

CLECKHEATON TOWN CENTRE ANNUAL STATEMENT OF KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS AUGUST 2001

Introduction

Since 1996, Planning Services of Kirklees M.C. has carried out a series of town centre audits to monitor the health and performance of shopping centres in the District. The time series data enables the role of individual town centres to be assessed, identifying the scope for change, renewal and diversification.

The first full audit for Cleckheaton town centre was published in August 1997. Changes that have taken place over the last 4 years have been examined in annual statements of key economic indicators, of which this is the fourth.

The indicators of vitality and viability covered here are:

- retail occupancy in terms of floorspace and shop units,
- vacancy rates,
- pedestrian footfall,
- retail development pipeline,
- retailer demand, and
- prime retail rents.

Retail floorspace, shop units and vacancy

A survey of occupancy updated in July 2001 recorded that Cleckheaton town centre provides a total of 77,900 sq.m. of net retail floorspace. The tables below illustrate the changes in both retail floorspace and shop unit occupancy since 1997.

Shop units in Cleckheaton town centre

	Convenience	Comparison ¹	Service	Vacant	TOTAL
1998	17 (10.1%)	87 (51.8%)	45 (26.8%)	19 (11.3%)	168 (100%)
1999	17 (10.1%)	90 (53.3%)	45 (26.6%)	17 (10.0%)	169 (100%)
2000	17 (10.0%)	89 (52.0%)	49 (29.0%)	15 (9.0%)	170 (100%)
2001	18 (10.5%)	92 (53.5%)	49 (28.5%)	13 (7.6%)	172 (100%)
% change 2000-01	+5.9	+3.3	0	-13.3	+1.2

¹ Including semi-retail uses e.g. travel agents, opticians.

The last 12 months has seen a distinct change in the pattern of retail floorspace provided in Cleckheaton town centre. Vacancy has fallen sharply and remains below the national average in terms of both floorspace and shop units. There has also been an increase in comparison goods floorspace and a corresponding decline in convenience goods floorspace. This is largely attributable to the closure of the Co-op Food Fair in Central Arcade and the opening of More Bargain shop.

Retail floorspace in Cleckheaton (sq.m. net)

	Convenience	Comparison ¹	Vacant	TOTAL
1998	1,854 (24.3%)	4,553 (59.6%)	1,226 (16.1%)	7,633 (100%)
1999	1,854 (23.0%)	5,391 (67.0%)	806 (10.0%)	8,051 (100%)
2000	1,854 (24.0%)	5,047 (66.0%)	748 (10.0%)	7,649 (100%)
2001	1,707 (21.9%)	5,588 (71.7%)	502 (6.4%)	7,797 (100%)
% change 2000-2001	-8	+11	-33	+2

Floorspace comparisons² (sq.m. net)

	Cleckheaton	Batley	Heck'wike	Dewsbury	Holmfirth
Conv.	1,707 (21.9%)	4,722 (20.3%)	4,255 (41.5%)	7,346 (18.2%)	1,841 (24.5%)
Comp.	5,588 (71.7%)	15,655 (67.3%)	4,562 (44.5%)	28,601 (70.9%)	3,988 (53.2%)
Vacant	502 (6.4%)	2,880 (12.4%)	1,443 (14.0%)	4,384 (10.9%)	1,674 (22.3%)
Total retail flsp	7,797 (100%)	23,257 (100%)	10,260 (100%)	40,332 (100%)	7,504 (100%)
No. vacant units	13 (7.6%)	24 (11.5%)	32 (19.6%)	68 (19.2%)	23 (13.7%)
Total no. of units	172 (100%)	209 (100%)	164 (100%)	354 (100%)	168 (100%)

² Figures relate to the floorspace contained within the Town Centre Audit Study Boundary of each town

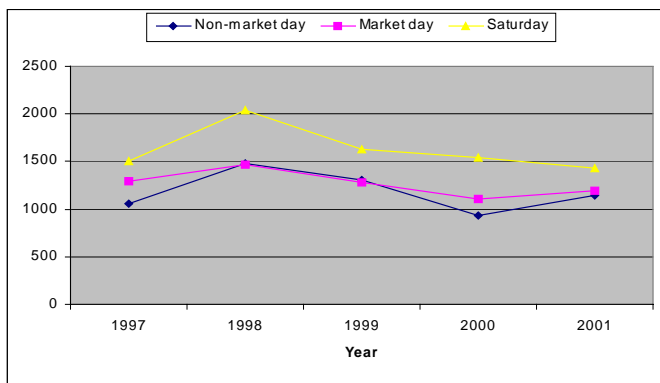
Pedestrian footfall

Pedestrian footfall counts have been undertaken annually in Cleckheaton town centre since 1997 on a market day, non-market day and Saturday. Hour sample counts have been conducted from 10:30am and from 2:30pm at 8 locations, including all access points into the town centre, the entrance to Tesco and the pedestrian link from the foodstore to Northgate. The table below gives the summer 2001 pedestrian count results.

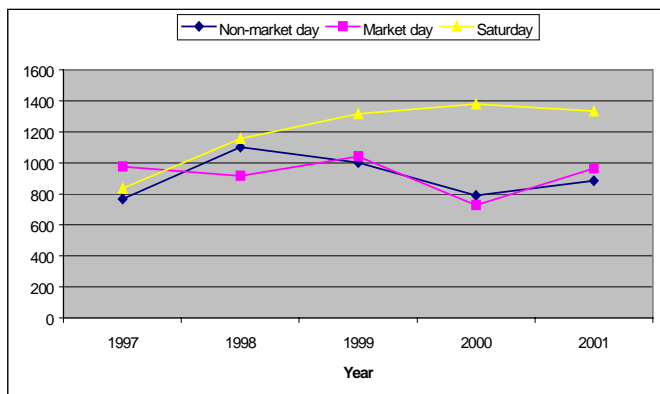
Cleckheaton pedestrian footfall 2001³

Survey location	12 th June Market day Dry/dull		14 th June Non-market day Warm/dry		16 th June Saturday Rain	
	a.m	p.m	a.m	p.m	a.m	p.m
	1. Tesco main ent	272	198	244	171	386
2. Pedestrian link	133	105	85	51	363	143
3. Cheapside	106	114	104	136	170	162
4. Northgate (N)	97	71	112	90	145	126
5. Albion Street	274	216	186	120	241	284
6. Northgate (S)	238	231	302	212	256	290
7. Central Arcade	205	144	194	148	230	147
8. Bus station	-	-	-	-	104	52
TOTAL into town	1192	966	1142	885	1428	1335

Morning pedestrian numbers 1997 - 2001 (summer)



Afternoon pedestrian counts 1997- 2001 (summer)



³ Morning counts were conducted for 1 hour between 10:30 and 11:30. Afternoon counts were conducted for 1 hour between 2:30 and 3:30. All count points record pedestrians coming INTO the town only. Totals represent the number of people entering the town and exclude the pedestrian link and bus station count points.

Weekday pedestrian footfall in Cleckheaton town centre had experienced a gradual but consistent decline over the previous 3 years, but greater numbers were recorded during all weekday counts this year. The Saturday assessment reveals a slightly less positive picture with decreases in pedestrian numbers compared to the 2000 figure.

Pedestrian footfall in Cleckheaton continues to exhibit a diffuse pattern of movement around the town centre. Furthermore, there is little discernible difference between footfall levels in the town on a market day compared to a non-market day.

Retailer demand

An assessment of retailer demand was undertaken in June 2001. This identified that there are 2 convenience retailers who have expressed a requirement for representation in Cleckheaton. These are Tesco (6,700 sq.m.) and Lidl (1,400 sq.m.). Tesco submitted a planning application that has been called in by the Secretary of State. A decision is still awaited.

Source: Focus Property Intelligence Plc / Kirklees M.C.

Retail development in the pipeline

With the exception of minor refurbishment works and changes in the use of shop premises, there has been little retail development activity in Cleckheaton town centre. Nevertheless it is worth commenting that JD Wetherspoon recently refurbished the former Foxy's nightclub for use as a public house. Planning permission for the construction of a 1229 sq.m. gross retail floorspace on St John's car park off Bradford Road recently expired. Outside the study area, the listed Congregational Church on Bradford Road has been converted to an Indian Restaurant that is reputed to be the largest in the UK.

Prime retail rental levels

The lack of a prime retail 'pitch' within the town centre of Cleckheaton creates difficulties in defining prime zone A rents. However, information received indicates that retail rents in the town have shown slight improvement over the last 12 months. Rents now fall within the general range of £108 - £215 per sq.m. (£10-20 per sq.ft.)

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