

HECKMONDWIKE TOWN CENTRE ANNUAL STATEMENT OF KEY ECONOMIC INDICATORS SEPTEMBER 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 Heckmondwike town centre was published in November 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 August 2001 recorded that Heckmondwike town centre provides a total of 11,751sq.m. (126,440sq.ft.) of net retail floorspace. The tables below illustrate the changes in both retail floorspace and shop unit occupancy since 1997.

Retail floorspace in Heckmondwike town centre (sq.m net)

	Convenience	Comparison ¹	Vacant	TOTAL
1997	4,203 (32.1%)	6,836 (52.2%)	2,068 (15.7%)	13,108 (100%)
1998	4,151 (32.3%)	7,134 (55.5%)	1,571 (12.2%)	12,856 (100%)
1999	4,270 (33.6%)	6,444 (50.7%)	1,990 (15.7%)	12,704 (100%)
2000	4,255 (41.5%)	4,562 (44.5%)	1,443 (14.0%)	10,260 (100%)
2001	5,068 (43.1%)	5,214 (44.4%)	1,469 (12.5%)	11,751 (100%)
% change 2000 – 01	+19.1	+14.3	+1.8	+14.5

The last 12 months has seen an increase of 14.5% in the total floorspace in Heckmondwike town centre. This is principally due to the re-development of the ex-Sunwin House site on Northgate to provide a number of large new units. This construction work has been offset by the amalgamation of other units within the town, resulting in a zero net change in the number of shop units.

¹ Comparison goods figures include A1 semi-retail uses such as opticians, travel agents etc.

The Northgate development has seen the accommodation of a Lidl foodstore, Brunswick Warehouse and Poundstretcher stores since the 2000 assessment, which have contributed to the increases in convenience and comparison goods floorspace and shop units.

Shop units in Heckmondwike town centre

	Convenience	Comparison	Service	Vacant	TOTAL
1997	12 (6.8%)	80 (45.5%)	44 (25.0%)	40 (22.7%)	176 (100%)
1998	11 (6.4%)	89 (51.4%)	41 (23.7%)	32 (18.5%)	173 (100%)
1999	10 (6.0%)	81 (48.5%)	45 (26.9%)	31 (18.6%)	167 (100%)
2000	11 (6.7%)	75 (45.7%)	46 (28.0%)	32 (19.6%)	164 (100%)
2001	11 (6.7%)	82 (50.0%)	45 (27.4%)	26 (15.9%)	164 (100%)
% change 2000 - 01	0	+9.3	-2.2	-18.8	0

Floorspace comparisons² (sq.m. net)

	Heck'wike	Cleckheaton	Batley	Dewsbury	Holmfirth
Conv	5,068 (43.1%)	1,707 (21.9%)	4,722 (20.3%)	7,346 (18.2%)	1,841 (24.5%)
Comp	5,214 (44.4%)	5,588 (71.7%)	15,655 (67.3%)	28,601 (70.9%)	3,988 (53.2%)
Vacant	1,469 (12.5%)	502 (6.4%)	2,880 (12.4%)	4,384 (10.9%)	1,674 (22.3%)
Total retail flsp	11,751 (100%)	7,797 (100%)	23,257 (100%)	40,332 (100%)	7,504 (100%)
No. vacant units	26 (15.9%)	13 (7.6%)	24 (11.5%)	68 (19.2%)	23 (13.7%)
Total no. of units	164 (100%)	172 (100%)	209 (100%)	354 (100%)	168 (100%)

² Floorspace relates to that contained within each town's respective study area boundary as defined by the Kirklees Town Centre Audit Programme

PEDESTRIAN FOOTFALL

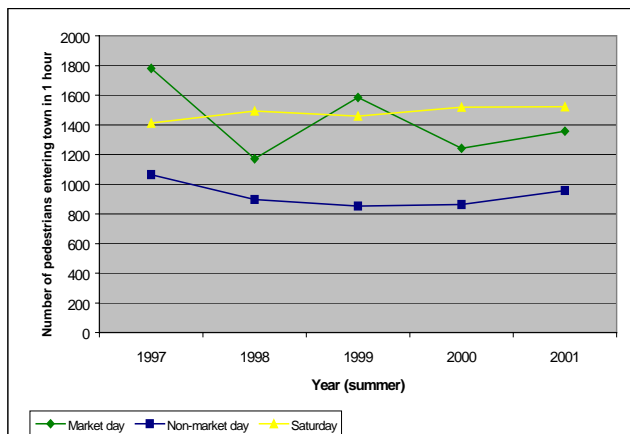
Pedestrian footfall counts have been undertaken annually in Heckmondwike town centre since 1995 on a market day, non-market day and Saturday. Hour sample counts have been conducted from 10:30am and from 2:30pm at 7 locations, including key entrance points to the town centre, the access to Morrisons foodstore and the pedestrian links between the supermarket and the town centre. The table below gives the summer 2001 pedestrian count results.

Heckmondwike pedestrian footfall 2001 ³

Survey location	24 th July Market day		25 th July Non-market day		28 th July Saturday	
	Dry/warm		Dry/warm		Hot/sunny	
	a.m	p.m	a.m	p.m	a.m	p.m
1. Northgate	309	266	191	162	252	185
2. Market Street	221	176	110	48	92	76
3. High Street	41	35	45	21	75	71
4. Cemetery Rd	150	90	94	100	120	108
5a. Blanket Hall St (into town)	528	372	195	196	391	238
5b. Blanket Hall St (out of town)	600	495	255	206	521	339
6. Westgate	54	24	32	27	50	52
7. Morrisons entr.	581	436	484	654	933	866
TOTAL into town	1356	1027	956	1012	1522	1358

The morning and afternoon sample graphs illustrate relatively static levels of pedestrian numbers recorded in Heckmondwike town centre over the last 4 years. However, this general trend masks some significant changes in the pattern of pedestrian movement around the town. In comparing the 2001 figures with last year on a street by street basis, it can be seen that Northgate has experienced dramatic increases of between 75% and 120%. This may principally be attributed to the extensive refurbishment works at the ex-Sunwin House site where a new Lidl supermarket, McDonalds restaurant, Brunswick Warehouse and Poundstretcher stores have now opened.

Morning pedestrian numbers 1997 – 2001

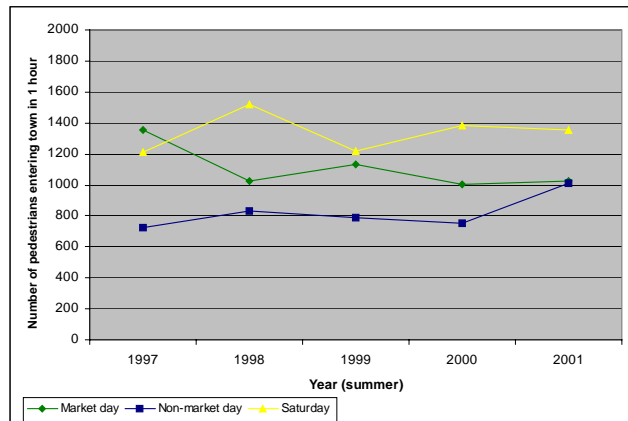


The highest concentration of pedestrians continues to be found along Blanket Hall Street and the pedestrian links which connect the town centre to Morrisons. However, numbers entering the foodstore itself have decreased by

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 (except 5b) record pedestrians coming INTO the town only. Totals represent the number of people entering the town and exclude the pedestrian link between Morrisons and the town (count points 5a and 5b). Non-market day is also half day closing for some shops.

an average of 23% during the weekday surveys and 6% on a Saturday. Conversely, Market Street has experienced a significant increase in volume of pedestrians since the 2000 assessment.

Both the open and covered markets continue to fulfil an important role in attracting people into Heckmondwike. This is evidenced by increases in pedestrian numbers on a market day compared to a non-market day, which is more predominant this year during the morning counts.



Afternoon pedestrian numbers 1997 – 2001

RETAILER DEMAND

An assessment of retailer demand was undertaken by FOCUS Research and Information Unit on behalf of KMC in June 2001. This identified that there is currently only 1 outstanding demand for representation in Heckmondwike town centre. This comes from a leisure operator with a requirement for gross unit space of 370 sq.m. (4,000 sq.ft) for use as a public house.

RETAIL DEVELOPMENT IN THE PIPELINE

Completions in Heckmondwike town centre include the construction of 4 new units at the Morrisons development providing 229 sq.m. (2,460 sq.ft) of gross floorspace (early 2000). The imminent completion of the ex-Sunwin house re-development will contribute a total of 3,197sq.m. (34,400sq.ft) of gross floorspace to the town. Only 1 unimplemented planning permission exists which is for the provision of market stalls in Blanket Hall Street covering an area of 75 sq.m. (795 sq.ft).

PRIME RETAIL RENTAL LEVELS

The Morrisons development of new shop units secures the highest rents in the town of approximately £237 - £269 per sq.m. (£22 - 25 per sq.ft.). Rents elsewhere in the town currently achieve a maximum of £204 per sq.m. (£19 per sq.ft.). Redevelopment at Northgate continues with a number of units now let. Completion of the scheme may have an effect on the pattern of rents. This will be monitored in future annual statements.

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