The Corporate Research Unit (InfoNet) is part of the Policy & Partnerships Service of Northumberland County Council (in the Performance Directorate); it supports the Corporate Policy Team, other sections of the council and the NSP.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 31% of the floorspace use was for retail.

- Shopper's perception of the range of retail provision was somewhat negative - 48% did not think that Ponteland offered a wide choice of shops.

- There were more leisure services and financial and business services than comparison retail (clothing, household goods, furniture, DIY and electrical goods) or convenience retail.

- There was 4% of vacant floorspace in Ponteland.

- 76% of shoppers interviewed found it easy to travel into the town centre by car.

- 67% of these shoppers felt that the availability of parking in the town centre was either good or very good.

- All three shoppers travelling into the town centre by bus on the day of the surveys also found it very or fairly easy to travel there.

- When looking at retaining shopper spend, 2% of Ponteland residents shopped in Ponteland. 43% of expenditure was lost to Newcastle and a further 36% to the Metro Centre.

Recommendations

- The town centre should be monitored over a number of years to track changes.
- Comparisons can also be made with towns which have similar functions.
• Use class data should take all floors (from which businesses operate) within town centre buildings into consideration, as opposed to solely the ground floor.
• Investigate the location and quantity of residential properties within the town centre.
• Work in partnership with local estate agents to gain further insight on property enquiries received.
• Align footfall counts across all town centres to enable fair comparisons. Additionally, footfalls to take place on Sunday to enable a weekly footfall to be estimated.
• A map to show all bus and train routes would prove useful in the analysis process.
• Investigate impact of crime initiatives on shopper’s perception of crime and safety within the town centre.
• Investigate impact of future proposals for Alnwick on shopper’s overall perception of the town centre.
1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Why Measure Town Centre Performance?

Through Planning Policy Statement 6 (PPS6), the Government sets out its key objectives for town centers. Overall, PPS6 describes the need to promote town centre vitality and viability by planning for the growth and development of existing centres; promoting and enhancing existing centres; by focusing development in such centers; and encouraging a wide range of services in a good environment, accessible to all.

More generally, the UK Government is committed to:

- Enhancing consumer choice by making provision for a range of shopping, leisure and local services, which allow genuine choice to meet the needs of the entire community, and particularly socially-excluded groups.

- Supporting efficient, competitive and innovative retail, leisure, tourism and other sectors, with improving productivity.

- Improving accessibility, ensuring that existing or new development is, or will be, accessible and well-served by a choice of means of transport.

The importance of town centres and the contribution that they make to the local economy is also highlighted in the Regional Economic Strategy. According to “Leading the Way”, the draft Regional Economic Strategy (2006), thriving town centres are at the heart of our communities and it is essential that they continue to provide a good range of services such as shops, leisure, transport and other services. Town Centres provide employment in many areas and attract new businesses to sustain the local economy. Research has shown the importance of strong Town Centres as the focus for driving wider economic growth and productivity. The Regional Economic Strategy also emphasises the importance of building on the potential of all town centres so that more remote economies and communities of the settlements around them can be supported.

The importance of the role played by town centres is also highlighted in Northumberland Local Area Agreement (LAA). The LAA Economic Development and Enterprise block includes an outcome to improve the impact of public/private sector
intervention on economic performance of Northumberland Town Centres. Whilst stretch targets leading to additional government funding are not proposed for this outcome, it is hoped that improved town centre performance can help achieve other LAA targets.

1.2 What should we measure?

Government policy contained in PPS6 recognises that:
“Comprehensive, relevant and up to date monitoring is essential to the effective planning and management of town centres. It should be used to inform the review of site allocations and town centre policies and enable early signs of change of town centres to be identified and appropriate action taken”.

In order to ensure that monitoring is effective, data collection on the quality, quantity and convenience of retailing in the area and potential capacity for growth or change of shopping centres is essential. In order to measure the vitality and viability and monitor the health of their town centres and how this is changing over time, local authorities should regularly collect information, preferably in co-operation with the private sector, on the following key indicators:

- Diversity of main town centre uses (by number, type and amount of floorspace): the amount of space in use for different functions – such as offices; shopping; leisure, cultural and entertainment activities; pubs, cafes and restaurants; and, hotels.

- The amount of retail, leisure and office floorspace in edge-of-centre and out-of-centre locations.

- The potential capacity for growth or change of centres in the network: opportunities for centres to expand or consolidate, typically measured in the amount of land available for new or more intensive forms of town centre development.

- Retailer representation and intentions to change representation: existence and changes in representation of types of retailer, including street markets, and the demand of retailers wanting to come into the centre, or to change their representation in the centre, or to reduce or close their representation.
• Shopping rents: pattern of movement in Zone A rents within primary shopping areas (i.e. the rental value for the first 6 metres depth of floorspace in retail units from the shop window).

• Proportion of vacant street level property: vacancies can arise even in the strongest town centres, and this indicator must be used with care. Vacancies in secondary frontages and changes to other uses will also be useful indicators.

• Commercial yields on non-domestic property (i.e. the capital value in relation to the expected market rental): demonstrates the confidence of investors in the long-term profitability of the centre for retail, office and other commercial developments. This indicator should be used with care.

• Pedestrian flows (footfall): a key indicator of the vitality of shopping streets, measured by the numbers and movement of people on the streets, in different parts of the center at different times of the day and evening, who are available for businesses to attract into shops, restaurants or other facilities.

• Accessibility: ease and convenience of access by a choice of means of travel, including – the quality, quantity and type of car parking; the frequency and quality of public transport services and the range of customer origins served; and, the quality of provision for pedestrians, cyclists and disabled people and the ease of access from main arrival points to the main attractions.

• Customer and residents’ views and behaviour: regular surveys will help authorities in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of town centre improvements and in setting further priorities. Interviews in the town centre and at home can be used to establish views of both users and non-users of the centre, including the views of residents living in or close to the centre. This information could also establish the degree of linked trips.

• Perception of safety and occurrence of crime: should include views and information on safety and security, and where appropriate, information for monitoring the evening and night-time economy.

• State of the town centre environmental quality: should include information on problems (such as air pollution, noise, clutter, litter and graffiti) and positive factors (such as trees, landscaping and open spaces).
In response to the monitoring requirements set out above, the InfoNet has developed the Northumberland Town Centre Performance System, which is designed to assess the vitality and viability of rural market towns and larger centres within the former coalfield areas. The system uses intelligence from the InfoNet Organisation Database; the Northumberland Property Data Service (NPDS) database; the County Public Transport Team; and from the Community Safety Analysis function maintained for the 6 Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships (CDRP’s) in the County. This is complemented by additional primary research designed to capture footfall estimates and shopper perception of town centres. The Service is also designed to complement the Retail Distinctiveness work undertaken for One North East and the Northumberland Strategic Partnership by Millers Consulting; and the Retail Distinctiveness Toolkit that has been developed for use by Town Centre Partnerships and Managers.

The service currently covers the towns of Alnwick, Amble, Ashington, Bedlington, Belford, Berwick upon Tweed, Blyth, Cramlington, Haltwhistle, Hexham, Morpeth, Newbiggin, Ponteland, Prudhoe, Rothbury, Seahouses and Wooler using town centre boundary definitions included in Local Development Frameworks. There will, however, be flexibility to include additional settlements as the system develops.
2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE TOWN CENTRE

2.1 Ponteland’s Town Centre Boundary

Throughout this report there are two different boundaries for Ponteland Town Centre that will be used depending on the section: the town centre boundary as defined by Castle Morpeth District Council (Figure 1), and the boundary as defined by Experian (a source of data used in this report) (Figure 2).

The area of Ponteland Town Centre in relation to the District Council boundary is 112,362.01 m².

Figure 1: Boundary for Ponteland Town Centre (District Council)

![Figure 1: Boundary for Ponteland Town Centre (District Council)](image)

Source: Castle Morpeth District Council
Figure 2: Boundary for Ponteland Town Centre (Experian)

Source: Experian
2.2 Ponteland Town Centre – A Definition

The RSS (Regional Spatial Strategies) definition of a town centre is that it “includes a range of different sized centres, including market and country towns, traditional suburban centres, and quite often, the principal centre(s) in a local authority’s area. Town centres contain a Primary Shopping Area, the area where retail development is generally concentrated”.

(From Castle Morpeth Borough Council): Ponteland is the second largest centre after Morpeth, situated in the south of the borough close to Newcastle International Airport and the Tyneside conurbation. The settlement includes Ponteland Village which is a district shopping centre with housing and the larger Darras Hall residential area. The settlement character of Ponteland is quite unique in the northeast region, the Darras Hall Estate being an extensive development of executive housing in a largely mature landscape environment and attached to the much smaller and more compact village centre. Consultants appointed by the Council have recently progressed a masterplanning exercise for Ponteland Village Centre and identified a range of commercial and community uses to address the aspirations of the local community and revitalise the centre. Chosen designs will soon be issued for public consultation. The settlement of Ponteland has been surrounded by Green Belt since 1963, so that mature and well defined boundaries have been established and opportunities for expansion and growth are limited.

2.3 History and Development of Ponteland

Ponteland lies on the A696 Newcastle to Edinburgh road, 8 miles north-west of Newcastle, and about 2 miles from Newcastle International Airport.

Two possible derivations of the name Ponteland have been suggested. The first relates to the river Pont which runs through the town. This river frequently flooded, turning the town into an island. It was therefore known as ‘Pont Island’ which became ‘Ponteland’. Major flood defences were built in the 1990’s to alleviate this problem. A second suggested derivation of the name comes from Roman times, when it was named the ‘bridge over the swamp’.
Aerial photographs of the area have identified various sites which may date back to the Prehistoric or the Roman periods. A few artefacts have also been found. In addition, a large number of deserted medieval villages have been discovered in the area, mainly dating back to the 13th Century.

There are many historical buildings in Ponteland. Among these are the Blackbird Inn, built on the site of a small castle and containing part of a medieval tower. It is believed that the English and Scots negotiated a peace on this site in 1244. St Mary’s church was built in the 12th century, though restored several times in subsequent years. Ponteland’s Vicar’s Pele Tower dates back to the 14th century.

The main occupations over the past 200 years related to agriculture, although there was also a small amount in mining and brick making.

The population in the Ponteland parish was 11,178 at the time of the 2001 census. Most of the growth in population occurred in the 20th century, with the coming of the railway, the building of the Darras Hall housing estate, and the building of Newcastle International Airport.

Today, there are various things to attract locals and visitors to the town. These include numerous shops, 5 schools, various restaurants and take-aways, a leisure centre and a golf club. Various events are held each year, including the Ponteland Wheelbarrow Race, the Spring Ball, Ponteland Party in the Park, the Duck Race and the Parish Flower Show.

A multi-million pound plan to revamp the town centre is currently at the public consultation stage. This is likely to include new retail units, a library and new community facilities.
3.0 DIVERSITY OF USES

The diversity of uses within a town centre contributes to the attractiveness of the centre to the local community. In this section the use class of buildings within the town centre will be investigated in terms of the percentage of floorspace occupied within the town centre and which areas of the town centre particular uses of buildings are situated. This chapter will also look at the events that take place throughout the year in Alnwick Town Centre and also the opinions of shoppers surveyed on the range of retail provision in Alnwick.

The full breakdown of use class analysed in this section can be found in Appendix 1.
3.1 Diversity of Use within Town Centre

Figure 3 shows that whilst the various sectors within Ponteland Town Centre seem to be fairly evenly distributed through the town, just under a third (31%) of the floorspace in Ponteland Town Centre are classed as shops. Financial and professional services and businesses each account for 11% of the floorspace in Ponteland with storage or distribution occupying 7%. 12% of floorspace in Ponteland was unclassified.

Figure 3: Floorspace by Use Class

Source: Experian
Figure 4: Building Use class for Ponteland Town Centre

Building Use Class for Ponteland Town Centre

Source: Experian
The map (Figure 4) shows that the majority of shops within the town centre are situated on Merton Road. The financial and professional services are distributed along West Road, Main Street and Bell Villas. Businesses are generally set on the edge of the town centre.

It must be noted that the use class information in this section is based on the ground floor of the premises from the data that was provided by Experian, and with the assumption that the majority of the commercial property in the town centre is situated on the ground floor.

3.2 Events
Ponteland Farmers Market takes place at the Memorial Hall, Darras Road. This is a FARMA certified farmers market which is held on the 4th Saturday of the month from 9am to 12.15pm. A summer event is due to take place on Sunday 7th June, 1.30pm-5pm, this event provides entertainment for all the family. The Music in the Park event takes place on Saturday 18th July, 6-9pm at Ponteland Park, West Road. This event provides music for everyone with Duston Silver Band, pongos and compere Paul Mooney. Summer festival of pictures, flowers and music, this event takes place from Saturday 1st August till Saturday August 8th at St Mary’s Church.

3.3 Satisfaction with the range of provision – retail
Question 16 in the Ponteland Shopper Questionnaire asked:

To what extent do you agree/disagree with the statement “On the whole, Ponteland offers a wide choice of quality shops”?

The level of disagreement with this statement was considerably higher than the level of agreement (48% vs. 33% of respondents) (Figure 5).
Figure 5: How would you rate “On the whole, Ponteland offers a wide choice of quality shops”?

(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Shopper Surveys

Base: 71 respondents
4.0 RETAIL TRENDS

The range and diversity of the retail offer directly influences the appeal of a town centre to visitors and shoppers. Convenience goods are consumer goods purchased on a regular basis, including food, groceries, toiletries and cleaning materials. Comparison goods are durable goods such as clothing, household goods, furniture, DIY and electrical goods.

In this section, the category of shops will be investigated and analysed in terms of both category and whether they are part of a multiple chain or are an independent business.

Figure 6: Multiple Chain and Independent Businesses by Category - Ponteland

Figure 6 shows that in Ponteland town centre, the majority of businesses are leisure services (15 independent, 2 multiple chain). The category which has the 2nd highest amount of businesses is financial and business services: 7 of which are independent
and 7 multiple chain. There are 9 comparison retail premises, 9 convenience retail premises and 9 retail service in total.
5.0 RETAILER DEMAND

5.1 Interest in Vacant Outlets within the Town Centre 2007 - 2008

There were no enquiries for properties in Ponteland Town Centre recorded on Northumberland Property Database between April 2007 and March 2008. The only enquiries recorded were for properties on Prestwick which is an out of town employment site. However, it must be noted that this data is based solely on one source (Northumberland Property Database) and other sources may provide further insight.
5.2 A Review of New Town Centre Occupiers

6.0 RETAIL RENTS AND YIELDS

Retail rent and yield are important indicators of viability. This section will investigate the zone A rent for properties within the town centre and also the yield of Ponteland Town Centre in comparison with the other town centres in Northumberland for which this information was available; the North East; and England.

6.1 Zone A Rental Information

“Zoning is a method of valuation where the highest level of value is attributable to the front part of the shop because that is the part nearest to the pavement, the frontage. It is therefore the part that all shoppers must pass to enter the shop and is also the part where the main display is generally situated in order to entice customers into the shop. The zoning theory is that the level of value within a shop decreases as the shop depth increases. The Valuation Office adopts a zoning pattern of three zones (A, B and C), each measuring 6·10 metres in depth, and then a remainder. The principle is to determine a price for zone A (the highest level of value), use half that price for zone B, half the zone B price for zone C and half the zone C price for the remainder. This is known as "halving back" though in reality the areas are adjusted in the valuation process with each area being expressed "in terms of zone A" (ITZA). The zoning process is restricted to areas of ground floor retail space. Other parts of the property will be measured to NIA and be valued in relation to a fraction of the zone A price.” (Valuation Office, October 2008)

Figure 7 shows the zone A rental information from the Valuation Office. The values relate to the 2005 Rating List, which are based on a valuation date of 1 April 2003. The properties have been banded by intervals of £100, as we cannot publish the exact figure for each building. This will also make it easier to identify trends when analysing the data on the map.

There are some properties which are shown as “unknown” on Figure 8. These premises could be retail in nature but are not valued on a zoned approach. The reason for this is that zoning is generally not used in various circumstances including:

- Larger retail properties (i.e. shops with a NIA (net internal area) greater than 1500m²).
• Where the retail areas are spread over several floors, again resulting in the Zone A being only a small fraction of the total.
• Larger shops may not have ‘traditional’ shop fronts, such that the zoning approach is not appropriate.
• The ‘market’ does not typically zone larger shops when letting and the VOA tries to follow the market in its analysis and valuation.

Figure 7: Valuation Office Zone A rental prices for Ponteland Town Centre

![Valuation Office Zone A rental prices for Ponteland Town Centre](image)

Source: Valuation Office

Figure 7 shows that of the properties for which Zone A rental information is known, Main Street generally has the highest zone A rent, with the majority being either £200 – 299 per m² or £300 - £399 per m². The prices decrease towards the edge of the town centre and on Bell Villas and Merton Road, the majority of properties fall into the £100 - £199 per m² and £200 - £299 per m² bands.
6.2 Yield

Yield “is the ratio of rental income to capital value and is expressed in terms of the open market rent of a property as percentage of the capital value.” ¹ It “provide a consistent basis for understanding how the property market assesses the comparative attractiveness of shop investments in different locations across the country... low yields indicate that a town is considered to be attractive and as a result be more likely to attract investment than a town with high yields.”²

\[
\text{Yield} = \frac{\text{Annual Rent}}{\text{Capital Value} / \text{Sale Price of Property}}
\]

Source: Valuation Office (www.voa.gov.uk)

In Northumberland, this data is only available for 5 towns: Alnwick, Ashington, Berwick upon Tweed, Blyth and Hexham.
There is therefore no available data for Ponteland, however Figure 8 shows the average yield for Northumberland, the North East of England, and England.

¹ www.voa.gov.uk
² www.voa.gov.uk
The graph shows that since April 2001, the average yield for Northumberland has generally been higher than the average for the North East of England and England. The biggest difference in yield between Northumberland and the rest of the North East was by 0.86 in January 2005. Similarly for Northumberland and the rest of England in January 2005 it was 1.20. This indicates that based on yield, it has been derived that there is more of a “risk” associated with setting up business in Northumberland compared to the rest of the North East and England. The latest result, however, in July 2007, showed that this gap had decreased. The average yield for Northumberland was 7.05; the average yield for the North East was 7.02; and the average yield for England was 6.70.

6.3 Average Rental Rate

The average monthly rental rate for vacant commercial property in Alnwick town centre between 1st January 2006 and 31st December 2007 was £168.00 per square metre. Figure 9 show this rate in comparison with other town centres. According to Figure 9, in comparison with other Northumberland town centres, Ponteland has the 3rd highest average monthly rental rate in Northumberland for the 11 towns recorded.
here with only Morpeth and Ashington with higher average rental rates. However, it must be noted that these rental figures are based solely on properties that were vacant between 1\textsuperscript{st} January 2006 and 31\textsuperscript{st} December 2007 and does not take the rental prices of buildings that were occupied throughout this period into consideration.

Figure 9: A comparison on average rental prices for commercial property between Ponteland and other Northumberland Towns

![A comparison on average rental prices for commercial property between Ponteland and other Northumberland Towns](source)

Source: Northumberland Property Database
7.0 VACANCY RATES

All town centres experience a baseline level of vacancy rates and this should not always be interpreted as a sign of weakness. A large number of vacant units within centres may indicate decline related to poor performance of the town or that shop premises are inadequate to meet the demands of modern retailers. Furthermore, units may be located in parts of the centre unsuited to retailers' requirements. This section will investigate the vacancy rates of premises within the town centre by road and overall vacancy rates within the town. Additionally, this section will look at property flows within Alnwick town centre between 2007 and 2008 in terms of both primary activity type and type of change (i.e. change in occupier, occupied to vacant, vacant to occupied).

It must be noted that the vacancy information in this section is based on the ground floor of the premises from the data that was provided by Experian the majority of the commercial property in the town centre is situated on the ground floor.

7.1 Vacancy Rates of Premises

Figure 10 shows that the street within Ponteland Town Centre with the most vacant premises is Thornhill Road with 17% of premises vacant. Further, when looking at vacancy rates in terms of floorspace, Thornhill Road was ranked 1st with 27% of its total floorspace vacant. The street with the 2nd most vacant premises and floorspace in Ponteland was Merton Road with 10% of vacant premises and 26% of vacant floorspace.

Figure 11 shows that in Ponteland Town Centre, there were 96% of occupied premises and 4% of vacant premises overall.
### Figure 10: Vacancy Rates of Premises

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Road</th>
<th>Vacant (number of buildings)?</th>
<th>Rank - vacancy</th>
<th>Vacant (floorspace sqm)?</th>
<th>Rank - vacancy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THORNHILL ROAD</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MERTON ROAD</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BELL VILLAS</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BREWERY LANE</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAIN STREET</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MEADOWFIELD</td>
<td>0%</td>
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<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MERTON WAY</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NORTH ROAD</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WEST ROAD</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
<td>0%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian

### Figure 11: Is a Property Vacant

**Is Property Vacant? (Ponteland Town Centre)**

- **Yes**: 4%
- **No**: 96%

Source: Experian
7.2 Changes in Town Centre Occupiers 2007 – 2008 (Property Flows)

Information about changes in town centre occupiers between 2007 – 2008 is not currently available for Ponteland town centre, as the GOAD plan from which the data is taken, was only created by Experian in 2008 when the work was commissioned by Northumberland Information Network.
8.0 PEDESTRIAN FLOWS

Pedestrian counts are a useful measure of vitality, in relation to the number and movement of people in different parts of the town centre and at different times of the day. The counts provide a clear picture of footfall patterns across the centre and of the number of people in the town. Over time trends can be identified and the success or decline of locations monitored. This section will analyse the results of the footfall counts that took place in Ponteland Town Centre in September/October 2007 and estimate a weekly footfall total.

8.1 Footfall methodology

Footfall counts were taken for 10 minutes of each hour between 9am and 5pm on Saturday 29th September, Tuesday 2nd October and Friday 5th October 2007. They were carried out by interviewers at two “access points” within the town centre (see Figure 12). These counts were used to give estimates of hourly and daily pedestrian rates.

8.2 Estimates of footfall

It is estimated that the footfall for a typical Saturday in Ponteland town centre is around 1,764, although this will obviously vary depending on the time of year. The data suggests that, on a “normal” day (in this instance, a Friday), the footfall could be higher by 300 people visiting the town centre than on a Saturday. However, in this week, the other “normal” day had the lowest footfall of the week with 666.
Figure 12: Estimated daily footfall in Ponteland Town Centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location (see Figure 2)</th>
<th>Tuesday (&quot;normal&quot; day)</th>
<th>Friday (&quot;normal&quot; day)</th>
<th>Saturday (Weekend)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merton Way</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>996</td>
<td>372</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Road</td>
<td>336</td>
<td>1,074</td>
<td>1392</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>666</td>
<td>2,070</td>
<td>1,764</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Footfall Counts

On this occasion, footfalls were calculated for the individual days that they were carried out to give an indication of daily footfall totals on particular “types” of day of the week. In the future, it is the intention to calculate average weekly footfalls for each town.

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3 Daily footfall has been estimated by summing the footfall counts for each location, then multiplying the totals by 6 to account for the footfall count being carried out for 10 minutes in each hour.
9.0 ACCESSIBILITY

The availability of different access modes to a town centre is important if shoppers are to be attracted to a centre for frequent visits. This section will investigate various aspects of accessibility into Ponteland town centre including the different methods of transport used to access the town centre by shoppers that were surveyed, their origin and their perceptions on accessibility and transport, availability of parking within the town centre and bus connectivity.

9.1 Shoppers travelling to town by car

Nearly half (48%) of respondents travelled into Ponteland by car on the day of the interview (Figure 13). 82% of these said that they go into Ponteland at least once a week during the daytime (although it cannot be deduced how often they use a car for these trips). This figure dropped to 24% in the evenings.

Figure 13: Frequency of visit to the town centre by those respondents travelling in by car

(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 34 for daytime; 34 for evening
Over three quarters (76%) of the respondents that travelled by car found it very easy to travel into Ponteland town centre. A further 18% found it fairly easy. No-one found it difficult (Figure 14).

**Figure 14: How easy/difficult do you feel it is to travel into Ponteland town centre (those respondents that travelled by car)**

(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires  
Base: 34

### 9.2 Access to car parking

Over two thirds of respondents gave a good or very good rating for the availability of public and disabled parking spaces. However, 21% and 15% gave a negative rating for these aspects respectively (Figure 15).

The safety/security of the parking facilities was viewed very positively, with 89% giving a good or very good rating, and only 6% giving a poor or very poor rating.
Only 2 people mentioned parking as being one of the main problems with the shopping experience:

- “Not enough car parking”.
- “Parking places”.

5 respondents also said that illegal parking was a problem.

14% gave ‘improved parking’ as a suggestion for improving the town centre.

9.3 Cost of parking

The cost of parking in Ponteland town centre was rated very highly, with 91% of respondents giving a good or very good rating, and only 8% giving a poor or very poor rating.
Figure 16: Percentage of respondents giving each rating for the cost of parking
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 66 respondents (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

9.4 Ponteland’s Car parks

Figures 17 and 18 show the location of car parks within and surrounding Ponteland Town Centre.
## Figure 17: Location of Car Parks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Car Park</th>
<th>Cost of Parking</th>
<th>Type of Car Park</th>
<th>Spaces</th>
<th>Long/Sh short Stay</th>
<th>Disabled Spaces</th>
<th>Coach Parking</th>
<th>Additional Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.</td>
<td>free</td>
<td>Surface Car Park</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.</td>
<td>free</td>
<td>Surface Car Park</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.</td>
<td>free</td>
<td>Surface Car Park</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>All Day</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Lines are worn away. Historically used as a lorry park but cars can park there too. They were going to move the lorries elsewhere but not sure if they ever did.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Castle Morpeth Borough Council, Transport Direct
Figure 18: Location of Car Parks

Source: Castle Morpeth District Council, Transport Direct
9.5 Bus Connectivity

The direct connections linking Ponteland to surrounding towns and villages are listed below.

Figure 19: Destination and Frequency of Buses from Ponteland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Destination</th>
<th>Mon – Fri</th>
<th>Sat</th>
<th>Sun</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Callerton</td>
<td>Approx 1 per 2 hr</td>
<td>Approx 1 per 2 hr</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darras Hall</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hr</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hr</td>
<td>Approx 1 per 2 hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Whittington</td>
<td>Approx 1 per 2 hr</td>
<td>Approx 1 per 2 hr</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jedburgh</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matfen</td>
<td>Approx 1 per 2 hr</td>
<td>Approx 1 per 2 hr</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne</td>
<td>Approx 5 per hr</td>
<td>Approx 5 per hr</td>
<td>Approx 1 per 2 hr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Otterburn</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
<td>2 per day</td>
<td>1 per day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stamfordham</td>
<td>Approx 1 per 2 hr</td>
<td>Approx 1 per 2 hr</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Woolsington</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hr</td>
<td>Approx 2 per hr</td>
<td>Approx 1 per 2 hr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Travel Search (http://www.carlberry.co.uk/index.html), North East Travel Line (http://planner.travelinenortheast.info)

9.6 Shoppers travelling to town by bus

Only 3 people travelled into Ponteland town centre by bus on the day of the interview. One of these said that they travel to the centre every day during the daytime, and the other two said they go there twice a week (although it cannot be deduced how often they use a bus for these trips). In terms of the evenings, these respondents travelled into town twice a week, less than once a month, and never.

All three found it very easy or fairly easy to travel into the town centre.

9.7 Train Connectivity

There is no train access to Ponteland.

9.8 Shoppers travelling to town by train

There is no train access to Ponteland and therefore no shopper's questionnaire respondents said that they travelled to Ponteland town centre by train.
9.9 Perception of Public Transport Services

Respondents had a fairly low opinion of public transport in Ponteland. Only one quarter or less gave a positive rating for the quality and the regularity of bus/rail services, and the destinations served by public transport. Over half gave a negative rating for the latter two aspects, a substantial proportion of which was a ‘very poor’ rating. The quality of bus/rail services fared slightly better, but still had 37% of respondents giving a poor or very poor rating.

Figure 20: Percentage of respondents giving each rating for public transport related attributes

(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 51 to 52 respondents depending on attribute (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

9.10 Perception of Accessibility

When asked how they would make the town centre better, 2 respondents (3%) said they would improve the accessibility.

In addition, the quality of footpaths was mentioned by 22% of respondents as one of the main problems with the shopping experience. Two comments were also made:

- “Paths need straightening - on slant”.
• “New footpaths”.

9.11 Origin and method of travel of Shoppers Interviewed

As Figure 21 shows, most of the respondents from the Ponteland Shopper Survey live in the Castle Morpeth District, with a large proportion living in or around Ponteland itself. In addition, some respondents came from the district of Tynedale and Newcastle upon Tyne Metropolitan District, and most of the others came from elsewhere in Northumberland or Tyne & Wear.

Most of the respondents travelled in by car, although a number of the respondents that live in, or close to, Ponteland said that they walked.

No respondents came from outside of the Northumberland and Tyne & Wear regions.
Figure 21: Visitors to Ponteland within Northumberland and Tyne and Wear
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Visitors to Ponteland within Northumberland and Tyne & Wear
(Shopper's Survey)
- Home Towns

Visitors to Ponteland - Method of Transport
- Bus
- Car
- Walk
- Other

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
10.0 ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY OF TOWN

This section will consider various aspects relating to the environmental quality of the town centre. This includes any improvements made within the past 12 months mainly by the District Council and Town Council (where applicable) and shopper’s perceptions of the environmental quality and appearance of the town centre as a whole.

10.1 Review of Recent Improvements

The following improvements have happened over the past 12 months in Ponteland:

- Street furniture has been upgraded throughout the town.
- Hanging baskets from shops have been put up.
- Flower planters have also been placed around the town.

10.2 Shopper perception of the town

10.2.1 Pedestrianisation

Views on pedestrianisation were not specifically asked about in the survey, and no comments were made on the subject.

10.2.2 Signage, Street furniture and Open Spaces

Signage
No-one mentioned any problems or improvements regarding signage/information.

Street Furniture
Respondents were asked to rate street furniture as part of two different questions. The first question asked for a street furniture rating, and the second asked about the general state of the town centre with regards to street furniture.
Both of these aspects were given very low ratings, with less than one quarter of respondents in each case giving a positive rating, and nearly half giving a poor or very poor rating (Figure 22).

**Figure 22: Street furniture ratings**

(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

![Street furniture ratings chart](chart)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

*Base: 65 to 71 respondents depending on question (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)*

**Open Spaces**

Half of the respondents gave a favourable rating for the parks and open spaces in Ponteland, and 30% thought that they were poor or very poor (Figure 23).
Figure 23: Ratings given for parks and open spaces
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

![Pie chart showing ratings for parks and open spaces.]

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Base: 64 respondents (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

10.2.3 Litter and Cleanliness
Respondents had a very low opinion of the overall level of cleanliness in Ponteland, with only 13% giving a positive rating, and 61% giving a negative rating.

Litter in Ponteland was rated a little better, but still received only 34% of good or very good ratings, and 31% of poor/very poor ratings (Figure 24).
Figure 24: Ratings given for litter and overall cleanliness
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Base: 70 respondents (litter); 71 responses (cleanliness); (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

Four respondents made related suggestions of how to make the town centre better:

- “Clean it up” (2 responses).
- “Clean up shopping centre…”.
- “Keep it clean”.

10.2.4 General Appearance of the Town
The general appearance of the town, with respect to graffiti/fly posting, the general state of the buildings, and the shop frontage, was not thought highly of. The shop frontage was given the worst rating (4% positive ratings and 80% negative ratings), with the general state of the buildings not rated much better (8% positive and 70% negative). The graffiti/fly posting was rated slightly better, with 31% of respondents giving a good or very good response, and 28% giving a poor or very poor response (Figure 25).
Figure 25: Ratings given for the appearance of the town
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Base: 68 to 71 respondents; (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

A large number of comments and suggestions for improvement were also given on this subject. These included facelifts, updating, painting of shop fronts and general renovation. One person said that it “needs to be pulled down, renovated and modernised completely”. A full list of the comments can be found in Appendix 2.
11.0 PERCEPTION OF SAFETY AND OCCURRENCE OF CRIME

High levels of crime in a centre will impact on the way people use it and may deter traders from locating there. This section will include an analysis of reported crimes which will be supplemented with information on perception or fear of crime from the Shopper Surveys. Consideration will also be given to any initiatives designed to address town centre-related crime.
11.1 Analysis of Reported Crimes

Figure 26: Analysis of Reported Crimes

Source: Northumbria Police
Looking at Figures 26 and 27, it is clear to see that the crime in Ponteland in 2005 – 2007 was fairly evenly distributed throughout the town centre, and the main type of crime here was “rowdy and/or nuisance” with 263 occurrences in total.

Looking at the chart (Figure 27), the types of crime have been broken down further. The most frequent type of crime occurring in Ponteland Town Centre between 2005 and 2007 was “other offences” of which there were 43 occurrences. More specifically, the 2nd most frequent type of crime was “Violence/offences against the person” of which there were 42 occurrences.
11.2 Perception or Fear of Crime

No respondents mentioned safety or security when asked about the main problems in Ponteland, but 2 respondents (3%) gave this as a response to how they would make the town centre better.

When asked directly about the safety/security during the daytime, over three quarters of respondents (76%) gave a good or very good rating. This dropped to 56% for safety/security during the night-time (Figure 28).

**Figure 28: Ratings given for safety/security**
(Excludes ‘don't know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 67 respondents (daytime); 54 respondents (nighttime); (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

As can be seen in section 9.2, 89% of respondents felt that the safety/security of the parking facilities was good or very good.
11.3 Initiatives to Address Town Centre-Related Crime

According to the Castle Morpeth Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CRDP) the following initiatives exist in the Castle Morpeth District (October 2008):

- Earlier in 2008, Castle Morpeth CDRP upgraded the Morpeth Shop Watch scheme by linking the radio message to the CCTV monitoring system at Killingworth so the CCTV operator can proactively use the Town Centre CCTV to monitor an ongoing situation as well as using their police radio to alert local patrols. The system has now been extended to Morpeth Pub Watch members and it is anticipated that when the re-development of Morpeth Town Centre is complete the scheme will be further extended.
12.0 CUSTOMER VIEWS

Shopper surveys will help authorities in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of town centre improvements and in setting further priorities. In this section the shoppers’ surveys carried out in Ponteland Town Centre will be analysed to find out their regularity of visits, type of purchases made, opinions on and use of leisure and entertainment; and what improvements they think will improve the town centre in the future. Additionally, data purchased from Experian will enable investigation of Ponteland catchment area; spending patterns and retaining shopper spend within the town centre.

12.1 Regularity of visits

91% of respondents go to Ponteland town centre during the daytime at least once a week, with the most common frequency of visit being every day (34%).

Respondents visit the centre less often during the evenings, with only one quarter (25%) visiting at least once a week. 32% said that they never visit the town centre during the evening (Figure 29).

Figure 29: Approximately how often are you in Ponteland Town Centre?
(Excludes ‘don't know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires
Base: 70 respondents (daytime); 71 respondents (evening)
12.2 Expenditure/ Type of Purchases

Figure 30 shows the proportion of respondents that shop for different items solely in Ponteland town centre, and how many go further afield. Figure 31 gives more details about which shopping centres the respondents use.

As can be seen from the tables, Ponteland town centre is used primarily for food and other domestic item shopping, although a large proportion of respondents go to Kingston Park for this type of shopping. For all other items, very few people shop in Ponteland, preferring instead to go to shopping centres such as Newcastle, and to a lesser extent, Kingston Park, the Metro Centre and Cramlington.
### Figure 30: Proportion of respondents shopping in Ponteland and other areas

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Food shopping</th>
<th>Other domestic (eg. Chemist, cosmetics, etc)</th>
<th>Clothes</th>
<th>Shoes</th>
<th>Electrical goods</th>
<th>Furniture/ carpets</th>
<th>DIY goods</th>
<th>CDs/DVDs etc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ponteland</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ponteland only</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ponteland + local area⁴</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ponteland + internet/</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-local/local mix</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Ponteland</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local area (not Ponteland)</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet or other</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixture of places (not Ponteland)</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Base</strong></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

---

⁴ ‘Local area’ is defined as being one of the following: Morpeth, Blyth, Cramlington, Ashington, Hexham, Kingston Park, Newcastle, Metro Centre.
Almost all (93%) of the respondents planned to spend less than £25 in Ponteland on the day they were interviewed, with a further 4% expecting to spend between £25 and £100. 1% did not know how much they would spend (Figure 32).
Figure 32: How much do you plan to spend in Ponteland today?
(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 71 respondents

12.3 The Catchment

According to the North East RSS, the region exhibits a polycentric settlement pattern based on two city-regions centred around Tyne & Wear and Tees Valley. A polycentric settlement pattern is one with many centres or nodes, albeit with different characteristics and scales, rather than one key centre dominating everywhere, where their functions are interconnected. Ponteland is the second largest centre in Castle Morpeth Borough. The settlement includes Ponteland Village which is a district shopping centre with housing and the larger Darras Hall residential area. The settlement character of Ponteland is quite unique in the northeast region, the Darras Hall Estate being an extensive development of executive housing in a largely mature landscape environment and attached to the much smaller and more compact village centre. The settlement of Ponteland has been surrounded by Green Belt since 1963, so that mature and well defined boundaries have been established and opportunities for expansion and growth are limited, a factor which is reflected in the RSS.
The map (Figure 33) shows the catchment area for Ponteland town centre, as defined by Experian. The catchment, which measures the extent of the local consumer base, was determined by calculating the centre’s population and the number of retailers present and assigning a radius of 1 mile.

12.4 Spending Patterns

In addition to Ponteland Village and Darras Hall, the catchment extends to Kirkley in the North West, High Callerton in the South and Prestwick to the East. Altogether, the catchment covers an area of 20.88 sq km, is home to approximately 5,600 people.
and 2,400 households. Together, these households and residents spend an estimated £25.8 million per annum on retail goods and services, with 34% of expenditure on convenience retail goods (£8.8 million) and 66% on comparison retail (£17 million). This balance differs slightly from the national (UK) average, which reports 36.6% of expenditure on convenience retail and 63.4% on comparison. The difference between the national and local position is clearly illustrated through the index which relates the proportion of each spend type in the Ponteland catchment to the proportion in the UK. An index of more than 100% indicates higher than average local spend and an index of less than 100 represents lower than average local spend.

Figure 34: Alnwick Catchment Summary Profile

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ponteland Catchment Summary Profile</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Population</td>
<td>5,611.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Households</td>
<td>2,371.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Population % UK</td>
<td>66.00%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 Households % UK</td>
<td>63.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Comparison</td>
<td>16,973,971.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Convenience</td>
<td>8,800,061.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Retail</td>
<td>94,153,859.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Comparison per household</td>
<td>£7,393.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Convenience per household</td>
<td>£3,833.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Retail per household</td>
<td>£11,226.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Source: Experian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total retail expenditure per household per annum within the catchment stands at £11,227, with average comparison retail spend at £7,393 per annum and convenience spend at £3,833 per annum (Figure 40). Comparison spend is above the national average whereas convenience spend is at a similar level to the national figure.

Figure 35 below provides a breakdown of Comparison retail expenditure within the Ponteland catchment and in the UK. Clearly the largest expenditure type within comparison retail is Clothing Material & Garments, accounting for £3.7 million or 22%
of total Comparison Expenditure within the catchment. Clothing is followed by Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment (£.2 million or 11.6%) and Furniture and furnishings; carpets and other floor coverings (£1.8 million or 10.3%). The pattern of expenditure nationally is similar, but with some notable differences. Referring to the index, households in Ponteland spend more on Small Electrical Household Appliances, Major Household Appliances, Audio-visual, Photographic and Information Processing Equipment and Household Textiles as a proportion of total spend than the UK average. In contrast, they spend substantially less on Bicycles, Materials for Maintenance and Repair of the Dwelling and Small tools and Miscellaneous Accessories.

Figure 35: Total Expenditure (in 2006 prices) Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2007 Total Expenditure (in 2006 prices) Comparison</th>
<th>Ponteland</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Index</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>16,973,971.00</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>171,926,829,196.00</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10% of Non-Durable household goods</td>
<td>31,372.00</td>
<td>0.18%</td>
<td>357,185,476.00</td>
<td>0.21%</td>
<td>91.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appliances for personal care</td>
<td>1,502,059.00</td>
<td>8.85%</td>
<td>15,298,262,865.00</td>
<td>8.90%</td>
<td>93.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment</td>
<td>1,972,965.00</td>
<td>11.62%</td>
<td>14,926,597,385.00</td>
<td>8.68%</td>
<td>135.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycles</td>
<td>15,806.00</td>
<td>0.09%</td>
<td>1,345,908,674.00</td>
<td>0.78%</td>
<td>16.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books and stationery</td>
<td>631,114.00</td>
<td>3.72%</td>
<td>6,968,169,166.00</td>
<td>4.05%</td>
<td>90.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clothing materials and garments</td>
<td>3,740,901.00</td>
<td>22.04%</td>
<td>37,197,970,202.00</td>
<td>21.64%</td>
<td>99.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Furniture and furnishings; carpets and other floor coverings</td>
<td>1,755,698.00</td>
<td>10.34%</td>
<td>18,218,052,893.00</td>
<td>10.60%</td>
<td>97.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Games, toys and hobbies; sport and camping; musical instruments</td>
<td>1,561,537.00</td>
<td>9.20%</td>
<td>18,951,364,780.00</td>
<td>11.02%</td>
<td>88.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gardens, plants and flowers</td>
<td>311,585.00</td>
<td>1.84%</td>
<td>3,402,000,385.00</td>
<td>1.98%</td>
<td>86.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glassware, tableware and household utensils</td>
<td>460,098.00</td>
<td>2.71%</td>
<td>4,753,009,610.00</td>
<td>2.76%</td>
<td>92.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household textiles</td>
<td>623,139.00</td>
<td>3.67%</td>
<td>5,378,572,610.00</td>
<td>3.13%</td>
<td>120.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewellery, clocks and watches</td>
<td>449,159.00</td>
<td>2.65%</td>
<td>4,533,353,900.00</td>
<td>2.64%</td>
<td>90.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major household appliances (electric or not)</td>
<td>631,880.00</td>
<td>3.72%</td>
<td>4,457,482,024.00</td>
<td>2.59%</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Major tools and equipment</td>
<td>27,410.00</td>
<td>0.16%</td>
<td>370,528,409.00</td>
<td>0.22%</td>
<td>77.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials for maintenance and repair of the dwelling</td>
<td>480,260.00</td>
<td>2.83%</td>
<td>6,026,571,834.00</td>
<td>3.97%</td>
<td>72.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical goods and other pharmaceutical products</td>
<td>344,813.00</td>
<td>2.03%</td>
<td>3,904,354,994.00</td>
<td>2.27%</td>
<td>82.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other personal effects</td>
<td>207,363.00</td>
<td>1.22%</td>
<td>2,276,336,174.00</td>
<td>1.32%</td>
<td>81.69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pets and related products</td>
<td>164,547.00</td>
<td>0.97%</td>
<td>2,747,999,981.00</td>
<td>1.60%</td>
<td>82.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recording media</td>
<td>897,766.00</td>
<td>5.29%</td>
<td>7,513,288,250.00</td>
<td>4.37%</td>
<td>140.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoes and other footwear</td>
<td>500,093.00</td>
<td>2.95%</td>
<td>5,348,647,704.00</td>
<td>3.11%</td>
<td>92.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small electrical household appliances</td>
<td>127,752.00</td>
<td>0.75%</td>
<td>748,364,529.00</td>
<td>0.44%</td>
<td>165.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small tools and miscellaneous accessories</td>
<td>237,006.00</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
<td>3,301,806,678.00</td>
<td>1.92%</td>
<td>73.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Therapeutic appliances and equipment</td>
<td>299,646.00</td>
<td>1.77%</td>
<td>3,101,000,673.00</td>
<td>1.80%</td>
<td>83.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Comparison</td>
<td>16,973,971.00</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>171,926,829,196.00</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian
Figure 36: Expenditure on Comparison Retail

Expenditure on Comparison Retail: Items with an Index Less than the UK Average

Source: Experian

Figure 37: Expenditure on Comparison Retail

Expenditure on Comparison Retail: Items with an Index Greater than the UK Average

Source: Experian

Figure 38 below provides a breakdown of Convenience retail expenditure within the Ponteland catchment and in the UK. Clearly the largest expenditure type within comparison retail in Ponteland is Food and non-alcoholic beverages, accounting for £6.4 million or 72.8% of total Comparison Expenditure within the area. Food and non-alcoholic beverages is followed by Alcohol (£1.1 million or 13.0%) and Tobacco (£0.5 million or 5.7%). The pattern of expenditure nationally differs a little. Referring to the index, households in Ponteland spend more on Newspapers and Periodicals as a proportion of total spend and less on Tobacco.
Figure 38: 2007 Total Expenditure Convenience Retail

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2007 Total Expenditure (in 2006 prices) Convenience Retail</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90% of Non-Durable household goods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcohol (off-trade)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and non-alcoholic beverages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newspapers and periodicals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tobacco</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Convenience</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian

12.5 Retaining Shopper Spend

The information outlined in the previous section describes the extent and pattern of expenditure per annum of households living within the Experian-defined catchment area for Ponteland town. What the information does not indicate, however, is how much of the expenditure is spent purchasing goods and services in Ponteland and how much leaks to neighbouring retail destinations. Based on the Where Britain Shops Survey, Experian have calculated:

- The proportion of the population within the Ponteland catchment that shop in Ponteland and the proportion that shop at other centres.
- The percentage of expenditure spent on goods and services in Ponteland and the extent to which spending leaks to other centres.

The figures in Figure 36 below provide a baseline assessment against which future reports will measure changes in performance. The figures do not currently provide a breakdown of leakage for comparison and convenience retail, although it is anticipated that retention will be substantially higher for the latter compared with the former.

With regards to population, Experian estimates that just under half of the resident population shop in Newcastle upon Tyne – Central (2,436 or 43%). The other main destination is the MetroCentre (1,994 or 36%). Less than 2% (96) of the resident population are estimated to shop in Ponteland itself.
Figure 36: Population Leakage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan Name</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne – Central</td>
<td>43.42</td>
<td>2,436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Centre</td>
<td>35.54</td>
<td>1,994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne - Kingston Park Centre</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead - Team Valley Retail World</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ponteland</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Shields - Silverlink Retail Park</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cramlington</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne – Byker Shields</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wallsend</td>
<td>1.22</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunderland</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Shields</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hexham</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chester-le-Street</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Byth</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Experian

The pattern with regards to spend is relatively similar. Experian estimates that just under half of retail spend by residents and households domiciled within the Ponteland catchment, representing over £7 million per annum, is spent in Newcastle City Centre.

A further £6 million is lost to the Metro Centre. Less than £300,000 is retained in Ponteland itself. What is not clear from the figures, however, is the retail types that outlying centres are able to attract from the catchment area. This is something that InfoNet will be investigating further with Experian over the coming 12 months.

Figure 37: Spend Leakage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plan Name</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
<th>Spend (£)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne – Central</td>
<td>43.42</td>
<td>7,370,098</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Metro Centre</td>
<td>35.54</td>
<td>6,032,549</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne - Kingston Park Centre</td>
<td>5.17</td>
<td>877,554</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead - Team Valley Retail World</td>
<td>1.99</td>
<td>337,782</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ponteland</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>290,255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Shields - Silverlink Retail Park</td>
<td>1.58</td>
<td>268,189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cramlington</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>266,491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gateshead</td>
<td>1.49</td>
<td>252,912</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newcastle upon Tyne – Byker Shields</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>246,123</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The map (Figure 38) below shows the Ponteland catchment area and is colour coded to indicate the proportion of retail expenditure that is spent by the resident population in Ponteland. From the map, it can be seen that households across the whole catchment spend less than 5% of their total retail expenditure in Ponteland.

**Figure 38: Proportion of Retail Expenditure**

3% of respondents said that they were in Ponteland town centre for leisure on the day of the interview.
Events attended
59% of respondents had attended at least one of the events asked about in the survey. The Farmers Market was attended by the largest proportion of respondents by far (58%). The Christmas Lights switch on and the Ponteland Gathering did not seem so popular (Figure 39).

Figure 39: Have you ever attended any of these events?
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Eating and drinking
Respondents generally thought highly of the eating and drinking places in Ponteland. The highest ratings were given for the restaurants (93% positive ratings) and the lowest were given for the coffee shops (62% positive ratings) (Figure 40).
Figure 40: How would you rate the following venues for eating and drinking in Ponteland?

(Excludes ‘don’t know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 65 to 69 respondents depending on type of venue (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

One respondent suggested a “McDonalds” when asked for examples of improvements to the retail offer.

Arts and leisure facilities

The ratings given for the arts and leisure facilities in Ponteland differed considerably by facility. Ponteland Leisure Centre received the highest rating (82% of positive ratings), and the parks and open spaces received the lowest rating (50% of positive ratings) (Figure 50).

One respondent suggested a “bigger library”.

---

% respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Restaurants/Bistros</th>
<th>Sandwich shops</th>
<th>Takeaways</th>
<th>Coffee shops</th>
<th>Pubs and clubs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>68%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Very Poor
Poor
OK
Good
Very Good

Values: 0% to 100%
Figure 41: How would you rate the following arts and leisure facilities in Ponteland?

(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: as written on chart (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a 'don't know' response)

When asked how they would rate Ponteland as a place to enjoy yourself, 57% of respondents gave a good or very good response, and 15% gave a poor or very poor response (Figure 42).
Figure 42: How do you rate Ponteland as a place to enjoy yourself?
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

![Pie chart showing ratings]

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 68 (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

General
When respondents were asked how they would make the town centre better, 7% gave an answer relating to improving the leisure facilities.

12.7 The Future: what will improve the town as a place to shop or visit?
The people interviewed for this survey generally thought that Ponteland was a good place to live (88% gave a positive rating, and only 3% gave a negative rating). It was also rated reasonably highly as a place to enjoy yourself (57% positive and 15% negative ratings). However, as a place to visit and a place to shop, respondents were not impressed (31% and 14% positive ratings respectively).

From the analysis of this survey, it is clear that there are a number of issues that need to be addressed in order to improve the town. These issues are examined in more detail below.
Figure 43: How do you rate Ponteland as a place to shop, visit, enjoy yourself and live?

(Excludes ‘don't know’ responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 66 to 71 respondents depending on question (note: this excludes those respondents that gave a ‘don’t know’ response)

Retail

Throughout the survey, respondents have been fairly negative about the retail offer in Ponteland as can be seen in the points below:

- When asked how they would make the town centre better, 58% of respondents said there should be a better retail offer.
- Only 14% of respondents rated Ponteland as a good or very good place to shop. Over half (54%) said that it was poor or very poor.
- Nearly half (48%) of respondents disagreed with the statement ‘on the whole, Ponteland offers a wide choice of quality shops’. 34% agreed.
- 7 respondents (14% of those that answered) gave a response relating to shops when asked what the main problems with the shopping experience were in Ponteland town centre.
As can be seen in section 12(b), Ponteland shopping centre is mainly used for food and other domestic item shopping, although a large proportion of respondents said that they go to Kingston Park to purchase these items. For all other shopping, respondents tend to go elsewhere (Newcastle, and to a lesser extent, Kingston Park, the Metro Centre and Cramlington).

When asked what improvements respondents would like to see to the retail offer in Ponteland, the most common suggestion by far was to have an increased variety of shops (43% of respondents mentioned this). More chain stores and more shops offering local produce were also given by 12% of respondents (Figure 44).

Figure 44: What improvements would you like to see to the retail offer in Ponteland?
(Excludes 'don't know' responses unless otherwise specified)

Source: Northumberland Infonet Shopper Questionnaires

Base: 65 respondents
Traffic and road safety
46% of respondents said that traffic was one of the main problems with the shopping experience in Ponteland. 24% gave a response related to road safety. A number of comments were also made relating to this subject (see Appendix 2).

Cleanliness and appearance of town (see section 10.2)
Respondents had a very low opinion of the overall level of cleanliness in Ponteland, with only 13% giving a positive rating, and 61% giving a negative rating. Litter in Ponteland was rated a little better, but still received only 34% of good or very good ratings, and 31% of poor/very poor ratings.

The general appearance of the town was not highly thought of, particularly the shop frontage which received 4% of positive ratings and 80% of negative ratings, and the general state of the buildings (8% positive and 70% negative ratings.

Street furniture was also given low ratings, with less than one quarter of respondents giving a positive rating, and nearly half giving a poor or very poor rating.

In addition, various comments on the cleanliness and the appearance of the town were made. These can be found in Appendix 2.

Public transport
Respondents had a fairly low opinion of public transport in Ponteland. The regularity of bus/rail services and the destinations served by public transport both received negative ratings from over half of respondents, and positive ratings from one quarter or less. The quality of the services fared slightly better, but still had 37% of respondents giving a poor or very poor rating.

However, public transport was not mentioned as either a main problem with the shopping experience or a suggested improvement.

Parking
Parking was mentioned by 14% of respondents when asked how they would make the town centre better, and also by two people as one of the main problems.
When asked directly about the parking facilities in Ponteland, respondents were generally positive, with over two thirds of respondents giving a good or very good rating for both the availability of public and disabled parking spaces. There were, however, 21% and 15% of respondents that gave a negative rating for these aspects respectively.

**Other**

The quality of the footpaths was given as a main problem by 22% of respondents.

The open spaces in Ponteland were given a poor or very poor rating by 30% of respondents (50% gave a positive rating).
13.0 INVESTMENT

Redevelopment
The following developments are proposed for Ponteland Town Centre;

- Callerton Lane Play Park is currently being revitalised.
- A Youth Centre situated on the Ponteland High School site has just been finished.
- Creation of a new community hub housing a new library and community centre.
- Additional housing.
- New retail units.
- Improved car parking.
- More green open spaces and potentially a water feature.
14.0 CONCLUSION

There are various developments currently proposed for the Town Centre. Whilst some regeneration is residential properties, there are also retail units proposed. These potential developments should therefore be taken into consideration when drawing conclusions about the health of the Town Centre.

In the Town Centre, 31% of the floorspace use was for retail (Figure 3). However, despite this relatively high percentage of the amount of retail floorspace, shopper’s perceptions of the range of retail provision was somewhat negative with 48% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing to the statement “Ponteland offers a wide choice of quality shops”, compared to 33% agreeing or strongly agreeing (Figure 5).

Although there weren’t many verbatim responses to what shoppers would like to see improved with the shopping experience (Appendix 2) the responses included that more shops were needed and that the selection of shops needed to be improved. The verbatim responses to what shoppers would like to see improved with the retail offer (Appendix 2) highlighted that more shops selling every day items were high on their priorities. Additionally, figure 6 highlighted that there were more leisure services and financial and business services than comparison retail (clothing, household goods, furniture, DIY and electrical goods) or convenience retail. This may indicate why shoppers would like to see more comparison retail and convenience retail, or they would like more variation within those particular category.

There was 4% of vacant floorspace in Ponteland (see Figure 11). The only enquiries recorded were for properties on Prestwick which is an out of town employment site. However, it must be noted that this data is based solely on one source (Northumberland Property Database) and other sources may provide further insight.

Accessibility into the town was not a problem for the shoppers interviewed with 76% (of those travelling by car) finding it very or fairly easy (Figure 14). Further, 67% of these shoppers felt that the availability of parking in the town centre was either good or very good. However, Appendix 2 shows that 2 shoppers commented on the lack of parking. Ponteland also has relatively good bus connectivity, which is shown in
Figure 19 by the frequency and number of destinations reached from Ponteland. All three shoppers travelling into the town centre by bus on the day of the surveys also found it very or fairly easy to travel there. However, Figure 25 shows that this was not the case when looking at overall perception of the shoppers interviewed with only one quarter or less of respondents rating the quality, regularity and destinations served by public transport positively. These two findings appear to contradict; however it may be that the negative response to the perception of public transport was given by those who do not use it, or vice versa. These two areas would need to be looked at more closely together to gain further insight on this matter.

When looking at retaining shopper spend, 2% of Ponteland residents shopped in Ponteland. 43% of expenditure was lost to Newcastle and a further 36% to the Metro Centre (Figure 36). However, the proposed regeneration programmes may show that the percentage for Ponteland will increase in the next few years and there will be a reduction in leakage to surrounding centres.

The responses from shoppers coupled with the various aspects that make up a town centre, suggest that generally Ponteland was in reasonable health. Although there has been some negative responses from the shoppers’ surveys with regards to the retail offer in general, the implementation of the various regeneration projects and increase in retail floorspace in the town centre should show hopefully show some improvements in forthcoming years.
15.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The original intention was that town centre health checks would be carried out biennially and there are various recommendations that would ensure that the next report improves and builds upon this initial “baseline” report. In subsequent years comparisons will be able to be made within the same town over a period of time, and also between towns which have the similar roles or functions, (e.g. market towns).

Section 3, Diversity of Uses, focused on the different uses of commercial properties. Using the data from Experian, an analysis of property use class was carried out, however this data was only based on the ground floor of the properties and did not take into consideration any businesses that were situated on the upper floors. In order to give a more accurate picture of the use class of the town centre, these other floors would have to be considered. It may also be possible to look at the location and quantity of residential properties in the town.

Section 5, Retailer Demand, summarised the interest of vacant outlets in the town centre. In this report, the source of this data was Northumberland Property Search. This cannot be taken as an exhaustive source of this information, and it would be beneficial to work in partnership with the various estate agents within the County to gain a more reliable and accurate insight. Additionally, a substantial amount of enquirers from the Northumberland Property Search referred to out of town properties such as those situated on business parks or industrial estates and therefore were excluded for the purpose of this report.

Section 8, Pedestrian Flows, analysed the footfall counts that had taken place within the town centres alongside the shopper’s surveys. As they had taken place on a “normal” weekday, a market day (where applicable) and a Saturday, it was not possible to estimate a weekly footfall count without including a footfall on a Sunday. This is something that would have to be considered next time.

Section 9, Accessibility, gathered all of the destinations reached from Alnwick by bus. This information was drawn up into a table, however a map would have been more useful.
Section 11, Perception of Safety and Occurrence of Crime, analysed the number of crimes that had taken place within the town centre between 2005 and 2007, and also the initiatives designed to address town centre-related crime. It will be interesting in the next report to investigate what impact these initiatives have had on the number of crimes reported in the town centre.

Section 13, Investment, looked at future proposals for the town centre. The perception of town centre shoppers should be reviewed when the report is next updated, in order to see if their opinions have been considered within future proposals for the area.

APPENDIX 1
Use Class Order
The following classes of use for England are set out in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 and its subsequent amendments.

- **A1 Shops** - Shops, retail warehouses, hairdressers, undertakers, travel and ticket agencies, post offices, pet shops, sandwich bars, showrooms, domestic hire shops, dry cleaners and funeral directors.
- **A2 Financial and professional services** - Banks, building societies, estate and employment agencies, professional and financial services and betting offices.
- **A3 Restaurants and cafés** - For the sale of food and drink for consumption on the premises - restaurants, snack bars and cafes.
- **A4 Drinking establishments** - Public houses, wine bars or other drinking establishments (but not a night clubs).
- **A5 Hot food takeaways** - For the sale of hot food for consumption off the premises.

- **B1 Business** - Offices, research and development, light industry appropriate in a residential area.
- **B2 General industrial**
- **B3-B7 Special Industrial Groups** - See 'Use Classes Schedule'.
- **B8 Storage or distribution** - This class includes open air storage.

- **C1 Hotels** - Hotels, boarding and guest houses where no significant element of care is provided.
- **C2 Residential institutions** - Residential care homes, hospitals, nursing homes, boarding schools, residential colleges and training centres.
- **C2A Secure Residential Institution** - Use for a provision of secure residential accommodation, including use as a prison, young offenders institution, detention centre, secure training centre, custody centre, short term holding centre, secure hospital, secure local authority accommodation or use as a military barracks.
- **C3 Dwellinghouses** - Family houses, or houses occupied by up to six residents living together as a single household, including a household where care is provided for residents.

- **D1 Non-residential institutions** - Clinics, health centres, crèches, day nurseries, day centres, schools, art galleries, museums, libraries, halls, places of worship, church halls, law court. Non residential education and training centres.
• **D2 Assembly and leisure** - Cinemas, music and concert halls, bingo and dance halls (but not night clubs), swimming baths, skating rinks, gymnasiums or sports arenas (except for motor sports, or where firearms are used).

• **Sui Generis** - Theatres, houses in multiple paying occupation, hostels providing no significant element of care, scrap yards. Petrol filling stations and shops selling and/or displaying motor vehicles. Retail warehouse clubs, nightclubs, launderettes, taxi businesses, amusement centres. Casinos.

## APPENDIX 2

**VERBATIM RESPONSES FOR SHOPPER’S SURVEY**
Verbatim responses to ‘Q12 Can you tell me what, if anything, are the main problems with the shopping experience in Ponteland Town Centre?’

**Shops**
- No good shops
- Not enough shops
- Not many shops - don't shop here
- Poor selection of shops (2 responses)
- Poor shops
- What shops!? all poor

**Traffic / congestion**
- Congestion
- Too many vans, don't feel safe
- Traffic at certain times
- At school times - chaotic
- At school times (2 responses)

**Parking**
- Not enough car parking
- Parking places

**Other**
- Paths need straightening - on slant
- Tidy it up
- Very poor

**Nothing**
- Nothing
- Nothing really

Verbatim responses to ‘Q17 What improvements would you like to see to the retail offer in Ponteland?’
Examples of improvements

- Supermarket - Asda, Better quality - M & S
- Cheaper supermarket
- Boutique shops, flowers, diy
- Smaller boutique shops, diy, handicraft shops
- Designer Shops, M/S, Tesco
- HMV, McDonalds
- M&S small shop
- Shops selling everyday items
- Small shops selling household items
- Need an ironmongers/ hardware store
- Better variety of shops
- Update - nowhere to buy batteries
- Update shopping centre
- Better all round (update)
- Any that's tidy and quality
- Anything would be an improvement
- Anything would improve it
- Already getting new shops on the main road
- No need if you have a car
- People forget its a village, Why spoil it

Other improvements

- A facelift
- Just a facelift
- Clean it up/needs a coat of paint
- New shop fronts
- Renovate the shops, paving & paint the whole building.
- Renovated and renewed and painted.
- Renovation is needed
- Needs to be pulled down, renovated and modernised completely
- Hardware shop
- Need mixture of shops
Verbatim responses to ‘Q23 How would you make this town centre better?’

**Appearance**

- Clean it up
- Clean it up and paint front of shops
- Clean up shopping centre, paint shop fronts
- Complete renovation - new windows, paint, etc
- General Improvement - Dated
- Improved fascia on buildings
- Just a facelift
- Keep it clean
- Makeover of shops/ new coat of paint
- New shop fronts
- Refurb of shop fronts in shopping centre
- Renovation of shops
- Renovate/ paint and refurbish shops
- Shop fronts need renovating
- Shopping centre needs painting and updating
- Update and paint shops
- New paving on floor of shopping centre
- New paving/ paint the shops aswell.
- Smaller shops, revamp shop fronts
- Tidy it up a bit
- Tidying up

**Shops**

- Better shops
- Covered in shops - easy access
- More shops, e.g. Woolworths
- New shops
- Shops selling batteries, light bulbs for example
- Small shops selling everyday home items
Traffic
- Bypass somehow. Too busy
- Get rid of traffic at peak times

Other
- New footpaths
- Keep it as a village
- Refurb, bigger library
- Don't Know
The Corporate Research Unit

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