regis • Shaftesbury • Sherborne • Sturminster Newton • Swanage • Verwood • Wimborne Minster • Wareham • Weymouth (Town Centre) • Upton
District Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • West Moors
Local Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beaminster • Bere Regis • Bridport (West Bay) • Chickerell • Corfe Castle • Corfe Mullen • Portland (Easton Square, Easton) • Portland (Fortuneswell) • Lytchett Matravers • Weymouth (Littlemoor Centre) • West Parley • Wool

¹ Christchurch and East Dorset Core Strategy (2014), West Dorset, Weymouth & Portland Local Plan (2015), North Dorset Local Plan – Part 1 (2016) & Purbeck Local Plan 2018-2034 (2024)

Table 2: Proposed additional centres in the Dorset Council Local Plan Options Consultation (2021).

Category	Proposed Centres
Town Centres	N/A
District Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dorchester (Queen Mother Square, Poundbury) • Stalbridge
Local Centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marnhull • Weymouth (Abbotsbury Road) • Weymouth (Portland Road, Wyke Regis) • Weymouth (Lodmoor Hill) • Weymouth (Southill Centre)

Methodology

For these health checks, planning officers visited all the designated town, district and local centres and those proposed as centres in the 2021 Local Plan consultation over the course of the 2023/2024 monitoring year (April 2023-March 2024).

Officers surveyed the shops and commercial premises inside the existing town centre boundary or where there was no boundary², the services in the village or parade of shops. The survey required officers to take note of the shop name and its primary use, or record if a property was vacant.

Using the Use Classes Order, planning officers then assigned a use class to each commercial premises. The commercial premises were then further grouped into the following categories:

- Convenience: Durable goods such as supermarkets, bakeries, butchers etc
- Comparison: Non-durable goods such as clothes, homewares etc
- Service retail: Non-retail goods but service businesses such as dry cleaners, florists, hairdressers etc
- Financial, professional & business: These are typically financial services on the high street, such as banks and building societies and other professional services such as job agencies, accountants, solicitors etc, plus offices and office-based businesses
- Leisure: Places that people go to socialise, such as public houses, restaurants, cafes and tourist accommodation, or commercial leisure such as health and fitness
- Medical: This includes doctors' surgeries, dentist surgeries, chiropractors, physiotherapists etc

² There are no adopted or proposed town centre boundaries for Marnhull, West Parley or Abbotsbury Road in Weymouth

- Community space: These are spaces for the public that are typically run by a public service, such as libraries, youth spaces, community halls
- Vacant: These are non-residential properties that appear to be empty

Other uses: An additional category has been added to record other non-town centres uses that might add to the overall health of the town centre. This category includes education establishments, religious buildings such as churches, general industrial buildings or workshops and town centre car parks.

Officers also assessed if the stores were high street chain stores (multiple) or independent retailers. The assessment of multiple retailers used the Experian definition of 15 premises or more within the chain and focused on retail³ and leisure uses (excluding self-catering tourist accommodation).

Using the Government's Valuation Office Data (VOA), planning officers were able to obtain information on the commercial premises' size and assessed rent.

The statistics for each category are inputted into the Health Check, alongside other data such as:

- Retail representation: The number of independent versus multiple retailers
- Opening hours and availability of nighttime economy: Such as restaurants, public houses, nightclubs, cinemas etc
- Accessibility: Car parks available and types of public transport available, such as buses and trains
- Potential development sites: If there are opportunities for development
- Overall conclusions: Such as should the town centre boundary or type of town centre designation be reviewed, or should policy interventions to help improve the vitality and viability of each town centre be considered?

Each health check includes a map showing the existing town centre boundary (where present) and the recorded use type (i.e. retail, restaurant, office etc) for each property.

Further research may be undertaken, if considered necessary, to assess pedestrian flows, perception of safety and occurrence of crime and market attractiveness.

Retail Evidence

This report includes the health checks and supporting work. The health checks will also be used to inform an updated Dorset Retail, Leisure and Town Centre Study in preparation by retail consultants Lambert Smith Hampton. Together, this will form the evidence base for retail and town centre type uses for Dorset.

³ The Convenience, Comparison and Service Retail categories

Disclaimer

This research was undertaken by council officers periodically between 2023 and 2024 and therefore, it may not be fully reflective of each town centre as it currently operates. However, this evidence forms an important baseline assessment of the health of each town centre and will inform what types of policies Dorset Council should include in its new Local Plan to improve their vitality and viability.

2. Beaminster Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Beaminster dates back to the Anglo-Saxon age and is situated in a bowl-shaped valley where the headwaters of the River Brit come together. Beaminster is a town known for award winning historic gardens and the nearby Mapperton House and Gardens. Beaminster's Grade 1 listed parish church - the Church of St Mary - is notable for its architecture, particularly its tower. Previously Beaminster was a centre of the production of linen and woollens and is now well known for the Beaminster Festival, an annual music and art festival. The main shopping areas are located around The Square and Hogshill Street.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	5	10.6	9.7	Higher	501
Comparison	8	17	29	Lower	782
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	18	38.2	9	Higher	711
Leisure, Community & Medical	11	23.3	27.6	Lower	960
Vacancy	4	8.5	14.7	Lower	103
Other Uses	1	2.1			Unknown
Total	47	99.7			3,057

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	28
Multiple Retailers	3

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £275 per sqm
Office	Up to £185 per sqm

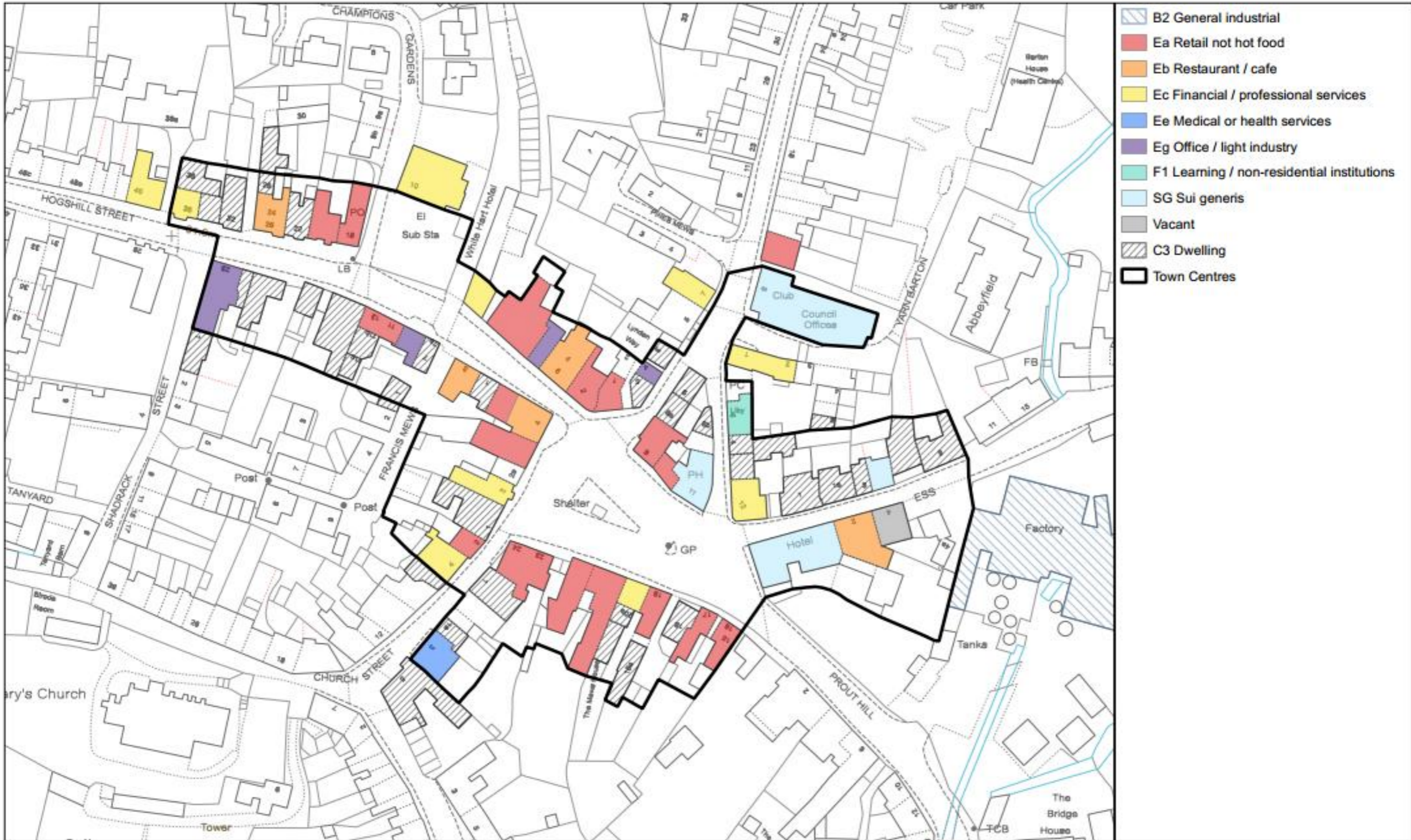
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, it still attracts well known multiple retailers such as Co-Op and Spar.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has retail shops and services, restaurants, cafes and offices. It is worth noting that there is a hotel/pub within the centre and multiple hotels and self-catering accommodation nearby. For this reason, this town centre has a wider reach than a typical town centre. It also has a number of public houses and restaurants that are open at nighttime, therefore ensuring that this town centre is open beyond 6pm.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Beaminster to the larger settlement villages surrounding the town centre such as Bridport and Crewkerne. There are a number of car parks within the town centre, including The Square and Yarn Barton, providing circa 100 car parking spaces.
Potential Development Sites	There may be potential for reoccupation of vacant units in the town centre boundary, but development potential is limited. Beaminster is located within the Dorset National Landscape (formerly AONB) and is also a conservation area.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Beaminster is a thriving town centre which has a wide range of shops and services operating during the day, and restaurants/pubs open in the evening. The town centre mostly comprises of independent shops and has a wider reach than the typical local centre due to its tourist accommodation provision nearby. The prevalence of tourist accommodation beyond the boundary means it may be worth revising this town centre boundary.



Town Centre Surveys - 2023
Beaminster

Scale (at A3)
 1:1,000



© Crown copyright and database rights 2023
 AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to terms
 and conditions. This map is not definitive and has no
 legal status.

3. Bere Regis Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Bere Regis, in south-east Dorset, is classified as a Local Centre. Interestingly, the town centre boundary only encompasses two commercial properties: a hair salon and a guest room for visitors of the residents at Cyril Wood Court, an affordable rented housing facility for older artists. Near the boundary there are two pubs, a village hall, and a Nissa Local shop, which also includes a post office. Other amenities in the settlement include a doctors' surgery and a dental surgery.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	0	0	9.7	Lower	0
Comparison	0	0	29	Lower	0
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	1	50	9	Higher	103
Leisure, Community & Medical	1	50	27.6	Higher	9
Vacancy	0	0	14.7	Lower	0
Other Uses	0	0			0
Total	2	100			112

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	1
Multiple Retailers	0

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for:	Rent
Retail	Up to £103 per sqm
Offices	N/A

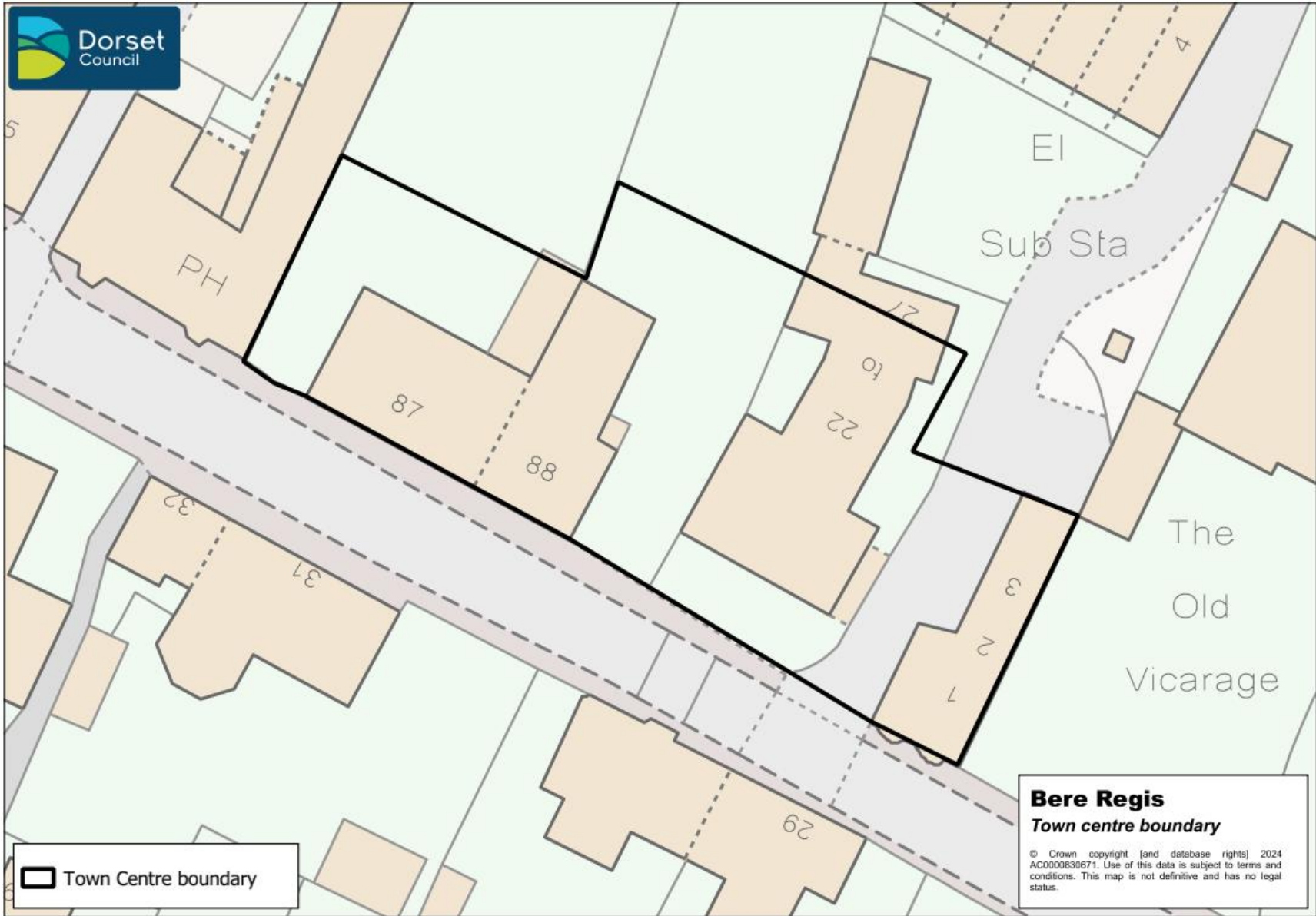
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Bere Regis' local centre offers a limited retail landscape, with only a hair salon included within the boundary. Near to the boundary is a Nissa Local shop, which also has Post Office facilities. As such, there is little diversity within the boundary and residents are likely to need to travel further to access a wider range of retail services.
Open Hours/ Availability/ Night-time Economy	Bere Regis' nighttime economy is limited, with no nighttime economy in the local centre boundary. There are two public houses in the settlement, close to the town centre boundary, which are both open until 6-10pm depending on the day of the week.
Accessibility	Bere Regis' transport links are limited, with 4 buses a day connecting to Dorchester and Winterborne Kingston. Two buses continue from Winterborne Kingston to Blandford Forum. There is no train station. As a result, residents are highly car dependent. However, there is a volunteer-based neighbourhood car scheme set up by the Parish Council for those with mobility problems or those who cannot rely on public transport. There are also school busses to and from Lytchett Minster at either end of the school day, which members of the public can use if space is available.
Potential Development Sites	There are no Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plan allocations within the town centre boundary. There are also no vacant commercial properties within the boundary. Coupled with the small size of the boundary, it is unlikely for any retail development sites to emerge within the boundary, unless the existing hair salon business closes.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

The commercial offer in Bere Regis' local centre is minimal, comprising only of a hair salon and a guest room. This suggests residents cannot currently have their needs met by this centre. The nighttime economy is also non-existent within the town centre boundary. There is also unlikely to be any commercial development opportunity within the local centre boundary. Considering the additional provision adjacent to the boundary, the boundary should be reviewed.



4. Blandford Forum Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Blandford Forum is a Georgian market town with many listed buildings, located on the banks of the River Stour. The town is noted for its Georgian architecture, parish church and marketplace. The main shopping areas are located in West Street, East Street and Salisbury Street, and a one-way traffic system runs through the town centre. Surrounding the marketplace are independent shops and a wide variety of places to eat and drink, ranging from independent cafes to the local brewery – the Hall and Woodhouse Brewery – which has been brewing Badger beer since 1777 and The Crown Hotel (a historic Georgian coaching inn, with pub / restaurant and a function room).

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	12	5.5	9.7	Lower	3,423
Comparison	54	24.8	29	Lower	5,901
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	67	30.8	9	Higher	4,938
Leisure, Community & Medical	62	28.5	27.6	Higher	4,990
Vacancy	17	7.8	14.7	Lower	1,988
Other Uses	6	2.8			487
Total	218	100			21,727

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	120
Multiple Retailers	30

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £300 per sqm
Office	Up to £200 per sqm

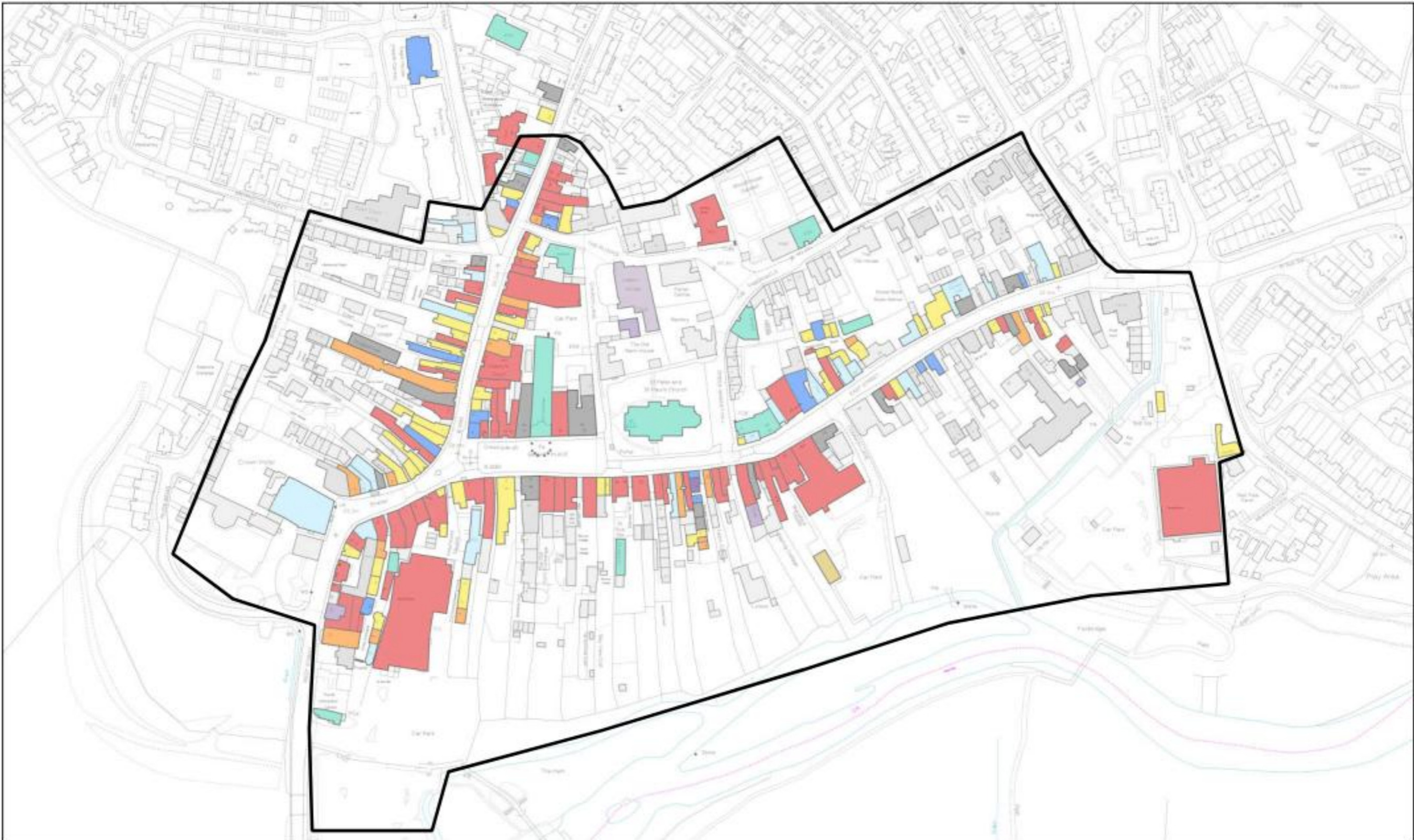
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Although a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, it still attracts well know multiple retailers such as Clarks, Marks and Spencer Foodhall, Boots and Iceland.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has a range of retail shops and services, restaurants and cafes, museums, and offices on the upper floors. So, this town centre has a wider reach than a typical town centre. It also has a range of public houses and restaurants that are open at nighttime, meaning this town centre is busy throughout the day and nighttime.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Blandford Forum to the larger settlement villages surrounding the town centre. There are a number of car parks within the town centre including Marsh & Ham, Church Lane and Langton Road Car Parks, providing circa 550 car parking spaces.
Potential Development Sites	There may be potential for intensification of some sites in the town centre boundary.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Blandford Forum is a thriving town centre that has a wide range of shops and services operating during the day, and restaurants/pubs open in the evening. It attracts some nationally recognised retailers, and it has a larger presence of offices than a typical town centre. Further research into the use of car parks and how to improve road usage into and out of the town centre without negatively impacting existing business and the vibrancy of the town centre is required.



Town Centre Surveys - 2023

Blandford Forum



- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------|
| Town Centre boundary | Ed Indoor sport | F2 Local Community |
| Ea Retail not hot food | Ee Medical or health services | SG Sui generis |
| Eb Restaurant / cafe | Eg Office / light industry | Vacant |
| Ec Financial / professional services | F1 Learning / non-residential institutions | Other buildings |

Scale (at A3)
1:2,000



© Crown copyright and database rights 2023
AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to terms
and conditions. This map is not definitive and has no
legal status.

5. Bridport (Town Centre) Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Bridport is a thriving market town with a vibrant antiques quarter and a rich rope-marking heritage. It is located a mile from the dramatic cliffs of the Jurassic Coast at West Bay. Bridport has a huge variety of small and independent shops selling unique fashion, art, books, food and drink. The town holds weekly markets with stalls selling fresh food, baked items as well as antiques. It has a strong reputation for arts, culture, events and food. It has its own arts centre, independent cinema and live music venue. There are many events that take place throughout the year.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	15	7.2	9.7	Lower	3,843
Comparison	69	33.3	29	Higher	10,479
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	57	27.6	9	Higher	6,846
Leisure, Community & Medical	52	25.1	27.6	Lower	5,224
Vacancy	7	3.4	14.7	Lower	816
Other Uses	7	3.4			521
Total	207	100			27,729

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	125
Multiple Retailers	38

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £350 per sqm
Offices	Up to £115 per sqm

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, it still attracts well known multiple retailers including Waitrose, Waterstones and FatFace.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has a wide range of shops and services, cafes, restaurants, offices and market stalls. It has several bakeries, bookshops, antique shops, art galleries and independent venues for cultural events which are unique to this town. The town centre is of key importance for this part of Dorset, and this is illustrated by the higher proportions of financial & professional services, offices and service retail uses when compared with the national average. This town centre is open after 6pm which is evidenced by the cafes, restaurants and public houses. Thus, allowing the town centre to be vibrant throughout the day and into the evenings. So, this town centre is open throughout the day and night.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Bridport to other town centres in Dorset including Dorchester, Lyme Regis, Weymouth, Beaminster and West Bay. There is also a bus service to Axminster and Dorchester rail stations. There are a number of car parks within and near to the town centre, providing circa 1,500 car parking spaces. This excludes car parking for customers only.
Potential Development Sites	Reoccupation of vacant units, and infilling sites should they arise. Land at Rope Walks and Coach Station Car Park have previously been identified as the preferred location for future expansion of the town centre area.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Bridport town centre has a wide range of shops, facilities and professional and financial services. The town's weekly markets include stalls selling fresh food and antiques. The town also has venues that host many cultural events. Bridport has a wider reach than a typical local centre of a similar size due to its variety of shops, services and facilities. The town has a range of public houses, bars, and restaurants that open at nighttime, which ensures visitors use the town centre beyond 6pm. Although the vacancy rate is lower, the vacant floorspace is quite large and the reoccupation for town centre type uses or residential use should be explored further.



Retail Survey 2023/24

Bridport

- Town Centre boundary
- B2 General industrial
- Ea Retail not hot food
- Eb Restaurant / cafe
- Ec Financial / professional services
- Ee Medical or health services
- Ef Creche / day nursery / day centre
- Eg Office / light industry
- F1 Learning / non-residential institutions
- F2 Local Community
- SG Sui generis
- Vacant
- Other buildings

Scale (at A3)
1:2,000



© Crown copyright and database rights 2025
AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.



6. Bridport (West Bay) Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

West Bay is a charming seaside harbour located just a mile from Bridport. It is located on one of the most dramatic stretches of the Jurassic Coast. It is set within a stunning landscape with important views from the cliff tops surrounding the village. There is a harbour at the centre of the settlement which provides moorings for both commercial and leisure craft. The centre also functions as a seaside resort, with holiday park sites and other tourist accommodation. Shops scattered in between the seaside cafes, restaurants and pubs make this a popular tourist destination for visitors all year round.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	2	3.6	9.7	Lower	240
Comparison	11	19.6	29	Lower	1,291
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	1	1.8	9	Lower	26
Leisure, Community & Medical	35	62.5	27.6	Higher	3,843
Vacancy	0	0	14.7	Lower	0
Other Uses	7	12.5			242
Total	56	100			5,642

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	42
Multiple Retailers	1

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £200 per sqm
Offices	N/A

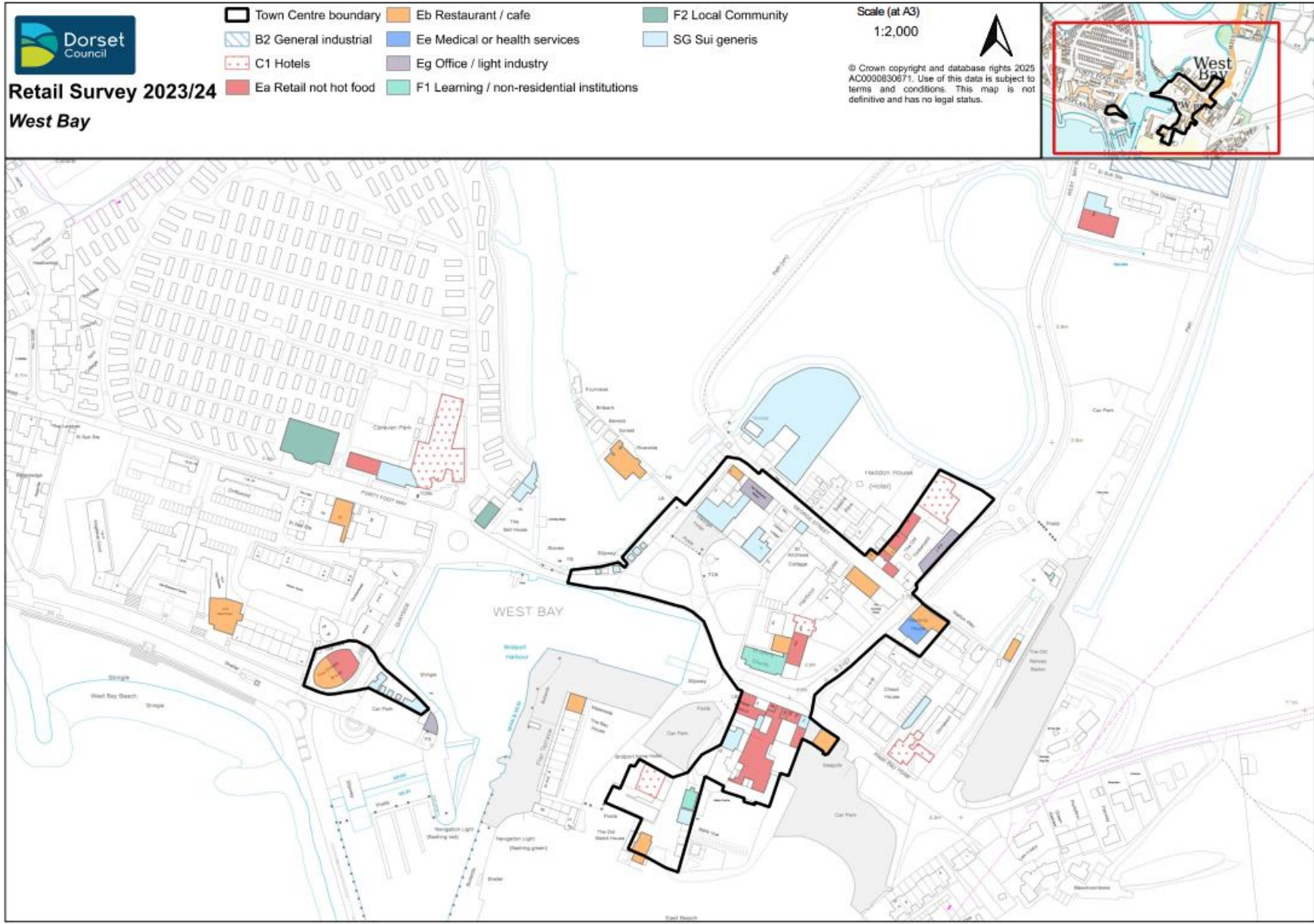
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though the majority of retailers in the centre are independent, the multiple retailer The Cornish Bakery also operate within the centre. Other well-known multiple retailers Spar and Nissa operate elsewhere in the settlement, outside of the centre boundary.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This local centre has a limited range of shops and services, which are focused around its function as a seaside resort. It is near to Bridport town centre (located circa 1 mile to the north) which has a broader offer of shops, facilities and services. For this reason, it has a higher proportion of cafes, restaurants, public houses, takeaways and other leisure facilities relative to other local centres in Dorset. A holiday park located close to the centre provides public access to swimming pools, amusement arcades and other facilities. Located in kiosks in the Central Mound area of West Bay are hot food takeaways, predominantly serving fish and chips and ice cream. This centre is open after 6pm which is evidenced by the cafes, restaurants and public houses, thus allowing the centre to be vibrant throughout the day and evening. However, for food shopping and to access other shops and services, residents would need to visit nearby town centres.
Accessibility	Public buses connect West Bay to other town centres in Dorset including Lyme Regis, Weymouth and Bridport. There is also a bus service to Axminster Rail station. There are a number of car parks within and near to the centre, providing circa 800 car parking spaces. This excludes car parking for customers only.
Potential Development Sites	Reoccupation of vacant units should they arise, with very limited infilling.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

West Bay has a limited variety of shops and services, and for a wider range, residents would need to travel to nearby town centres. However, as a tourist destination, it has plenty of restaurants and cafes, takeaways and leisure uses. Due to its location, with an attractive harbour and Jurassic Coast beach frontage, it attracts lots of tourists year-round. There are transport connections to nearby town centres, and as a seaside resort the local centre attracts visitors from outside the area due to its leisure offer and dramatic scenery. West Bay also has a range of public houses, bars, and restaurants that open at nighttime, which ensures visitors use the centre beyond 6pm.



7. Chickerell Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Chickerell is an area to the west of Weymouth. It is a local centre. There are a limited range of shops and services, with the main commercial uses located on East Street and North Square. It is also home to Bennetts Water Gardens (8ha). South of Chickerell is the Chickerell Link Road and Granby Industrial Estate, an out-of-town retail park. To the west of Chickerell is the Fleet Lagoon, which is part of the Jurassic Coast World Heritage Site.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	1	20	9.7	Higher	169
Comparison	1	20	29	Lower	60
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	1	20	9	Higher	19
Leisure, Community & Medical	2	40	27.6	Higher	68
Vacancy	0	0	14.7	Lower	0
Other Uses	0	0			0
Total	5	100			316

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	1
Multiple Retailers	2

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £195 per sqm
Office	N/A

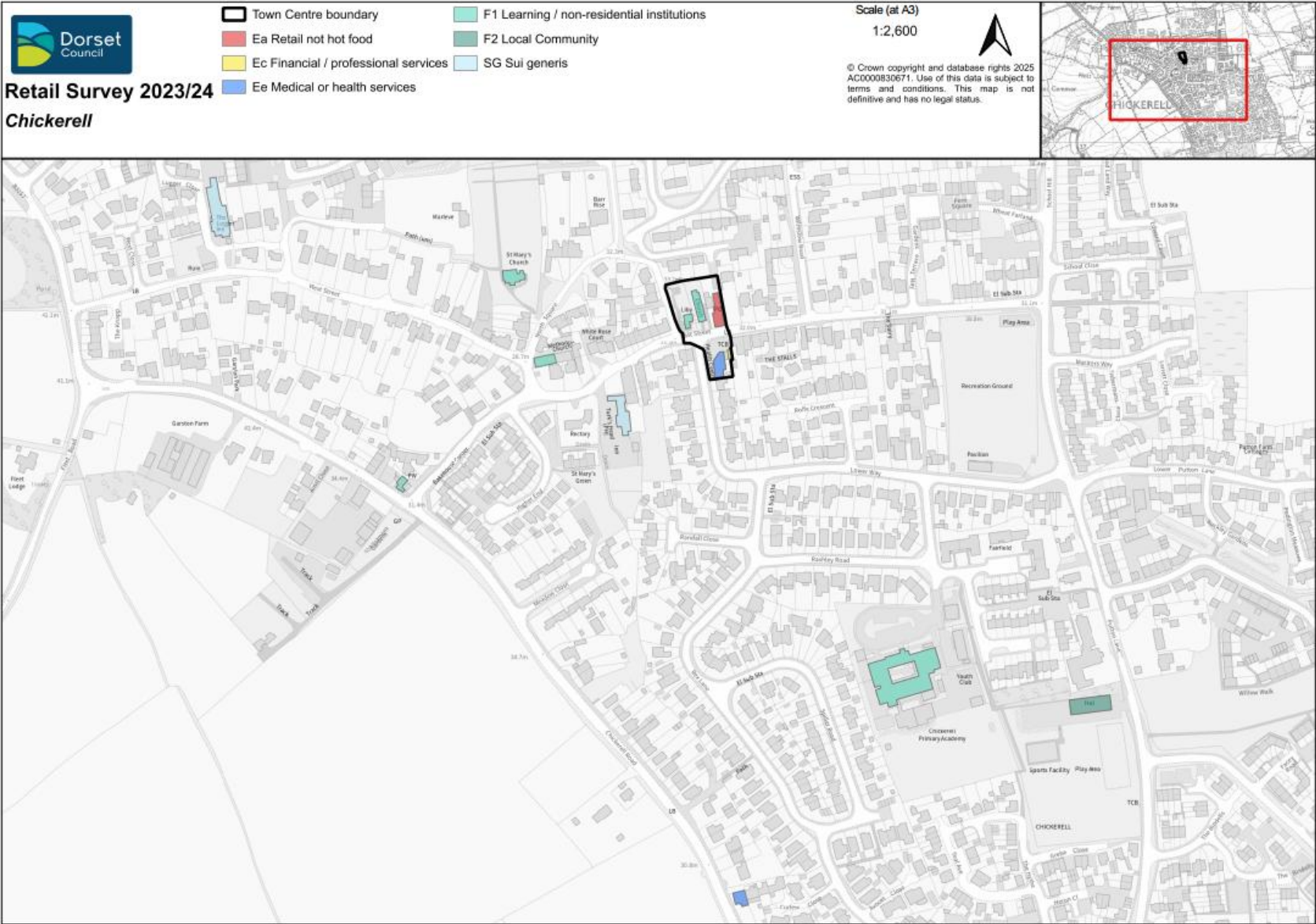
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	There are a limited number of retailers. This local centre is located near Weymouth town centre and out of town retail parks / supermarkets. Residents would rely on Weymouth town centre to access retail shops, services, leisure and other town centre type uses instead.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This local centre has a limited number of shops and services, and there are no cafes or restaurants. There are two public houses beyond the centre boundary, but little to suggest the centre itself has a night-time economy.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Chickerell to Weymouth, Dorchester and Bridport, with the nearest train station being located at Weymouth. There is no publicly accessible car parking in Chickerell local centre, however there is on street parking.
Potential Development Sites	Reoccupation of units should they become vacant. Due to Chickerell's location near Weymouth, it is unlikely that there would be capacity or need for this local centre to grow. It is worth mentioning that there is residential development under construction and proposed at Chickerell.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Due to its size, limited range of shops and services, and proximity to Weymouth town centre, the status of this town centre should be reviewed as it is currently designated as a Local Centre.



8. Corfe Castle Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Corfe Castle is a picturesque town located between Wareham and Swanage. Corfe Castle is overlooked by the ruins of the 12th Century Castle of the same name, which is perched on a hill between the Purbeck Ridge. The town is accessible by public transport and has Norden Railway Station (which inspired renowned author Enid Blyton). There are a number of traditional pubs, tearooms, cafes and restaurants. Corfe Castle is located near to Kimmeridge - a coastal town famous for fossils of marine sea life.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	3	27.3	9.7	Higher	124
Comparison	4	36.4	29	Higher	301
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	1	9.1	9	Higher	18
Leisure, Community & Medical	3	27.3	27.6	Lower	Unknown
Vacancy	0	0	14.7	Lower	0
Other Uses	0	0			0
Total	11				443

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	9
Multiple Retailers	1

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £220 per sqm
Office	N/A

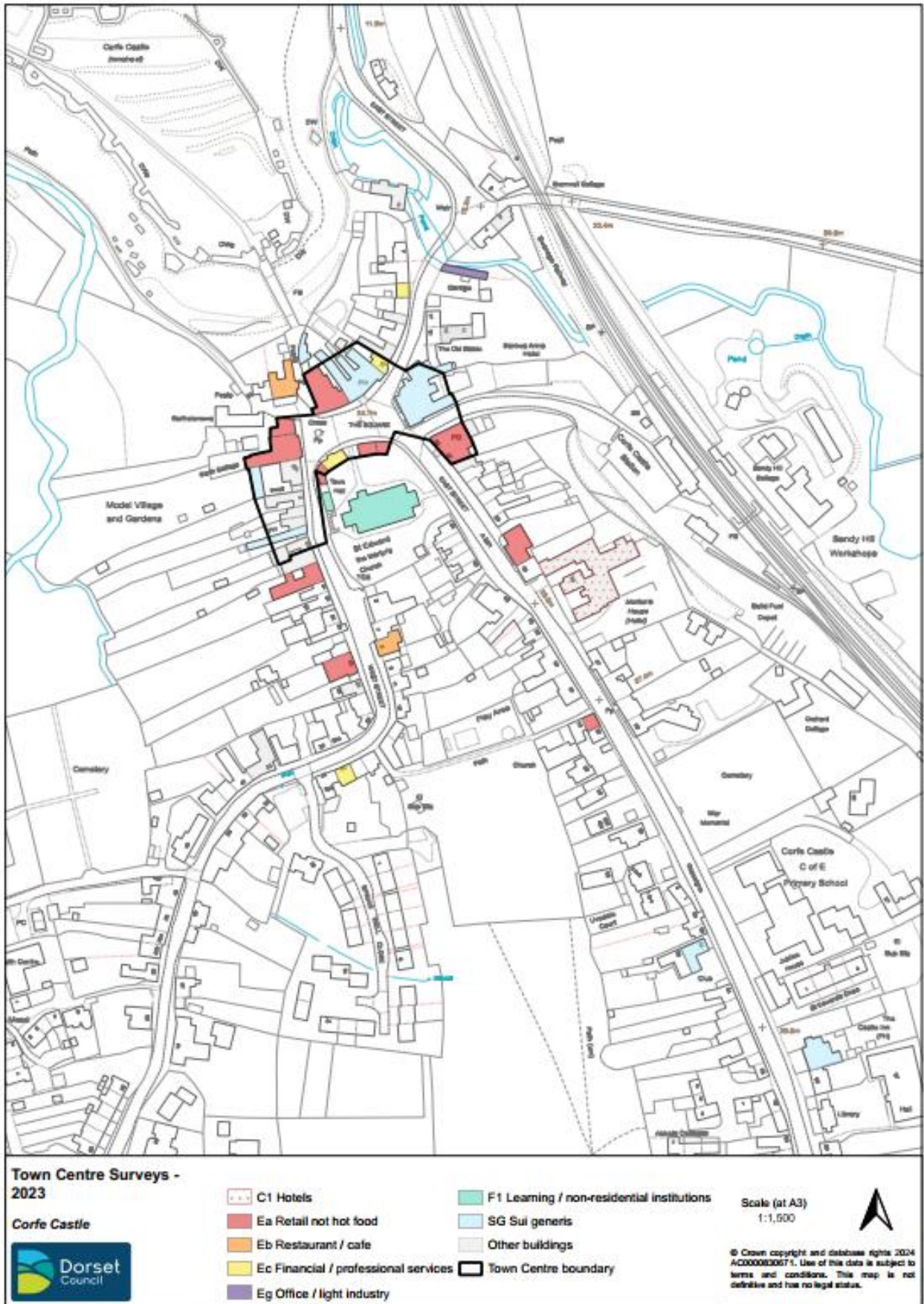
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Most of the retailers in this centre are independent retailers.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	There are two pubs within the centre boundary, enabling it to be open beyond 6pm. There are also additional hotels and self-catering accommodation beyond the boundary. Due to tourism, it would have a wider reach than a typical local town centre.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Corfe Castle to other town centres and villages including Poole, Swanage, Wareham, Dorchester and Weymouth. A Heritage Railway connects Corfe Castle to Norden and Swanage. There is limited on-street parking, but visitors can park at a distance from the town centre, at West Street and Norden Park providing circa 500 car parking spaces.
Potential Development Sites	No potential for development due to it being a Conservation Area and no vacancies.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Corfe Castle is a small centre but has pubs, enabling it to be open beyond 6pm. Due to Corfe Castle and additional tourist accommodation outside of the centre boundary, it attracts a lot of tourism and would have a wider reach than a typical local centre. However, for a local centre, Corfe Castle does not have many shops and services and residents would need to travel to nearby towns to access these.



9. Corfe Mullen Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Corfe Mullen serves as an important residential area for people working in larger towns such as Poole, Wimborne, Bournemouth, Ferndown and Southampton. The settlement is set on the edge of the conurbation of the Bournemouth, Christchurch, and Poole area and is surrounded to a large extent by the Green Belt. It retains a village identity towards the western fringe, where the conservation area covers the far north-western area known as Sleight.

Corfe Mullen benefits from churches, pubs, schools, shops, businesses, a village hall and leisure facilities. The main town centre type uses are located in a linear pattern along Wareham Road. There are two clusters of town centre type uses: located at the northern end of Wareham Road towards Blandford Road and then towards the southern end of Wareham Road near Albert Road.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	3	9.7	9.7	Equal	1,960
Comparison	3	9.7	29	Lower	1,305
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	8	25.8	9	Higher	611
Leisure, Community & Medical	13	41.9	27.6	Higher	2,875
Vacancy	1	3.2	14.7	Lower	60
Other Uses	3	9.7			52
Total	31	100			6,863

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	15
Multiple Retailers	6

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £420 per sqm
Office	Up to £225 per sqm

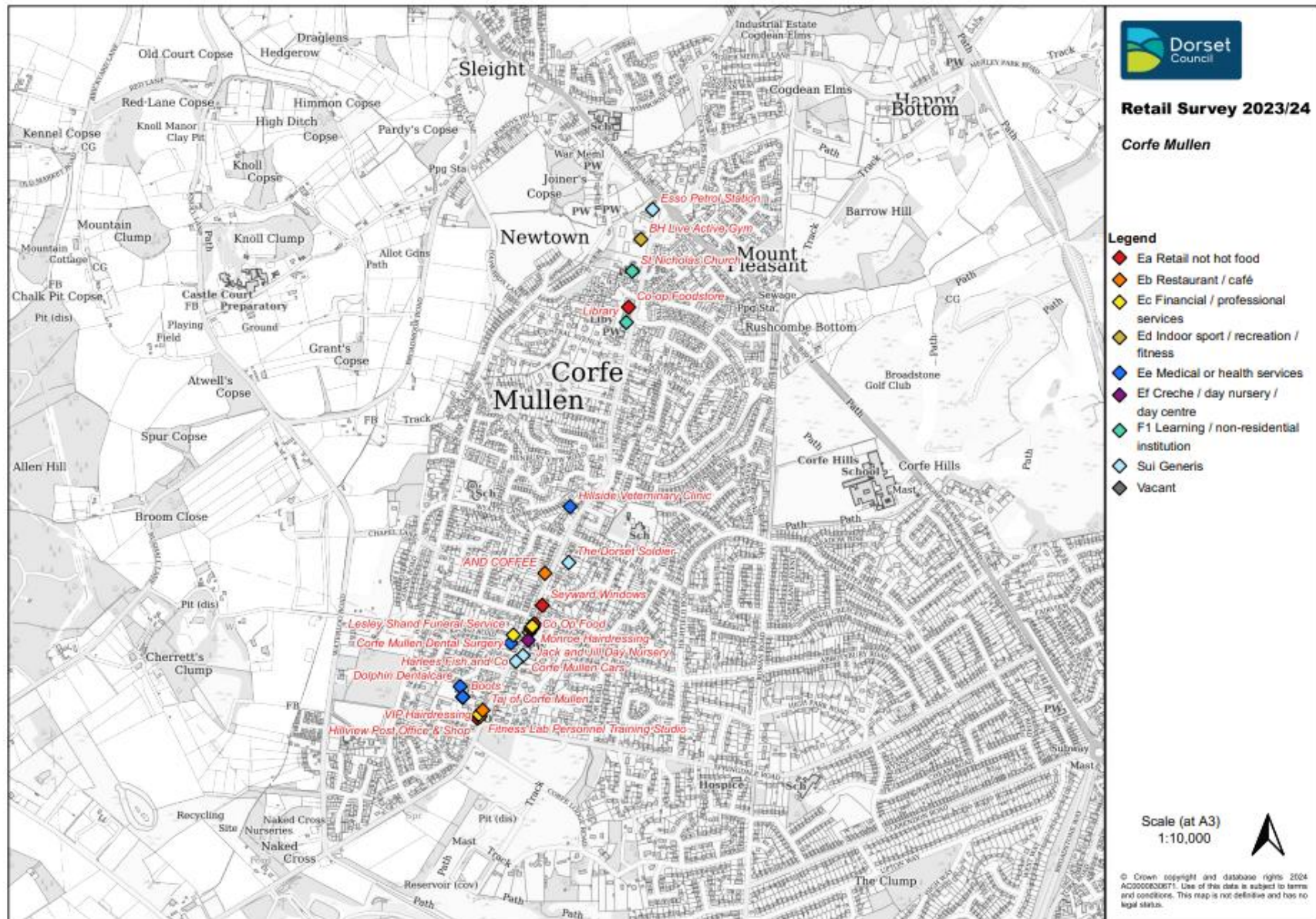
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Most of the retailers in the town centre are independent retailers, but there is representation from some multiple retailers including Co-op and a Boots pharmacy.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has a few restaurants and public houses, therefore enabling the town to be open beyond 6pm.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Corfe Mullen to other town centres and villages including Poole, Bournemouth, Wimborne and Broadstone. There is limited on-street parking. Some establishments do provide their own private car parking for customers only.
Potential Development Sites	There is no town centre boundary, and therefore development opportunities are available along Wareham Road, where existing commercial uses are located, should the market demand more town centre type uses. Consideration should be given to creating town centre boundaries so that edge-of-centre and out-of-centre can be identified spatially in future reviews of the Local Plan.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Corfe Mullen is settlement that meets the day-to-day needs of its local residents with its existing offer of town centre uses. Although there is no town centre boundary, the main town centre type uses are located in a linear pattern on Wareham Road with two clusters located north and south. For the new Local Plan, consideration needs to be given to the type of centre – given its size, scale and catchment and the need for a town centre boundary – so that edge-of-centre and out-of-centre areas can be identified.



10. Dorchester (Town Centre) Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Dorchester is the county town of Dorset. It is a historic market town with roots in the Roman period as well as earlier iron age settlements. The town centre area reflects this strong historical connection, being home to the Dorset Museum, the Shire Hall Museum, and the Tutankhamun Exhibition, as well as a historic Roman Town Centre area. This focus on heritage continues with other sites outside of the town centre boundary, including the Roman Town House and the Keep Military Museum.

For shopping, the town centre features many well-known high street brands and more independent shops located along the main streets of South Street and Trinity Street, within three 'Arcades': Hardy Arcade, Tudor Arcade, and Antelope Walk, and two tributary streets of Princes Street and Durgate Street.

Brewery Square is a recent redevelopment of a former brewery site and is an extension of the main town centre, linking it to the main railway station. It features a complex of restaurants, a cinema, and boutique shops alongside flatted residential development.

There is a weekly covered market at Fairfield car park, and the town hosts lots of festivals and events that take place throughout the spring and summer.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	16	3.8	9.7	Lower	5,267
Comparison	107	25.3	29	Lower	25,772
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	107	25.3	9	Higher	12,444
Leisure, Community & Medical	114	27	27.6	Lower	16,497
Vacancy	67	15.8	14.7	Higher	10,287
Other Uses	12	2.8			314
Total	424	100			70,581

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	190
Multiple Retailers	77

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £800 per sqm
Offices	Up to £240 per sqm

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, it still attracts well known retailers such as Waitrose, New Look, Costa Coffee, Boots, Crewe and FatFace.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has a range of retail and community shops, services, restaurants, cafes, and offices on the upper floors. So, this town centre has a wider reach than a typical town centre. It also has a range of public houses and restaurants that are open after 6pm. Vacancy rates in the town centre are an issue across the town centre area, but particularly within Antelope Walk and at the town centre extremities. Floor space vacancy amounts to over 10,000 square metres, with 2000 sqm of this being the former Marks and Spencer shop.

Accessibility	Public buses and two railway stations connect Dorchester to other town centres in Dorset and beyond, including rail routes direct to London and Bristol. There are a number of car parks within the town centre including Acland Road, Top O' Town, Trinity Street and Fairfield, providing circa 1,700 car parking spaces. This excludes car parking for customers only. There is the option of hiring mobility scooters in the town centre.
Potential Development Sites	There may be potential for intensification of some sites in the town centre boundary, as well as the reoccupation of vacant floorspace for town centre type uses and residential uses for vacancies on the upper floors. Land at Charles Street is a key town centre site to deliver significant new retail development with ancillary mixed uses. On completion, the site will form part of the primary shopping area. Land off Trinity Street will also be the preferred location for future retail expansion of the primary shopping area.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Dorchester town centre has a range of retail shops and services, restaurants and cafes, leisure and community uses and offices on the upper floors. It has strong rail connections to Weymouth, Poole, Bournemouth, Bristol and Southampton, and therefore would attract people outside of the area in other nearby towns and villages due to its leisure offer and good level of comparison shopping.

Dorchester does have a range of public houses and restaurants that open at nighttime, including the popular Brewery Square complex, which complements the town centre offer and ensures visitors use the town centre beyond 6pm. It is notable that this town centre has a higher than average vacancy rate with more than 10,000 sqm vacant.

As a key town centre in the Dorset Council area, the reasons for vacancy rates need to be explored, with consideration of whether the town centre boundary needs to contract, along with other potential economic interventions. The proposed expansion of the primary shopping area at Charles Street and Trinity Street should also be reassessed.



Retail Survey 2023/24

Dorchester

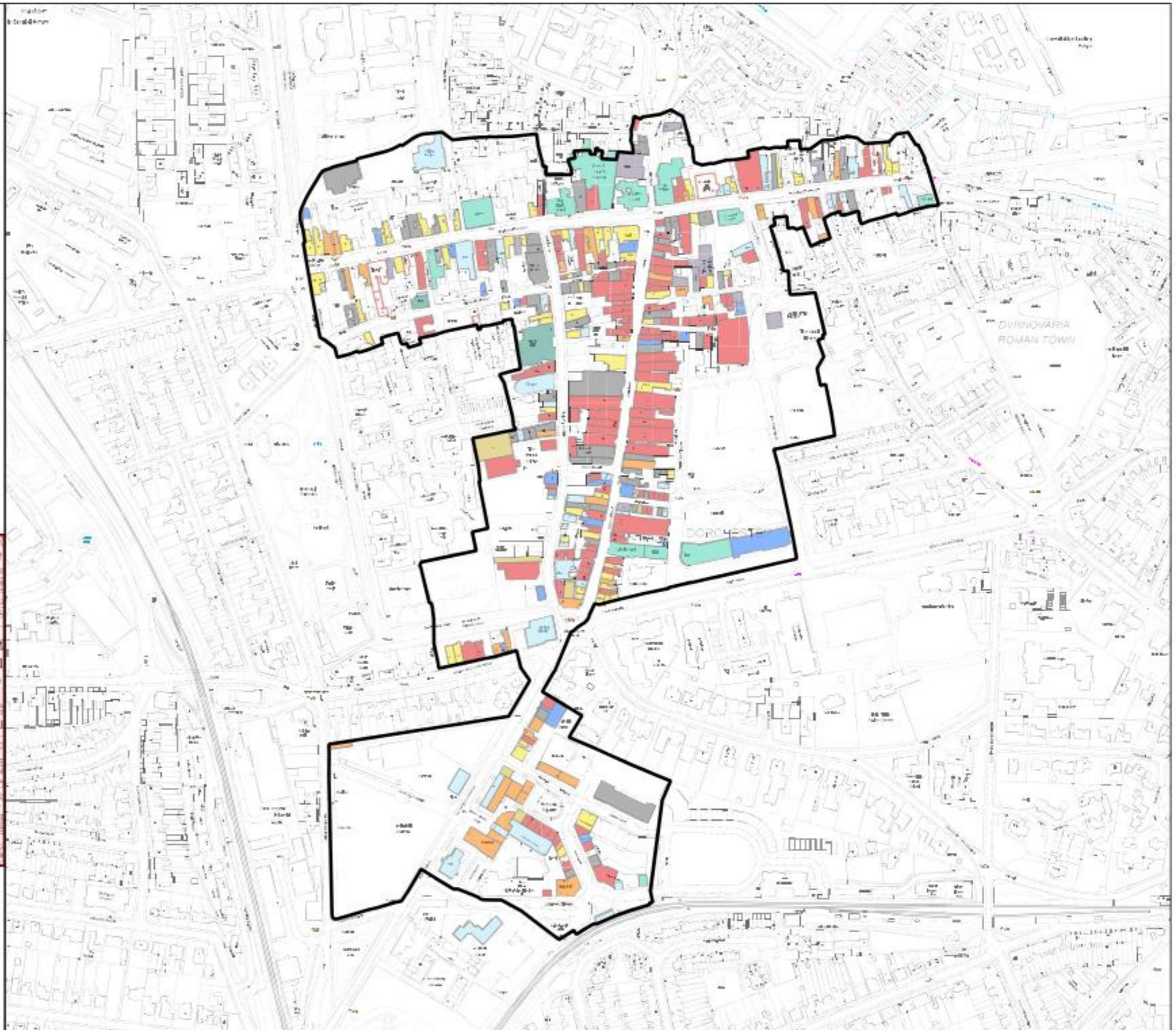
-  C1 Hotels
-  Ea Retail not hot food
-  Eb Restaurant / cafe
-  Ec Financial / professional services
-  Ed Indoor sport
-  Ee Medical or health services
-  Eg Office / light industry
-  F1 Learning / non-residential institutions
-  F2 Local Community
-  SG Sui generis
-  Vacant



Scale (at A3)
1:3,500



© Crown copyright and database rights 2024
AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.



11. Dorchester (Queen Mother Square, Poundbury) Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Poundbury is an urban extension to Dorchester. It commenced construction in 1993 and is nearing completion. It was built on land owned by the Duchy of Cornwall, and is an integrated, rather than zoned, development. Queen Mother Square is the key commercial hub of Poundbury. At least 20% of commercial floorspace is occupied by offices. There are also cafes, a restaurant/hotel, a garden centre and a spa (just outside the existing boundary). In August, it hosts the Dorset Food Festival.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	2	7.7	9.7	Lower	1,264
Comparison	6	23.1	29	Lower	3,229
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	12	46.2	9	Higher	2,839
Leisure, Community & Medical	4	15.4	27.6	Lower	257
Vacancy	2	7.7	14.7	Lower	1,386
Other Uses	0	0	0		0
Total	26	100.1			8,975

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	12
Multiple Retailers	2

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £230 per sqm
Office	Up to £175 per sqm

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	There are a limited number of retailers, but this is a key area for top up shopping and essential services. Residents would rely on Dorchester town centre to access a wider range of retail shops, services, leisure and other town centre type uses instead. Key multiple retailers situated in Queen Mother Square include Waitrose.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This centre has a limited number of shops and services. There is a limited number of public houses, cafes or restaurants, so this local centre has some activity beyond 6pm.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Poundbury to Dorchester and other local centres, with the nearest train station being located at Dorchester West. There is car parking available at Queen Mother Square.
Potential Development Sites	Reoccupation of vacant units. Poundbury is still under construction with potential scope for more retail shops and services.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Queen Mother Square has been previously proposed to be designated as a district centre, providing essential shops and services for local residents. However, residents would be dependent on accessing a wider range of shops and services in nearby Dorchester town centre. Interestingly, there is a larger representation of offices in this centre than typical. Due to its size and limited range of shops and services, and its proximity to Dorchester town centre, the designation of this centre should be reviewed. There is also an additional cluster of commercial premises around the Buttermarket, and it should be explored whether this area should also be designated.



Retail Survey 2023/24

- Town Centre boundary
- Ea Retail not hot food
- Eb Restaurant / cafe
- Ec Financial / professional services
- Ed Indoor sport
- Ee Medical or health services
- Eg Office / light industry
- F1 Learning / non-residential institutions
- SG Sui generis
- Vacant

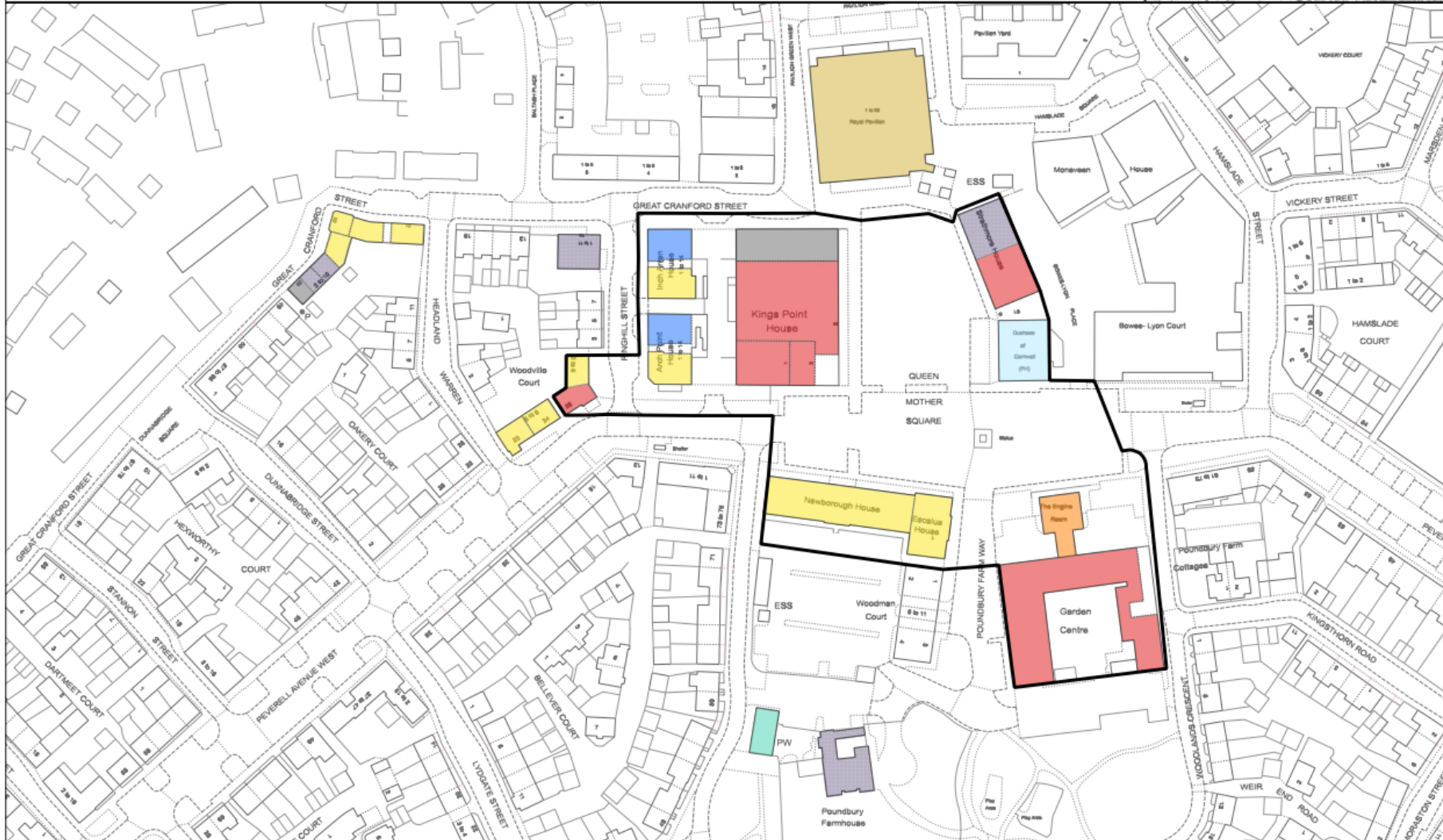
Scale (at A3)
1:1,250



© Crown copyright and database rights 2025
AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.



Poundbury (Queen Mother Square)



12. Ferndown Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Ferndown is a modern town located in eastern Dorset, surrounded by high quality, designated natural environment and close to the New Forest National Park. It is located just south of the A31 Trunk Road (part of the strategic road network), which provides direct access to Bournemouth, Poole, Winchester, London and beyond. It is well placed to connect with neighbouring settlements and major employment and interchange destinations such as Bournemouth Airport. The main shopping areas in Ferndown are Pennys Walk, Victoria Road and Ringwood Road. To the west of the designated town centre are a number of community facilities, including schools, recreation ground and village and community halls.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	7	4.3	9.7	Lower	460
Comparison	30	18.6	29	Lower	3,928
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	69	42.8	9	Higher	7,968
Leisure, Community & Medical	36	22.4	27.6	Lower	3,839
Vacancy	14	8.7	14.7	Lower	738
Other Uses	5	3.1			225
Total	161	99.9			17,158

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	70
Multiple Retailers	27

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £480 per sqm
Offices	Up to £260 per sqm

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, it still attracts well know multiple retailers such as Tesco, Iceland, Holland & Barrett and Boots. Most of the provision in Pennys Walk and Victoria Road is through units below 200sqm ⁴ , except for Tesco. There is a cluster of larger supermarkets and other retail on the north-eastern edge of the town near the A31, e.g. Lidl, Sainsbury's, Halfords, McDonald's, a furniture shop and a garage. There is also a Marks & Spencer Foodhall to the south-west, outside the central area of the town.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has a range of retail and shops, and has an Arts Centre – The Barrington Arts Centre – a key venue contributing to night-time economy. It has a limited number of cafes, restaurants and public houses. Therefore, Ferndown meets the day-to-day needs of local people and would have limited uses that would operate beyond 6pm. Due to the range of convenience supermarkets, Ferndown would attract visitors from outside the area. The Ferndown Town Centre Strategy (FTCS) [2017] identifies the need for more cafes, bars and restaurants, as well potential opportunities to support this.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Ferndown to other nearby town centres including Bournemouth, Poole, Wimborne, West Moors and Ringwood. There are circa 1,000 car parking spaces within the town centre, located at Tesco and Sainsbury's.
Potential Development Sites	There may be potential for intensification of some sites in the town centre boundary. The FTCS identifies both short- and longer-term opportunities for redevelopment, including in Pennys Walk, to enhance the night time economy, provide more outside space for events and an improved market, provide space for larger units over 250 sqm and enhance accessibility and pedestrian flows.

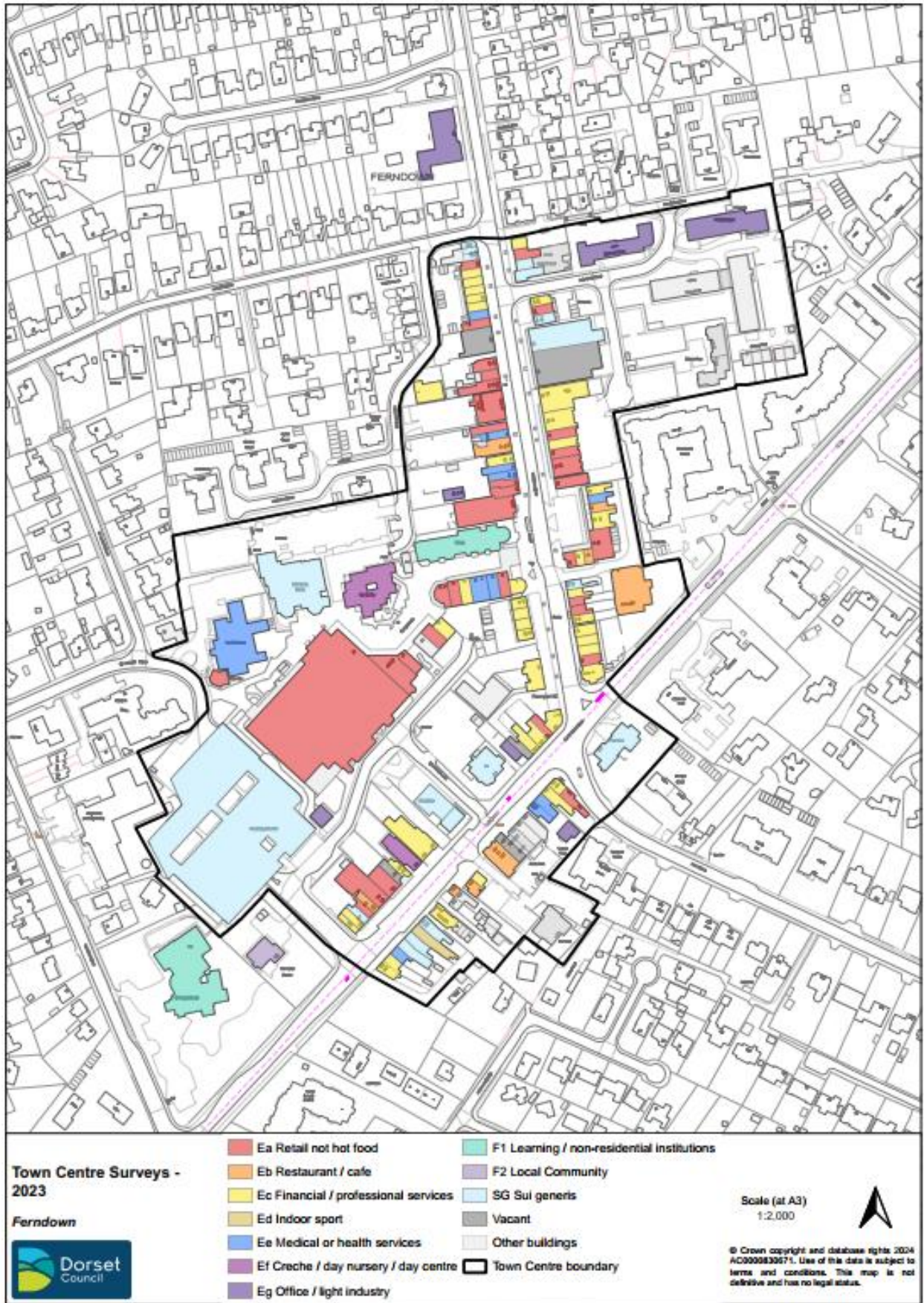
National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

⁴ Ferndown Town Strategy 2017

Conclusion

Ferndown has retail shops and services which provide for the day-to-day needs of local people, with some shops located edge-of-centre and out-of-centre. The edge of town cluster by the A31 likely attracts passing visitors and residents from nearby towns due to the wide range of its convenience offer. The Barrington Arts Centre and a limited number of restaurants and pubs enable the town centre to open beyond 6pm.

Interventions could be explored to improve the comparison retail offer, nighttime economy and community space in the town centre which would encourage visitors to venture further into the town centre.



13. Gillingham Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Gillingham Town Centre is a compact and diverse retail and service hub located in North Dorset. It features a mix of independent and multiple retailers, with a strong presence of service-based businesses such as hairdressers, beauticians, estate agents, and medical practices. The centre includes several supermarkets (e.g. Waitrose, Lidl, Asda, Iceland), convenience stores, cafés, and takeaway outlets, alongside comparison retailers like furniture shops, charity shops, and hardware stores.

The town centre also accommodates community facilities such as the library, museum, churches, and council offices, contributing to its role as a local civic and cultural centre. Retail units vary in size and use class, with a notable number of vacant units, indicating potential for regeneration or investment.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	7	4.6	9.7	Lower	7,729
Comparison	22	14.4	29	Lower	4,053
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	56	36.6	9	Higher	4,581
Leisure, Community & Medical	31	20.3	27.6	Lower	1,878
Vacancy	23	15	14.7	Higher	3,746
Other Uses	14	9.2			3,817
Total	153	100.1			25,804

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	69
Multiple Retailers	20

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for:	Rent
Rent for Retail	Up to £600 per sqm
Rent for Offices	Up to £105 per sqm

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation:	Gillingham Town Centre offers a varied retail landscape, with a mix of convenience, comparison, and service-based outlets. The town is anchored by several national multiples such as Waitrose, Lidl, Asda, Iceland and Costa Coffee, providing essential goods and services. Alongside these, a strong presence of independent retailers—including local cafés, beauticians, estate agents, and specialist shops—adds character and diversity to the high street.
Open Hours/ Availability/ Night-time Economy:	Gillingham has a modest but growing night-time economy. Pubs such as The Red Lion and The Phoenix Inn are open until 11:00 PM most nights, offering food, drinks, and social events like quizzes and live music. Restaurants including Viceroy Indian, Gillingham Tandoori, and Rose Café provide evening dining options, though late-night venues are limited compared to larger towns
Accessibility:	Gillingham is relatively accessible by both public and private transport. The town benefits from a railway station on the Exeter–London line, and local bus services connect surrounding villages and towns. Several public car parks are located within or near the town centre, offering short- and long-stay options, which support access for shoppers and visitors.
Potential Development Sites:	The Gillingham Neighbourhood Plan (2016–2031) highlights several key development opportunities in the town centre. The most significant is the Station Road Mixed-Use Regeneration Area, which could deliver around 200 homes, retail and office space, and a transport hub. Other opportunities include converting upper floors of High Street properties for residential use, redeveloping vacant retail units, and re-development of the former Co-op store and car park.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

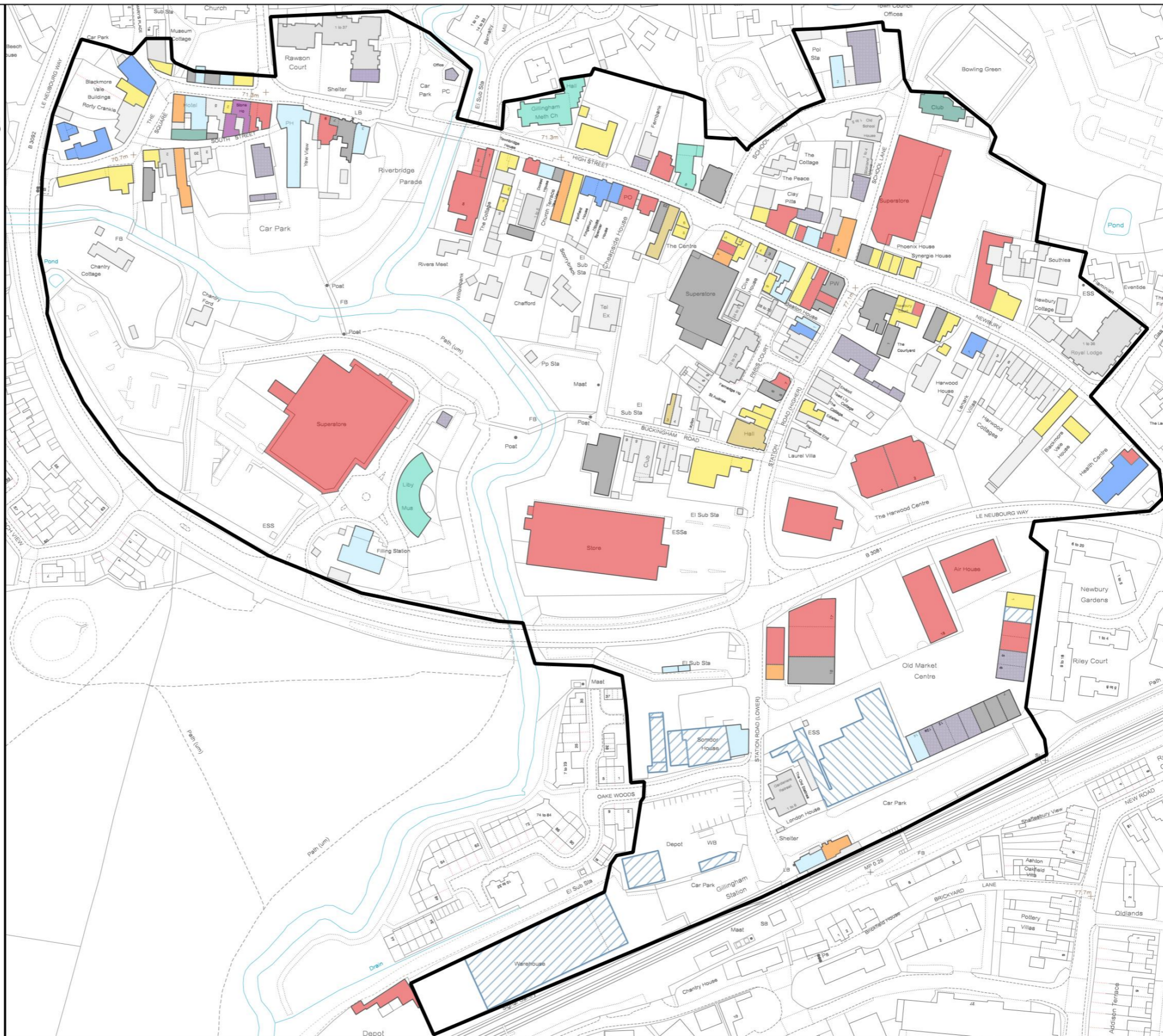
Gillingham town centre offers a variation of traditional and modern retail, with a mix of convenience, comparison and service-based outlets. The night-time economy includes pubs, restaurants, and cultural venues. Accessibility is strong, with a mainline railway station and proximity to the A303, supported by plans for a transport hub. Key development opportunities include the regeneration of Station Road area and other brownfield opportunities.



Town Centre Surveys - 2023

Gillingham

- Town Centre boundary
- B2 General industrial
- B8 Storage / warehousing
- Ea Retail not hot food
- Eb Restaurant / cafe
- Ec Financial / professional services
- Ed Indoor sport
- Ee Medical or health services
- Ef Creche / day nursery / day centre
- Eg Office / light industry
- F1 Learning / non-residential institutions
- F2 Local Community
- SG Sui generis
- Vacant
- Other buildings



Scale (at A3)
1:2,000



© Crown copyright and database rights 2024 AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to terms and conditions. This map is not definitive and has no legal status.

14. Lyme Regis Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Lyme Regis is a historic seaside town and fishing port with its own harbour, known as the Cobb. It is situated at the western edge of the Dorset part of the Jurassic Coast, which is a World Heritage Site, and is within the Dorset National Landscape. The port is named in the Domesday Book of 1086. Lyme Regis is famous for fossil hunting and as the home of Mary Anning. The Lyme Regis Museum and the Annual Fossil Festival celebrate this heritage. It is also home to the Marine Theatre, Lyme Regis Marine Aquarium and Langmoor and Lister Gardens (which include tennis and mini golf facilities and a sculpture trail), overlooked by the Alexandra Hotel. The beach and pastel coloured beach huts add to the appeal of the town, which is a popular holiday destination. There are a high number of holiday lets and guest houses in Lyme Regis for tourists, reflected in the high proportion of units in the Leisure, Community Space and Medical category.

The main shopping areas are located along Broad Street, Silver Street, Church Street and Coombe Street. The Town Mill is an attractive addition to the town comprising of a restored water mill and buildings set within the artisan quarter of Lyme. There is the working water mill and shop, as well as an art gallery, creative and artisan businesses, a micro-brewery and food outlets.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	11	7.7	9.7	Lower	1,345
Comparison	42	29.6	29	Higher	3,254
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	15	10.5	9	Higher	723
Leisure, Community & Medical	62	43.6	27.6	Higher	1,868
Vacancy	7	4.9	14.7	Lower	176
Other Uses	5	3.5			53
Total	142	99.8			7,419

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	75
Multiple Retailers	12

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £440 per sqm
Office	Up to £325 per sqm

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, it still attracts well known multiple retailers such as FatFace, Seasalt and Tesco.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has retail, shops and services, restaurants and cafes, recreational uses and offices. This town centre comprises of more tourist accommodation than is typical for a town centre of this type and size. For this reason, it has a wider reach than a typical town centre. It also has a number of public houses and restaurants that are open at night-time, therefore ensuring that this town centre is open beyond 6pm.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Lyme Regis to larger towns such as Dorchester, Bridport and Weymouth. The town is served by the popular Jurassic Coaster double decker bus which runs all the way from Weymouth to Axminster. The nearest train station is located at Axminster. There are a number of car parks within the town centre including Woodmead, Holmbush and Charmouth Road, providing circa 1,000 car parking spaces.

Potential Development Sites	There may be potential for reoccupation of vacant units in the town centre boundary, but development potential is limited. Lyme Regis is located within the Dorset National Landscape (formerly AONB).
-----------------------------	--

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

This is a thriving town centre that has a wide range of shops and services operating during the day, and restaurants/pubs open in the evening, as well as hotels and holiday accommodation. The town centre mostly comprises independent shops and, due to the holiday accommodation, has a wider reach than a typical town centre.



Retail Survey 2023/24

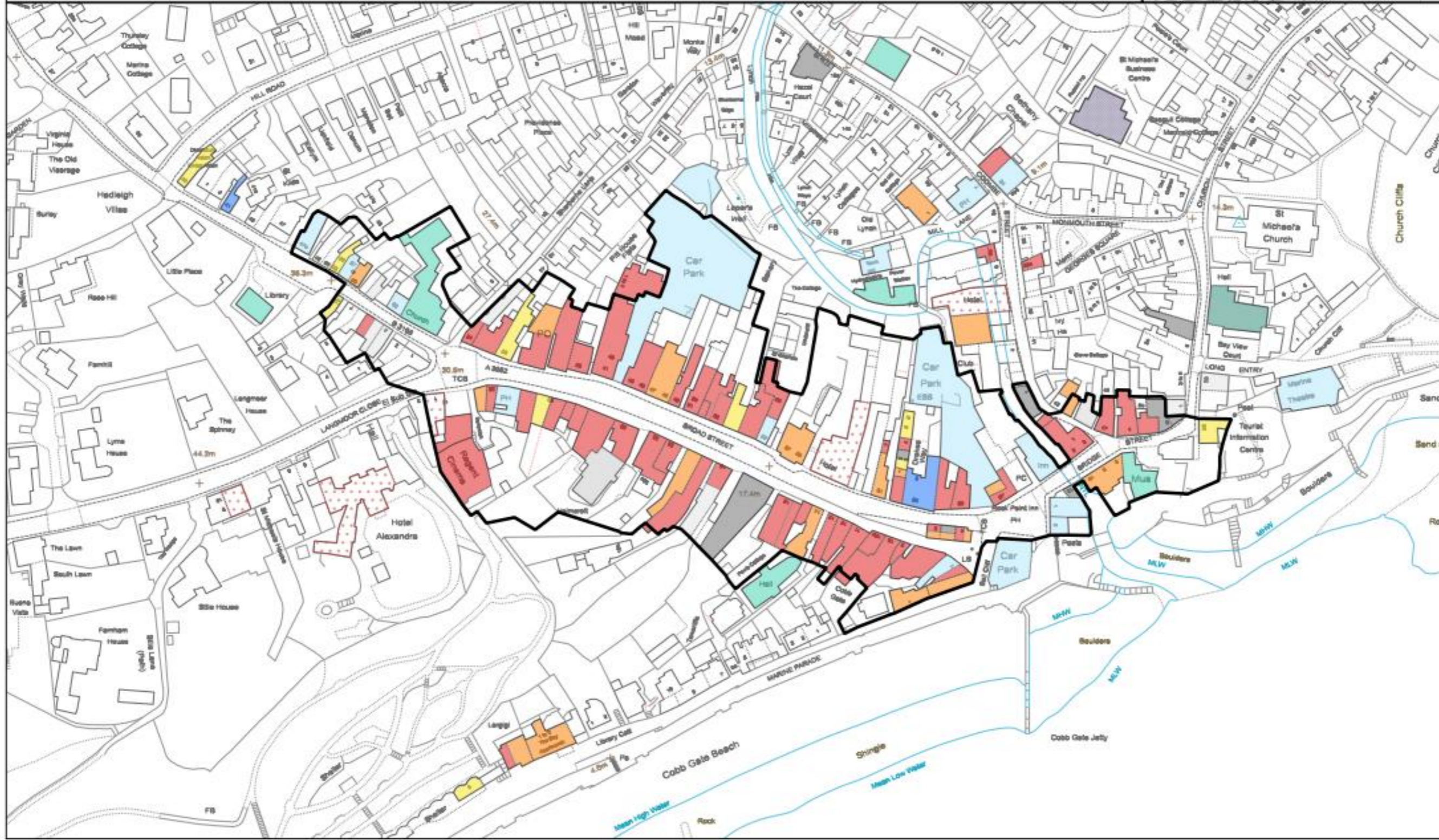
Lyme Regis

- Town Centre boundary
- C1 Hotels
- Ea Retail not hot food
- Eb Restaurant / cafe
- Ec Financial / professional services
- Ed Indoor sport
- Ee Medical or health services
- Eg Office / light industry
- F1 Learning / non-residential institutions
- F2 Local Community
- SG Sui generis
- Vacant

Scale (at A3)
1:1,500



© Crown copyright and database rights 2025
AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.



15. Lytchett Matravers Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Lytchett Matravers is a quaint local centre with facilities spread out across the area beyond the defined boundary High Street provides most of the town centre functions. It is a large village that dates back to the Domesday Book. It provides local shops and services for residents.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	2	40	9.7	Higher	323
Comparison	0	0	29	Lower	0
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	2	40	9	Higher	95
Leisure, Community & Medical	1	20	27.6	Lower	unknown
Vacancy	0	0	14.7	Lower	0
Other Uses	0	0			0
Total	5	100%			418

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	3
Multiple Retailers	1

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £200 per sqm
Office	N/A

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though there are independent retailers, it still attracts well know multiple retailers such as Tesco.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has a range of retail and community shops and services and is suitable for day-to-day needs. So, this town centre is a local centre and residents would be reliant on nearby Poole to access a wider range of retail shops and services. There is limited evidence of a nighttime economy.
Accessibility	Limited on-street parking outside the shop within the town centre.
Potential Development Sites	Occupation of vacant units should they arise.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

This is a small local centre that has a limited range of shops and services to meet residents' day to day needs. The status of this town centre may need to be reviewed.



Retail Survey 2023/24

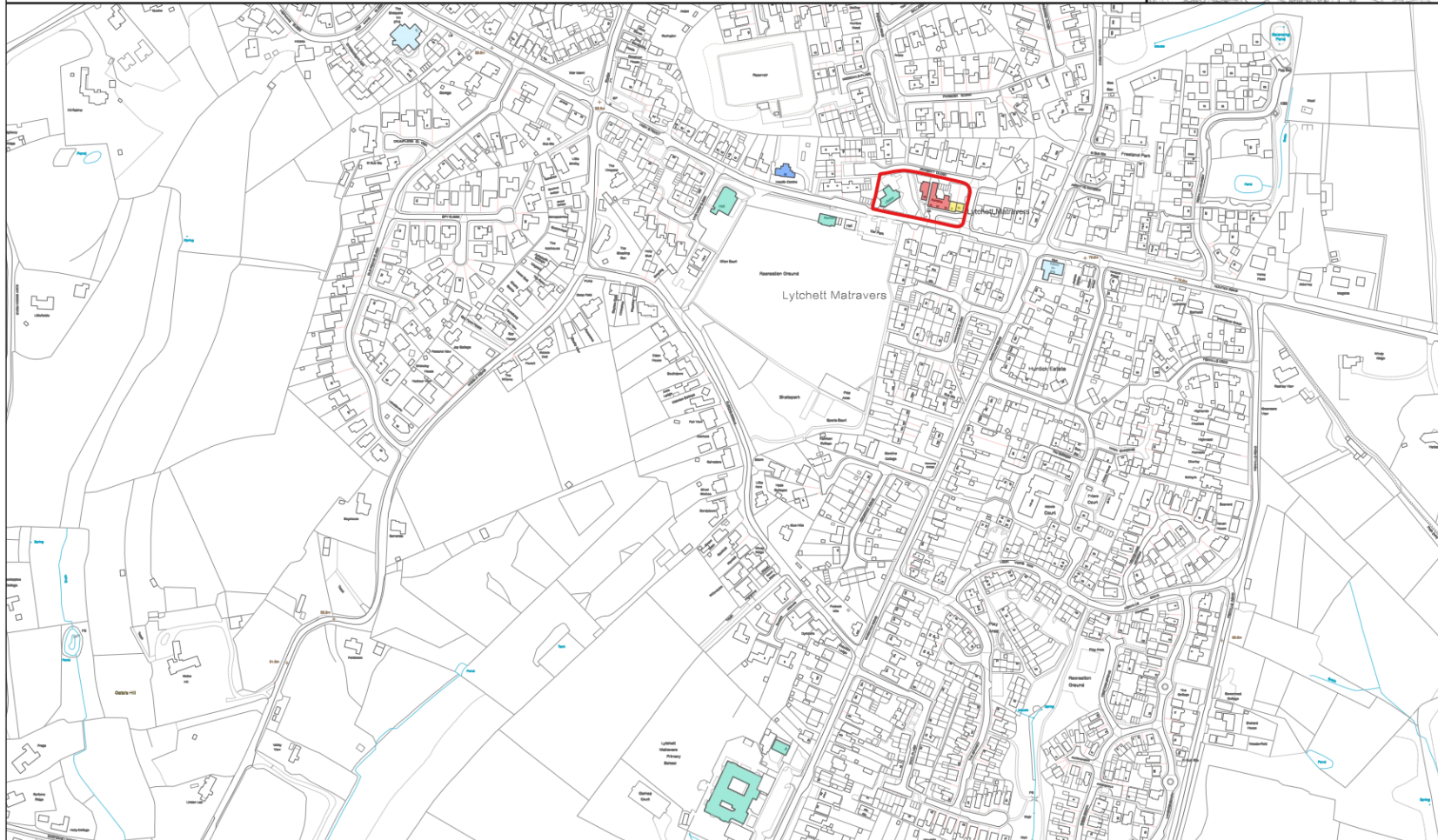
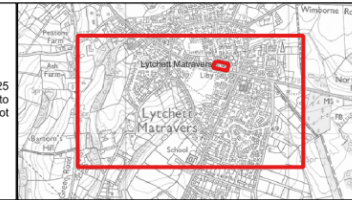
Lytchett Matravers

- Town Centre boundary
- Ea Retail not hot food
- Ec Financial / professional services
- Ee Medical or health services
- F1 Learning / non-residential institutions
- SG Sui generis

Scale (at A3)
1:3,406



© Crown copyright and database rights 2025
AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.



16. Marnhull Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Marnhull is a proposed local centre with a modest range of facilities. It includes two village stores, a post office, pharmacy, surgery, primary school, pubs, and a small parade of shops along Burton Street. Retail provision is mostly independent and focused on convenience and service uses, with limited comparison shopping. The village is near Henstridge Airfield, offering access to employment opportunities.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	2	14.3	9.7	Higher	121
Comparison	2	14.3	29	Lower	191
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	3	21.4	9	Higher	444
Leisure, Community & Medical	5	35.7	27.6	Higher	228
Vacancy	0	0	14.7	Lower	0
Other Uses	2	14.3			Unknown
Total	14	100			984

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	7
Multiple Retailers	2

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for:	Rent
Rent for Retail	Up to £200 per sqm
Rent for Offices	Up to £200 per sqm

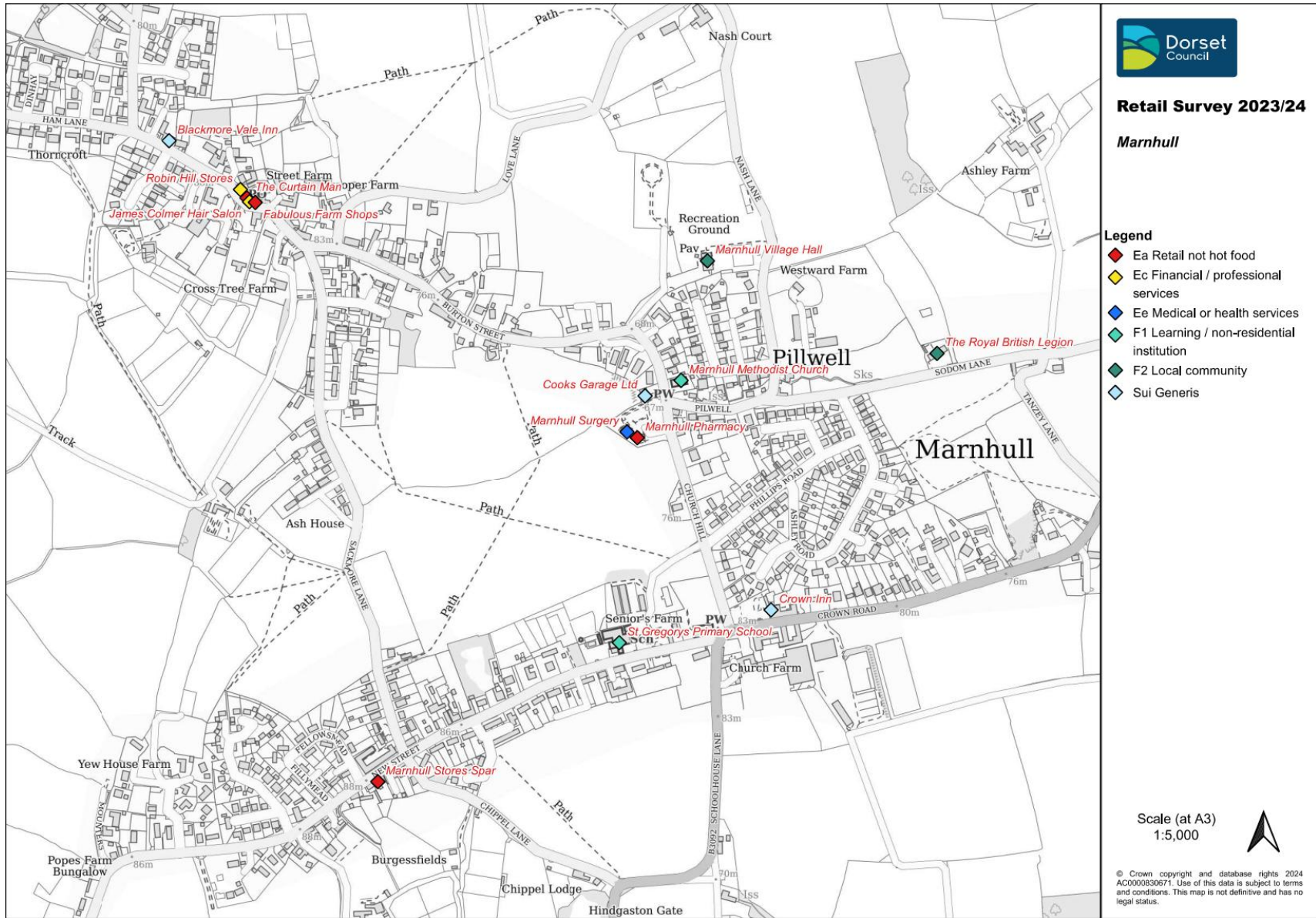
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation:	There is a strong presence of independent retailers in the village, particularly among convenience and service-based businesses such as the shop/post office, pub and hair salon. These independents contribute to the village's character and local economy. In contrast, multiple retailers are limited, comprising of only Spar and the Royal British Legion recreation club.
Open Hours/ Availability/ Night-time Economy:	Marnhull's night-time economy is modest but present, primarily supported by its two pubs—the Blackmore Vale Inn and the Crown Inn—as well as the Royal British Legion recreation club. These venues offer social and leisure opportunities for residents during the evening hours.
Accessibility:	Marnhull has limited transport links, primarily served by the X10 (Blandford – Yeovil via Sturminster Newton). Its rural setting means that car travel remains the dominant mode, with limited dedicated parking infrastructure.
Potential Development Sites:	Although the consensus of local opinion from the parish Survey was that a larger foodstore and other commercial units in a new village centre location was neither necessary or desirable, permission has been granted for this on land off Church Hill, by the surgery, as part of the Tess Square appeal. This will, when built, provide a food store with café of just over 800sqm sales area with office space above, plus a building subdivided into five units of about 100sqm each, for Class E uses.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion:

Marnhull's retail scene is shaped by a strong presence of independent businesses, reflecting its rural character. The night-time economy is modest, centred around two pubs and a social club, offering limited evening activities. Accessibility is constrained by narrow lanes, limited pavements, and infrequent bus services, making car travel dominant. Significant development is underway, including a mixed-use scheme (Tess Square), which will introduce new housing, retail, and community facilities. Due to its size, limited range of shops and services the status of this proposed centre should be reviewed and if considered appropriate a town centre boundary should be defined.



17. Portland (Fortuneswell) Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Fortuneswell is a settlement located on Portland. There are a limited range of shops and services, with the main commercial uses located on Fortuneswell Road. The settlement is located on the hillside known as Underhill, on the sharp incline to the top of the island. Due to the local centre being located on higher ground, it has stunning views down to Chesil Beach, Portland Harbour and over to Weymouth.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	1	4	9.7	Lower	261
Comparison	6	24	29	Lower	449
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	5	20	9	Higher	193
Leisure, Community & Medical	8	32	27.6	Higher	132
Vacancy	4	16	14.7	Higher	155
Other Uses	1	4			unknown
Total	25	100			1,190

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	16
Multiple Retailers	1

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £125 per sqm
Office	Up to £120 per sqm

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	There are a limited number of retailers, but this is a key area for top up shopping and essential services. Fortuneswell is located near Weymouth town centre, so residents would rely on this local centre to access a wider range of retail shops, services, leisure and other town centre type uses instead. There is also a supermarket at the bottom of the island.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This centre has a limited numbers of shops and services. Most of the non-residential uses are leisure uses. There are 3 public houses, one social club and a cafe, suggesting this centre is open beyond 6pm.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Fortuneswell to Weymouth and others local centres on Portland, with the nearest train station being located at Weymouth. There is 1 publicly accessible car park offering 61 car parking spaces.
Potential Development Sites	Reoccupation of vacant units. Due to the location of Fortuneswell, there are limited development opportunities nearby. Also, due to its proximity to Weymouth, it is unlikely that there would be capacity or need for this town centre to grow.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Fortuneswell is one of two key centres on Portland providing a range of shops and services. However, residents would be dependent on accessing a wider range of shops and services in Weymouth. It is evident by the front of the buildings that lots of former commercial uses have been converted into residential uses, and there are still a large number of properties vacant. This centre needs to be retained so that residents have access to key shops and services. However, the number of vacancies need to be explored further to understand if initiatives could be used for their reoccupation for much needed town centre type uses.

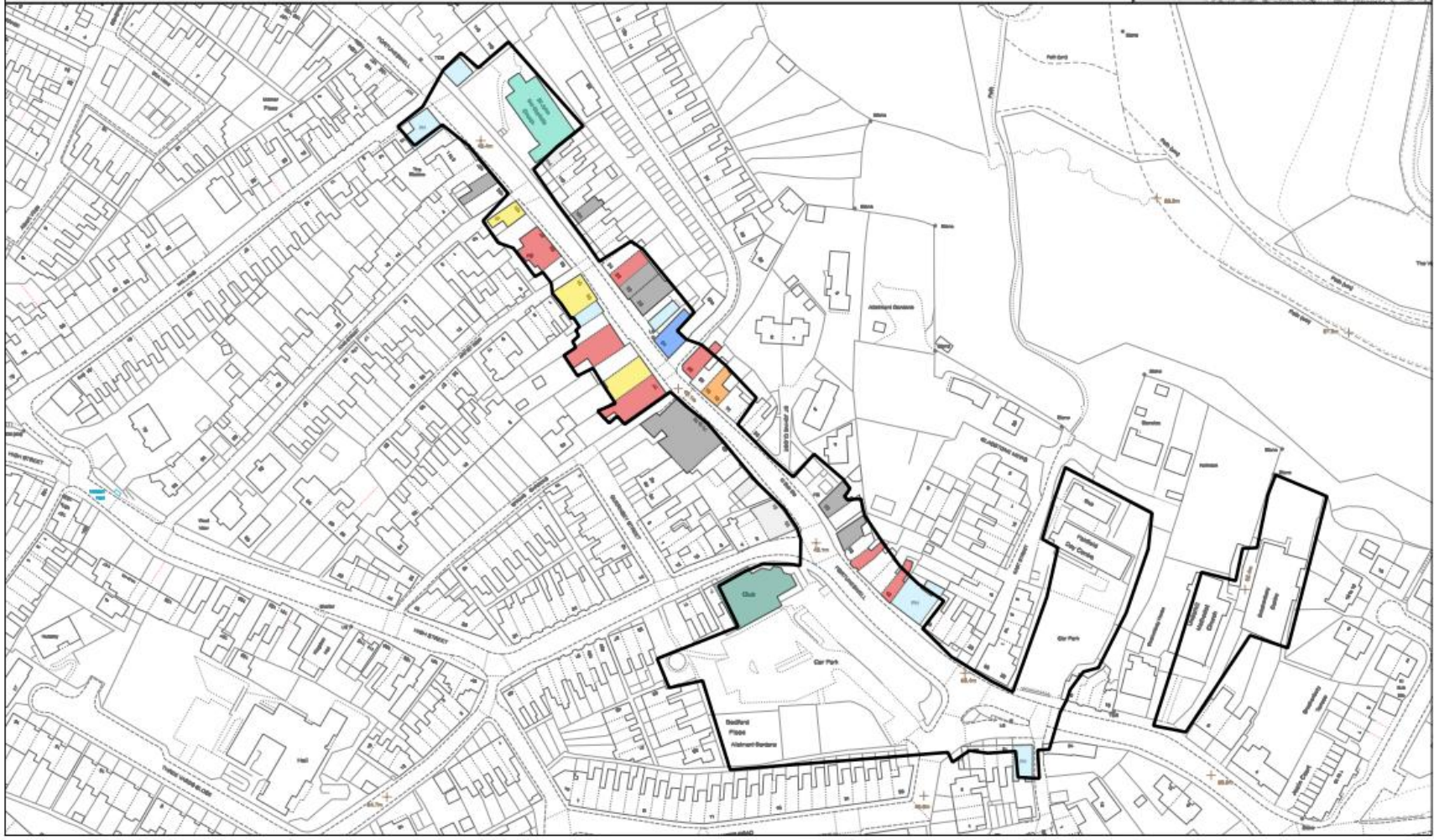
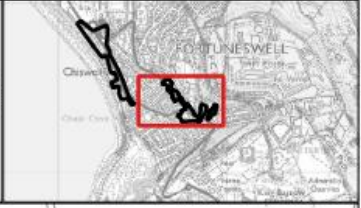


Retail Survey 2023/24
Fortuneswell

- Town Centre boundary
- C1 Hotels
- Ea Retail not hot food
- Eb Restaurant / cafe
- Ec Financial / professional services
- Ee Medical or health services
- F1 Learning / non-residential institutions
- F2 Local Community
- SG Sui generis
- Vacant

Scale (at A3)
1:1,250

© Crown copyright and database rights 2025
AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.



18. Portland (Easton) Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Easton is located on Tophill in Portland and is designated as a Local Centre. There are a wide range of shops and services providing essential services for local residents, and those across the wider community on Portland. Easton is the key centre on Portland. The main commercial areas are Easton Street, Easton Square and Straits. Easton Square provides a focal point with public gardens and play area. A Tesco Superstore is located to the south.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	3	4.7	9.7	Lower	3,979
Comparison	17	26.6	29	Lower	912
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	16	25	9	Higher	704
Leisure, Community & Medical	18	28.2	27.6	Higher	787
Vacancy	7	10.9	14.7	Lower	262
Other Uses	3	4.7			70
Total	64	100.1			6,714

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	39
Multiple Retailers	5

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £215 per sqm
Office	Up to £100 per sqm

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	This is a key centre for top up shopping, weekly shopping and essential services. Easton is located near Weymouth town centre, so residents would rely on this town centre to access a wider range of retail shops, services, leisure and other town centre type uses instead. Although there are a large number of independent retailers, the multiple retailers include Tesco, Co-op and Boots.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This local centre has a small number of cafes and public houses. There are 2 public houses, suggesting this centre is open beyond 6pm.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Easton to other local centres on Portland and Weymouth, with the nearest train station being located at Weymouth. There is one public car park providing 26 spaces and on-street car parking available only.
Potential Development Sites	Reoccupation of vacant units. Due to its proximity to Weymouth, it is unlikely that there would be capacity or need for this centre to grow.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Easton is designated as a local centre, providing essential and weekly shops and services for local residents. However, should residents require choice, they would be dependent on accessing a wider range of shops and services in nearby Weymouth town centre. The number of vacancies in the centre are high, and this perhaps should be explored if they are likely to be reoccupied. This is the key centre on Portland and It should retain its current designation as a Local Centre.



Retail Survey 2023/24

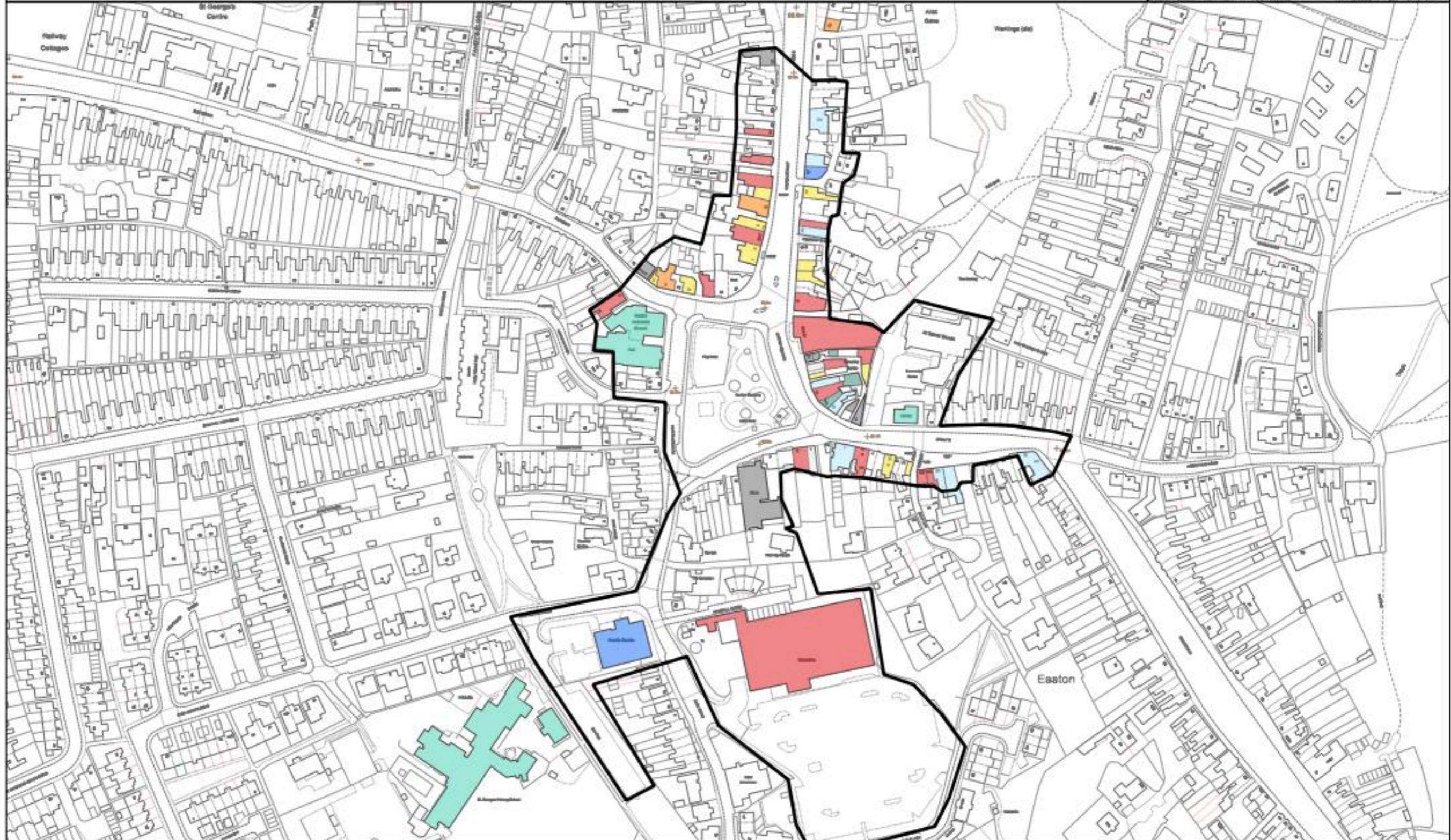
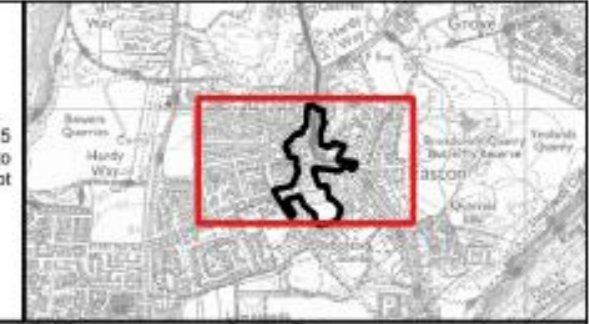
Easton

- Town Centre boundary
- Ea Retail not hot food
- Eb Restaurant / cafe
- Ec Financial / professional services
- Ee Medical or health services
- F1 Learning / non-residential institutions
- F2 Local Community
- SG Sui generis
- Vacant

Scale (at A3)
1:2,000



© Crown copyright and database rights 2025
AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.



19. Shaftesbury Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Shaftesbury is a small market town dating back to the Saxon period. Located about 215 metres above sea level, it is also one of the highest towns in England. The town is home to Gold Hill (known for featuring in the 1973 Hovis advert) and has magnificent views over Thomas Hardy's Blackmore Vale. Some attractions are the ruins of Shaftesbury Abbey, Shaftesbury Arts centre, Gold Hill Museum and an outdoor swimming pool. Shaftesbury also hosts the Gillingham & Shaftesbury Show. There are lots of independent shops located on Bell Street and the High Street. There are plenty of restaurants, cafes and bars in Shaftesbury, in addition to various sports and leisure activities.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	13	9	9.7	Lower	1,026
Comparison	47	32.6	29	Higher	5,423
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	39	27.1	9	Higher	3,021
Leisure, Community & Medical	29	20.2	27.6	Lower	2,418
Vacancy	11	7.6	14.7	Lower	2,044
Other Uses	5	3.5			90
Total	144	100			14,022

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	84
Multiple Retailers	21

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £320 per sqm
Offices	Up to £320 per sqm

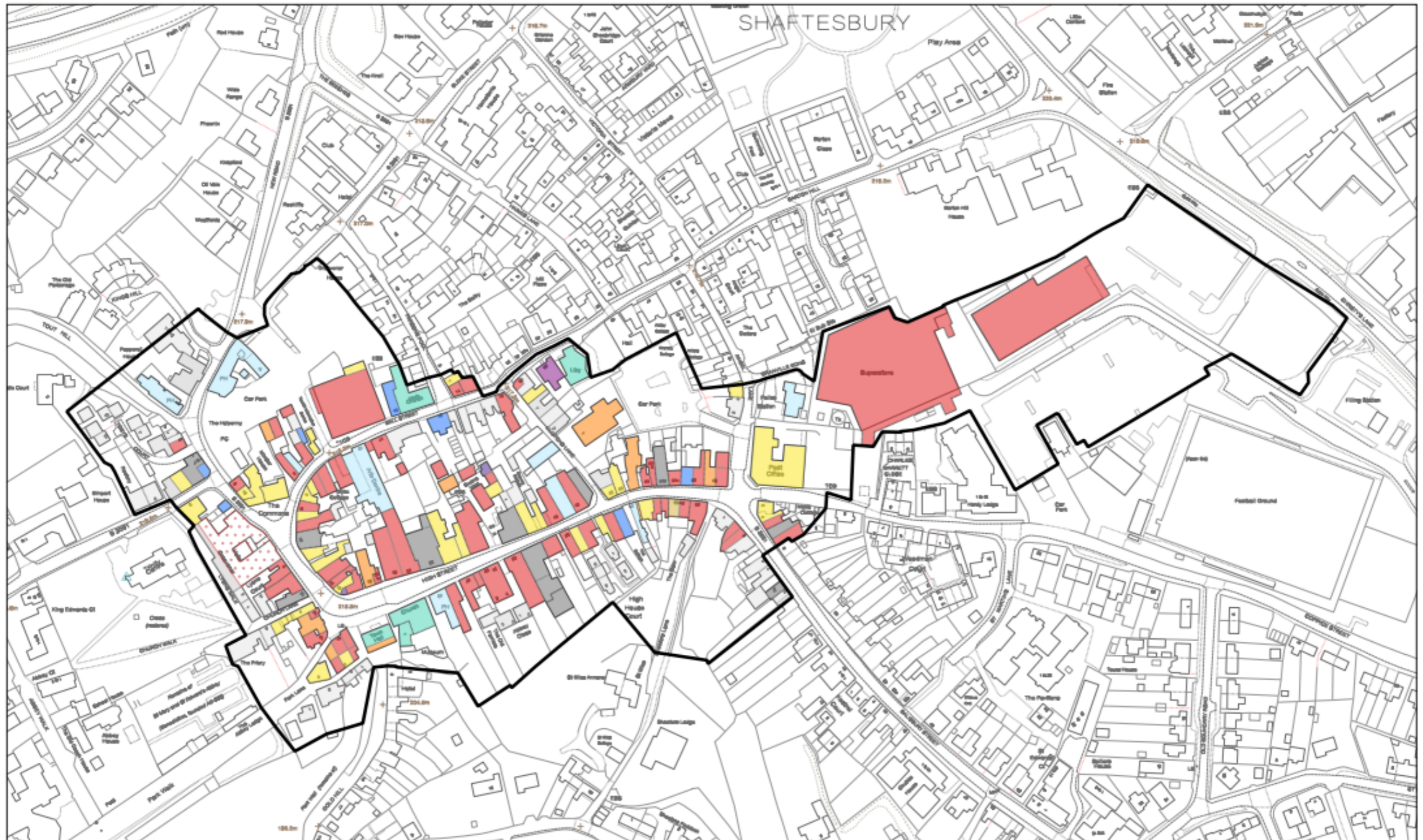
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, it still attracts well know multiple retailers such as Morrisons, Tesco, Holland & Barrett, Boots and Costa.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	Shaftesbury does have a few public houses and restaurants that open at night time which adds to the town centre offerings. This means that the town centre is used beyond 6pm.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Shaftesbury to other town centres in North Dorset. There are a number of car parks within the town centre including Bell Street, Barton Hill and Tesco, providing circa 560 car parking spaces.
Potential Development Sites	There may be potential for intensification of some sites in the town centre boundary. There is a vacant site between Lidl and the Tesco petrol station, fronting Christy's Lane (currently subject to a planning application for 41 retirement apartments, which has gone to appeal for non-determination). Otherwise, it is a dense town centre consisting of many smaller buildings, many of which are listed.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

This town centre has a range of retail and community shops and services, restaurants and cafes and offices on the upper floors. Shaftesbury provides shops and services to meet the day-to-day needs of its local residents, but would also attract people outside of the area due to tourism and convenience shopping only. Shaftesbury does have a few public houses and restaurants that open at night time, which complements the town centre offerings and ensures that it used beyond 6pm.



Town Centre Surveys - 2023

Shaftesbury



- | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| Town Centre boundary | Ec Financial / professional services | F1 Learning / non-residential institutions |
| C1 Hotels | Ed Indoor sport | SG Sui generis |
| Ea Retail not hot food | Ee Medical or health services | Vacant |
| Eb Restaurant / cafe | Ef Creche / day nursery / day centre | Other buildings |
| | Eg Office / light industry | |

Scale (at A3)
1:2,000



© Crown copyright and database rights 2024
AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.

20. Sherborne Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Sherborne is an attractive, historic town renowned for its medieval and yellow-stoned architecture. The stunning Grade I listed Sherborne Abbey is a focal point with its nearby Almshouse. The town centre has a high-end appearance, with a wide range of individually owned shops and boutiques, lots of tearooms, coffee shops, cafes, pubs, bistros and restaurants. The main focus is along the pedestrianised Cheap Street.

Sherborne has a reputation for art and antiques. It has a bi-weekly market and hosts film festivals and an annual Literary Festival. Concerts are held at Sherborne Abbey. Sherborne has several public schools with Sherborne School located in the town centre beside the Abbey. Sherborne's two castles are located just outside the town.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	10	5.7	9.7	Lower	3,549
Comparison	70	40	29	Higher	9,333
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	49	28	9	Higher	4,311
Leisure, Community & Medical	34	19.5	27.6	Lower	2,665
Vacancy	12	6.9	14.7	Lower	1,122
Other Uses	0	0			0
Total	175	100.1			20,980

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	100
Multiple Retailers	32

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £475 per sqm
Offices	Up to £490 per sqm

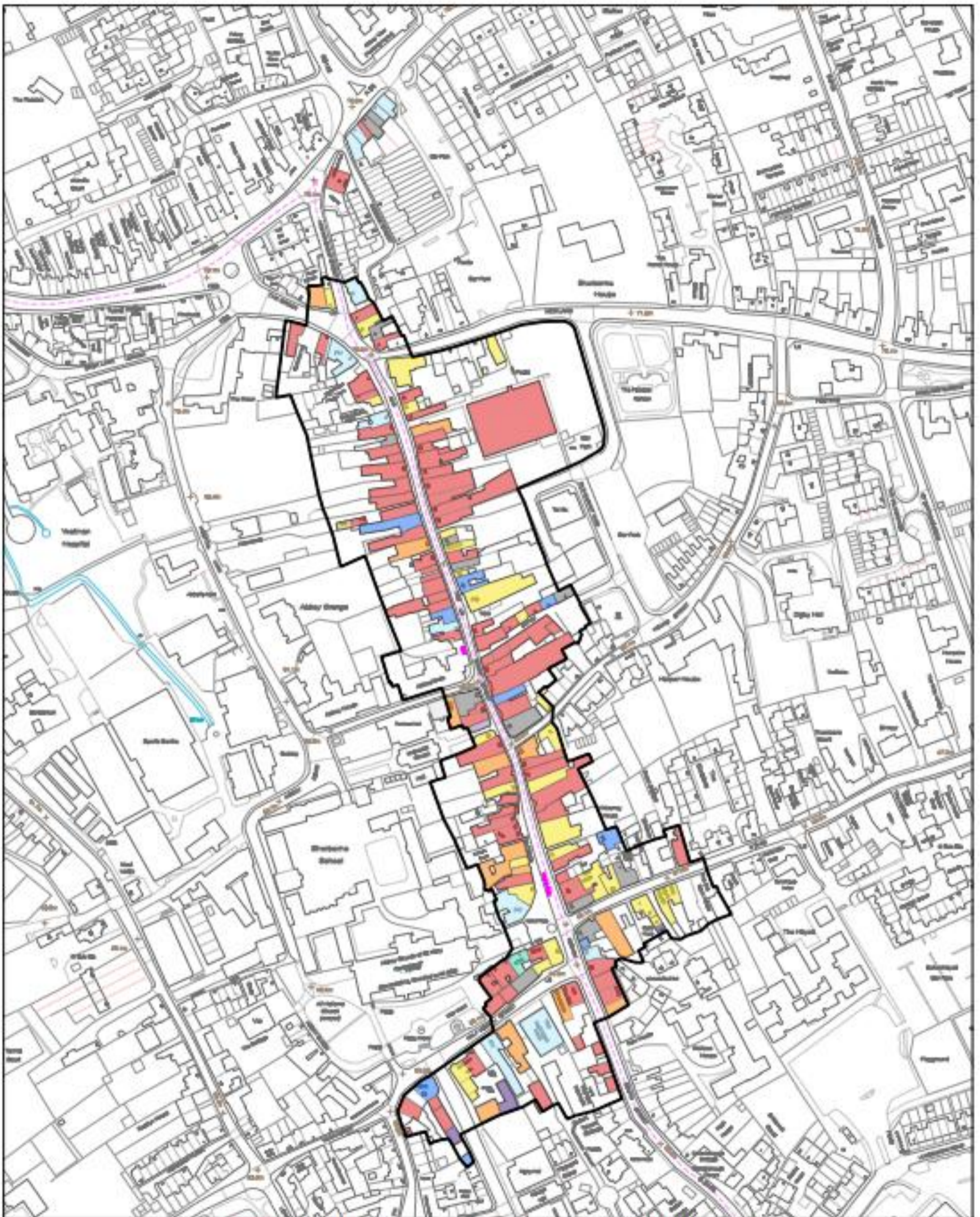
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, it still attracts well known multiple retailers such as Joules, Waitrose, Crew, FatFace and Costa Coffee.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has a range of retail shops and services, restaurants, cafes, leisure and offices on the upper floors. Due to the number of professional and financial services and types of multiple retailer this town centre attracts, it would have a wider reach than a typical local town centre. Sherborne also has several public houses and restaurants that are open after 6pm.
Accessibility	Sherborne railway station is located on the Exeter to London Waterloo mainline, giving it good connectivity. Public buses connect Sherborne to other town centres including Blandford, Dorchester, Yeovil and Wincanton. There are a number of car parks within the town centre including Sherborne Rail Station, Old Market Yard and Culverhayes, providing circa 570 car parking spaces.
Potential Development Sites	There may be potential for intensification of some sites in the town centre boundary. Land at Newland Car Park North and South are currently the preferred locations for future expansion of the town centre area.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

The town centre has a range of retail and community shops and services, restaurants and cafes, plus offices on the upper floors. Sherborne attracts higher end retailers, and it has a larger presence of offices than a typical local centre. Sherborne railway station is located on the Exeter to London Waterloo mainline, giving it good connectivity. Sherborne attracts people from outside the area due to tourism and its heritage and educational offer, comparison shopping and business. Sherborne has a small and vibrant evening offer which complements the town centre offer and ensures that it is used beyond 6pm.



Town Centre Surveys - 2023

Sherborne



- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Ea Retail not hot food | F1 Learning / non-residential institutions |
| Eb Restaurant / cafe | F2 Local Community |
| Ec Financial / professional services | SG Sui generis |
| Ed Indoor sport | Vacant |
| Ee Medical or health services | Town Centre boundary |
| Eg Office / light industry | |

Scale (at A3)
1:2,000



© Crown copyright and database right 2023
40000838671. Use of this data is subject to terms
and conditions. This map is not definitive and has no
legal status.

21. Stalbridge Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Stalbridge is Dorset's smallest town and is located close to the Somerset border. The town dates back to the Saxon period, and most of the buildings are made from grey limestone with stone tiled roofs. Stalbridge is a quiet town with a few shops and services, plus an independent supermarket, located along High Street.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	3	20	9.7	Higher	1,958
Comparison	3	20	29	Lower	271
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	2	13.3	9	Higher	78
Leisure, Community & Medical	3	20	27.6	Lower	89
Vacancy	4	26.9	14.7	Higher	240
Other Uses	0	0			0
Total	15	100.2			2,636

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	10
Multiple Retailers	1

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £170 per sqm
Offices	N/A

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	There are predominantly independent retailers operating in Stalbridge. This includes Dike & Son, an independent, family run supermarket with a café, dating back to 1851.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	Stalbridge meets the day-to-day needs of local people and would not attract many persons except those from nearby villages. There is one pub and two hot food takeaways, which shows that the town centre is opened beyond 6pm but in limited capacity.
Accessibility	There are two public bus routes connecting Stalbridge to Yeovil and Wincanton in Somerset, and to Sherborne in Dorset. The nearest railway station is located at Templecombe, 3 miles from Stalbridge, with access to the London-Plymouth line. There are less than 100 car parking spaces within the town centre, located at Burton Street and Station Road.
Potential Development Sites	There may be potential for reoccupation of some of the commercial floorspace in the town centre boundary.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Stalbridge has limited retail shops and services, including an independent supermarket, that provide for the day-to-day needs of local people. There is one pub, which shows that the town centre is opened beyond 6pm but in limited capacity. Stalbridge is a proposed District Centre, and its status should be reviewed.



22. Sturminster Newton Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Sturminster Newton is situated in the Blackmore Vale, between Sherborne and Blandford Forum. The town has a number of pubs and cafes and a selection of independent shops. The majority of shops and cafes are situated along Market Cross and Market Place (the town's historic centre), and along Station Road (where there are larger home and discount stores and a small supermarket). Sturminster Newton has a weekly market. The Exchange is a focal point for Sturminster Newton's cultural offerings, with shows, music and exhibitions on offer. A carnival and the Sturminster Newton Cheese Festival are held annually. Outside the town, there is the Sturminster Newton Water Mill, which was recorded in the Domesday Book, and a 15th century medieval bridge. There is a museum housed in a converted Victorian Chapel located in the town centre itself.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	9	10	9.7	Higher	1,665
Comparison	18	20	29	Lower	2,566
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	30	33.3	9	Higher	1,712
Leisure, Community & Medical	20	22.2	27.6	Lower	2,715
Vacancy	10	11.1	14.7	Lower	715
Other Uses	3	3.3			unknown
Total	90	99.1			9,373

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	46
Multiple Retailers	6

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £195 per sqm
Office	Up to £195 per sqm

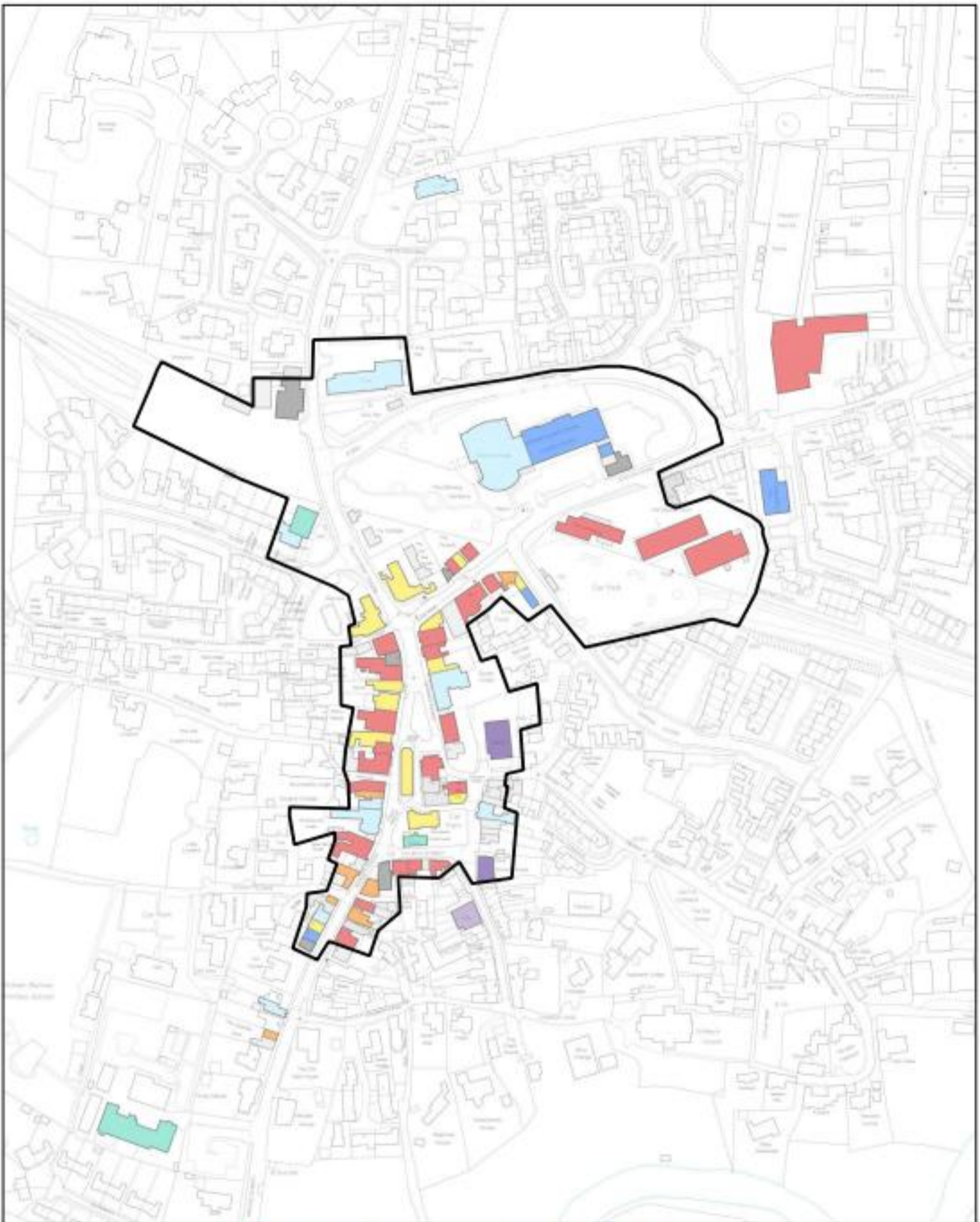
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Lot of the retailers in the town centre are independent. However, the town still attracts well known multiple retailers such as Co-op and Boots. There are also some charity shops in the town centre.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has a range of retail shops and services, cafes, leisure and offices on the upper floors. Due to the number of professional and financial services this town centre attracts, it would have a wider reach than a typical local town centre. Sturminster Newton also has several public houses and restaurants that are open after 6pm. The Exchange also offers evening entertainment and provides a cultural and arts focus.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Sturminster Newton to other town centres and villages including Blandford, Yeovil, Stalbridge, Shillingstone and Gillingham. These are daytime services and run roughly bi-hourly. There are a number of car parks within the town centre including Church Street, Riverside Meadows and Station Road, providing circa 120 car parking spaces.
Potential Development Sites	There may be potential for intensification of some sites in the town centre boundary. The Sturminster Newton Neighbourhood Plan has identified land south of Station Road, the Market Hill site and Clarkes Yard & adjoining land as the main sites with development potential.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Sturminster Newton is a small town with a good cultural offering from the Exchange. The town centre has a range of retail shops and services, restaurants and cafes and offices on the upper floors. Sturminster Newton would attract people outside of the area due to its tourism, business and entertainment offer. It has a larger presence of offices than a typically sized centre. The town's public houses, restaurants and The Exchange open at nighttime which complements the town centre offering and ensures that it is used beyond 6pm.



**Town Centre Surveys -
2023**

Sturminster Newton



- | | |
|--|----------------------|
| Ea Retail not hot food | F2 Local Community |
| Eb Restaurant / cafe | SG Sui generis |
| Ec Financial / professional services | Vacant |
| Ee Medical or health services | Other buildings |
| Eg Office / light industry | Town Centre boundary |
| F1 Learning / non-residential institutions | |

Scale (at A3)
1:2,000



© Crown copyright and database rights 2004
AC000030671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.

23. Swanage Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Swanage is a seaside town located on the Isle of Purbeck and is remote from other town centres. The town centre has kept much of its original Victorian charm with a heritage pier and steam railway, and clifftop castle at Durlston beyond. Swanage is home to an award winning golden sandy beach which is accessible to all visitors. The wide, sandy beach is backed by a promenade, and it has all the facilities you would expect for a traditional seaside resort; cafes and refreshment kiosks, toilets, showers, free drinking water refill points and colourful beach huts.

There are also amusements and a park. Diving, kayaking and sea fishing are also on offer. Swanage also hosts many events annually including Swanage Carnival, Swanage Fish Festival, Swanage Folk Festival, Swanage Blues Festival, Fairy Festival, Pirate Festival, Swanage Lifeboat Week and Purbeck Art Weeks Festival. For shopping, the town centre has lots of independent shops and cafes located along the main streets of High Street, Commercial Road and Institute Road. There is also a supermarket.

There are a number of pubs and several restaurants, plus a theatre that give Swanage a nighttime scene. There are a high number of holiday lets and guest houses in Swanage for tourists, reflected in the high proportion of units in the Leisure, Community Space and Medical category.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	11	4.7	9.7	Lower	3,469
Comparison	74	31.6	29	Higher	6,371
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	29	12.4	9	Higher	2,200
Leisure, Community & Medical	96	41.03	27.6	Higher	7,325
Vacancy	16	6.8	14.7	Lower	1,417
Other Uses	8	3.4			499
Total	234				21,281

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	138
Multiple Retailers	22

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £325 per sqm
Offices	Up to £325 per sqm

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, Swanage still attracts well known retailers such as Co-op, Spar, Boots and TG Jones (formerly WH Smith).
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has retail and community shops and services, restaurants and cafes, with offices or holiday lets on the upper floors. Swanage also has its own theatre / cinema, nightclub, museum and shops dedicated to water sports. So, this town centre has a wider reach than a typical town centre. It also has a range of public houses and restaurants that are open after 6pm.
Accessibility	Swanage is a remote town, located at the end of the Isle of Purbeck and with a reasonably long drive to larger towns such as Poole and to Wareham, where there is a main line rail connection. Swanage is well served by public buses, and the Sandbanks Ferry connects to Poole, although this requires driving to reach. There are a number of car parks within the town centre including Mermond Place, Central, Main Beach and Broad Road, providing circa 900 car parking spaces. This excludes car parking for customers only.

Potential Development Sites	There may be potential for reoccupation of vacant floorspace in the town centre. Growth of this town centre is constrained due to its location in the Dorset National Landscape. A Seafront Masterplan is being prepared to improve the seafront public realm and accessibility.
-----------------------------	--

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Swanage town centre has retail shops and services, restaurants and cafes and leisure and community uses, as well as offices and tourist accommodation on the upper floors. Swanage also has its own theatre/cinema, nightclub, museum and shops dedicated to water sports. As a historic seaside town opening up onto the beach and with a good tourism and cultural offering, Swanage is a tourist destination which attracts people from outside the area. The range of public houses and restaurants ensure that the town centre is used beyond 6pm.

Swanage has two main supermarkets: Co-op (Kings Road West) and Budgens (Station Road). These stores provide essentials and some local produce, but they are not large-format supermarkets. For bigger weekly shops or discount options, residents often travel to Wareham or Poole. Due to Swanage's relative geographic isolation, any need for a large-format supermarket should be explored further.

Dorset Council

Retail Survey 2023/24

Swage

- Swage boundary
- CA Retail/food/bev
- CB Restaurants / cafe
- CC Financial / professional services
- CD Medical / health services
- CE Office / industry
- CF Learning / educational institutions
- CG Local Community
- CH Bar / public house
- CI Other buildings

Scale 1:5000

© Dorset Council 2024. All rights reserved. This map is for information only and does not constitute a contract or offer of any service.



24. Upton Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Upton is designated as a town centre, located between Wareham and Poole. Upton Country Park is a short walk from the centre, with access to strategic play equipment, segways, art gallery and lots of walks. It also forms part of the Castleman Trailway, an old railway that connects to Broadstone, Wimborne and beyond. It is also located near Holes Bay, a walking route around Poole Harbour, connecting Upton to Poole town centre and Hamworthy. The main areas for retail shops and services are located at the Triangle, Moorland Place, Blandford Road and Poole Road. There is one key focal point for commercial uses, located on Factory Road.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	2	8	9.7	Lower	326
Comparison	2	8	29	Lower	174
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	8	32	9	Higher	498
Leisure, Community & Medical	11	44	27.6	Higher	1,075
Vacancy	1	4	14.7	Lower	32
Other Uses	1	4			0
Total	25	100			2,105

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	8
Multiple Retailers	4

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £190 per sqm
Offices	Up to £190 per sqm

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, it still attracts well known retailers such as Spar, Costa Coffee and Domino's.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has a limited range of shops, services and leisure facilities that serve local residents. Residents may have to venture to other nearby larger town centres for weekly food shops, as well as for other shops and leisure facilities. There are no public houses or restaurants, but a few hot food takeaways, suggesting there is no night time economy in Upton.
Accessibility	Public buses and cycle routes connect Upton to other nearby town centres such as Broadstone, Poole and Hamworthy. Upton is within walking distance of Hamworthy rail station, located circa 1 mile from the town centre. There is on-street parking only and private parking for customers.
Potential Development Sites	There may be potential for intensification of some sites subject to planning policy. Upton is a very sustainable location and therefore has the potential to grow.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Upton town centre provides limited range of retail shops and services, leisure facilities and community uses to serve the day-to-day needs of its local residents. There is minimal evidence that this town centre operates beyond 6pm. There is one key focal point for commercial uses on Factory Road, but most shops and services are spread along the key thoroughfares. It has strong transport connections to Poole via Hamworthy railway station, which also connects to Wareham, Dorchester, Bournemouth and beyond, possibly attracting people outside of the area. Therefore, it has the possible potential to grow due to its sustainable location, subject to other land designations. The status of this town centre needs to be reviewed.



Retail Survey 2023/24

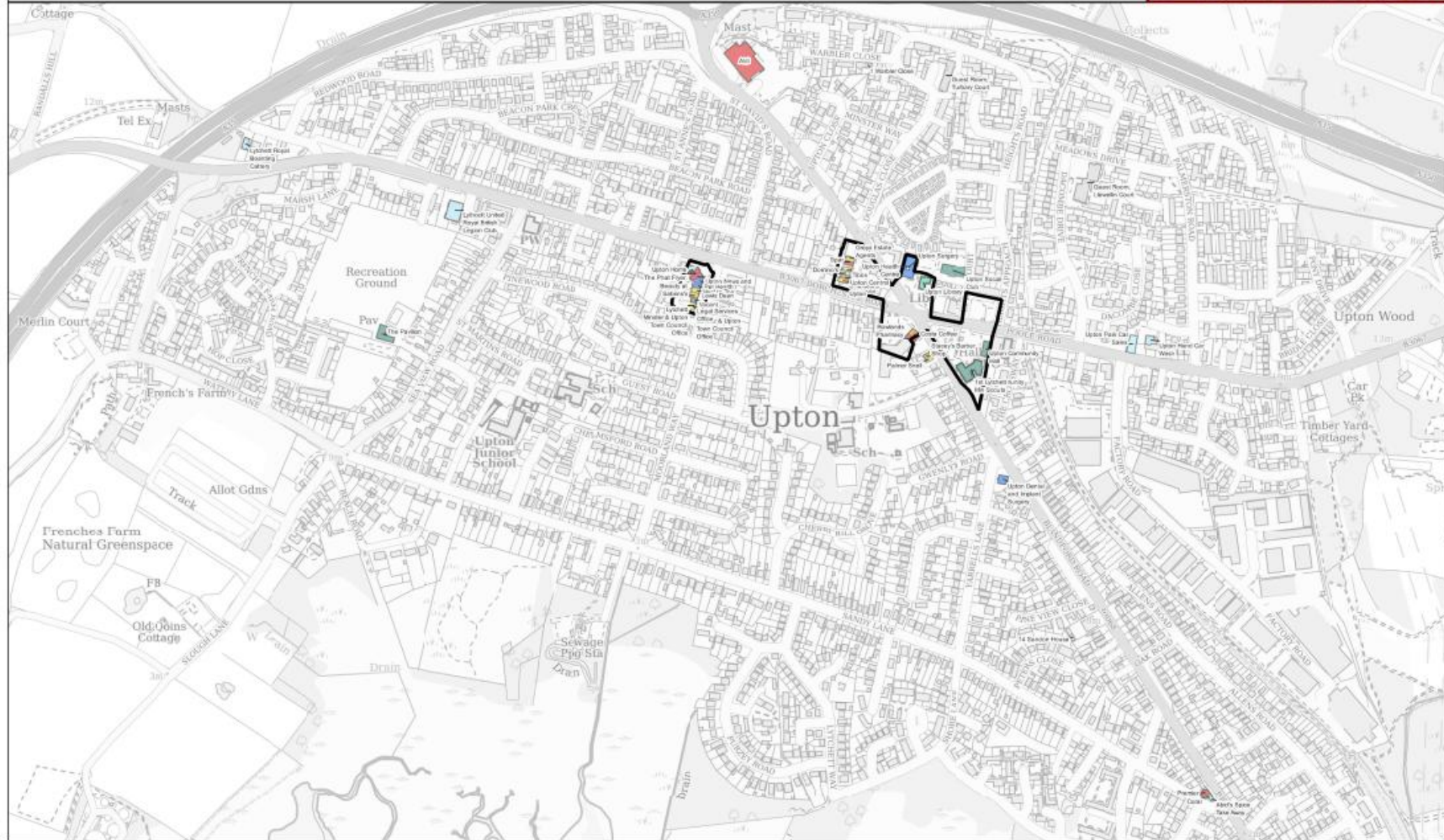
Upton

- Town Centre boundary
- Ea Retail not hot food
- Eb Restaurant / cafe
- Ec Financial / professional services
- Ee Medical or health services
- Eg Office / light industry
- F1 Learning / non-residential institutions
- F2 Local Community
- SG Sui generis
- Vacant

Scale (at A3)
1:5,500



© Crown copyright and database rights 2024
AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.



25. Verwood Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Verwood is a town that dates back to the 14th Century, located near the New Forest border, the Cranborne Chase National Landscape, Moors Valley County Park and Dorset Heavy Horse Farm. Verwood was previously famous for pottery making, due to clay minerals located in the area. Now only 3 Kilns currently remain. There are a number of retail shops and services in Verwood, with a weekly market in the Memorial Hall. The leisure facilities at the Verwood Hub include a cinema, arts, a theatre, including live music, café, children's activities, a gym and exercise classes.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	4	5	9.7	Lower	340
Comparison	13	16.2	29	Lower	1,092
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	31	38.7	9	Higher	1,998
Leisure, Community & Medical	22	27.5	27.6	Lower	1,414
Vacancy	3	3.7	14.7	Lower	93
Other Uses	7	8.7			37
Total	80	99.8			4,974

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	35
Multiple Retailers	4

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £275 per sqm
Offices	Up to £275 per sqm

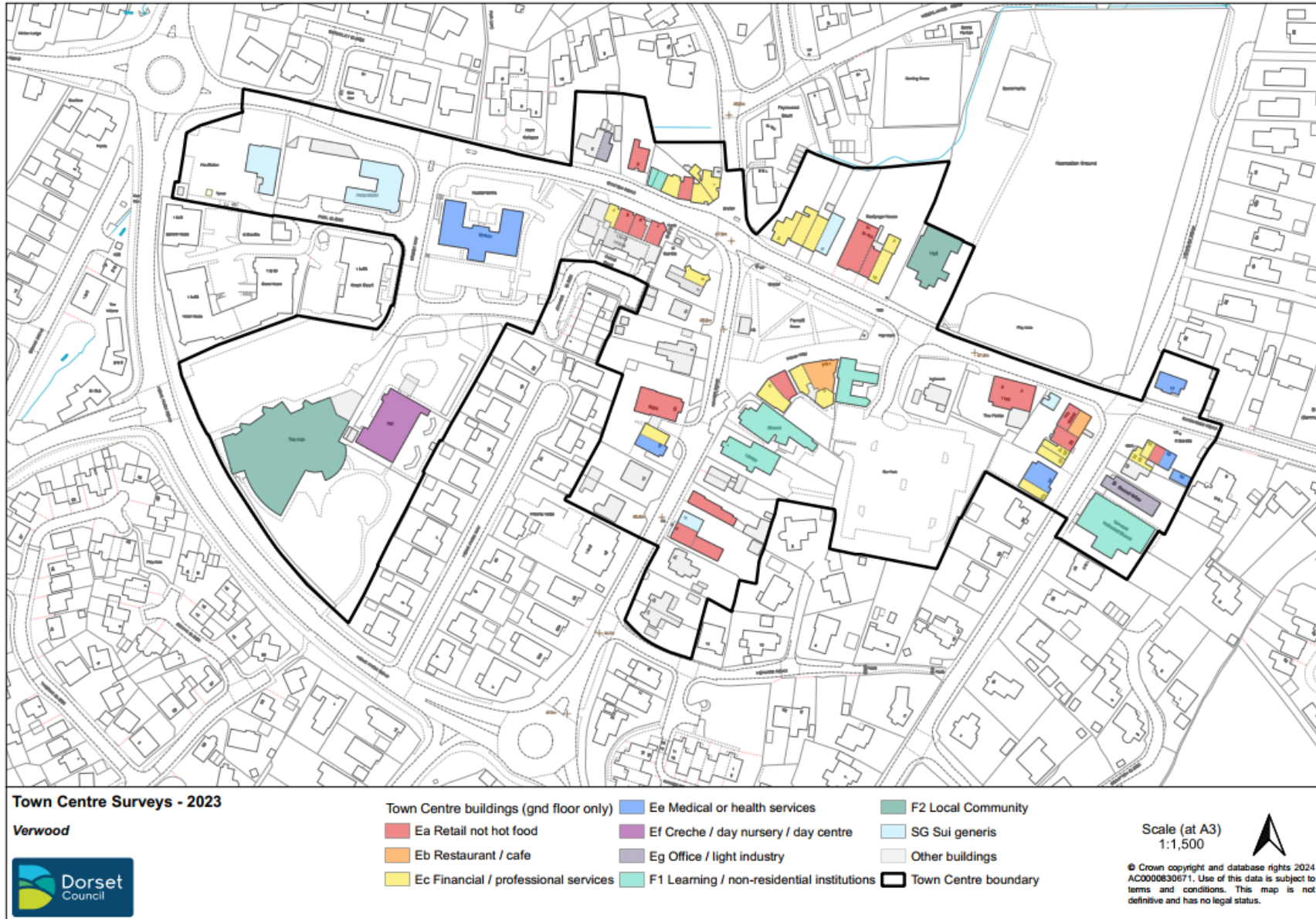
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, it still attracts a few well-known convenience retailers such as Tesco Express operates within the centre. Morrisons, Lidl and Co-Op are also located outside of the boundary.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has a wide range of retail shops and services, but has very few restaurants, public houses and cafes. Use after 6.00pm will be focussed on Verwood Hub, the Memorial Hall and the limited pubs and restaurants.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Verwood to other town centres in Dorset, including Bournemouth and Ferndown, plus Ringwood in Hampshire. There are a number of car parks within the town centre, including Potters Wheel and The Hub, providing circa 280 car parking spaces. The main road through the centre of town connects with the A31 and routes into Dorset and Hampshire.
Potential Development Sites	There may be potential for intensification of some sites in the town centre boundary.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Verwood town centre has a range of retail shops and services but a limited number of restaurants, cafes, public houses and offices. Town centre uses beyond 6pm may be limited and are focussed around public houses, Verwood Hub and activities at the Memorial Hall. Despite its transport connections (to Ferndown, Bournemouth and Ringwood), Verwood is a Town Centre and would only attract people from nearby villages for its convenience shops and service retail offer. Some of the convenience offer is located outside of the town centre boundary. Therefore, the boundary needs to be explored further



26. Wareham Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Wareham is a Saxon walled town with a grid street pattern centred on The Cross. North, South and West Street have a wide range of independent shops and pubs, restaurants, cafes and take-aways. The Quay on the River Frome holds a Saturday market and the town hosts events throughout the year including a carnival and a film festival, with screenings at The Rex community cinema. Wareham is an ideal base for visitors to explore the many attractions in the Purbeck area, including the Wareham Town Museum, Corfe Castle, Monkey World, The Tank Museum and Clouds Hill, the rural retreat of T. E. Lawrence (Lawrence of Arabia).

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	6	5	9.7	Lower	3,515
Comparison	33	27.9	29	Lower	2,682
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	33	27.9	9	Higher	2,773
Leisure, Community & Medical	35	29.6	27.6	Higher	2,482
Vacancy	10	8.4	14.7	Lower	784
Other Uses	1	0.8			0
Total	118	99.6			12,236

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	75
Multiple Retailers	13

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £250 per sqm
Offices	Up to £250 per sqm

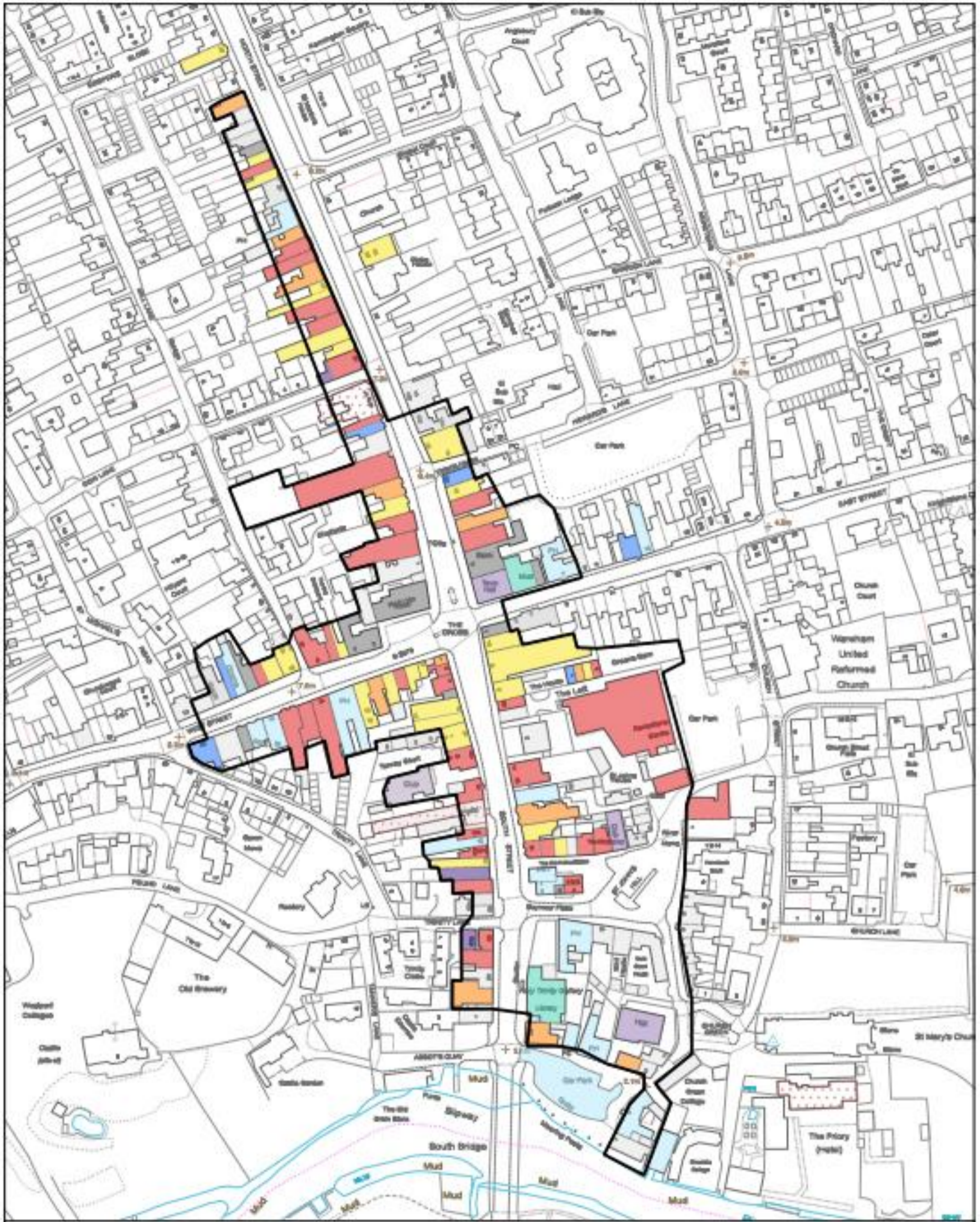
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	A lot of retailers in the town centre are independent and some specialise in antiques and gifts. The town attracts well-known multiple convenience goods retailers such as Sainsbury's and Co-op.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	Wareham has a number of public houses and restaurants that open at nighttime, adding to the town centre offer and contributing to the use of the town centre beyond 6pm.
Accessibility	Wareham is well served by buses and trains, with good links to other nearby towns, including Poole, Bournemouth, Dorchester and Swanage. It also has regular direct bus and rail services to London. However, it is important to note that the settlement is split by the A351, with the station in the northern half and the town centre boundary in the southern half, which are roughly 0.5 miles apart. There are a number of car parks serving the town centre including at Howards Lane, the Rempstone Centre and Streche Road, providing over 300 car parking spaces. Shop mobility scooters are available from the Purbeck Mobility Centre in the town.
Potential Development Sites	The town centre is constrained with few redevelopment opportunities. However, there may be limited potential for intensification of some sites within the town centre.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023

Conclusion

Wareham Town Centre supports a range of multiple and independent retailers, services, cafes and take-aways. As a service centre, it attracts people primarily from the Purbeck area, but it has a wider reach as a visitor destination. Wareham's public houses and restaurants add to the town centre offer, contributing to its use beyond 6pm.



Town Centre Surveys - 2023

Wareham



- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| C1 Hotels | F1 Learning / non-residential institutions |
| Ea Retail not hot food | F2 Local Community |
| Eb Restaurant / cafe | SG Sui generis |
| Ec Financial / professional services | Vacant |
| Ee Medical or health services | Other buildings |
| Eg Office / light industry | Town Centre boundary |

Scale (at A3)
1:1,500



© Crown copyright and database rights 2024
A0000830671. Use of this data is subject to terms and conditions. This map is not definitive and has no legal status.

27. West Moors Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

West Moors district centre comprises two modern parades of shops, separated by housing for older people. Immediately to the east is West Moors Plantation and the Moors River System SSSI. It is generally surrounded by woodland and heathland. It lies on the route of the Castleman Trailway – a disused railway line now used as a walking and cycling routes which links West Moors to Avon Country Park, Moors Valley Country Park, Ringwood and beyond. These country parks attract lots of visitors from beyond the West Moors area. Station Road is a busy main road linking to the A31, and is part of the strategic road network.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	5	10.2	9.7		461
Comparison	10	20.8	29		728
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	14	29.1	9		932
Leisure, Community & Medical	17	35.4	27.6		1,180
Vacancy	1	2	14.7		4
Other Uses	1	2			0
Total	48	99.5			3,305

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	23
Multiple Retailers	3

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £195 per sqm
Offices	Up to £160 per sqm

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, it still attracts well known multiple retailers such as Tesco Express and Spar.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has shops and services to meet the day-to-day needs of local residents. There are also two pubs, providing a night time economy beyond 6pm. Due to its proximity to the Country Park, West Moors has a wider reach than a typical town centre.
Accessibility	Public buses connect West Moors to larger town centres such as Poole, Bournemouth, Ferndown, Verwood and Ringwood. Short term car parking is associated with shopping parades and community/sporting facilities.
Potential Development Sites	There may be potential for reoccupation of the vacant unit in the town centre boundary, and reoccupation of additional vacant units should they arise.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

This town centre is small in size and has a limited range of shops and services that meet the day-to-day needs of local residents. Due its proximity to the country parks, this centre would have a wider reach than a typical centre. However, it would only benefit from passing trade, as there is no tourism accommodation nearby. There are two pubs, showing the centre is open beyond 6pm. Due to its size and the type of shops and services, the status of this town centre should be reviewed as it is currently designated as a district centre.



Retail Survey 2023/24

West Moors

-  Town Centre boundary
-  Ea Retail not hot food
-  Eb Restaurant / cafe
-  Ec Financial / professional services
-  Ee Medical or health services
-  Eg Office / light industry
-  F1 Learning / non-residential institutions
-  SG Sui generis
-  Vacant
-  Other buildings

Scale (at A3)
1:1,500



© Crown copyright and database rights 2024
AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.



28. West Parley Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

West Parley is a village dating back to the Saxon times and is located off the B3073 road between Bournemouth and Ferndown. The majority of the settlement until recently was located to the north of the B3073 road with limited residential development to the south of the B3073, west of New Road. Significant residential development is underway or planned to the south of the B3073 either side of New Road. The main retail focus is at Parley crossroads, the junction of the B3073 and New Road. Dudsbury Rings, an Iron Age Hill Fort, is located nearby to the south of the B3073 and Parley Wood and Common to the north-east of Parley Cross.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	2	7.4	9.7	Lower	451
Comparison	5	18.5	29	Lower	630
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	10	37	9	Higher	183
Leisure, Community & Medical	8	29.6	27.5	Higher	306
Vacancy	2	7.4	14.7	Lower	154
Other Uses	0	0			0
Total	27	99.9			1,724

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	18
Multiple Retailers	2

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for:	Rent
Rent for Retail	Up to £250 per sqm
Rent for Offices	N/A

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation:	Even though a lot of retailers in the village centre are independent, it still attracts well known retailers such as Tesco Express and, more recently, Lidl.
Open Hours/ Availability/ Night-time Economy:	This local centre has a limited range of shops, services and leisure that serves the day-to-day needs of local residents. Residents may have to travel further to other nearby larger town centres for comparison and retail services as well as leisure facilities. This centre has no public houses or restaurants thereby there is unlikely to be evening activity.
Accessibility:	Public buses connect West Parley to Ferndown, Poole, Wimborne and Ringwood. There is limited on-street parking only. The supermarkets provide their own parking facilities.
Potential Development Sites:	There may be potential for occupancy of vacant units and intensification of some sites in the village area subject to planning policy. Further retail is anticipated through the development to the east of New Road.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion:

West Parley is a centre that is spread along the main route between Wimborne and Ferndown, which are larger town centres with a bigger trade draw. West Parley provides a limited range of retail shops and services, and leisure uses to serve the day-to-day needs of its local residents. It is currently classed as a local centre. There is potentially a need to review this centre's retail status and if considered appropriate a town centre boundary should be defined.

29. Weymouth (Abbotsbury Road) Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Abbotsbury Road is a suburb located near Weymouth town centre and a proposed local centre. There are a limited range of shops and services providing essential services for local residents, with the main commercial uses located on Abbotsbury Road.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	3	15	9.7	Higher	219
Comparison	3	15	29	Lower	267
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	4	20	9	Higher	242
Leisure, Community & Medical	7	35	27.6	Higher	406
Vacancy	3	15	14.7	Higher	149
Other Uses	0	0			0
Total	20	100			1,283

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	14
Multiple Retailers	2

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £110 per sqm
Office	N/A

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	There are a limited number of retailers in Abbotsbury Road, but this is a key area for top-up shopping and essential services. Abbotsbury Road is located near Weymouth town centre, so residents likely rely on Weymouth to access a wider range of retail shops, services, leisure and other town centre type uses instead.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has a limited numbers of shops and services. There is 1 public house, so there is little evidence that this local centre is open beyond 6pm.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Abbotsbury to Weymouth and other local centres, with the nearest train station being located at Weymouth. There is on-street car parking available only.
Potential Development Sites	Reoccupation of vacant units. Due to its proximity to Weymouth, it is unlikely that there would be capacity or need for this town centre to grow.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023

Conclusion

Abbotsbury road is a proposed local centre, providing essential shops and services for local residents. However, residents would be dependent on accessing a wider range of shops and services in nearby Weymouth town centre. Due to its size, limited range of shops and services and proximity to Weymouth town centre, the status of this town centre should be reviewed and if considered appropriate a town centre boundary should be defined.



Retail Survey 2023/24

Abbotsbury Road

- C1 Hotels
- Ea Retail not hot food
- Ec Financial / professional services
- Ee Medical or health services
- SG Sui generis
- Vacant

Scale (at A3)
1:1,000



© Crown copyright and database rights 2025
AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.



30. Weymouth (Littlemoor Centre) Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Littlemoor Centre is a purpose-built retail centre located in a suburb near Weymouth, designated as a Local Centre. There is a limited range of shops and services providing essential services for local residents, with a large Home Bargains store plus smaller shops, a health centre and a library (just outside the boundary).

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	1	7.7	9.7	Lower	237
Comparison	3	23	29	Lower	2,636
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	1	7.7	9	Lower	70
Leisure, Community & Medical	7	53.8	27.6	Higher	315
Vacancy	1	7.7	14.7	Lower	17
Other Uses	0	0			0
Total	13	99.9			3,275

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	5
Multiple Retailers	3

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £230 per sqm
Office	N/A

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	There are a limited number of retailers, but this is a key area for top-up shopping and essential services. Littlemoor Centre is located near Weymouth town centre, so residents would rely on this town centre to access a wider range of retail shops, services, leisure and other town centre type uses instead.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has a limited numbers of shops and services. There are no public houses, cafes or restaurants, but there are some hot foot takeaways, providing little evidence that this local centre is open beyond 6pm.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Littlemoor to Weymouth and other local centres, with the nearest train station being located at Upwey. There is car parking available at Littlemoor Centre.
Potential Development Sites	Reoccupation of vacant units. Due to its proximity to Weymouth, it is unlikely that there would be capacity or need for this town centre to grow.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Littlemoor Centre is designated as a local centre, providing essential shops and services for local residents. However, residents would be dependent on accessing a wider range of shops and services in nearby Weymouth town centre. Due to its size, limited range of shops and services and proximity to Weymouth town centre, the status of this town centre should be reviewed as it is currently designated as a local centre.



Retail Survey 2023/24

Littlemoor

- Town Centre boundary
- Ee Medical or health services
- SG Sui generis
- Ea Retail not hot food
- F1 Learning / non-residential institutions
- Vacant

Scale (at A3)
1:1,000



© Crown copyright and database rights 2025
AC000630671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.



31. Weymouth (Lodmoor Hill) Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Lodmoor Hill is a proposed local centre spread out along Dorchester Road, separated into two distinct clusters, with residential properties in between. It provides top-up shopping to meet the day-to-day needs of local residents.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	3	21.4	9.7	Higher	410
Comparison	2	14.3	29	Lower	180
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	3	21.4	9	Higher	285
Leisure, Community & Medical	5	35.7	27.6	Higher	200
Vacancy	0	0	14.7	Lower	0
Other Uses	1	7.1			45
Total	14	99.9			1,120

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	9
Multiple Retailers	4

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £200 per sqm
Office	N/A

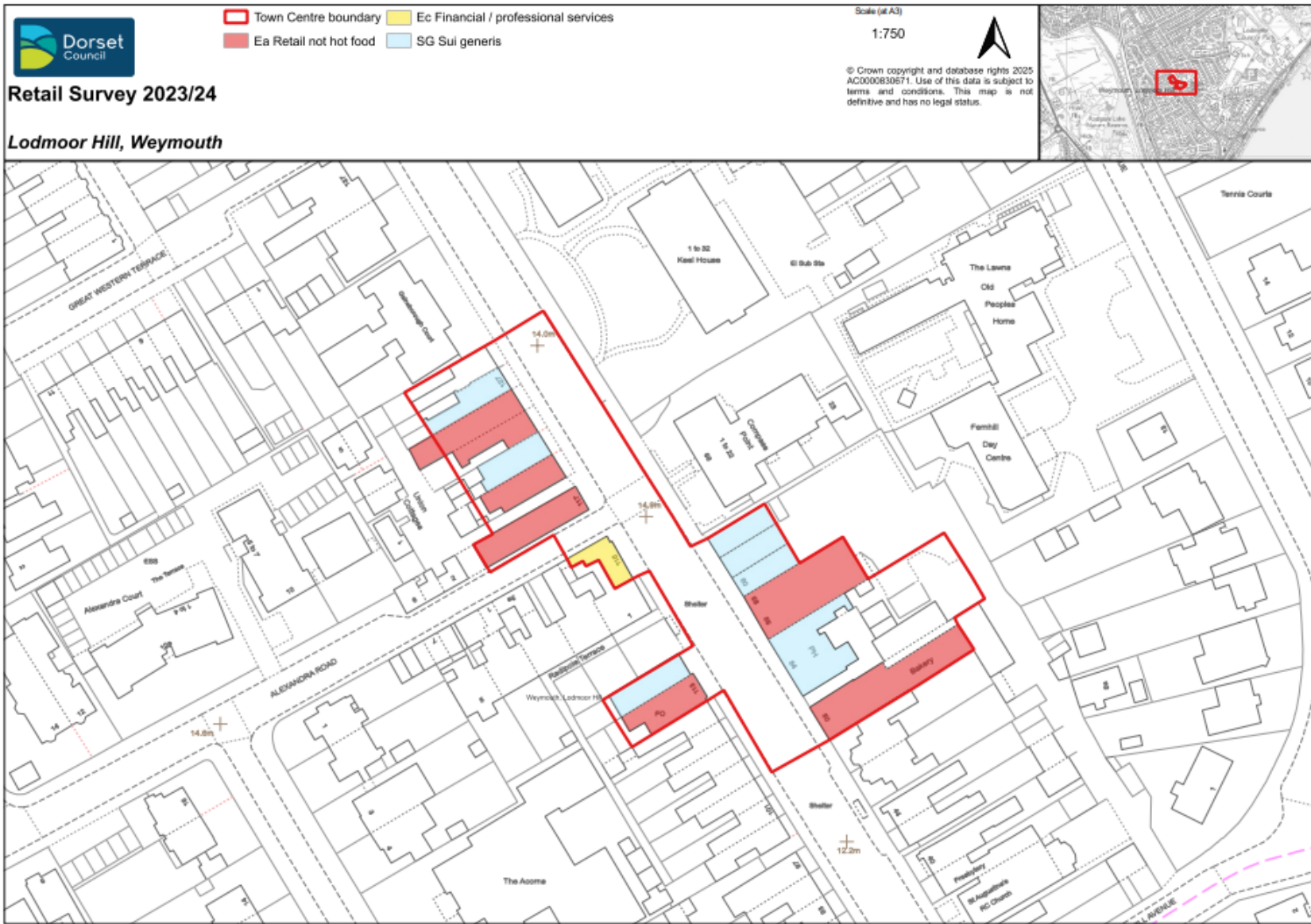
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though there are independent retailers, it still attracts well know multiple retailers such as Tesco and the Sue Ryder charity shop.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This town centre has a range of retail shops and services and is suitable for day-to-day needs. So, this town centre is a local centre and residents would be reliant on nearby Weymouth to access a wider range of retail shops and services. There is limited evidence of a nighttime economy.
Accessibility	Limited on-street parking outside the shops within the town centre.
Potential Development Sites	Occupation of vacant units should they arise.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

This is a proposed local centre spread along a large road. It has a limited range of shops and services to meet residents' day to day needs. The status of this centre may need to be reviewed.



32. Weymouth (Southill) Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Southill is a residential area to the north-west of Weymouth, with a small group of shops proposed as a local centre. There are a limited range of shops and services, located off Radipole Lane.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	1	9	9.7	Lower	158
Comparison	2	18.1	29	Lower	490
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	1	9	9	Higher	74
Leisure, Community & Medical	6	54.5	27.6	Higher	807
Vacancy	0	0	14.7	Lower	0
Other Uses	1	9			0
Total	11	99.6			1,529

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	6
Multiple Retailers	2

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail	Up to £125 per sqm
Office	N/A

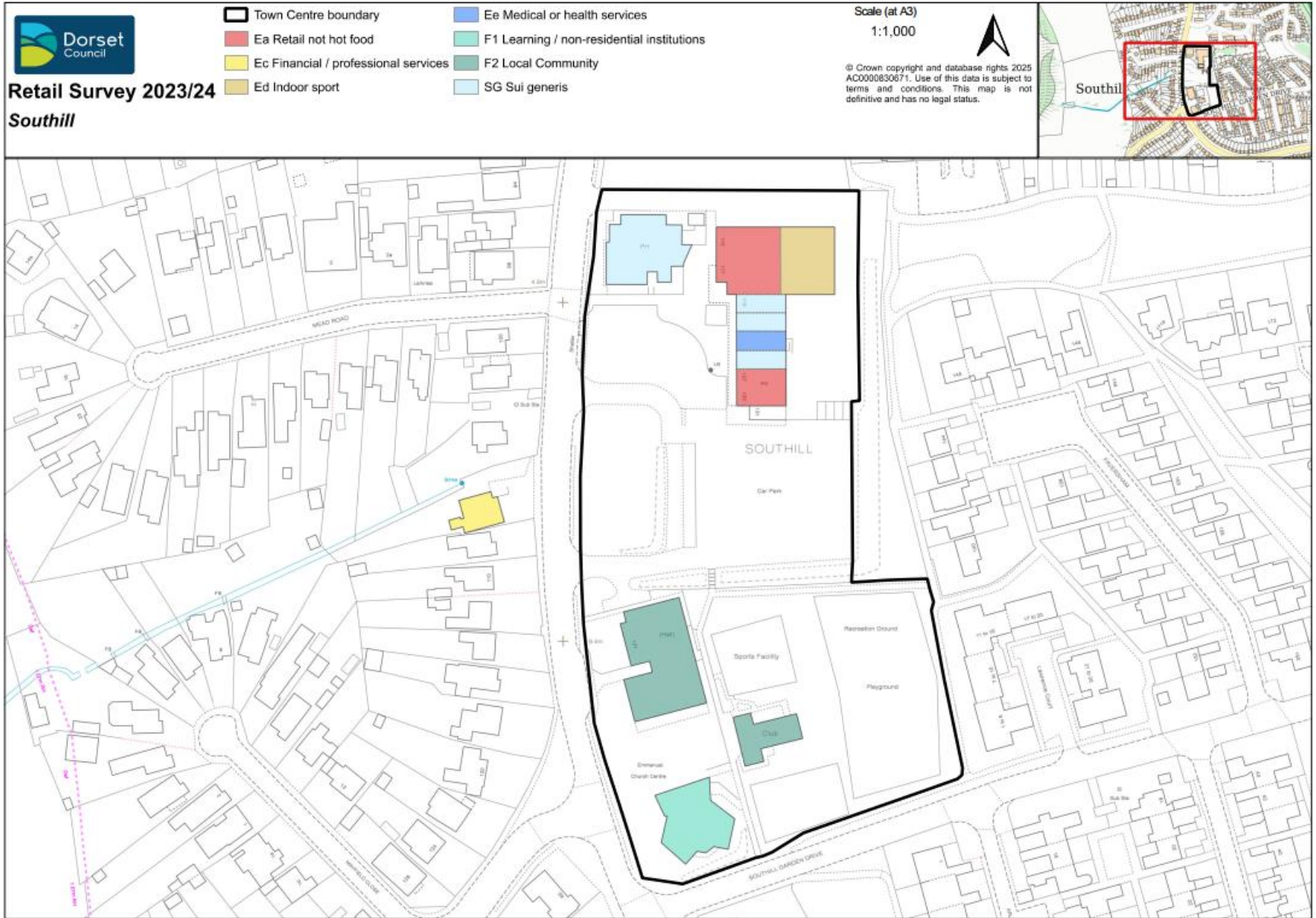
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	There are a limited number of retailers. Southill is located near Weymouth town centre, so residents would rely on this centre to access retail shops, services, leisure and other town centre type uses instead.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This proposed centre has a limited numbers of shops and services. There is one public house and two hot food takeaways, but no cafes or restaurants. Thus, this centre is open beyond 6pm in limited capacity.
Accessibility	Public buses connect Southill to Weymouth, with the nearest train station being located at Weymouth. There is 1 publicly accessible car park that comprises of 87 car parking spaces.
Potential Development Sites	Reoccupation of units should they become vacant. Due to Southill's proximity to Weymouth, it is unlikely that there would be capacity or need for this town centre to grow.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Due to its size, limited range of shops and services and proximity to Weymouth town centre, the status of this proposed centre should be reviewed.



33. Weymouth (Wyke Regis, Portland Road) Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Wyke Regis is proposed local centre spread out across Portland Road. It is separated into two distinct clusters, with residential properties in between. It provides top up shopping to meet the day-to-day needs of local residents.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	2	10	9.7	Higher	127
Comparison	6	30	29	Lower	427
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	2	10	9	Higher	85
Leisure, Community & Medical	8	40	27.6	Higher	193
Vacancy	1	5	14.7	Lower	0
Other Uses	1	5			
Total	20	100			832

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	14
Multiple Retailers	2

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for	Rent
Retail Rents	Up to £225 per sqm
Office Rents	N/A

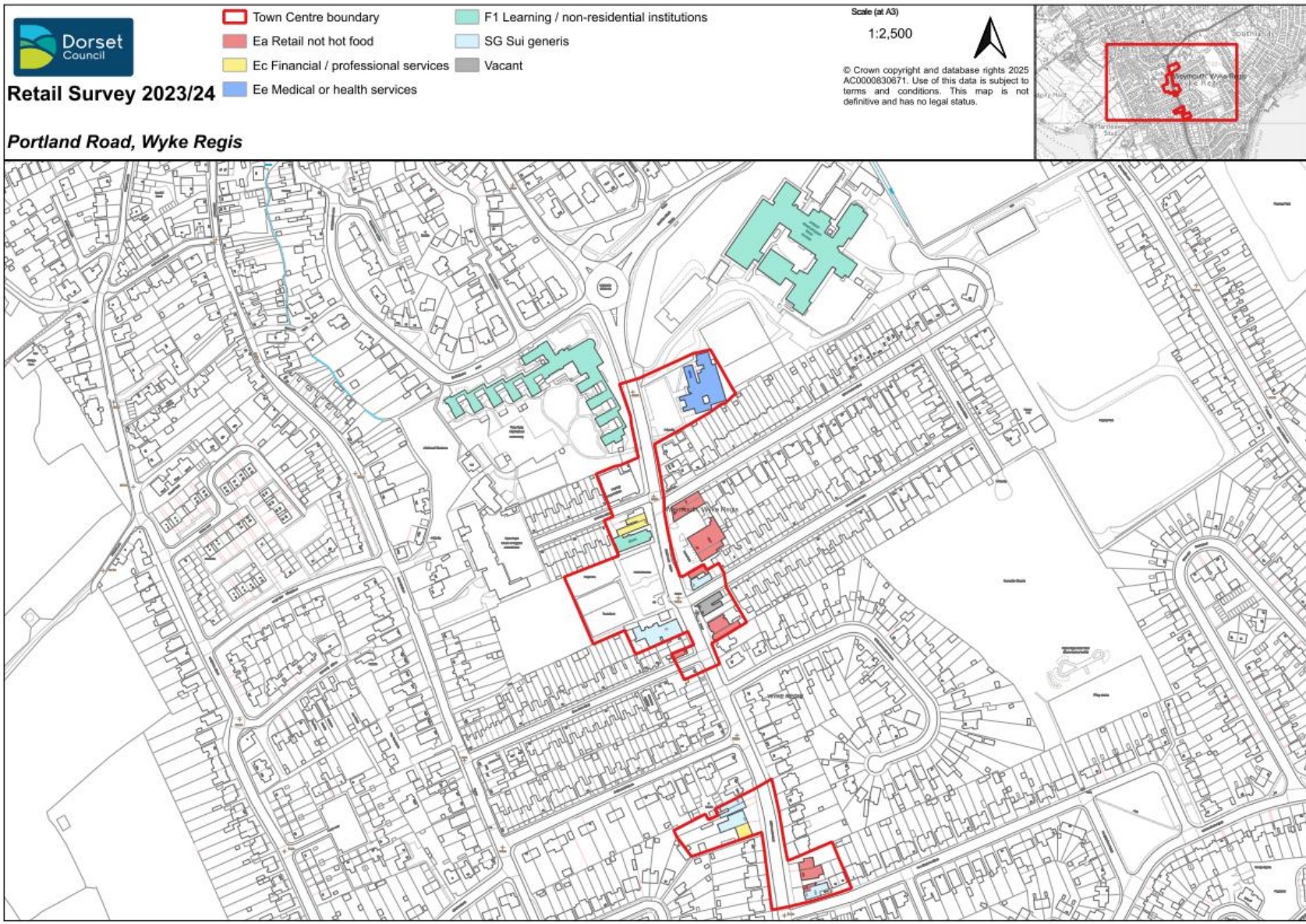
Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation	Even though there are independent retailers, the town still attracts well know multiple retailers such as Domino's and Boots Pharmacy.
Open Hours / Availability / Night-time Economy	This proposed centre has a range of retail shops and services and is suitable for day-to-day needs however its residents would be reliant on nearby Weymouth to access a wider range of retail shops and services. There is limited evidence of a nighttime economy.
Accessibility	Limited on-street parking outside the shops within this proposed centre.
Potential Development Sites	Occupation of vacant units should they arise.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

This proposed local centre is spread out along a large road, which has a limited range of shops and services to meet residents' day to day needs. The status of this proposed centre may need to be reviewed.



34. Weymouth (Town Centre) Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Weymouth is a seaside town in Dorset and is a popular tourist destination for visitors all year round. It is renowned for its variety of beaches, iconic esplanade and harbour seafront Georgian architecture, and busy town centre. Nearby attractions include Lodmoor Country Park, Radipole Park and Gardens, the Nothe Fort and Gardens, Weymouth Sea Life Centre, and Fantasy Island Fun Park. Weymouth hosts festivals and events all year-round including the seafood festival, Quayside music events, and visiting fairground rides. For shopping and leisure, the main areas in the town centre are St Mary Street, New Bond Street, St Thomas Street, the Esplanade, and the Harbourside. There is lots to see and do in Weymouth, and the town centre caters well for tourists.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	31	5.4	9.7	Lower	4,113
Comparison	132	23	29	Lower	34,860
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	111	19.3	9	Higher	13,465
Leisure, Community & Medical	212	37	27.6	Higher	15,091
Vacancy	49	8.5	14.7	Lower	10,122
Other Uses	38	6.6			3,673
Total	573	99.8			81,324

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	326
Multiple Retailers	88

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for:	Rent
Rent for Retail	Up to £700 per sqm
Rent for Offices	Up to £150 per sqm

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation:	Even though a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, it still attracts well known retailers such as Marks and Spencer, the Range, TK Maxx, Clarks and Pandora.
Open Hours/ Availability/ Night-time Economy:	This town centre has a range of shops and services, restaurants, cafes, and offices on the upper floors. Outside of retail, a predominate use is leisure; there are lots of hotels and guest houses catering for tourists. Therefore, this town centre has a wider reach than a typical town centre. It also has a range of public houses, bars, and restaurants that are open after 6pm, allowing the town centre to be vibrant throughout the day and evening.
Accessibility:	Public buses and a railway station connect Weymouth to other town centres in Dorset and beyond, including rail routes to London and Bristol. There are a number of car parks within and near to the town centre, providing circa 1,500 car parking spaces. This excludes car parking for customers only. There is the option of hiring mobility scooters in the town centre.
Potential Development Sites:	There is potential for the intensification of some sites within the town centre boundary, as well as the reoccupation of vacant floorspace for town centre type uses and residential uses on the upper floors. We estimate that there is circa 10,000 sqm of vacant space. In addition to this, we estimate that there is circa 3,000 sqm of floorspace already earmarked for development or is currently being redeveloped, which has not been included in the calculations. A main issue for development in Weymouth town centre is flood risk.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion

Weymouth town centre has a range of shops and services, restaurants and cafes, leisure and community uses, and offices on the upper floors. Outside of retail, a predominate space in Weymouth is for leisure use, catering for tourists. Due to its location opening onto a variety of beaches, Jurassic coastline and historic harbour, it attracts lots of tourists year-round.

It has strong transport connections to Dorchester, Poole, Bournemouth, Bristol, and Southampton, and therefore would attract people outside of the area due to its leisure offer and good level of comparison shopping. Weymouth does have a range of public houses, bars, and restaurants that open at nighttime, which complements the town centre offer and ensures visitors use the town centre beyond 6pm.

It is notable that this town centre has lots of floorspace that is vacant, but there are lots of sites earmarked for development or being redeveloped.



Retail Survey 2023/24

Weymouth

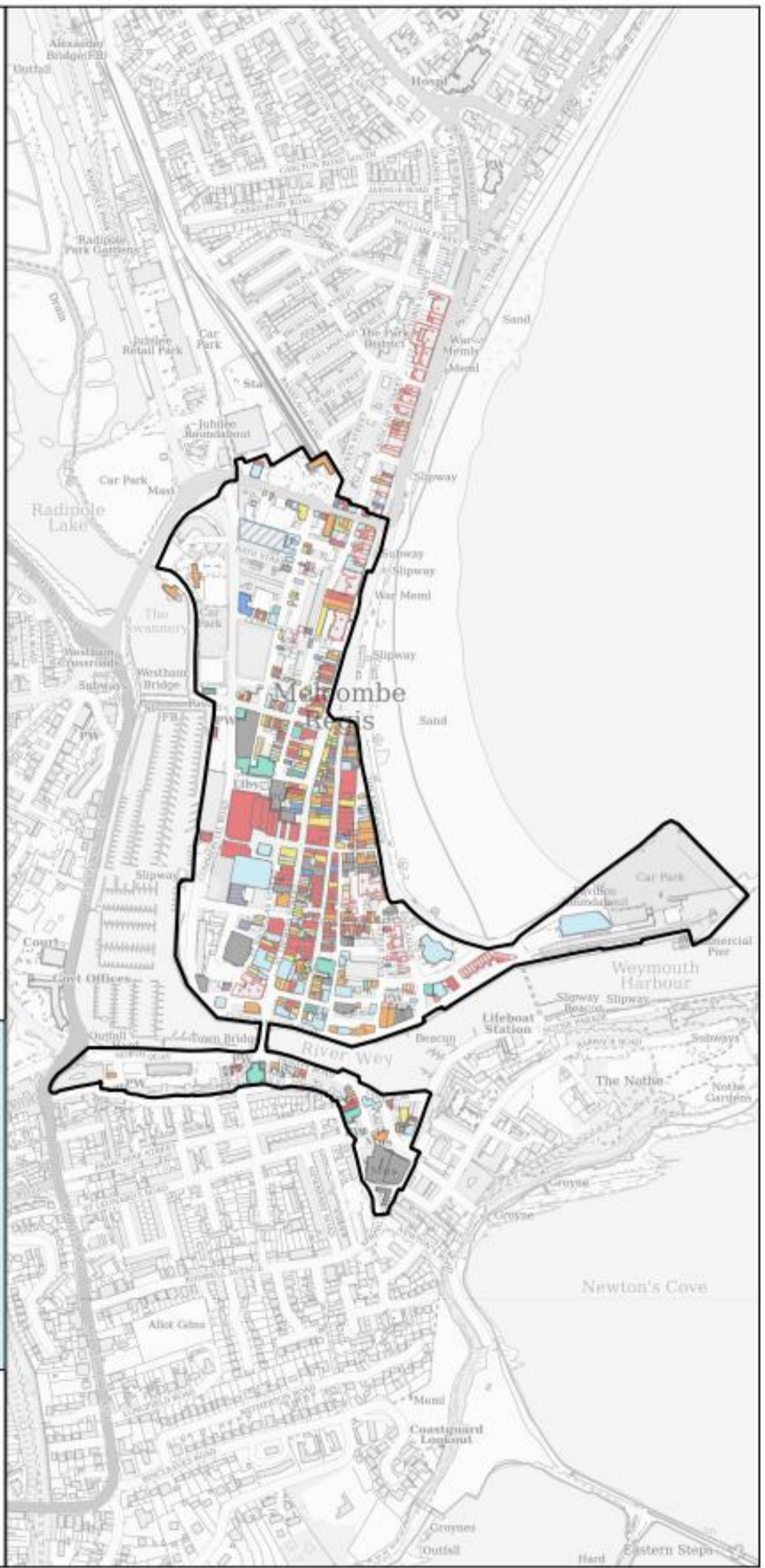
-  Town Centre boundary
-  B2 General industrial
-  B8 Storage / warehousing
-  C1 Hotels
-  Ea Retail not hot food
-  Eb Restaurant / cafe
-  Ec Financial / professional services
-  Ed Indoor sport
-  Ee Medical or health services
-  Eg Office / light industry
-  F1 Learning / non-residential institutions
-  F2 Local Community
-  SG Sui generis
-  Vacant



Scale (at A3)
1:6,000



© Crown copyright and database rights 2024
AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.



35. Wimborne Minster Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Wimborne Minster is a quaint market town, with several bridges linking the town centre to wider areas. It has a Minster in the middle of the town centre, with open space that is used by the community. Some of the cafes, restaurants, and public houses in the centre of the town centre have outdoor seating which contributes hugely to the town centre's vitality and vibrancy. There is a one-way traffic system that runs through the town centre, with noticeably a lot of car parks within and surrounding the town centre.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	17	6.1	9.7	Lower	5,987
Comparison	61	22	29	Lower	5,341
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	91	32.8	9	Higher	6,454
Leisure, Community & Medical	76	27.4	27.6	Lower	5,717
Vacancy	9	3.2	14.7	Lower	815
Other Uses	23	8.3			1,038
Total	277	99.8			25,352

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	139
Multiple Retailers	34

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents	Yield
Retail:	Up to £600 per sqm
Offices:	Up to £210 per sqm

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation:	Even though a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, it still attracts well know multiple retailers such as Crewe, Phase Eight, FatFace, Waitrose, Marks and Spencer.
Open Hours/ Availability/ Night-time Economy:	This town centre has a range of retail and community shops and services, restaurants and cafes, and offices on the upper floors. So, this town centre has a wider reach than a typical local town centre, it also has a range of public houses and restaurants that are open at nighttime, therefore this town centre is vibrant throughout the day and night.
Accessibility:	Regular public buses connect Wimborne to other centres in Dorset. There are also several public car parks located within and surrounding the town centre, making it easily accessivke by car. There are mobility scooters available outside Somerfield's and Waitrose. Public restricted car parking is also available on-streets outside shops in the town centre.
Potential Development Sites:	There may be potential for intensification of some sites in the town centre boundary.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion:

This is a vibrant town centre, that has a wide range of shops and services operating throughout the day and into the evening. It attracts higher end retailers, and it has a large presence of offices than a typical local centre. Further research is required into the use of car parks and how to improve road usage into and out of the town centre without negatively impacting existing business, and the vibrancy of the town centre.



Retail Survey 2023/24

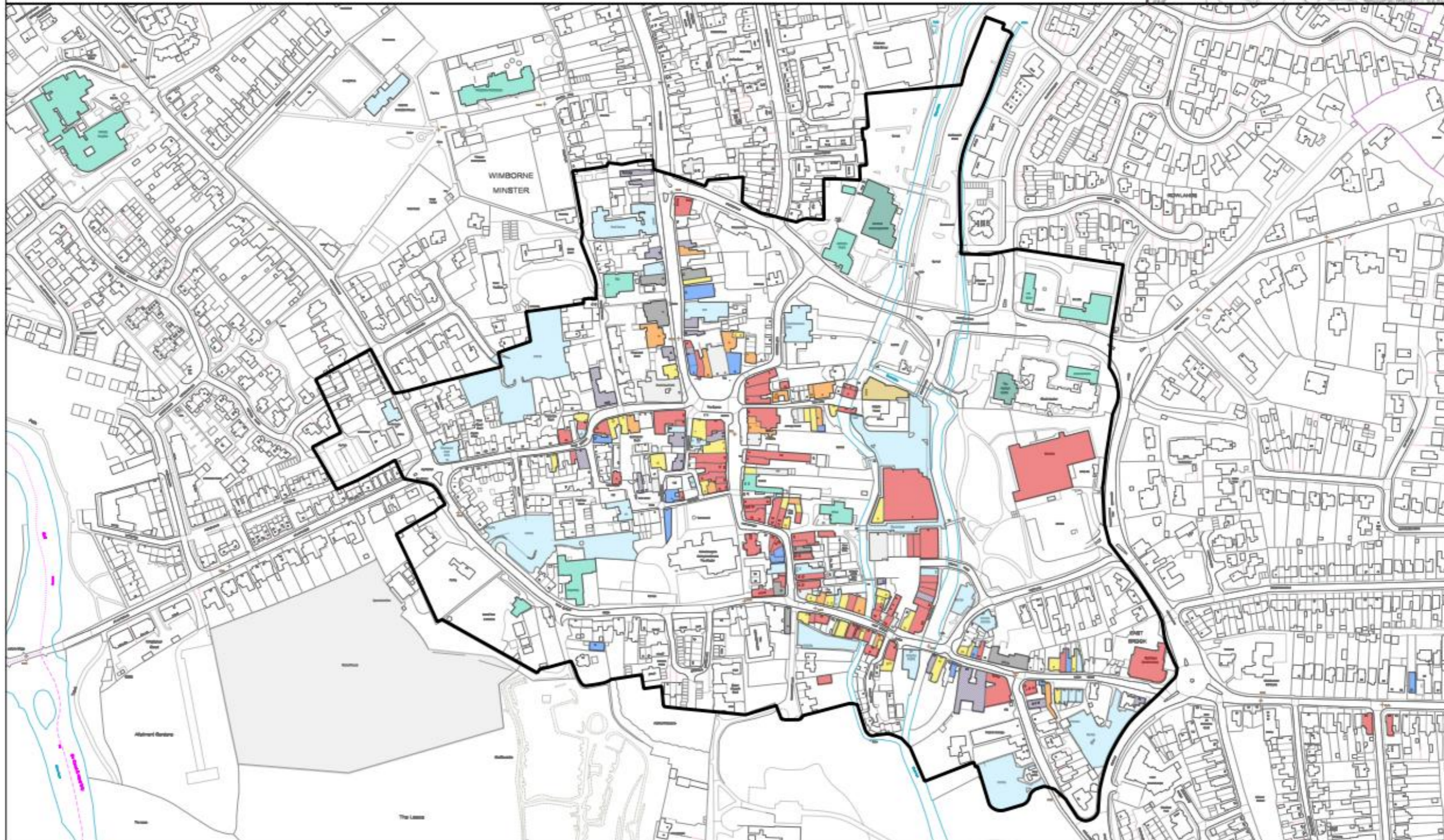
Wimborne

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Town Centre boundary | Eg Office / light industry |
| Ea Retail not hot food | F1 Learning / non-residential institutions |
| Eb Restaurant / cafe | F2 Local Community |
| Ec Financial / professional services | SG Sui generis |
| Ed Indoor sport | Vacant |
| Ee Medical or health services | Other buildings |

Scale (at A3)
1:3,000



© Crown copyright and database rights 2025
AC0000830671. Use of this data is subject to
terms and conditions. This map is not
definitive and has no legal status.



36. Wool Town Centre Health Check

Survey photos



Description of Town Centre

Wool is an Anglo-Saxon village that dates back to the 11th Century. It is a large, picturesque village, located halfway between Dorchester and Wareham, on the main train line, although not all services stop there. The main focal points for shopping are Spring Street, Dorchester Road, High Street and Station Road. The old part of the village with shops and other uses is located at the far east of Wool, whereas the newer part of the village is located at the far west of Wool. So, all the shops and services are spread throughout the village rather than being concentrated into one specific area. The village, and its nearby areas, are prominent in English Literature such as Tom Hardy's *Tess of the D'urbervilles* and T.E Lawrence. Local attractions such as the Tank Museum and Monkey world are located nearby.

Category of uses

Use	No Units (Units)	%	National Average (%)	Higher / Lower than National Average	Sqm
Convenience	4	23.5	9.7	Higher	292
Comparison	5	29.4	29	Higher	770
Service Retail, Financial, Professional & Business	3	17.6	9	Higher	407
Leisure, Community & Medical	4	23.5	27.6	Lower	109
Vacancy	0	0	14.7	Lower	0
Other Uses	1	5.9			Unknown
Total	17	99.9			1,578

Balance between independent and multiple stores

Retailer type	Number of units
Independent Retailers	12
Multiple Retailers	4

Commercial rents

Commercial Rents for:	Rent
Rent for Retail	Up to £150 per sqm
Rent for Offices	N/A

Assessment

Issue	Summary
Retail Representation:	Even though a lot of retailers in the town centre are independent, it still attracts well known retailers such as Central, Spar and Boots.
Open Hours/ Availability/ Night-time Economy:	This town centre has a limited range of shops, services and leisure that serves the day-to-day needs of local residents. Residents may have to travel further to other nearby larger town centres for weekly food shops, comparison and retail services as well as leisure facilities. This town centre has two public houses, one of which is a focal point upon entry to the older part of the village. Thereby the village is active in the evenings however in a limited capacity. The vacancy rate for this town centre is low.
Accessibility:	Public buses and a railway station connect Wool to other town centres in Dorset and beyond, including rail routes direct to London and Bristol. There is on-street parking only.
Potential Development Sites:	There may be potential for intensification of some sites in the village area subject to planning policy. The older part of the village is a conservation area. Due to a railway station connecting Wool to further places, it is a sustainable location and therefore has the potential to grow. Policy H5 of the Purbeck Local Plan (2024) allocates land for 470 new homes and a 350 sqm convenience store. This policy also requires improvements between the allocations and nearby services, as well as improvements to the railway station.

National Average: Based on retail town centre survey and GIS mapping completed by the Council, VOA information as of 2023. UK Average from Experian Goad Report April 2023.

Conclusion:

Wool town centre is a picturesque village that provides a limited range of retail shops and services, leisure and community use to serve the day-to-day needs of its local residents. The old and new parts of the village are located at a distance from each other. Residents would need to travel to other nearby larger town centres to access a wider range of shops and services. It has strong transport connections to Weymouth, Poole, Bournemouth, Bristol, Southampton and London, and therefore could attract people outside of the area in other nearby towns and villages and beyond. Therefore, it has the possible potential to grow due to its sustainable location subject to other land designations.

37. Appendix: Definitions

Main town centre uses: Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, 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).

Primary shopping area: Defined area where retail development is concentrated.

Town centre: Area defined on the local authority's policies map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre type uses within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres but exclude small parade of shops purely of neighbourhood significance. Unless they are identified as centres in the development plan, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising of or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.