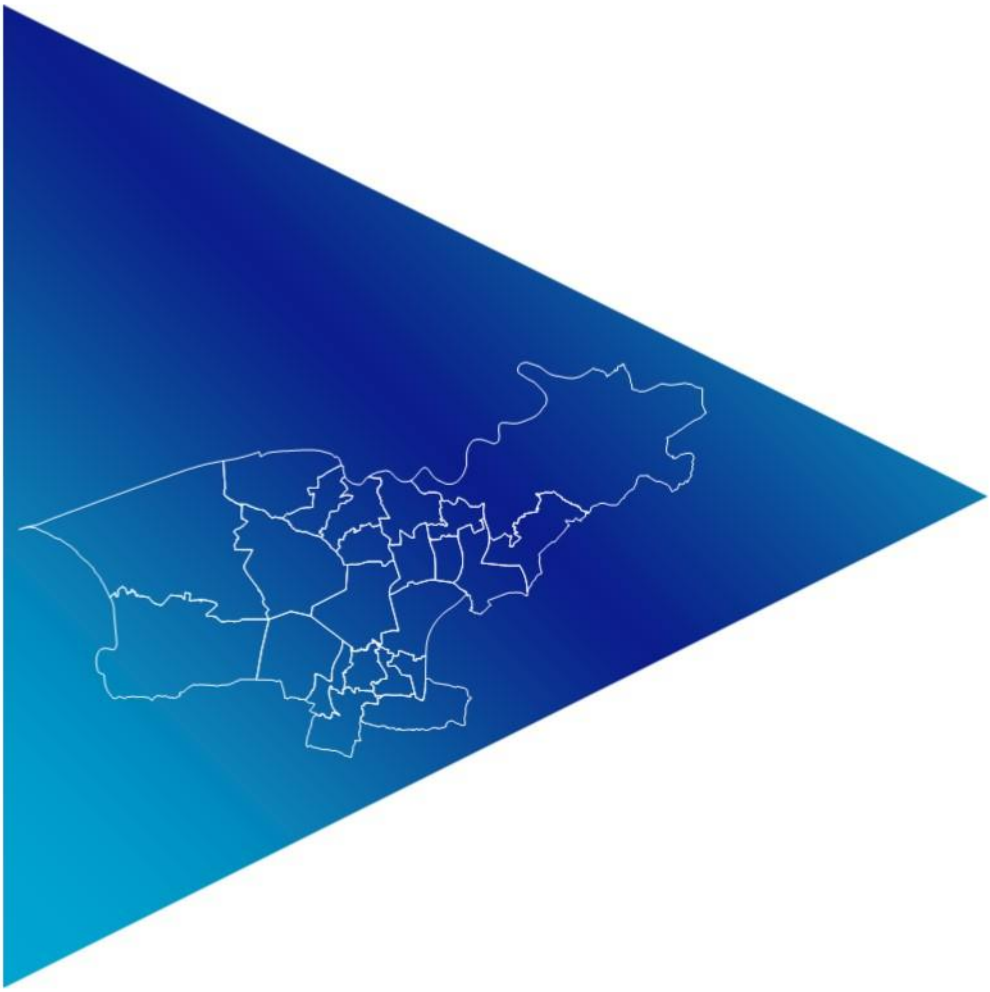


Retail Position Statement

November 2018

Contents

Introduction

Despite the migration to out-of-town shopping, town, district and local centres continue to have an important role to play in any district. They form a focal point for the community and provide a wide range of services that are accessible to the whole population including retail, employment, leisure, residential, education and transport. It is important to maintain and protect the vitality and viability of the retail centres.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development which includes an economic role.

The NPPF requires that planning policies should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period. In drawing up Local Plans, it requires local planning authorities to;

- Recognise town centres as the heart of their communities and pursue policies to support their viability and vitality;
- Define a network and hierarchy of centres that is resilient to anticipated future economic changes;
- Define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas;
- Promote competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres;
- Retain and enhance existing markets and, where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones, ensuring that markets remain attractive and competitive.

It further requires Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to ensure that the Local Plan is based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence about the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area. LPAs should ensure that their assessment of and strategies for housing, employment and other uses are integrated, and that they take full account of relevant market and economic signals. They are required to work with partners to prepare and maintain a robust evidence base to understand both existing business needs and likely changes in the market.

Core Strategy Policy 11 sets out South Ribble's shopping hierarchy of centres, showing Leyland town centre as the principal shopping area in the Borough, followed by the district centres of Bamber Bridge, Longton, Tardy Gate and Penwortham. In addition, there is a network of supporting Local Centres within the Borough. The boundaries for the Town, District and Local centres can be viewed in the Local Plan (2015), as well as the relevant policies for how development in the retail centres will be managed. The policies that cover the retail centres are E3 – Leyland Town Centre, E4 – District Centres, and E5 – Local Centres.

The introduction of significant numbers of non-retail uses into town centres, particularly primary retail frontages, and the smaller district and local centres, such as banks, building societies and other professional activities, can introduce breaks in the continuity of retail frontages. These 'dead frontages' can be visually disruptive and may be discouraging to shoppers.

They can also reduce the choice of units available to retailers, fragmenting and weakening the established shopping centres and making them less vibrant places. The Local Plan document seeks to maintain a minimum of 60% of A1 retail uses in the Leyland Primary Retail Frontage, and in all the identified town, district and local centres.

This document provides a 'snapshot' in time of the situation in the retail centres in the Borough, and builds on previous survey work to enable comparative analysis to be undertaken and trends to be identified. This report is feeding into the evidence base of the evolving Local Development Framework and will identify early signs of change and the type of action that should be taken. The statistics contained within the report will also assist during the planning application process, as the document should be used to inform as to whether the targets set in the policies for A1 uses in centres are being met.

Leyland Town Centre

Leyland is regarded as the main shopping centre in South Ribble. Leyland Town Centre comprises the shopping core of Hough Lane, the southern Towngate area, which features a Tesco Extra superstore, and the Churchill Retail Park. Leyland offers an extensive range of both convenience and comparison goods and services.

The Central Lancashire Core Strategy (adopted July 2012) identifies Leyland Town Centre in the retail hierarchy as a second tier centre, also known as a principal town centre.

It is important that Leyland retains its status within the retail hierarchy, remains competitive with its neighbours, and continues to attract shoppers, visitors and businesses to the town. Whilst it is accepted that people will go to other centres for certain products, it is important that the town builds on its strengths, recognises and alleviates its weaknesses and improves the facilities that it provides to the community.

Policy E3 of the Local Plan applies to Leyland Town Centre.

Uses in Leyland Town Centre

The Local Plan identifies a primary retail frontage for Leyland Town Centre, and a secondary retail area. Within the primary retail frontage, Policy E4 requires that a minimum of 60% of the units are of A1use. The policy also encourages A3 and A4 uses, and permits other uses, such as A2 and B1 uses, subject to a six month marketing assessment.

The secondary retail frontage covers the remainder of the town centre. Within the secondary retail area, the policy encourages A1, A3 and A4 uses. Changes of use for other uses, such as A2 or B1, should be accompanied by a 6 month marketing assessment to provide evidence for this change of use.

Surveys have previously been undertaken in Leyland twice yearly, in April and October. However, from October 2013, it was resolved to undertake the surveys annually, in October, in line with all of the other centres in the Borough.

The uses of all of the ground floor units in the town centre boundary are recorded. The latest survey, undertaken in October 2018, identified 315 units in the town centre, with 71 in the primary retail frontage.

The table below shows the number of each use class in both the primary retail frontage and the town centre as a whole, as well as the percentage of units this represents.

	Leyland Town Centre		Leyland Primary Retail Frontage	
Use	Number	%	Number	%
Vacant	24	8	4	6
A1	123	39	34	48
A2	40	13	18	25
A3	12	4	3	4
A4	7	2	4	6
A5	24	8	4	6
B1	4	1	0	0
C3	55	17	0	0
D1	14	4	2	3
D2	5	2	1	1
Sui Generis	7	2	1	1

Primary Retail Frontage

The table above shows that the predominant use in the primary retail frontage is A1, at 48%, which is lower than the previous year, when it was 51%. This is significantly below the 60% of uses being A1 encouraged by policy E3. The number of A2 uses is also significant, at 25%. The vacancy rate in the primary retail frontage is has increased from 3% to 6%. Based on the results of the survey, changes of use from A1 units to non-A1 units in the primary retail frontage would not be supported. A3 and A4 uses make up 10% of the primary retail frontage.

Town Centre

The table above shows that there is a wide range of uses in the town centre, with the predominant use in the town centre being A1, with 39% of units being in this use class.

13% of units are in A2 uses, and 17% of units in the town centre are residential.

The vacancy rate is higher than the primary retail frontage at 8%. A3, A4 and A5 units make up 16% of units in the town centre combined.

Analysis of Vacancies in the Town Centre and Primary Retail Frontage

It is important to monitor the vacancy rates in town and district centres. A key part of this monitoring is to look at what uses are leaving the centres, resulting in vacant units.

The table below shows the previous uses of the units in the town centre and the primary retail frontage that were vacant during the October 2018 survey.

	Leyland Town Centre		Leyland Primary Retail Frontage	
Use	Number	%	Number	%
A1	15	63	3	75
A2	2	8	1	25
A3	2	8	0	0
B1	1	4	0	0
Sui Generis	1	4	0	0
D1	0	0	0	0
Unknown	3	13	0	0

More than half of the vacant units in the town centre were previously in A1 use (63%). These results suggest there may be an issue in the town centre with A1 uses moving out of units moving out and not being replaced.

The previous use of the unit would also be a consideration if the Council received an application for change of use. Applications for changes of use for vacant A1 units may not be looked upon favourably, especially if the percentage of A1 units in that particular centre is below the target set in the policies of the Local Plan.

75% of the units within the primary retail frontage that are now vacant were previously in A1 use. However, this is to be expected as the primary retail frontage is the prime shopping area within the centre.

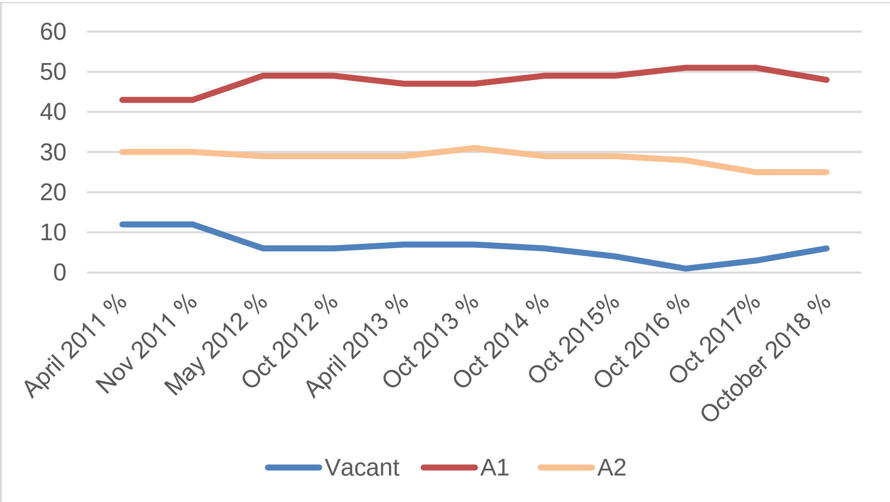
Comparison of Uses over Time

Primary Retail Frontage

The table below shows how the uses in the primary retail frontage have changed since April 2011.

	April 2011 %	Nov 2011 %	May 2012 %	Oct 2012 %	April 2013 %	Oct 2013 %	Oct 2014 %	Oct 2015%	Oct 2016 %	Oct 2017%	October 2018 %
Vacant	12	12	6	6	7	7	6	4	1	3	6
A1	43	43	49	49	47	47	49	49	51	51	48
A2	30	30	29	29	29	31	29	29	28	25	25
A3	1	1	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	4
A4	1	1	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	6	6
A5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	6	6	6
B1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
D1	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	0
D2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Sui Generis	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

The changes in the main uses in the primary retail frontage are displayed in the chart below.



The table and chart show that there has not been a great deal of fluctuation in the uses in the primary retail frontage since April 2011. The vacancy rate decreased from 12% in April 2011 to 1% in October 2016, and then rose to 6% in October 2017.

The number of A1 uses has increased from 43% to 48%. There has been a slight decrease in the number of A2 units in the primary retail frontage from 30% in April 2011 to 25% in October 2018.

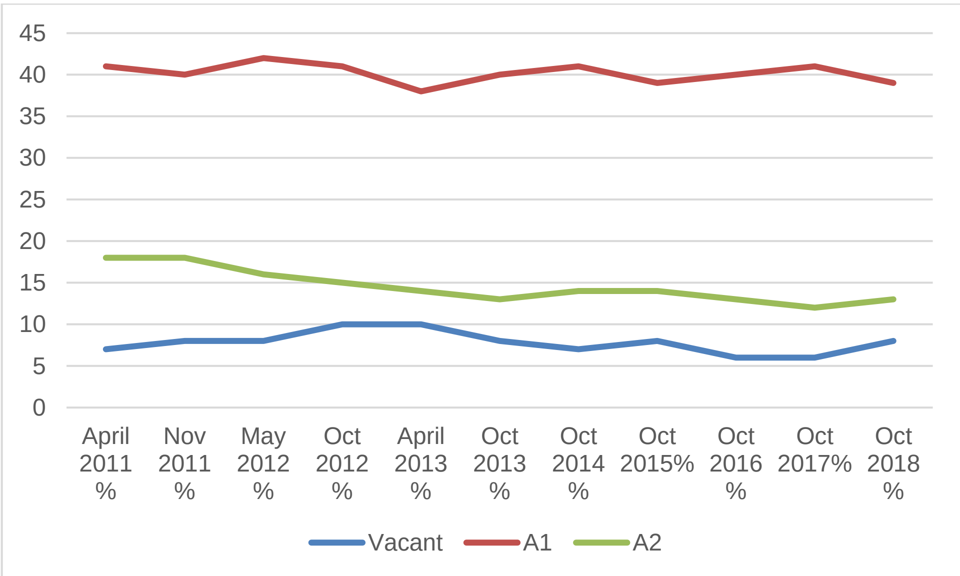
The number of A3, A4 and A5 units has increased slightly between these dates, whilst the number of B1 units having decreased slightly. The number of D1, D2 and Sui Generis uses in the primary retail frontage has remained constant throughout.

Leyland Town Centre

The table below demonstrates how the uses in Leyland Town Centre have changed since April 2011.

	April 2011 %	Nov 2011 %	May 2012 %	Oct 2012 %	April 2013 %	Oct 2013 %	Oct 2014 %	Oct 2015%	Oct 2016 %	Oct 2017%	Oct 2018 %
Vacant	7	8	8	10	10	8	7	8	6	6	8
A1	41	40	42	41	38	40	41	39	40	41	39
A2	18	18	16	15	14	13	14	14	13	12	13
A3	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	5	4	4	4
A4	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	4	3	2
A5	7	8	7	7	7	7	7	7	8	7	8
B1	3	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1
C3	11	11	12	12	17	17	17	17	17	17	17
D1	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
D2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Sui Generis	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	2

The changes in the main uses in the town centre are displayed in the chart below.



The table and chart show clearly that there has not been a great change in any of the uses in the Town Centre since April 2011. The number of vacant units in the centre has increased slightly, as has the number of A1 units. Uses such as A3, A4, A5, D1 and Sui Generis have remained largely the same.

District Centres

There are 4 district centres in the Borough, as identified in the Local Plan (2015). The district centres are spread across the Borough and offer a range of facilities for the wider community. Policy E4 of the Local Plan Document applies to the district centres.

Uses in District Centres

Policy E4 of the Local Plan seeks to ensure that 60% or more of the units in the district centres are of A1 use. A3 uses are also encouraged. Applications for other uses would need to include a six month marketing assessment to provide evidence for a change of use from A1.

The district centres were all surveyed in October 2018. The results are displayed in the table below:

	Penwortham		Bamber Bridge		Tardy Gate		Longton	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Vacant	5	5	3	4	2	4	1	3
A1	41	44	30	42	32	59	16	41
A2	14	16	9	13	2	4	8	20
A3	8	9	3	4	2	4	2	5
A4	2	2	2	3	1	2	0	0
A5	6	6	3	4	7	13	1	3
B1	5	5	2	3	1	2	7	18
B2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
C3	4	4	15	21	2	4	0	0
D1	4	4	2	3	3	6	4	10
D2	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0
Sui Generis	2	2	2	3	2	4	0	0

Penwortham

Penwortham is the largest district centre in the Borough with 93 units. Of these, 44% are A1, and 16% are A2. The vacancy rate is 5%. Penwortham has a relatively low proportion of residential units in the centre, at 4%. A3 uses make up 9% of the centre.

Bamber Bridge

There are 72 units within Bamber Bridge district centre. Of these, 42% are of A1 use, and Vacancy rates are currently 4%. A3 uses make up 3% of the centre. 13% of units in the centre are A2, and the centre has the highest proportion of residential units in the district centres at 21%.

Tardy Gate

There are 54 units with Tardy Gate district centre. The centre has the highest proportion of A1 units of any district centre in the Borough, at 59%. It however, also has the highest percentage of hot-food takeaways (A5) at 13%. Vacancy rates are 4% and 4% of units in the centre are in residential use. A3 uses make up 4% of the district centre.

Longton

Longton is the smallest district centre in the Borough, with 39 units. Of these, 41% are in A1 use, which has decreased from 49% in 2015, 20% of units are A2 use. Longton is the only district centre to not have any residential units. The vacancy rate is currently 3%, down from 8% in 2016.

Summary

It is evident from the results of the surveys in the district centres in the Borough that currently none of the district centres meets the 60% set in policy E4. Applications for changes of use that result in the loss of an A1 unit would not currently be supported in the district centres.

Analysis of Vacancies in District Centre

The table below sets out the previous uses of the units which were identified as vacant in the October 2018 survey.

	Penwortham		Bamber Bridge		Tardy Gate		Longton	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
A1	2	20	1	33	2	100	0	0
A2	2	20	0	0	0	0	0	0
C3	0	20	1	33	0	0	0	0
D1	0	20	1	33	0	0	1	100
Sui Generis	1	20	0	0	0	0	0	0

The only vacant unit in Longton was previously in D1 use. The three vacant units in Bamber Bridge were previously occupied by A1, C3 and D1 uses. The five vacant units in Penwortham were previously occupied by A1, A2, C3, D1 and Sui Generis uses. In Tardy Gate, 100% of vacant units were A1.

Local Centres

The Local Plan identifies 9 Local Centres in the Borough. These centres are spread across the Borough, and, although small, provide a vital service to the communities they serve. Policy E5 of the Local Plan Document applies to local centres.

It is important that the vitality and viability of these centres is retained, through maintaining the retail strength that they offer. The current composition (October 2018) of each of the local centres is split over the 3 tables below.

	Kingsfold		**Earnshaw Bridge**		**Farington**	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Vacant	0	0	0	0	3	14
A1	15	36	10	50	9	41
A2	4	9	0	0	1	5
A3	2	5	0	0	0	0
A4	1	2	0	0	1	5
A5	3	7	4	20	5	23
B1	1	2	0	0	0	0
C3	12	29	4	20	3	14
D1	3	7	0	0	0	0
D2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sui Generis	1	2	2	10	0	0

Kingsfold

Kingsfold is the largest local centre in the Borough, with 42 units. The centre has a range of uses, with 36% of units being A1, 9% being A2, and 14% being A3/A4/A5. The centre has a vacancy rate of 0 and over a quarter (29%) of units are in residential use. The centre also has B1, D1 and Sui Generis uses.

Earnshaw Bridge
There are 20 units in Earnshaw Bridge local centre. Of these, none are vacant. 50% of these are A1 uses, and there are no A2, A3 or A4 uses in the centre. 20% of the units are residential and 20% of the units are of A5 use. The only other use in this centre is Sui Generis.

Farington

There are 22 units in Farington Local Centre. 41% of these are in A1 use. The centre also has a high number of units (23%) in A5 use. 14% of units in the centre are vacant. Other units in the centre are comprised of A2 and A4 (both 5%) and C3 (14%)

	Higher Walton		Seven Stars		Walton-Le-Dale	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Vacant	0	0	1	3	2	9
A1	7	35	22	61	5	22
A2	1	5	1	3	0	0
A3	0	0	1	3	0	0
A4	2	10	2	6	1	4
A5	2	10	5	14	0	0
B1	0	0	0	0	1	4
B2	0	0	0	0	0	0
C3	7	35	2	6	11	48
D1	1	5	1	3	2	9
D2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Sui Generis	0	0	1	3	1	4

Higher Walton

Higher Walton local centre comprises of 20 units. 35% of units are in A1 use. There are a high number of residential properties in the centre, at 35%. There are no vacant units in the centre. 20% of units are in either A4 or A5 use, and A2 and D1 units make up 5% of the centre each.

Seven Stars

There are 36 units in this centre. 61% of these are in A1 use. A5 uses make up 14% of the centre. Vacant units make up 3% of the centre, with A4 and C3 at 6% of the centre each. A2, A3 and D1 uses each make up 3% of the centre.

Walton Le Dale

There are 23 units in Walton Le Dale centre. The predominant use in this centre is residential, with almost half of the units (48%) being in this use. A1 units make up 22% of the centre. D1 units make up 9% of the centre, whilst A4, B1 and Sui Generis units make up 4% of the centre. 9% of units in the centre are vacant.

	Gregson Lane		New Longton		Walmer Bridge	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Vacant	3	23	0	0	0	0
A1	6	46	9	82	7	39
A2	0	0	1	9	1	6
A3	1	8	1	9	1	6
A4	0	0	0	0	1	6
A5	2	15	0	0	2	11
C3	1	8	0	0	5	28
Sui Generis	0	0	0	0	1	6

Gregson Lane

There are 13 units in Gregson Lane local centre. Of these, just under half (46%) are in A1 use. A further 15% of units are in A5 use. C3 units make up 8% of the units, and A3 uses make up 8%. 23% of units are vacant.

New Longton

New Longton is the smallest local centre in the Borough, with 11 units. It is also the centre with the highest proportion of A1 units, at 82%. A2 and A3 uses both make up 9% of the centre.

Walmer Bridge

There are 18 units in Walmer Bridge local centre. Just over a third of these (39%) are in A1 use. A further 11% of units are in A5 use, and C3 uses make up 28% of the centre. A2, A3, A4, and Sui Generis units make up 6% of the centre each. No units are vacant.

Vacancy Analysis in Local Centres

The table below sets out the previous uses of the units which were identified as vacant in the October 2018 survey.

	Higher Walton		Seven Stars		Farington	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
A1	0	0	1	100	3	100

	Kingsfold		Earnshaw Bridge		Walton Le Dale	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
A1	0	0	0	0	0	0
B1	0	0	0	0	1	50
D2	0	0	0	0	1	50

	Gregson Lane		New Longton		Walmer Bridge	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
A1	3	100	0	0	0	0
Unknown	0	0	0	0	0	0
A5	0	0	0	0	0	0

Conclusion

It is clear from the results that none of the district centres meet the 60% target for A1 uses set in Local Plan Policy. New Longton and Seven Stars are the only local centres that exceed the 60% target for A1 uses set in the Local Plan. In some centres in the Borough, particularly Bamber Bridge district centre and Higher Walton and Walton Le Dale local centres, there are a high number of residential properties. A high number of residential uses in the centres could make it extremely difficult to meet the target of 60% set in the retail policies of Local Plan. Further work may be needed to look at how the targets can be met in these situations.

Vacancy rates in the centres are generally relatively low, although vacancy rates in Gregson Lane and Farington local centres are fairly high. This will need to be kept under review as there may be an issue with vacant units being filled in these centres, or existing uses moving out of these centres.

A5 uses in 4 of the Boroughs centres, Tardy Gate district centre and Gregson Lane, Earnshaw Bridge and Walmer Bridge local centres are relatively high.