Town Centres Team, Planning Services

DEWSBURY TOWN CENTRE
ANNUAL STATEMENT OF KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS
DECEMBER 2006

Introduction
The Town Centre Audit programme facilitated by the Planning Service Town Centres Team monitors the health and vitality of Town Centres in the Kirklees District.

The role of individual town centres is assessed through analysis of performance data which identifies the scope for renewal, diversification and change.

Since 1997, yearly statements have been produced which assess 7 key indicators of health and vitality for Dewsbury Town Centre. These are:
- Shop unit and floorspace occupancy;
- Vacancy rates;
- Pedestrian footfall;
- Development information;
- Retailer demand;
- Prime retail rental levels;
- Prime retail yields.


Market Place

Floorspace, Shop Units and Vacancy
A survey of shop unit occupancy undertaken during October 2006 revealed that within Dewsbury town centre study area (map, page 7) 344 shop units were recorded. A total of 48,757 sq.m. (524,625 sq.ft.) of net retail floorspace is provided within this area.

Overall, since the 2005 survey, Dewsbury town centre has seen an increase of 13.6% in retail floorspace with the number of shop units decreasing by 1.1% as demonstrated by figure 1.

Convenience goods retailing has seen a significant increase in sales floorspace with the main contributor being the new Lidl supermarket on Bradford Road, however, the centre has seen the closure of Kwik Save and Dewhirst butchers.

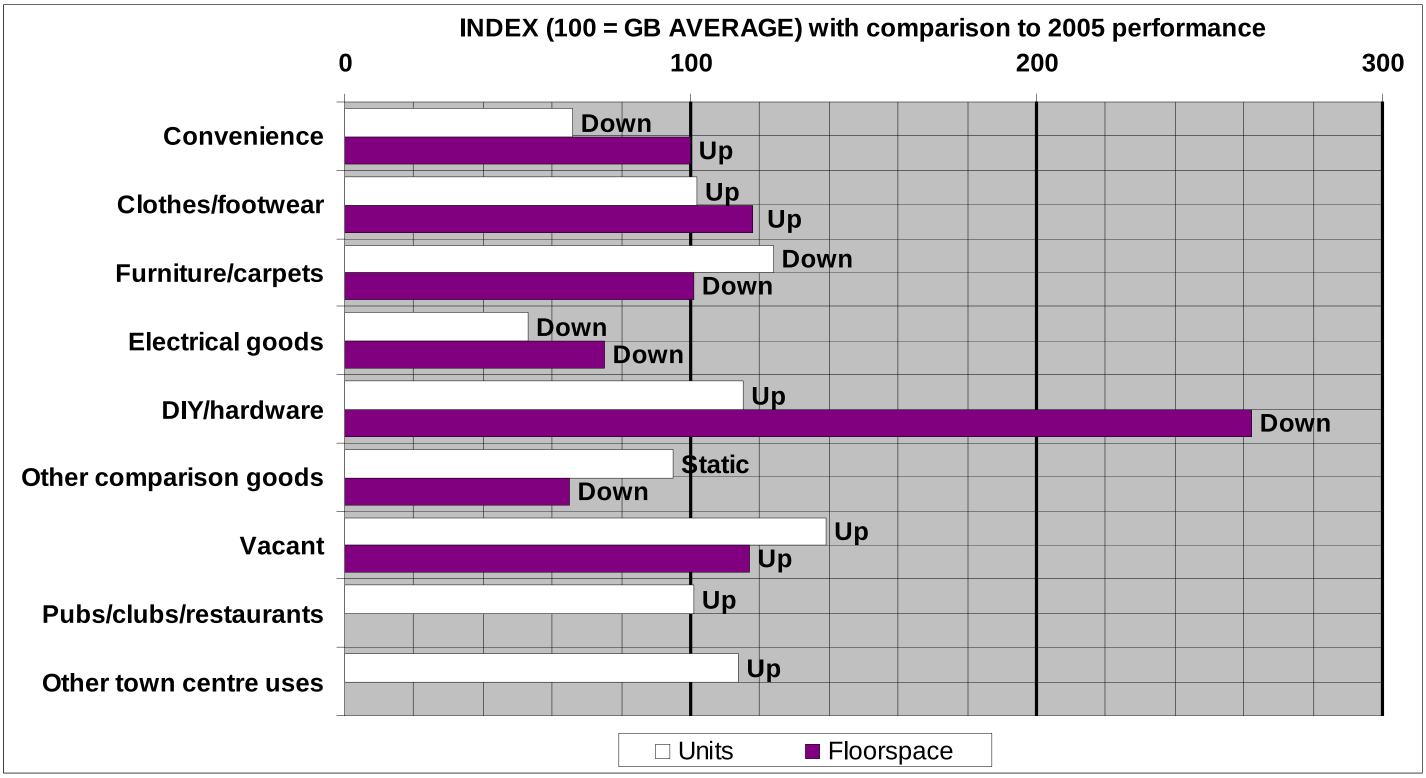
Figure 1: Dewsbury shop unit/floorspace statistics

	2005		2006		% change 2005-2006	
	Sales fl'space sq.m.	Shop units	Sales fl'space sq.m.	Shop units	Sales fl'space sq.m.	Shop units
Convenience (food)	8,336 (19.4%)	23 (6.6%)	9,923 (20.3%)	21 (6.1%)	+19.0	-8.7
Comparison (non-food)[1]	31,281 (72.9%)	188 (54.0%)	33,220 (68.1%)	191 (55.5%)	+6.2	+1.6
Service	N/A	79 (22.7%)	N/A	80 (23.3%)	N/A	+1.3
Vacant	3,287 (7.7%)	58 (16.7%)	5,520 (11.3%)	49 (14.2%)	+67.9	-15.5
Under refurbishment	N/A	N/A	94 (0.2%)	3 (0.9%)	N/A	N/A
TOTAL	**42,904 (100%)**	**348 (100%)**	**48,757 (100%)**	**344 (100%)**	**+13.6**	**-1.1**

A positive increase in comparison goods retailing both in terms of floorspace and units has been recorded. Movement in the town during the last 12 months has seen the opening of a number of independent retailers and the national multiple retailer Next.

The town centre has seen a 15% reduction in the number of vacant units recorded since 2005. The former Safeway store on Bradford Road accounts for 43% of the 2006 vacant retail floorspace figure which takes vacant floorspace for the town above the national average as shown in figure 2. Without taking this unit into account, the town records a decrease of 5% in vacant retail floorspace on the previous year and would be well below the national average.

Figure 2: Comparison with national averages[2]



Pedestrian Footfall

The volume and pattern of movement of shoppers and visitors to Dewsbury Town Centre has been monitored through pedestrian counts since 1997.

Primary and secondary shopping frontages and important pedestrian links are covered on market day, non-market day and Saturday using ten count points which are shown on the map on page 7.

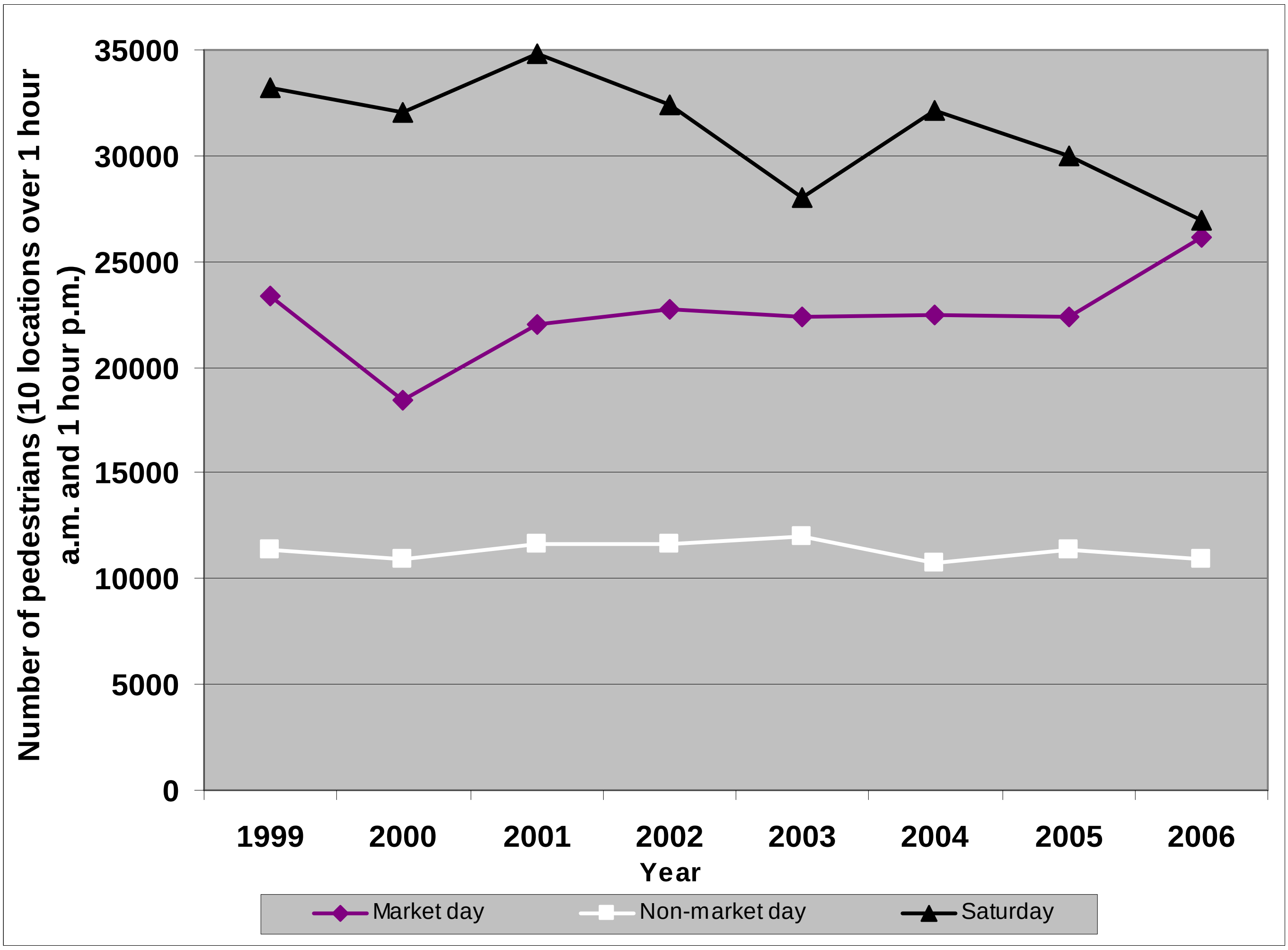
Pedestrian numbers for autumn 2006 have seen a decline on the previous year with the exception of Market Day afternoon which has seen an increase as shown in figure 3. Rain and cold weather on non-market day with cold and dull weather on the morning of Saturday may have had an influence on pedestrian numbers.

Figure 3: Comparison of pedestrian numbers Autumn 2005 to Autumn 2006

		2005	2006	% change
Market Day	a.m.	15965	15333	-3.96
	p.m.	10072	10806	7.29
Non-Market Day	a.m.	6200	5714	-7.84
	p.m.	5805	5194	-10.53
Saturday	a.m.	17328	13496	-22.11
	p.m.	14454	13462	-6.86
TOTAL		**69824**	**64005**	**-8.33**

An assessment of footfall over time is illustrated in figure 4 and shows that visitor numbers have remained fairly constant for non-market day and market day with the exception of 2006 which has shown a marked increase. This highlights the importance of the market in drawing visitors to Dewsbury.
Saturday has seen a steady decline in visitor numbers which will continue to be monitored.

Figure 4: Pedestrian footfall Autumn 1999 – Autumn 2006



Results for the street counts are given in figure 5 and provide a yearly 'snapshot' of the volume of pedestrians and their pattern of movement within the centre.

The Princess of Wales Precinct, Longcauseway, Market Place and Foundry Street remain the principle areas of pedestrian activity particularly on market day and Saturday as in previous years.

Figure 5: Autumn pedestrian counts, Morning and Afternoon samples*

Date	18th October 2006 Market Day (Wednesday)		19th October 2006 Non-Market Day (Thursday)		14th October 2006 Saturday	
Weather	Dry, Cool		Light rain, dull		Cold, dull	
Time	a.m.	p.m.	a.m.	p.m.	a.m.	p.m.
1. Train Station (Out)	213	202	122	177	158	124
2. Bus Station (Out)	932	420	461	342	1070	642
3. Princess of Wales Precinct	2456	1685	908	790	1760	2122
4. Westgate	1697	1623	643	718	1638	1274
5. RWP Subway	1343	1115	764	706	1571	1616
6. Longcauseway	2812	1970	1065	963	966	1113
7. Market Place	2513	1480	731	688	2269	2338
8. Northgate	647	516	338	392	587	570
9. Foundry Street	2506	1513	553	306	3357	3493
10. Halifax Road	214	282	129	112	120	170
TOTAL	**15333**	**10806**	**5714**	**5194**	**13496**	**13462**

*Figures relate to hour long samples (10:30am – 11.30am and 2:30pm – 3:30pm)
Counts in both directions unless otherwise indicated.

Development Information

Over the last 12 months a number of retail developments have taken place within the town centre study boundary.

Dewsbury has seen the opening of national multiple retailers Next and Lidl and the loss of Kwik Save as highlighted previously. This has created a development opportunity on the site of the vacant Kwik Save Store, South Street which has the benefit of its own private car park.

Lidl have occupied only part of the former Safeway site with new purpose built premises, thus a development opportunity exists on the remainder of the site.

A long term vacant unit in the primary shopping area of The Princess of Wales Precinct has been occupied by the independent retailer Gemstone Accessories. The town has also seen the opening of Qui Adoro on Northgate which is an independent store occupied by a number of small traders. Northgate has also seen a number of independent fashion retailers opening within the last 12 months.

Planning permission has been granted for the erection of 22 apartments and a shop unit on the site of the old cinema on Market Street in the centre of the town. A vacant nightclub on Bond Street has also received planning permission for 8 apartments and an A2 unit. There are a number of small scale applications that have been approved which will add to the vitality of the town when implemented.

Vacant Kwik Save Store, South Street

Former Safeway Site, Bradford Road

Gemstone Accessories, The Princess of Wales Precinct

Qui Adoro, Northgate

Retailer Demand

A general assessment of demand for retail floorspace was undertaken during December 2006. The number of companies expressing an interest in being represented in Dewsbury and their maximum floorspace requirement is shown in figure 7. This includes businesses which have registered an interest in out of centre locations incorporating established retail parks and/or out of town shopping centres.

Figure 7: Retail / Leisure floorspace requirements 2006

Category	Number of registered interests	Maximum floorspace requirement sq.m. (sq.ft.)
Convenience	3	1,729 (18,600)
Clothing/ Footwear	3	3,717 (40,000)
Furniture/ Carpets	1	3,717 (40,000)
Electrical goods	0	0
Variety/ Department	1	929 (10,000)
Specialist comparison	3	390 (4,200)
Restaurants/ Pubs	3	809 (8,700)
Leisure/ Hotels	0	N/A
Other	2	Unknown
Total	**19**	**11,942 (128,500)**

As at December 2006, a total of 19 separate interests had been recorded, this is the same as in the previous year.

New companies interested in the town total 8, which together require a maximum floorspace of 4,554 sq. m. (49,000 sq.ft). Of these, 3 are national multiple retailers.

Twelve companies have expressed an interest in prime pitch town centre locations accounting for a maximum floorspace of 5,390 sq. m (58,000 sq. ft). This is an increase of 4 on the previous year, although the floorspace requirement in prime pitch has decreased by 1,023 sq. m. (11,007 sq.ft.).

Further requirements may exist from other retailers who wish to relocate or establish themselves within the town centre but have not registered their interests.

This assessment does not address the demand for office accommodation from financial, professional or other commercial uses.

Market Place

Foundry Street

Prime Retail Rental Levels

During the 12 month period from May 2005 to May 2006, United Kingdom average prime zone A retail rents increased on average by 3.4%. However, growth has slowed from the 4.1% achieved in the previous 12 months. In the Yorkshire and Humber region rental growth has achieved 4.0%, out performing the UK national average and achieving a higher rate of increase than the 3.1% recorded in 2005. This has been principally influenced by increasing retail rents in only a few shopping centres in the region with all other centres remaining static.

Prime zone A rents in Dewsbury town centre secure £753 per sq. m. which is an increase of 7% from 2005. This indicates a continuing strength of retailer interest in the town. Rental levels for selected towns in the region as shown in figure 8 have also recorded an increase with the exception of Barnsley which has remained static.

Figure 8: Prime Zone A retail rents for selected towns[3] per sq.m (£ per sq.ft)

	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Dewsbury	538 (50)	538 (50)	700 (65)	700 (65)	753 (70)
Huddersfield	1,130 (105)	1,130 (105)	1,130 (105)	1,130 (105)	1,184 (110)
Wakefield	1,076 (100)	1,130 (105)	1,238 (115)	1,238 (115)	1,238 (115)
Halifax	915 (85)	915 (85)	969 (90)	969 (90)	1,023 (95)
Barnsley	1,238 (115)	1,292 (120)	1,292 (120)	1,292 (120)	1,292 (120)
Regional average[4]	1314 (112)	1,346 (125)	1,405 (131)	1,432 (133)	1,484 (138)
National average	1,131 (105)	1,165 (108)	1,201 (112)	1,249 (116)	1,291 (120)

Westgate

Prime Retail Yields

The 'all risk yield' for Dewsbury town centre has risen slightly to 9.0%. However, there continues to be strong retailer demand for representation in Dewsbury coupled with a good level of shop unit take up. The town has seen a number of new businesses open during the last 12 months, including 4 national multiple retailers. A further national company opened in late 2006 following the October occupancy survey.

Other selected towns in the region have remained static with Wakefield showing an improved commercial yield as shown in figure 9.

Figure 9: Prime Retail yields for selected towns[5] (%)

	2003	2004	2005	2006
Dewsbury	10.0	8.0	8.0	9.0
Huddersfield	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5
Wakefield	8.0	7.0	7.0	6.25
Halifax	9.0	8.0	8.0	8.0
Barnsley	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.25

Source: Valuation Office Property Market Report July 2006

The Princess of Wales Precinct

Independent retailers on Northgate

Notes:

[1] Comparison goods figures include A1 uses such as opticians and travel agents etc.

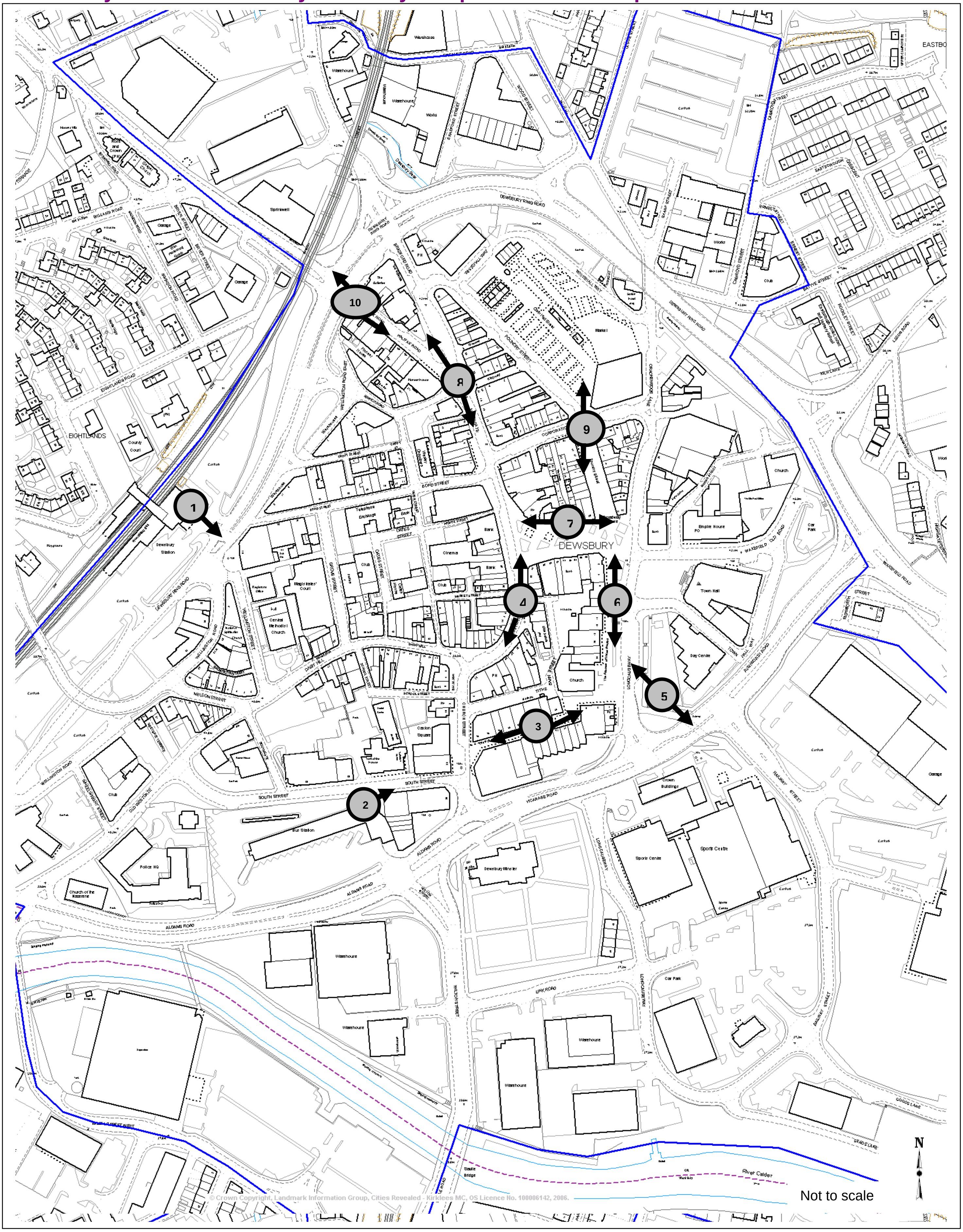
[2] Based on the UK average, 100 being the average proportion of floorspace or number of units for certain categories of use in a UK town, not including markets.

[3] These values relate to the zone A rent for a modern standard sized shop unit (6.1m frontage, 18.3m depth and 30sq.m. of storage or staff accommodation, and a full insuring and repairing lease). The assessment date is May of each year.

[4] Regional averages relate to Yorkshire and Humberside.

[5] 'All risk yields' are calculated by dividing the annual rent as though it had been received as a single sum at the year end, by the capital value or sale price of the property. This is a simple benchmark which the property market uses to assess the comparative attractiveness of different shopping centres. Values from April of each year.

Dewsbury Town Centre study boundary and pedestrian count points



Key to map:

Count point direction

Study Boundary

1. Train station
2. Bus Station
3. The Princess of Wales Precinct
4. Westgate
5. Subway
6. Longcauseway
7. Market Place
8. Northgate
9. Foundry St/Corporation St.
10. Halifax Road

Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the data and statements contained within this publication, Planning Services does not accept responsibility for any errors or inaccuracies which may have occurred therein.

This document has been produced by:

The Town Centres Team
Planning Services
Kirklees M.C.
P.O.Box B93
Civic Centre III
Huddersfield
HD1 2JR

Tel: 01484 221628
Fax: 01484 221613
E-mail: carol.dean@kirklees.gov.uk

Website: www.kirklees.gov.uk/towncentres