

Appendix 3 – Healthcheck Assessments

Buxton Town Centre

Description

Buxton town centre is the principal defined commercial centre within the High Peak authority area, which serves both the local residential catchment but is also an important tourist destination, drawing in visitors due to its heritage aspects, leisure offer and aesthetics.

The centre is anchored by the Waitrose foodstore, located to the north, with the associated Spring Gardens Shopping Centre attached to the south and adjacent car parking to the north. Spring Gardens consists of both a covered shopping mall and an external commercial pedestrianised street.

Buxton itself is split into two clearly defined commercial areas, with the 'new town' to the north, and the 'old town' to the south, beyond Buxton Town Hall. The southern part of the town centre is focused around the external market area, but extends further southwards along the A515.

The northern part of the town centre around Spring Gardens comprises the highest concentration of national multiples.

To the west of Spring Gardens is Cavendish Arcade Shopping Centre and Buxton Crescent, which include a range of retail and leisure, primarily independent operators, and the Buxton Crescent Visitor Experience, where visitors can explore the Victorian Pump Room. To the west of the Crescent and outside of the defined town centre boundary is The Pavilion Gardens and associated openspace, along with the Buxton Leisure Centre. A public car park is situated directly to the west of the Pavilion Gardens.

High Peak Council successfully secured £6.6m of Future High Street funding from the Government in December 2021, following the preparation of detailed masterplan and business cases. The funding is only for physical works and focuses on the northern part of the town centre around Spring Gardens and the railway station. Buxton was also successful in securing Heritage Action Zone initiative which will complement the Future High Street funding, helping to reinstate traditional shopfronts and restore vacant heritage buildings.



Figure 1: Image of Spring Gardens



Figure 2: Cavendish Shopping Centre



Figure 3: Crescent of retail units on Terrace Road



Figure 4: The market being held in the Old Town



Figure 5: New Highstakes restaurant on High St



Figure 6: The Old Sun Inn on High Street

Table 1 Town Centre Floorspace Composition

| GOAD Category | Floorspace at 2021 (sq.m) | Floorspace at 2021 (%) | Floorspace at 2012 (%) | Floorspace UK Average at 2021 (%) |
|----------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Comparison | 14,070 | 26.5% | 23.9% | 30.5% |
| Convenience | 7,160 | 13.5% | 12.0% | 15.4% |
| Financial | 3,740 | 7.0% | 7.0% | 6.9% |
| Leisure | 15,920 | 33.3% | 26.5% | 25.6% |
| Retail Service | 3,500 | 6.6% | 6.6% | 7.2% |
| Vacant | 6,980 | 13.1% | 4.2% | 13.9% |
| TOTAL | 53,140 | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Source: Composition of town centre derived from Nexus Planning Survey of December 2021; Composition at 2012 taken from High Peak & Staffordshire Moorland Quantitative Retail Study Update 2013; UK Average from Experian Goad Report October 2021

Table 2 Town Centre Unit Composition

| GOAD Category | Units at 2021 | Units at 2021 (%) | Units at 2012 (%) | Units UK Average at 2021 (%) |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Comparison | 99 | 32.2% | 27.9% | 27.1% |
| Convenience | 20 | 6.5% | 6.2% | 9.2% |
| Financial | 27 | 8.8% | 8.9% | 9.1% |
| Leisure | 77 | 25.4% | 19.6% | 24.6% |
| Retail Service | 39 | 12.7% | 12.0% | 15.6% |
| Vacant | 44 | 14.3% | 10.6% | 14.2% |
| TOTAL | 307 | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

Source: Composition of town centre derived from Nexus Planning Survey of December 2021; Composition at 2012 taken from High Peak & Staffordshire Moorland Quantitative Retail Study Update 2013; UK Average from Experian Goad Report July 2021

Uses

There are 99 comparison goods operators in Buxton town centre, which equates to 32.2% of all units. These units account for 14,070 sq.m of floorspace, which equates to 26.5% of the total stock of retail floorspace in the town centre. These figures represent an increase on the comparison composition figures at 2012 in respect of both floorspace and units. Key national multiple comparison operators include Boots, New Look, Claire's, Shoezone, Mountain Warehouse, Next, Trespass and WHSmith. The largest comparison unit is occupied by High Peak Furnishings, followed by Boots and Next within the Spring Gardens Shopping Centre.

There are a total of 20 convenience operators within Buxton town centre, which account for 6.5% of all units in Buxton. These equate to 7,160 sq.m, or 13.5% of the total stock of retail floorspace. These include Aldi, Waitrose, Iceland and Sainsbury's Local as well as a number of smaller retailers including Holland & Barrett, Mccoll's and Greggs. There are also a series of smaller independent operators such as the Beer District in Cavendish Arcade, and Geoff Mycock & Son.

In total, there are 78 leisure service operators (which equates to 25.4% of all units in the town centre) or 17,690 sq.m of floorspace (which equates to 33.3% of the total stock of retail floorspace). Operators include 19 cafés, 15 restaurants, 14 hot-food takeaways, bars, public houses, amusement arcades and hotels and guest houses.

There are 39 retail service operators in Buxton town centre, which account for 12.7% of all units and 6.6% of the total stock of retail floorspace. Operators include hairdressers, laundrettes, beauty salons, tattooists, opticians and travel agents.

Financial and business service operators account for 8.8% of all units and 7.0% of the total stock of retail floorspace. Operators include TSB, Natwest and Barclays, along with estate agents and solicitors.

Vacancies

Our survey identified a total of 44 units vacant, which consist of 6,980 sq.m of vacant commercial floorspace. In terms of proportions, this represents 14.3% of the total stock of units and 13.1% of the total level of floorspace. The proportion of vacant units is above the national average of 13.9%, and only slightly above the national average in terms of proportion of vacant floorspace. The vacancy rate at 2021 represents a significant increase on the 4.2% vacancy rate in respect of floorspace at 2012, although a more modest increase on the 10.6% of vacant units at 2012.

Vacant units are scattered across the centre, with the largest vacant unit located within Spring Gardens, being the former Marks and Spencer unit. There are no key areas with an added concentration of vacant units, but the peripheral areas of the centre do include a higher proportion than those more central areas. There are vacancies both within and around Spring Gardens and in the old part of the town centre.

Pedestrian Flows

The highest footfall on the day of our visit was observed along Spring Gardens and particularly along the pedestrianised stretch outside of the

shopping centre. Footfall was particularly busy walking to and from Spring Gardens from the adjacent car parks and from the car park adjacent to Waitrose into the foodstore. At the time of our visit, there were pedestrians congregating in around the entrance to Spring Gardens from the adjacent car park, with high levels of activity particularly outside the leisure uses such as Café Nero and Costa.

The quieter parts of the centre were around the Crescent and within the southern old town part of the centre. Pedestrian flows were also particularly limited on the day of our visit between the southern and northern elements of the town centre.

Pedestrian footfall was present around the outdoor market and to and from the public transport stops in the centre.

Accessibility

Buxton is well served by public transport, with the Buxton railway station located to the north of the Waitrose on the opposite site of Station Road and the bus station located on Market Place to the south, with bus stops located throughout the centre.

The railway station has two platforms which provides services to and from Manchester Piccadilly, via Stockport and Levenshulme. The station is also served by a car park providing space for 53 cars and 24 bike parking spaces, along with toilets and disabled access.

The Bus stops throughout the centre provide for regular services to and from Manchester, Stockport, Glossop and Manchester Airport throughout the day and evening at regular intervals. Bus stops are accessible throughout the centre, with live timetables provided to passengers.

The principal town centre car park is situated adjacent to Spring Gardens and the Waitrose foodstore. Parking is also provided to the west of the Pavilion Gardens with on-street parking provided throughout the centre. There are also a number of cycle parking stands located throughout the town centre.

Pedestrian accessibility in Buxton is generally considered to be good, but given the topography between the north and south parts of the centre, walking from one to the other may be difficult for some. The pedestrianised street along Spring Gardens encourages safe movement for visitors and allows visitors to enjoy the centre away from vehicular movement. Work has also been undertaken to the public realm outside of the Crescent, and the access to the adjacent greenspace is good.

Perception of Safety

Buxton is a busy and generally well-used destination, appealing to a wide number of residents, visitors and tourists throughout the year, but particularly in the Summer season.

The town centre generally felt safe and secure, with considerable amounts of natural and passive surveillance provided by both the high amounts of pedestrian activity, passing vehicle movements and active ground floor

uses. There is little evidence of crime or anti-social behaviour, and the public realm is generally well maintained and provides a reasonably attractive environment.

However, more peripheral areas to the main town centre which are likely to have lower levels of activity are likely to feel less safe, particularly after dark when footfall is lower.

According to the website UKCrimeStats, the Buxton Central Ward recorded 82 crimes in November 2021. This consists of 30 violent crimes, 24 ASB and 9 public order crimes. In November 2020, there were 57 recorded crimes and in November 2019, 79 crimes recorded, both in the same Buxton Central Ward. The lower figure in 2020 is likely due to there being a lack of activity in light of the pandemic, and as such, the crime statistics have remained fairly static from 2019 to 2021.

Environmental Quality

The town centre environment is generally of a good quality, particularly on and surrounding Spring Gardens. Areas which are of very good environmental quality include the area around the recently refurbished Buxton Crescent, the adjacent open space and the pedestrianised area along Spring Gardens.

The shopfronts are generally of a high standard, with some having been sympathetically upgraded in recent years to reflect the historical feel of the town centre.

Importantly, Buxton was selected as one of more than 60 towns across the country to receive a share of the High Street Heritage Action Zone funding, receiving a total of £926,700 with a further £100,000 from Historic England. The grant will be used towards conservation-led repairs and will focus on the restoration of shopfronts, based on historic evidence, repairing the external facades on the upper floors, repairing architectural details and repairing the external envelope of buildings. These restorations to the existing property portfolio within the town centre will also go some way to enhancing the environmental quality of the centre.

Conclusions

Buxton town centre is the principal commercial defined centre within the High Peak authority area. The centre is anchored by the Waitrose foodstore, located to the north, with the associated Spring Gardens Shopping Centre attached to the south and adjacent car parking to the north. Spring Gardens consists of both a covered shopping mall and an external commercial pedestrianised street.

Buxton itself is split into two clearly defined commercial areas, with the 'new town' to the north, and the 'old town' to the south, beyond Buxton Town Hall. The southern part of the town centre is focused around the external market area, but extends further southwards along the A515.

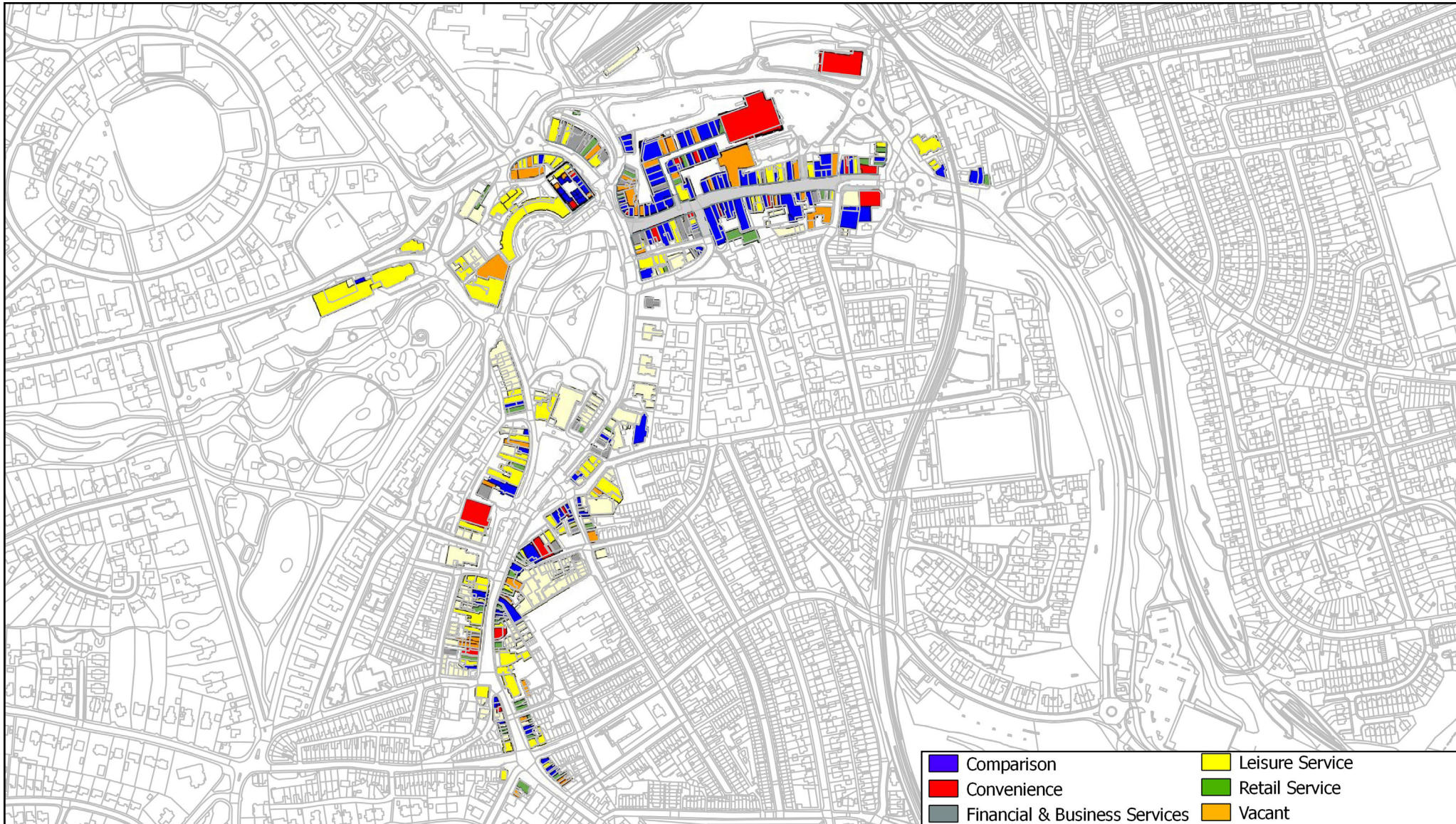
The northern part of the town centre around Spring Gardens comprises the highest concentration of national multiples.

To the west of Spring Gardens is Cavendish Arcade Shopping Centre and Buxton Crescent, which includes a range of retail and leisure independent operators and the Buxton Crescent Visitor Experience, where visitors can explore the Victorian Pump Room. To the west of the Crescent and outside of the defined town centre boundary is The Pavilion Gardens and associated openspace, along with the Buxton Leisure Centre. A public car park is situated directly to the west of the Pavilion Gardens.

Overall, the vacancy rate is at or just below the national average in terms of both the proportion of vacant units and floorspace, indicating that the centre is performing well even despite the pandemic. However, there are some signs of weaknesses in the long-term vacancy with the former M&S unit. Consideration in respect of the repurposing and reuse of the larger vacant units in particular needs to be considered. There are however some key national multiples present and a good range of independent operators throughout the centre.

The overarching environmental quality and accessibility is good, with a good offer of public transport options with the presence of the railway station and bus stops.

Reviewing The Requirements List, and online commercial requirements search engine, there are 13 live requirements in Buxton, although some are dating back to 2020. Of the most recent requirements in Buxton are Hickory's Smokehouse, a BBQ restaurant, Travelodge, KFC, Lidl, Marks and Spencer Food and Amber Taverns.



Buxton town centre

High Peak Retail and Leisure Study 2022

Survey Date - November 2021

Glossop Town Centre

Description

Glossop is the largest settlement in the High Peak authority area and, by virtue of its good transport links to Manchester, is a popular area for commuters. The centre is focused along A57 High Street, which is a major route between Manchester and Sheffield. The majority of retail units are located along or in close proximity to this route, and as such the centre does feel relatively dominated by vehicle movements. Notwithstanding this, the centre benefits from a number of attractive, period buildings which reflect the town's development in the 18th and 19th centuries.

Recent developments in Glossop include the transformation of Glossop Hall, which has secured £2million in funding from the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership via a Getting Building Fund allocation. This project will result in the use of the Market Hall as space for creative and start-up businesses and food and retail units on the ground floor. Planning consent for these works was granted in July 2020.



Figure 1: Shopfronts throughout Glossop are generally well-maintained and add interest and character to the town centre



Figure 2: Glossop benefits from a number of attractive period buildings, including listed buildings. The town centre is largely contained within a Conservation Area.



Figure 3: Norfolk Square is located at the centre of Glossop, and provides an attractive location in which visitors can rest



Figure 4: Wren Nest Retail Park, located in the west of the town centre, includes the converted former Wren Nest Mill which was redeveloped following a fire in 1996

Table 1 Town Centre Floorspace Composition

| GOAD Category | Floorspace at 2021 (sq.m) | Floorspace at 2021 (%) | Floorspace at 2012 (%) | Floorspace UK Average at 2021 (%) |
|----------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Comparison | 13,360 | 27.9% | 26.6% | 30.5% |
| Convenience | 11,880 | 24.8% | 24.9% | 15.4% |
| Financial | 2,430 | 5.1% | 5.6% | 6.9% |
| Leisure | 8,400 | 17.5% | 15.5% | 25.6% |
| Retail Service | 5,420 | 11.3% | 7.4% | 7.2% |
| Vacant | 6,460 | 13.5% | 6.7% | 13.9% |
| TOTAL | 47,950 | 100% | 100% | 100 |

Source: Composition of town centre derived from Nexus Planning Survey of November 2021; Composition at 2012 taken from High Peak & Staffordshire Moorland Quantitative Retail Study Update 2013; UK Average from Experian Goad Report October 2021

Table 2 Town Centre Unit Composition

| GOAD Category | Units at 2021 | Units at 2021 (%) | Units at 2012 (%) | Units UK Average at 2021 (%) |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Comparison | 72 | 28.9% | 29.8% | 27.1% |
| Convenience | 23 | 9.2% | 7.5% | 9.2% |
| Financial | 23 | 9.2% | 9.2% | 9.1% |
| Leisure | 53 | 21.3% | 17.4% | 24.6% |
| Retail Service | 49 | 19.7% | 12.8% | 15.6% |
| Vacant | 29 | 11.6% | 6.6% | 14.2% |
| TOTAL | 249 | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Source: Composition of town centre derived from Nexus Planning Survey of November 2021; Composition at 2012 taken from High Peak & Staffordshire Moorland Quantitative Retail Study Update 2013; UK Average from Experian Goad Report October 2021

Uses

Glossop is the key retail destination in the northern part of High Peak, and as such accommodates a diverse range of convenience and comparison operators. There are 23 convenience operators in the town centre, with these being anchored by a particularly strong range of foodstores in Glossop. These include Tesco, Iceland, Aldi, M&S Food and the Lidl store which opened in 2021 at Mill Street. Accordingly, although the 23 convenience operators account for a comparable proportion of units to the national average (9.2%), the proportion of retail floorspace occupied by convenience uses equates to 24.8% of the total stock of floorspace. This compares to the current national average of 15.4%, with this disparity being attributable to the large format nature of these foodstore operators. Additionally, there are three bakers and confectioners, three off-licences, two confectionery, tobacco and news stores, two butchers and a greengrocer and health food store. Glossop gained a market charter and 1290, and has hosted a market since that time. Glossop Indoor Market is currently closed for refurbishment, an outdoor market is open on Friday and Saturday.

Comparison operators are well represented in Glossop town centre, despite some recent high profile closures such as Peacocks and Edinburgh Woollen Mill. There are 72 comparison operators in total which are primarily located at Wren Nest Retail Park and along High Street West, accounting for 13,360

sq.m of floorspace. This equates to 27.9% of the total stock of retail floorspace, a figure which represents a minimal increase from the 26.6% recorded at 2012. The proportion of both comparison units and floorspace is comparable to the current national averages. Within the town centre there are eight craft and gift shops, seven charity shops, seven clothing shops, five hardware and household goods shops and four chemists. Key national multiple retailers with a presence in Glossop include Argos, B&M Bargains and Next.

Service operators account for just over half of all operators in Glossop, with 53 leisure service operators accounting for 21.3% of all operators, a figure which is commensurate with the current national average. These operators are diverse and include 18 fast-food takeaways, 10 public houses, eight cafés, seven bars and five restaurants alongside two betting offices. There are 49 retail service operators which equate to 19.7% of all units in the town, again these operators are diverse and include 17 hairdressers, 11 beauty salons, three opticians and two dry cleaners alongside petrol filling stations, tattoo parlours, undertakers, a Post Office and a car repair garage. The 23 financial and business service operators in Glossop account for 9.2% of all units in the town centre.

A search of The Requirement List has confirmed that a number of operators, including Poundstretcher, Subway, KFC and Hickory's Smokehouse have an outstanding requirement for new premises in Glossop.

Vacancies

At the time of our visit, a total of 29 vacant units were recorded within Glossop town centre. These vacant units account for 6,460 sq.m of floorspace, which is equivalent to 13.5% of the total stock of retail floorspace. The vacancy rates observed at the time of our visit were broadly similar to the national average figures at that time. However, the vacancy rate for both floorspace and units represents a substantial increase on the figures recorded at 2012.

Vacant units are located throughout the town centre, with particular concentrations observed around Wrens Nest Retail Park, including the former KFC and public house in that location, and in the west of the centre around Howard Town Retail Park. These vacant units are indicative of changes in town centres that have occurred in recent years, including closure of retail banks (the Barclays bank in Glossop closed in August 2021) and closures of national multiple retail operators, such as Edinburgh Woollen Mill and Peacocks. Notwithstanding this, the vacancy rate observed in Glossop at the time of our visit is not considered to represent significant cause for concern at this time.

Pedestrian Flows

During our visit, both pedestrian activity and footfall were considered to be healthy. This activity was concentrated on the south side of High Street between Victoria Street and Cross Street, with more limited levels of activity observed around Norfolk Square, the M&S Foodhall at Smithy Fold and along the rest of High Street. Generally lower levels of activity were observed around the Edward Street car park and the Wrens Nest Retail

Park. Indeed, few linked trips were observed between the Tesco superstore and Wrens Nest Retail Park and the main retail core of Glossop. The limited activity beyond the Norfolk Square area can potentially be attributed to the level of vehicular traffic along the A57 High Street and the narrow pedestrian footways in this location, alongside the limited pedestrian crossing points along this major road.

The majority of people are considered to access the centre by car, with the car parks observed to be well used at the time a survey was completed. However, strong numbers were observed around key bus stations in the town on Norfolk Square. This suggests that a number of visitors to the town do so via public transport.

Accessibility

Glossop is generally considered to be an accessible destination by both private vehicle and public transport. Glossop train station is located within the defined town centre boundary on Norfolk Street. Two services an hour to Manchester Piccadilly are provided throughout the day, with these services taking approximately 30 minutes to make this journey. Services are also provided to residential areas to the west of Glossop, such as Hadfield. A small car park is located adjacent to the train station, which provides 24 spaces. A key bus interchange in the town is located at Henry Street near Norfolk Square and Norfolk Square itself. From here, services 61, 61A, 237, 341, 351, 390, 393, 394 and X57 provide frequent access to a range of destinations including Buxton, New Mills, Chapel-en-le-Frith, Hadfield, Ashton-under-Lyne, Hyde, Manchester City Centre and Sheffield City Centre.

There is a considerable amount of car parking available in the town centre. There are 107 spaces at Edward Street, 91 spaces at the Municipal Buildings and 39 spaces at Bernard Street. These surface level car parks provide up to two hours of car parking for £1.50. Furthermore, along High Street West is a significant amount of on-street car parking, which provides free, short-term car parking for up to 40 minutes. Additional parking for customers at Aldi, B&M and the M&S Foodhall/Lidl is also provided within the town centre. The centre is therefore considered to be easily accessible to those who have access to a vehicle. There are EV charging points located at the Municipal Buildings, Edward Street and adjacent to the Lidl foodstore.

However, the town is located along the A57 which is a major trunk road linking Manchester and Sheffield. Snake Pass, the main route between these two cities, is located to the south-east of Glossop. By virtue of this, Glossop is generally dominated by vehicular movements and a generally high level of vehicular traffic moves along High Street. This reduces overall pedestrian accessibility, although there are a number of controlled pedestrian crossing points along this route.

Perception of Safety

Glossop is a generally safe and secure town centre, with a low instance of report crime. According to the website UKCrimeStats, 121 crimes were reported within a mile radius of Glossop town centre in September 2021. This compares with 141 crimes reported in the same area in September 2020 and 97 in September 2019.

There is a good sense of security within the centre provided by a well maintained environment, free from litter or signs of deterioration. The car parks as such have the perception of being safe and secure. The centre is overlooked in most locations, and benefits from considerable standards of both natural and passive surveillance. Areas such as Norfolk Square and High Street have an open feel, located close to the activity associated with the main retail core and with good visibility of the surroundings.

Although the centre generally feels safe and secure, the proximity of the retail core to a major and busy arterial route impacts on the overall standard of pedestrian safety. However, the pedestrian nature of Norfolk Square and the lower levels of vehicular activity in peripheral areas away from the A57 High Street ensure that pedestrian safety is good in these locations.

Environmental Quality

As noted above, Glossop town centre is a linear centre located along A57 High Street. This road is a well-used and somewhat congested route between Sheffield and Manchester, and as such the volume of passing traffic which moves through the centre does somewhat detract from the overall environmental quality of Glossop.

The town has a long history, with a market charter dating from 1290. Accordingly, many of the buildings within the town centre are of a historic nature and a considerable proportion are listed. These include the Glossop Market Hall, which is a Grade II listed building, and is currently subject to considerable works to revitalise the building and bring it back into use. It is understood that the Market Hall will be reopened as a new food hall as part of a £5.5 million development which also include the refurbishment of the Town Hall. Specific buildings such as these provide a positive contribution towards the centre's overall environmental quality. Almost the entirety of the town centre is located within a defined Conservation Area, which is considered to be reflective of both the historic and attractive nature of the town.

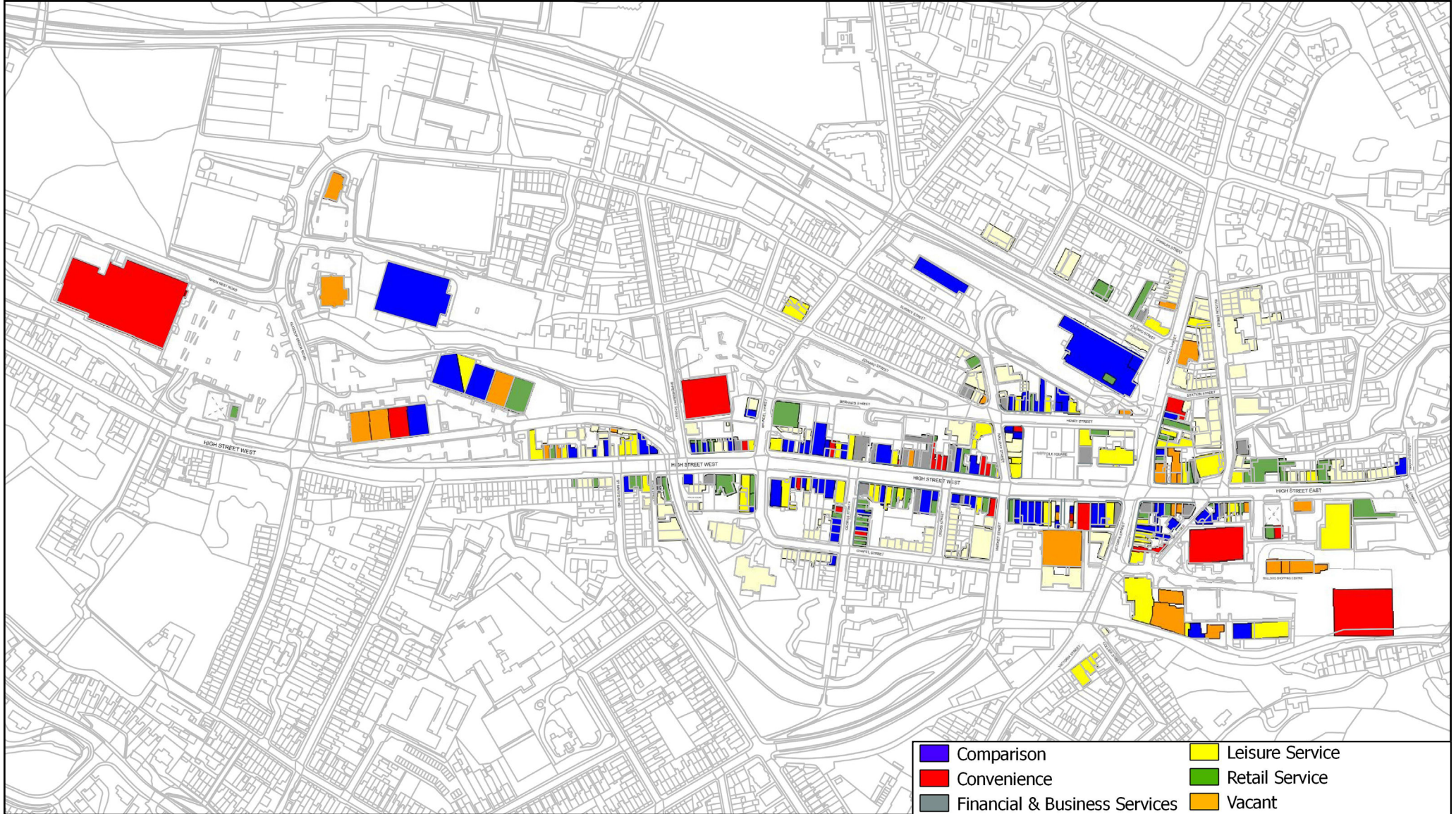
The centre is generally well maintained, as are the retail units themselves. There are seasonal planters and areas of planting located throughout the centre, with a particularly pleasant environment at and around Norfolk Square. The public realm in the surroundings is again well planned and maintained, with clear signposting around the centre. These areas are of a simple design and provide opportunities for seating and café culture around Norfolk Square. No apparent environmental issues relating to anti-social behaviour or vandalism were observed.

Conclusions

Glossop is considered to be a vital and viable centre which, despite recent changes in the operators with a presence in the town centre, has remained vibrant and maintains its role as the key retail and service destination in the north of the authority area. This is demonstrated in the town maintaining a vacancy rate broadly similar to the current national average. Its strong convenience and comparison offer is augmented by a diverse range of

service operators which are considered to easily serve the needs of the local community.

The centre is generally well maintained, as are the retail units themselves, and the public realm is on the whole attractive and pleasant. Evidence of investment, including the transformation of Glossop Hall, which will result in the use of the Market Hall as space for creative and start-up businesses and food and retail units on the ground floor, will build on these existing strengths. However, a perennial issue in the town has been the volume of traffic on the A57 High Street and this was observed during our visit. Notwithstanding this, Glossop was well-used at the time of our visit and is considered to be a healthy, vibrant centre.



Glossop town centre

High Peak Retail and Leisure Study 2022

Survey Date - November 2021

Chapel-en-le-Frith Town Centre

Description

Chapel-en-le-Frith is a relatively small centre, located just to the west of the boundary of the Peak District National Park. The retail centre is linear in nature and largely runs along Market Street and High Street, which are two busy, well-used routes. The impact of this relationship is that the town centre is dominated by vehicle movements, which somewhat impact on the appearance of the town centre and the overall ease of pedestrian movement.

Chapel-en-le-Frith town centre contains a mix of modern purpose built retail units alongside converted former residential properties. However, within the defined boundaries of the village centre are a number of residential properties and other non-retail operators. As a result of this, Chapel-en-le-Frith largely lacks a clear retail 'core', with the exception of the Market Place. However, the centre is generally well maintained and provides an attractive and pleasant retail environment. The centre provides a reasonable range of operators which are considered to be easily capable of providing for the day-to-day needs of the local community, particularly in respect of convenience goods.



Figure 1: The retail units in the town centre are diverse, and include more modern premises such as these at Thornbrook Road



Figure 2: The Kings Arms Hotel overlooks the Market Place and is a key landmark in the town which, although currently vacant, is a positive contributor to Chapel-en-le-Frith



Figure 3: Chapel-en-le-Frith is anchored by Co-op Food and Morrisons with activity in to the town centre driven by these two operators



Figure 4: Market Place is located at the centre of Chapel-en-le-Frith and provides an attractive area of public space for community use

Table 1 Town Centre Floorspace Composition

| GOAD Category | Floorspace at 2021 (sq.m) | Floorspace at 2021 (%) | Floorspace at 2012 (%) | Floorspace UK Average at 2021 (%) |
|----------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Comparison | 3,070 | 24.3% | 19.4% | 30.5% |
| Convenience | 3,880 | 30.7% | 26.1% | 15.4% |
| Financial | 670 | 5.3% | 5.7% | 6.9% |
| Leisure | 2,330 | 18.4% | 17.8% | 25.6% |
| Retail Service | 1,980 | 15.7% | 9.0% | 7.2% |
| Vacant | 720 | 5.7% | 7.3% | 13.9% |
| TOTAL | 12,650 | 100% | 100% | 100 |

Source: Composition of town centre derived from Nexus Planning Survey of November 2021; Composition at 2012 taken from High Peak & Staffordshire Moorland Quantitative Retail Study Update 2013; UK Average from Experian Goad Report October 2021

Table 2 Town Centre Unit Composition

| GOAD Category | Units at 2021 | Units at 2021 (%) | Units at 2012 (%) | Units UK Average at 2021 (%) |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Comparison | 23 | 24.7% | 20.6% | 27.1% |
| Convenience | 7 | 7.5% | 4.7% | 9.2% |
| Financial | 12 | 12.9% | 10.3% | 9.1% |
| Leisure | 22 | 23.7% | 21.5% | 24.6% |
| Retail Service | 23 | 24.7% | 16.8% | 15.6% |
| Vacant | 6 | 6.5% | 11.2% | 14.2% |
| TOTAL | 93 | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Source: Composition of town centre derived from Nexus Planning Survey of November 2021; Composition at 2012 taken from High Peak & Staffordshire Moorland Quantitative Retail Study Update 2013; UK Average from Experian Goad Report October 2021

Uses

Chapel-en-le-Frith is considered to have a strong diversity and range of operators, with comparison operators equating to 24.7% of all units in the centre. This figure is slightly less than the current national average, and includes florists, booksellers, DIY shops, chemists, electrical goods retailers, jewellers and a charity shop. The majority of these comparison goods retailers are independents, with the lack of modern, purpose built retail stock reducing the centre's appeal to national multiple retailers. Convenience operators in Chapel-en-le-Frith are relatively diverse, and are anchored by Morrisons and Co-op Food. Additionally, there are two bakeries, a butchers and an off-licence in the town centre. These seven operators equate to 7.5% of all units in the town centre, a figure has increased marginally since 2012.

Service uses are relatively diverse. Retail services include hairdressers, a dog grooming parlour, an opticians and a petrol filling station. These 23 units account for 24.7% of all units in Chapel-en-le-Frith. Leisure service operator's account for a similar proportion of units when compared to the current national average, at 23.7% in Chapel-en-le-Frith compared to 24.6%. Furthermore, the proportion of leisure service units in the town is broadly similar to that recorded at 2012. The 22 operators include seven hot-food takeaways, four public houses, four cafés and three restaurants.

Since the closure of the NatWest and RBS branches in the town centre, there are no retail banks in Chapel-en-le-Frith. Notwithstanding this, there are 12 financial and business service operators, including solicitors and estate agents, which account for 12.9% of units; a figure which is slightly higher than the current national average.

Vacancies

At the time of our visit, a total of six vacant units were recorded. These equate to 6.5% of all retail units in the town centre, a figure substantially lower than the current national average. Similarly, the proportion of vacant floorspace equated to 5.7% of the total retail stock, again representing a lower figure than the current national average. Since 2012, the vacancy rate in respect of both floorspace and units has decreased.

Although these vacancies are generally dispersed throughout the town centre, a small cluster of three vacant units was observed around the Market Place. These vacant units include the former Kings Arms Hotel, The Cobbles bar and RBS bank.

Pedestrian Flows

Although pedestrian activity was relatively limited at the time of our visit, the levels of activity were constant. Pedestrian activity was noted as being concentrated around the Co-operative Foodstore and Morrisons supermarket. However, few linked trips were observed between these destinations and other parts of the town centre. Indeed, it was noted that most people who arrived to these destinations did so by private vehicle. The limited levels of linked trips between these two convenience uses suggests that although these two units anchor Chapel-en-le-Frith, but in practice they play a limited role in driving activity through the town centre. Rather, customers to the two food stores are likely to arrive by car and use the private car parks provided at each facility for a single trip.

The lowest activity was observed on the southern side of High Street/Market Street, perhaps reflective of the lack of safe pedestrian crossing points between these locations and the Co-operative Foodstore/Morrisons. Other areas with pronounced levels of pedestrian activity include Market Place and the retail parade at the north of Thornbrook Road.

Accessibility

Chapel-en-le-Frith is considered to be generally accessible, with the town located adjacent to the A6. The town centre itself is well integrated with surrounding residential areas, and as such is considered to be easily accessible by pedestrians.

However in respect of public transport, Chapel-en-le-Frith is generally less accessible. Bus routes 040 and Skyline 199 provide services to Buxton, Whaley Bridge, New Mills and Manchester Airport via Stockport and Hazel Grove. Access to Glossop is provided through a change to service 61 in New Mills. Additionally, Chapel-en-le-Frith train station is located approximately 20 minutes walk to the south of the town. Although this is not directly accessible from the town itself, hourly services between Buxton and Manchester Piccadilly via Whaley Bridge, New Mills and Stockport are provided. Buxton is accessible in 12 minutes, and Manchester Piccadilly is accessible in 43 minutes.

There are two surface level car parks located in close proximity to Chapel-en-le-Frith town centre; 41 spaces at Thornbrook Road and 31 spaces at Miry Meadows. These provide free car parking between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00. On-street bay parking is also available along Market Street, although by virtue of the narrow nature of the carriageway through Chapel-en-le-Frith this is relatively limited. However, this parking does provide up to one hour of free, short-term car parking. Parking is also available to customers to the rear of the Co-operative Foodstore and at the Morrisons supermarket.

Perception of Safety

Chapel-en-le-Frith town centre is relatively dispersed and includes a number of non-retail uses within the defined centre boundary. Similarly, the centre is bisected by Market Street and High Street which both have a relatively high, and constant, volume of traffic moving along them. As such Chapel-en-le-Frith benefits from a high standard of both natural and passive surveillance. Due to the varied activity through the centre, and the residential properties within it, this surveillance is likely to continue at all hours of the day thereby providing a good standard of safety. According to the website UKCrimeStats, 51 crimes were reported within a mile radius of Chapel-en-le-Frith town centre in September 2021. This compares with 53 crimes reported in the same area in September 2020 and 28 in September 2019.

Although the perception of safety in Chapel-en-le-Frith is generally of a high standard, the centre lacks any pedestrianised areas which could help to improve the overall perception of safety, particularly for pedestrians. This situation is exacerbated by the volume of traffic that moves through the centre along Market Street and High Street.

Environmental Quality

Chapel-en-le-Frith is a pleasant town centre, with generally well-maintained retail units and clear evidence of investment to improve the overall retail environment and appearance of the centre. The town centre is tightly located along Market Street and High Street, with narrow pedestrian footways running along these roads. The result of this is that the overall appearance of the town is somewhat impacted by vehicle movements through the centre. The result of this is to negatively impact the centre's overall environmental quality.

However, as with other centres in High Peak, Chapel-en-le-Frith is an historic market town which has a number of attractive period buildings, a number of which are listed. These help to create an attractive, characterful town centre which is further improved by small areas of public realm throughout the town, such as the seating area at Market Place, which is a particularly beneficial feature. The majority of the town centre (mainly excluding the Morrisons superstore and the units along Thornbrook Road) is located within a Conservation Area.

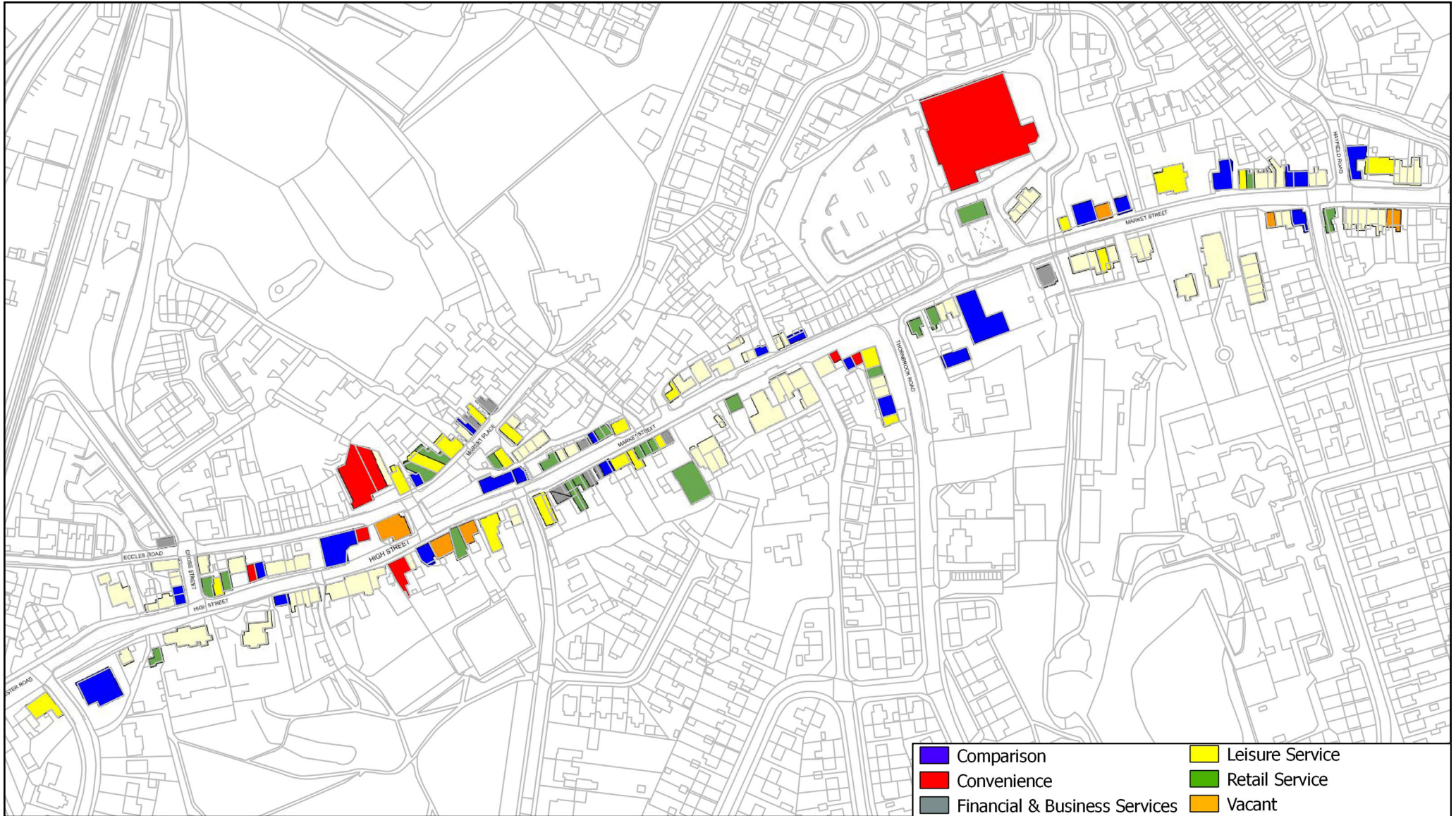
The retail units themselves are not considered to be distinctive in terms of their appearance and are essentially functional rather than attractive. Moreover, by virtue of the town centre's proximity to a major and busy

road, the centre is relatively dominated by vehicular movements. Notwithstanding this, the environmental quality of Chapel-en-le-Frith is considered to be good.

Conclusions

Chapel-en-le-Frith is a relatively small centre, located just to the west of the boundary of the Peak District National Park. The retail centre is linear in nature and largely runs along Market Street and High Street, and contains a mix of modern purpose built retail units alongside converted former residential properties. However, within the defined boundaries of the village centre are a number of residential properties and other non-retail operators. As a result of this, Chapel-en-le-Frith largely lacks a clear retail 'core', with the exception of the Market Place.

The centre provides a reasonable range of operators which are considered to be easily capable of providing for the day-to-day needs of the local community, particularly in respect of convenience goods. Chapel-en-le-Frith has a vacancy rate considerable lower than the current national average, and as such is considered to be a vital and viable centre.



Chapel-en-le-Frith town centre

High Peak Retail and Leisure Study 2022

Survey Date - November 2021

New Mills Town Centre

Description

Located at the western edge of High Peak and close to the boundary of the Peak District National Park, New Mills town centre is a relatively small centre focused on providing for the day-to-day needs of the surrounding community. In terms of retailers, the majority of operators within the town centre are independents, although there are a limited number of national multiples such as Sainsbury's Local.

New Mills developed through the late 18th and 19th centuries, and as such has a number of attractive, period buildings typical of this period. The town centre is focused along Market Street and Union Road, and includes peripheral areas such as Torr Top Street and High Street. These roads are generally quiet, the effect of this being that New Mills provides a generally pleasant retail environment. The town hosts the 'New Mills Festival' in late September, which includes a number of cultural events, live music concerts, exhibitions and a lantern procession and street party on the final Saturday.



Figure 1: There are a number of attractive, well-maintained retail units in the town centre. These include both independent and national multiple operators, such as Boots on Market Street.



Figure 2: Sainsbury's Local on Torr Top Street is the main convenience goods location in New Mills



Figure 3: There is a considerable amount of on-street vehicular parking in the town centre, as shown here at Market Street



Figure 4: Located close to the edge of the Peak District National Park and the Sett Valley, New Mills is well located to take advantage of spending generated by the tourist industry

Table 1 Town Centre Floorspace Composition

| GOAD Category | Floorspace at 2021 (sq.m) | Floorspace at 2021 (%) | Floorspace at 2012 (%) | Floorspace UK Average at 2021 (%) |
|----------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Comparison | 1,790 | 25.9% | 21.5% | 30.5% |
| Convenience | 1,220 | 17.7% | 14.8% | 15.4% |
| Financial | 700 | 10.1% | 14.3% | 6.9% |
| Leisure | 1,810 | 26.2% | 21.9% | 25.6% |
| Retail Service | 780 | 11.3% | 9.7% | 7.2% |
| Vacant | 610 | 8.8% | 8.2% | 13.9% |
| TOTAL | 6,910 | 100% | 100% | 100 |

Source: Composition of town centre derived from Nexus Planning Survey of November 2021; Composition at 2012 taken from High Peak & Staffordshire Moorland Quantitative Retail Study Update 2013; UK Average from Experian Goad Report October 2021

Table 2 Town Centre Unit Composition

| GOAD Category | Units at 2021 | Units at 2021 (%) | Units at 2012 (%) | Units UK Average at 2021 (%) |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Comparison | 22 | 28.2% | 23.6% | 27.1% |
| Convenience | 9 | 11.5% | 7.9% | 9.2% |
| Financial | 9 | 11.5% | 15.8% | 9.1% |
| Leisure | 18 | 23.1% | 19.1% | 24.6% |
| Retail Service | 13 | 16.7% | 14.2% | 15.6% |
| Vacant | 7 | 9.0% | 7.9% | 14.2% |
| TOTAL | 78 | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Source: Composition of town centre derived from Nexus Planning Survey of November 2021; Composition at 2012 taken from High Peak & Staffordshire Moorland Quantitative Retail Study Update 2013; UK Average from Experian Goad Report October 2021

Uses

New Mills' retail offer is underpinned by a reasonably strong provision of convenience goods, with these operators accounting for 11.5% of all units and 17.7% of the total stock of retail floorspace. Both of these figures are marginally higher than the current national averages. The convenience goods offer is diverse, and is anchored by Sainsbury's Local on Torr Top Street. Other operators include four bakers and confectioners, a butcher, an off-licence and a shoe repairers. Furthermore, a search of The Requirement List has confirmed that Lidl have an outstanding requirement for a new foodstore in the town.

Given that New Mills is primarily a centre focused on meeting the day-to-day needs of the local community, the town has a strong range of comparison goods. In total, 25.9% of the total stock of retail floorspace and 28.2% of all units are occupied by comparison operators. These figures represent an increase on the proportion of comparison floorspace and units recorded at 2012. Operators are also diverse, and include four charity shops, three clothing shops, two hardware and household goods and two retail art galleries. In addition, there are a number of specialist retailers including a bookseller, pharmacist, bicycles, florists and textiles and soft furnishings.

Although New Mills has a diverse range of convenience and comparison goods operators, it is dominated by leisure, retail and financial and business

service operators. These operators account for 47.6% of the total stock of retail floorspace and 51.3% of all retail units, and there are a diverse range of service operators with a presence in the town centre. Leisure service operators account for 23.1% of all units and 26.2% of the total stock of retail floorspace. Operators include public houses, hot-food takeaways, cafés and a restaurant.

Retail service operators are similarly diverse, equating to 16.7% of all units and 11.3% of the total stock of retail floorspace. These 13 operators include eight hairdressers, alongside an optician, undertaker, travel agent and a Post Office. There are nine financial and business service operators, accounting for 11.5% of all units. These include estate agents, solicitors and financial advisors.

Vacancies

There were seven vacant units observed in New Mills town centre at the time of our visit, with these equating to 9.0% of all units in the town centre. These account for 610 sq.m of floorspace, which represents 8.8% of the total stock of retail floorspace in New Mills. Both figures represent lower figures than the current national average for vacant units or floorspace and are broadly similar to the vacancy rates recorded at 2012.

Pedestrian Flows

Pedestrian activity varies considerably throughout New Mills town centre. The greatest levels of activity were observed around the Sainsbury's Local at Torr Top Street and along Market Street. That significant levels of activity were observed around the largest convenience food shopping destination in the town centre is to be expected, as this store provides a range of goods to serve the day-to-day needs of the local community. A limited number of linked trips were observed between the Sainsbury's Local and other destinations within the town centre. Strong pedestrian activity was also noted along Market Street. This location is the centre of New Mill's comparison goods and leisure service offer.

Union Road, and more peripheral areas of the town centre, have lower levels of activity compared to Market Street. This is potentially due to the nature of the offer in this location, but also due to the traffic which passes along the B6101 in this location. This key route, and the volume of traffic movements along it, is considered to represent a barrier to pedestrian movement. Peripheral areas, including High Street and Torr Top Street, were observed as having the lowest activity in the centre. These areas have a limited number of retail units and as such is not considered likely to attract a strong flow of pedestrians.

Accessibility

New Mills town centre is considered to be easily accessible. The town is located at the western edge of the authority area, and as such is well-integrated into the national road network. The A6 runs to the south of the town, and provides access to Stockport in the west and Buxton.

There is a considerable amount of car parking available throughout the town centre. There are two surface level car parks located within or in close proximity to the town centre; 63 spaces at Torr Top Street and 44 spaces at Market Street. Both car parks provide free car parking for the first hour, with a charge of £0.90 for up to two hours. In addition to the surface level

car parking in New Mills, there is a considerable amount of on-street car parking located along Market Street. This parking provides free, short-term car parking for up to one hour.

Public transport is also readily accessible from New Mills, with New Mills Central train station located approximately 250 metres to the west of the town centre. From here, there are up to two services per hour to Manchester Piccadilly (accessible in around 35 minutes) and one service per hour to Sheffield, which is accessible in 49 minutes. Around 800 metres to the southwest of the town centre is New Mills Newtown train station. This station is located on the Manchester-Buxton line, and provides access to destinations in High Peak including Whaley Bridge and Chapel-en-le-Frith, as well as Stockport. Bus transport is also considered to be good, with a bus interchange located at Rock Mill Lane. Services 60, 60A, 61, 61A, 358, 389 and Skyline 199 provide access to Macclesfield, Buxton (via Whaley Bridge and Chapel-en-le-Frith), Glossop and Stockport.

Pedestrian accessibility is generally good, with the town centre well integrated into surrounding residential areas. However, within the town centre itself pedestrian movement is inhibited by vehicular movements along Market Street and Union Road, with this issue being particularly significant at the roundabout in the centre of the town where only one controlled pedestrian crossing point is provided. This restricts ease of pedestrian movement through the town centre.

Perception of Safety

In general, New Mills is considered to be a safe and secure town centre which little obvious evidence of crime, litter or anti-social behaviour. According to the website UKCrimeStats, 62 crimes were reported within a mile radius of New Mills town centre in September 2021. This compares with 57 crimes reported in the same area in September 2020 and 43 in September 2019. Although more central areas around Market Street and Union Road benefit from a good standard of natural and passive surveillance, and higher levels of pedestrian activity, peripheral areas further from the centre, including Torr Top Street, feel less secure. This is partially due to the lower levels of pedestrian activity in these areas, and thus less surveillance. However, the standard of safety even in these areas is still considered to be good.

Pedestrian safety is also somewhat compromised by the considerable amount of traffic that moves through the centre, and the narrow pedestrian footways that provide limited separation between vehicles and pedestrians along Market Street and Union Road.

Environmental Quality

New Mills largely developed in the Industrial Revolution, and this pattern of development is reflected in the large number of buildings which date from the late 18th and 19th centuries. These buildings add character to the town, and the value of these buildings is reflected in the designation of New Mills Conservation Area which covers the vast majority of the town centre. Despite this designation, there are few listed buildings within the town centre itself. The buildings within the town centre are generally well-

maintained, attractive and provide positive points of interest, and further add to the centre's character and overall appearance.

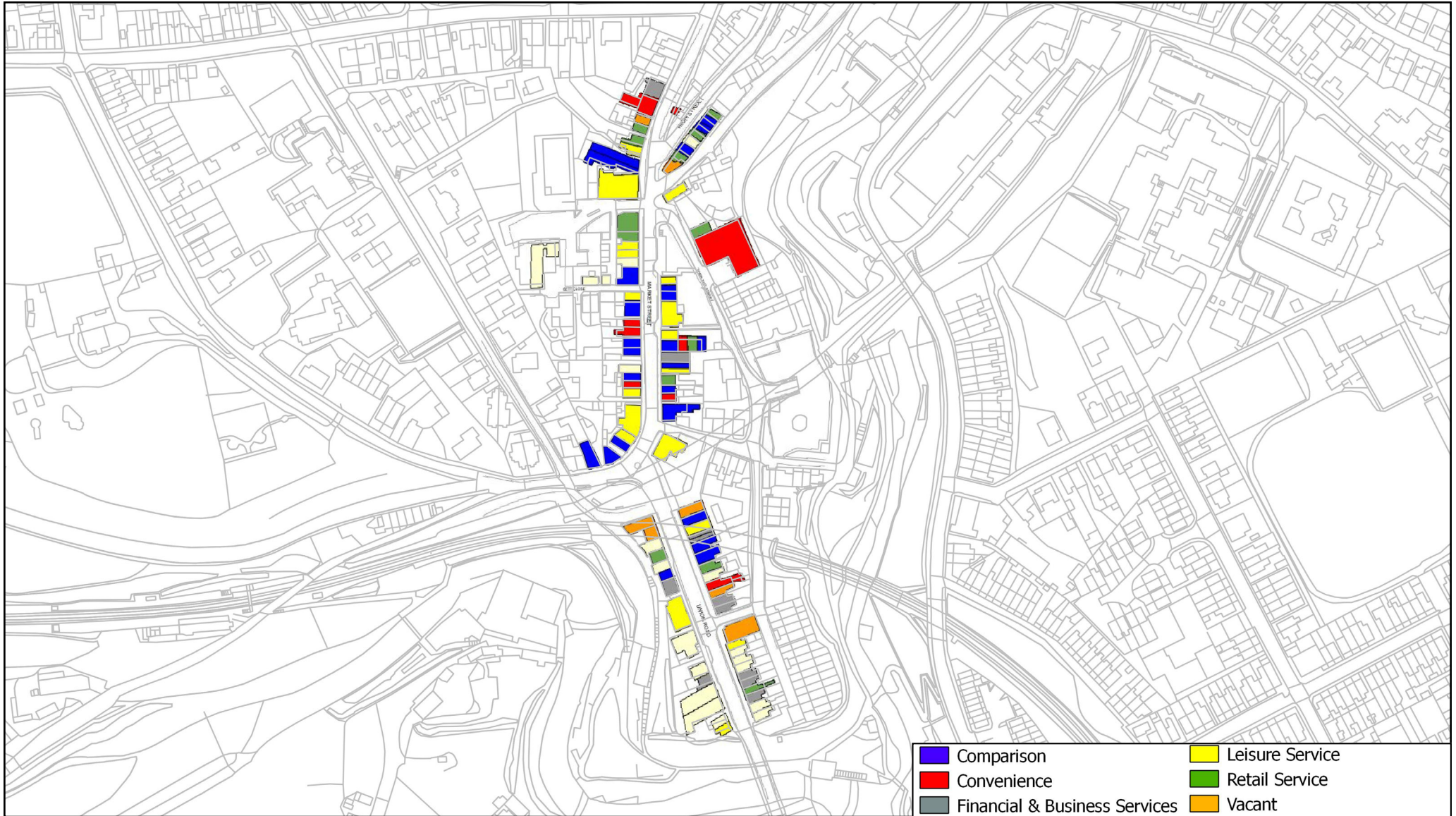
In the southern part of the town centre along Union Road the environmental quality is considered to be lower than in other parts of the town centre. This is due to the reduced levels of vibrancy and pedestrian activity in this location, which is somewhat removed from the main 'core' of the town centre, along with fewer retailers which could provide a degree of interest. Vehicle movements also dominate in the southern part of the town centre.

The appearance of Market Street in particular is considered to be good, with evidence of upkeep and maintenance visible. Retail units are well-maintained, with a number of characterful and attractive shopfronts which add further interest to the streetscene. In general, New Mills has a high standard of environmental quality which is underpinned by its combination of historic buildings and the town's pattern of development over many years.

Conclusions

New Mills is one of the smaller town centres in High Peak, and as such primarily caters to serving day-to-day retail needs. The centre is anchored by a strong convenience goods offer, alongside which is a diverse comparison offer which is comparable in terms of floorspace and units than the current national average. Furthermore, the centre benefits from a vacancy rate which is lower than the current national average.

The centre's close proximity to the edge of the Peak District National Park result in it benefiting from passing tourist activity which, alongside New Mills' focus on providing for the local community, result in a town centre which is considered to be both vital and viable.



New Mills town centre

High Peak Retail and Leisure Study 2022

Survey Date - November 2021

Whaley Bridge Town Centre

Description

Whaley Bridge is the smallest town centre in the High Peak authority area, and as such is focused on providing for the day-to-day needs of the local community, with a strong service and convenience goods offer, alongside a more limited comparison offer which provides for both day-to-day as well as more specialist goods. The small size of the town centre is such that the town has a 'village feel', with a strong community who organise and host a number of events, including an annual carnival in June, and provide for the upkeep of the town centre.

The town centre is mostly focused along Buxton Road, which is a key arterial route through Whaley Bridge and as such is subject to a high number of vehicular movements. The centre's location, although ensuring a high standard of accessibility, does detract somewhat from the overall environmental quality. In common with other towns in High Peak, Whaley Bridge developed during the Industrial Revolution. The legacy of this pattern of development can be seen in charming period and historic buildings, many of which are listed.



Figure 1: Although there is a limited amount of surface level car parking provided at Canal Street, on-street car parking is available in the town centre, as shown here along Buxton Road



Figure 2: Whaley Bridge train station is located within the defined town centre boundary and provides access to a range of destinations, including Manchester



Figure 3: Canal Street provides a retail parade set back from Buxton Road in the north of Whaley Bridge town centre



Figure 4: The Co-op Foodstore on Buxton Road, alongside McColl's, underpin the town's convenience goods offer

Table 1 Town Centre Floorspace Composition

| GOAD Category | Floorspace at 2021 (sq.m) | Floorspace at 2021 (%) | Floorspace at 2012 (%) | Floorspace UK Average at 2021 (%) |
|----------------|---------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Comparison | 1,195 | 32.6% | 17.4% | 30.5% |
| Convenience | 448 | 12.2% | 18.6% | 15.4% |
| Financial | 245 | 6.7% | 62.1% | 6.9% |
| Leisure | 1,029 | 28.1% | | 25.6% |
| Retail Service | 247 | 6.7% | | 7.2% |
| Vacant | 504 | 13.7% | 1.8% | 13.9% |
| TOTAL | 3,668 | 100% | 100% | 100 |

Source: Composition of town centre derived from Nexus Planning Survey of November 2021; Composition at 2012 taken from High Peak & Staffordshire Moorland Quantitative Retail Study Update 2013; UK Average from Experian Goad Report October 2021

Table 2 Town Centre Unit Composition

| GOAD Category | Units at 2021 | Units at 2021 (%) | Floorspace at 2012 (%) | Units UK Average at 2021 (%) |
|----------------|---------------|-------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| Comparison | 11 | 27.5% | 16.7% | 27.1% |
| Convenience | 4 | 10.0% | 14.6% | 9.2% |
| Financial | 4 | 10.0% | 64.6% | 9.1% |
| Leisure | 15 | 37.5% | | 24.6% |
| Retail Service | 5 | 12.5% | | 15.6% |
| Vacant | 1 | 2.5% | 4.2% | 14.2% |
| TOTAL | 40 | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Source: Composition of town centre derived from Nexus Planning Survey of November 2021; Composition at 2012 taken from High Peak & Staffordshire Moorland Quantitative Retail Study Update 2013; UK Average from Experian Goad Report October 2021

Uses

Given the relatively limited scale of Whaley Bridge, it is not surprising that the centre is focused around serving the day-to-day needs of the local community. The town is anchored by a relatively strong convenience goods provision, with four such operators equating to 10.0% of all units and 12.2% of all floorspace. These operators include McColls, Co-op Food, a bakery and a wine shop. Alongside the convenience operators are a relatively diverse range of comparison units, of which there are 11 in the town centre. These units equate to 27.5% of all units and 32.6% of the total stock of retail floorspace, with both figures being broadly similar to the current national average for comparison units although representing significant increases on the proportion of comparison floorspace and units at 2012. The comparison operators include Well Pharmacy, a pet shop, a bicycle shop, a retail art gallery and clothing shop.

Service uses, particularly leisure service uses, dominate the composition of operators in Whaley Bridge. There are 15 leisure service operators in the village centre, which equate to 37.5% of all units in Whaley Bridge. This figure is considerably higher than the current national average figure of 24.6%. Operators include seven hot-food takeaways, four cafés, two restaurants and two public houses. There are five retail service operators in Whaley Bridge which equate to 12.5% of all units. The seven operators include three hairdressers, an optician, and a beauty salon. There are four financial and business service operators in Whaley Bridge, with these units

accounting for 4.0% of all operators in the town centre and 6.7% of the total stock of retail floorspace.

Vacancies

Our survey recorded a vacancy rate of 13.7% of floorspace in the town centre, a figure which is comparable to the current national average figure. This vacancy rate represents a significant increase on the 1.8% of vacant floorspace recorded at 2012.

However, there is only one vacant unit in the town centre, the former Jodrell Arms public house which has been vacant for approximately 14 years. Accordingly, the vacancy rate in respect of units is 2.5%, significantly lower than the current national average of 14.2%. As such, the vacancy rate is not considered to represent cause for concern. Furthermore, it is pleasing to note that plans to convert the building into a holiday apartments and re-open the public house were being progressed toward the end of 2021.

Pedestrian Flows

At the time of our visit, both pedestrian activity and footfall were considered to be healthy. This activity was generally concentrated on the eastern side of Buxton Road, where the majority of convenience operators are located, and at the Co-op Foodstore in the south of the town centre. A number of linked trips were observed between these locations and other destinations in the town centre, including leisure service operators in the town. This suggests that the convenience operators in Whaley Bridge assist in driving activity and footfall in to the town.

More limited levels of pedestrian activity were observed on the western side of Buxton Road. This is potentially due the offer in this location, which is both more specialised and focused on a night-time food and drink offer. Limited activity was also observed in the south of the town centre, which can potentially be attributed to the level of vehicular traffic along the A5004 Buxton Road and the narrow pedestrian footways in this location, alongside the limited pedestrian crossing points along this major road. The majority of people are considered to access the centre by car, with on-street car parking observed to be very well used at the time a survey was completed.

Accessibility

Whaley Bridge is considered to be easily accessible for pedestrians, public transport users and via private vehicle. The standard of accessibility via public transport in Whaley Bridge is considered to be very good. Whaley Bridge train station, located at the north of the town centre, provides hourly services to Manchester Piccadilly (via Stockport) and Buxton. From Whaley Bridge station, Manchester Piccadilly can be accessed in approximately 36 minutes, and Buxton in 16 minutes. The town centre is also well connected to the wider bus network too, with a key bus interchange being located in the north of the town centre, adjacent to the train station on Buxton Road. From here, services 60, 60A, 61, 190 and Skyline 199 provide frequent access to a range of destinations including Glossop (via New Mills), Buxton (via Chapel-en-le-Frith), Manchester Airport and Macclesfield.

Located on the A5004 Buxton Road, Whaley Bridge is easily accessible by private vehicle. There is a limited amount of free car parking available in Whaley Bridge, with two surface level car parks located at Canal Street and adjacent to the Station. These provide 50 and 20 spaces respectively, with

two hours of car parking available between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00. Additionally, there is a limited amount of free on-street car parking available along Buxton Road for up to one hour.

Pedestrian accessibility is generally good, however the centre's location along a key arterial route does represent a barrier to pedestrian movement in the town centre. Pedestrian movement is further restricted by the lack of controlled pedestrian crossing points in the town, with a single crossing point located on Buxton Road close to the junction with Whaley Lane. Notwithstanding this, the town is generally well integrated with surrounding residential areas.

Perception of Safety

There is a good sense of security within the centre provided by a well maintained environment, free from litter or signs of deterioration. The centre is overlooked in most locations, and benefits from considerable standards of both natural and passive surveillance. Areas along Buxton Road have an open feel, located close to the activity associated with the main retail core and with good visibility of the surroundings. According to the website UKCrimeStats, 25 crimes were reported within a mile radius of Whaley Bridge town centre in September 2021. This compares with 19 crimes reported in the same area in September 2020 and 23 in September 2019.

Although the centre generally feels safe and secure, the proximity of the retail core to a major and busy arterial route impacts on the overall standard of pedestrian safety. The lack of significant pedestrian areas and controlled crossing points further adds to this perception.

Environmental Quality

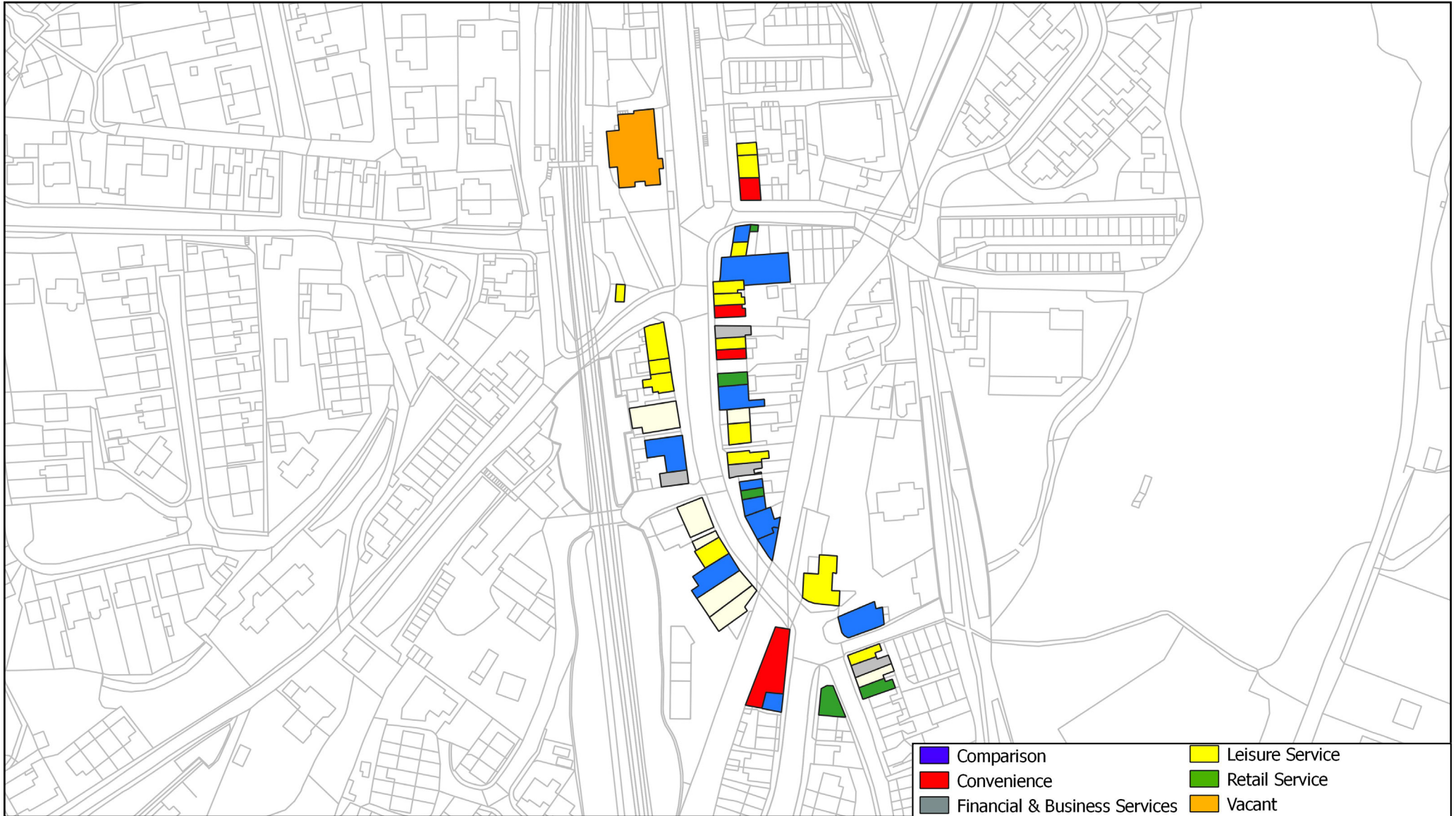
Whaley Bridge town centre is considered to be an attractive town which provides a pleasant retail environment, with the River Goyt running to the east of the main retail parade. Many of the buildings within the town centre are of a historic nature and a considerable proportion are listed, including key landmark buildings such as the former Jodrell Arms. However, this now vacant building does provide a somewhat negative aspect to the town centre. Almost the entirety of the town centre is located within a defined Conservation Area, which is considered to be reflective of both the historic and attractive nature of the town.

The centre is generally well maintained, as are the retail units themselves. There are seasonal planters and areas of planting located throughout the centre. No apparent environmental issues relating to anti-social behaviour or vandalism were observed. However, a significant negative contributor to Whaley Bridge's environmental quality is the A5004 Buxton Road which runs carries a considerable amount of vehicular traffic, including heavy goods vehicles, through the town centre.

Conclusions

Whaley Bridge is a small town centre focused along Buxton Road, and provides a reasonable range of operators which are considered to be easily capable of providing for the day-to-day needs of the local community, including both convenience goods operators and a range of community facilities. The vacancy rate is just 2.5% of units in the centre, with a single prominent vacancy (the former Jodrell Arms public house), recorded at the

time of our visit. As a result of this, it is considered that Whaley Bridge is a vital and viable centre.



Whaley Bridge town centre

High Peak Retail and Leisure Study 2022

Survey Date - November 2021