# Clay Cross Town Centre Health Check 2013

## Contents



## 1.0 Introduction

### Planning Policy

1.1 NPPF does not require Town Centre Health Checks to be undertaken, however, it does emphasise the need for local authorities to monitor the health of their town centres and determine how they are changing over time. The NPPF, along with the draft NPPG on Ensuring the Vitality of Town Centres, has replaced the former guidance for town centres (PPS4 Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth).

1.2 The NPPF chapter 'Ensuring the vitality of town centres' states that planning should promote competitive Town Centre environments that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of the Town Centre. Town Centres should be recognised as the heart of the community and their viability and vitality supported. Suitable sites should be allocated to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in the Town Centre. Where town centres are in decline, local planning authorities should plan positively for their future to encourage economic activity.

1.3 Although PPS4 has been deleted regarding the methodology for health check process and identifying indicators, the accompanying practice guidance on 'Planning for Town Centres' still exists, detailing the benefits of regular auditing and monitoring of town centres. The useful indicators for Health Check monitoring that were established as part of PPS4 will continue to be used.

1.4 One of the key objectives of regular monitoring and town centre health checks (in addition to providing important baseline data for retail/town centre assessments) is to consider a centre's performance over time. It will also be relevant to consider how the centre has performed relative to national trends, and to similar sized centres elsewhere. This type of analysis provides an important insight into whether the centre is improving, stable or declining, and will have a bearing when considering the potential/need for new development and the likely impact of new developments.

**National Trends**

1.5 Recent experience and research suggests that the future context for retailing in town centres will be very different and that centres must adapt to the changing policy and economic landscape. Along with the growth of out-of-centre retail development, the economic climate has had an impact on consumer spending which in turn has had a negative impact on the vitality of town centres and an increase in vacancy rates.

1.6 Experian's (2012) report entitled 'Town Centre Futures 2020' sets out how the UK's town centres will have changed by the end of the decade and what town centres, high streets and retailers need to do to survive and thrive. Though facing tough challenges Experian's report stresses that the UK's town centres can survive and thrive beyond 2020, provided they understand and cater to the distinct needs of their local communities, while embracing technology to boost the high street experience.

1.7 For example, town centres will need to market themselves as convenient hubs for picking up products ordered online. They must also cater for an ageing population, including the provision of face-to-face service and opportunities for socialising and leisure activities. The latest Census data shows that the population is indeed ageing, and therefore town centres will need to offer the kind of facilities valued by older people, such as health services, and safe and accessible shopping areas.

**Purpose of Town Centre Health Check**

1.8 The main purpose of this Town Centre Health Check is to monitor the vitality and viability of Clay Cross Town Centre to help ensure an adequate supply of services and facilities to meet the requirements of the local population both currently and in the future. This Health Check assessment will form part of the evidence base for policies and proposals in the Local Plan. As explained earlier, the advice previously contained within PPS4 regarding the types of evidence and indicators Local Authorities should collect still provide a relevant and useful basis to measure the health of town centres. The following indicators are used to help gain a proper understanding of the vitality and viability of each centre:

i. Diversity of uses;
ii. Amount of retail, leisure and offices in edge and out-of-centre locations;
iii. The potential capacity for growth;
iv. Retailer representation;
v. Shop rents;

vi. Proportion of vacant property;
vii. Pedestrian flows;
viii. Accessibility;
ix. Perception of safety / occurrence of crime;
x. Environmental quality

1.9 However, due to the lack of information available, some of the indicators are less obtainable than others. Some indicators are therefore less detailed than others or not reported on at all, such as pedestrian flows (vii). As work progresses on the emerging Local Plan, this information may become more readily available. The findings of each indicator are presented below and summarised as part of a SWOT analysis which highlights the import issues towards the future development of the town centre.

## 2.0 Clay Cross

2.1 Clay Cross town centre is constrained to some extent by its historic street layouts and development density, however the recent developments (Tesco) on the edge-of-centre, has added to the development mix, and analysis of changes in floorspace and mix since 2008 may show whether the new developments are having a complimentary effect or are acting as a standalone retail destination.

2.2 Clay Cross needs to play an important role in serving the requirements of the local community and surrounding smaller settlements on a day-to-day basis. It forms a focal point for the surrounding area and provides a wide range of services that are accessible to the population, including retail, employment, leisure along with such things as financial and health services.

2.3 The extent of the town centre surveyed in 2008 and 2013 did extend beyond the 2005 Local Plan Town Centre boundary in order to provide information on edge of centre developments and to inform the Town Centre boundary in the emerging new Local Plan. The analysis is based on uses within the 2005 town centre boundary.

## 3.0 Scale and Diversity of Uses

3.1 The NPPF defines main town centre uses as follows:

- Retail development
- Leisure, entertainment facilities, and the more intensive sport and recreation uses
- Offices, and
- Arts, culture and tourism development

3.2 This section (covering indicator i set out in paragraph 1.8) provides a breakdown of town centre units by type, including use class and goods type, in order to monitor the amount and type of town centre uses to inform emerging planning policies. Information has been sourced from retail audits undertaken in 2008 and August 2013.

3.3 Scale and function are important factors in assessing the health of town centres. Scale is typically measured by assessing the quantity of floorspace and number of outlets in various town centre uses and assessments of function take into account quantitative and qualitative considerations including the types and diversity of uses for example in retail, leisure, offices and other town centre functions.

**Table 1: Town Centre Units by Use Class 2008 and 2013**

| | 2008 | | | | 2013 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Use Class** | **Sq Metres** | **% total** | **units** | **% total** | **Sq Metres** | **% total** | **units** | **% total** |
| A1 Shops | 7098.78 | 33.7% | 60 | 37.0% | 14635.4 | 51.6% | 69 | 39.0% |
| A2 Financial Prof. Services | 2211.03 | 10.5% | 21 | 13.0% | 1969.56 | 6.9% | 17 | 9.6% |
| A3 Food/Drink | 166.9 | 0.8% | 2 | 1.2% | 451.42 | 1.6% | 4 | 2.3% |
| A4 Drinking | 1255 | 5.9% | 8 | 4.9% | 1154 | 4.1% | 7 | 4.0% |
| A5 Hot Food Takeaway | 1028.8 | 4.9% | 16 | 9.9% | 1056.1 | 3.7% | 15 | 8.5% |
| B1 Business | 1405.5 | 6.7% | 7 | 4.3% | 1625.3 | 5.7% | 7 | 4.0% |
| B2 General Industry | 629 | 3.0% | 2 | 1.2% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| B8 Storage Distribution | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| C1 Hotels | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| C2 Residential Institutions | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| *C3 Dwellings | | | 9 | 5.6% | | | 9 | 5.1% |
| D1 Non-residential Inst. | 2774.5 | 13.2% | 8 | 4.9% | 3150.64 | 11.1% | 8 | 4.5% |
| D2 Assembly Leisure | 730.3 | 3.5% | 2 | 1.2% | 1263.8 | 4.5% | 4 | 2.3% |
| Sui Generis | 1416.3 | 6.7% | 13 | 8.0% | 678.59 | 2.4% | 16 | 9.0% |
| Vacant | 2377.54 | 11.3% | 14 | 8.6% | 2374.48 | 8.4% | 21 | 11.9% |
| **Total** | **21093.65** | **100%** | **162** | **100%** | **28359.29** | **100.0%** | **177** | **100.0%** |

*there was no floorspace data for the dwellings available.

3.4 Since 2008 the number of units in the town centre has increased by 15, with a resulting increase in floorspace of around 7000sq m, due to the new Tesco and Bridge Street development. There have been increases in A1, A3, A5, B1, D1 and D2 floorspace, and increases in the number of A1, A3, D2, Sui Generis and vacant units. In terms of the Sui Generis uses, there has been a notable increase in service retail beauty sector such as nail parlours and spray tanning salons.

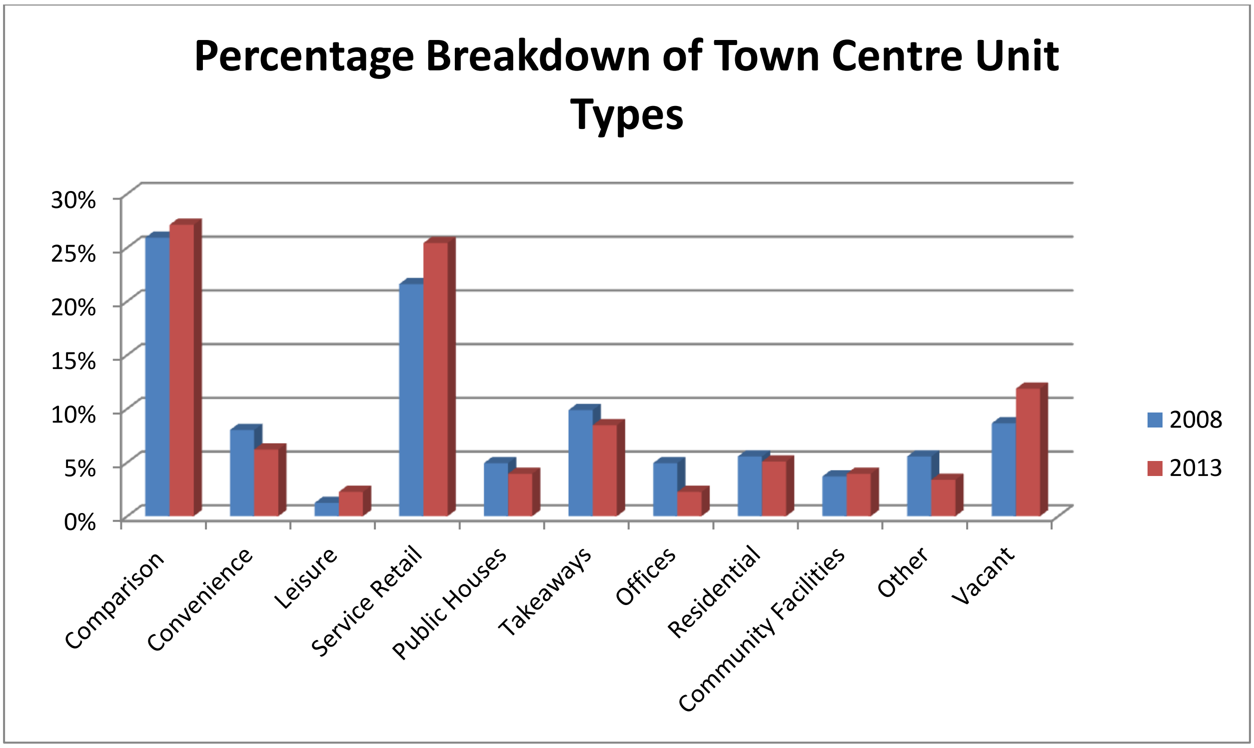
**Table 2: Town Centre Units by type 2008 and 2013**

| | 2008 | | | | 2013 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Town Centre Units by Type 2008** | **Sq Metres** | **% total** | **units** | **% total** | **Sq Metres** | **% total** | **units** | **% total** |
| Comparison | 4809.48 | 22.8% | 42 | 25.9% | 9552.2 | 33.7% | 48 | 27.1% |
| Convenience | 2376.98 | 11.3% | 13 | 8.0% | 4440.6 | 15.7% | 11 | 6.2% |
| Leisure | 730.3 | 3.5% | 2 | 1.2% | 800.4 | 2.8% | 4 | 2.3% |
| Service Retail | 2688.55 | 12.7% | 35 | 21.6% | 3326.44 | 11.7% | 45 | 25.4% |
| Public Houses | 1255 | 5.9% | 8 | 4.9% | 1154 | 4.1% | 7 | 4.0% |
| Takeaways | 1028.8 | 4.9% | 16 | 9.9% | 1056.1 | 3.7% | 15 | 8.5% |
| Offices | 1876.3 | 8.9% | 8 | 4.9% | 1364.8 | 4.8% | 4 | 2.3% |
| Residential | | | 9 | 5.6% | | 0.0% | 9 | 5.1% |
| Community Facilities | 2600.2 | 12.3% | 6 | 3.7% | 3471.64 | 12.2% | 7 | 4.0% |
| Other | 1350.5 | 6.4% | 9 | 5.6% | 818.63 | 2.9% | 6 | 3.4% |
| Vacant | 2377.54 | 11.3% | 14 | 8.6% | 2374.48 | 8.4% | 21 | 11.9% |
| **Total** | **21093.65** | **100%** | **162** | **100%** | **28359.29** | **100.0%** | ***177** | **100.0%** |

**Note –Tesco Extra has been counted twice in order to reflect the comparison element.*

3.5 The town centre outlets have been split into different types to better gauge the function of the town centre. Public Houses and Takeaways have been separated from Service Retail due to the particular issues they can pose in town centres. For this reason, where there was a mixed use, such as Public House with restaurant or café with takeaway, the public house or takeaway aspect has been used.

3.6 Due to the large floorspace in the new Tesco, the amount of convenience floorspace has increased significantly, but the number of convenience units as a proportion of total units has decreased from 8% to 6.2% as shown in Table 2. It is useful to look at the changes in the number of each type of unit to understand how the town centre has changed.




3.7 It is clear that the increases have been in comparison retail, leisure and service retail, as well as in vacant units. Takeaways do remain a significant element of the town centre offer at 8.5% of units, which has an impact on the character of the town centre, even though the actual floorspace currently taken up by takeaways is only 3.7% of the total.

**Evening Economy**

3.8 Leisure floorspace in centres comprises a range of activities including cinemas, theatres, concert halls, restaurants, cafes, takeaways, pubs, bars, night clubs and a range of other leisure facilities. Leisure services can add vitality and viability to a centre and ensure it remains lively after shops close. A significant quantum and range of leisure facilities, or a cluster of leisure/evening economy uses can be an important component of a town centre's role and function.

3.9 In 2008, evening uses comprised a total of approximately 3181 sq.m of floorspace across the town (15.1% of total town centre floorspace and 17.3% of total premises). In 2013 there were 2 less evening use units than in 2008, reducing the percentage of total premises to 14.7% and floorspace to 10.6% of total floorspace. See Appendix 2 for the full breakdown of data on evening uses.

3.10 The majority of evening uses in 2008 was public houses and cafes/takeaways, at nearly 80% of the evening use floorspace. The picture in 2013 was broadly the same, with a slight drop in cafes and takeaways floorspace, and an increase in leisure floorspace. There is a particular concentration of activities in High Street and Market Street, with smaller concentrations on Thanet and Eyre streets.

## 4.0 Retail

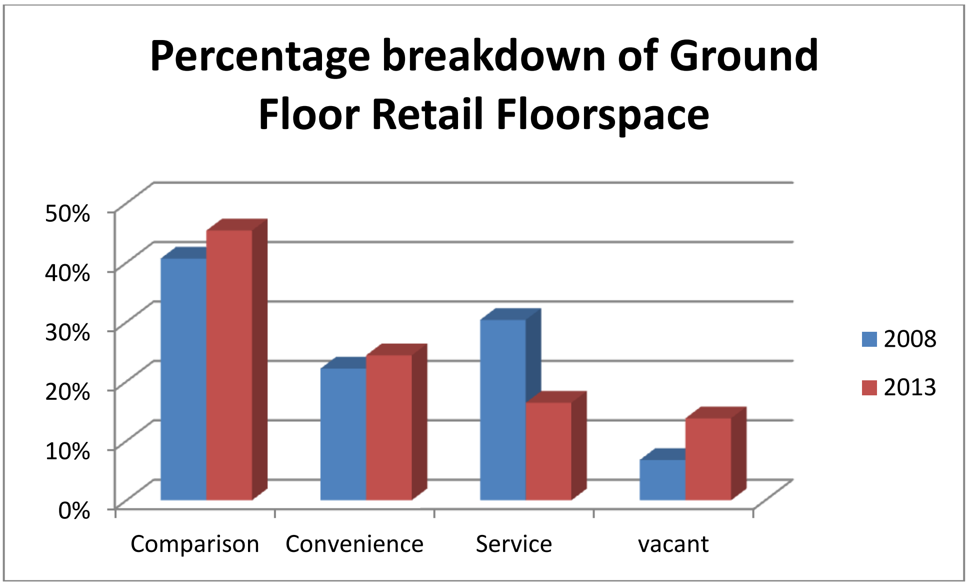
4.1 Tables 1 and 2 use total floorspace data (including basements, upper floors and non-sales areas). This provides a picture of the potential floorspace in buildings and premises that could be used for town centre uses. In order to get a more accurate picture of the floorspace in active retail use, there is available data on A1 and A2 uses for ground floor retail sales areas (covering indicators i and iv).

**Table 3: Ground Floor Retail Floorspace 2008 and 2013**

| | 2008 | | | | 2013 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Ground Floor Retail Floorspace** | **Floorspace** | **% Total** | **No Units** | **% Total** | **Floorspace** | **% Total** | **No Units** | **% Total** |
| Comparison | 2832.4 | 40.7% | 42 | 37.5% | 7189.5 | 45.4% | 48 | 36.9% |
| Convenience | 1541.77 | 22.2% | 13 | 11.6% | 3862.29 | 24.4% | 11 | 8.5% |
| Service* | 2113.65 | 30.4% | 48 | 42.9% | 2599.76 | 16.4% | 55 | 42.3% |
| Vacant | 472.74 | 6.8% | 9 | 8.0% | 2185.68 | 13.8% | 16 | 12.3% |
| **Total** | **6960.56** | 100.0% | **112** | 100.0% | **15837.23** | 100.0% | **130** | 100.0% |

**Note: Service includes takeaways.*

4.2 As set out in Table 3, the breakdown of ground floor retail floorspace in 2008 was less balanced than in 2013, with comparison retail now accounting for over 45% of ground floor retail floorspace due to the new Tesco and Bridge Street development. It is interesting that even with the 3277 sq metres of new convenience at Tesco, the overall convenience floorspace in the town centre as a percentage of total ground floor retail space has only increased by around 2% since 2008. This is mainly due to the closure of Somerfield which occupied over 925 square metres of ground floor convenience retail floorspace.




4.3 It is interesting to note that vacancy rates of ground floor retail floorspace have doubled between 2008 and 2013, and are above the national average. The number of vacant ground floor retail units has also increased from 9 to 16. Three of the vacancies in 2013 are units that have moved (Fulton Foods, Post Office and Peak Pharmacy). The main losses are A1 comparison (The Soap Box) and the former surgery.

**Table 4: GOAD Report Outlet Type National Averages**

| Outlet Type | National Average Units | National Average Floorspace |
|---|---|---|
| Comparison | 32.8% | 36.39% |
| Convenience | 8.21% | 14.75% |
| Retail Service | 13.94% | 7.36% |
| Leisure Service | 22.22% | 23.08% |
| Financial and Business | 10.97% | 8.29% |
| Vacant | 11.55% | 9.4% |

4.4 Comparison with the GOAD data is more direct when considering ground floor retail, as the GOAD survey data was based on building footprint area and did not take into account other floors. In relation to the national averages (see Table 4), ground floor retail figures (Table 3) show that in 2013 comparison retail was significantly above the national average for both units and floorspace, whilst convenience units are on a par with the national average, the proportion of floorspace is higher.

GOAD 2012 Survey of Clay Cross

4.5 The 2012 GOAD survey of the town did not cover the whole of the town centre area, in particular it did not include the new Tesco and Bridge Street units. The categories used varies slightly to those used in this health check, but comparison, convenience and vacant are the same, therefore comparisons can be made. Due to the exclusion of the significant amount of new floorspace at Tesco in the GOAD survey it is more helpful to look at units rather than floorspace. It is clear that in 2013 Clay Cross had slightly above the national average for all three categories, perhaps indicating a less than average range of other categories such as leisure.

| | Units | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | National Average | 2012 GOAD survey | 2013 Health Check |
| Comparison | 32.8% | 29.3% | 36.9% |
| Convenience | 8.21% | 7.1% | 8.5% |
| Vacant | 11.55% | 12.1% | 12.3% |

**Retailer Representation**

4.6 This section assesses the presence of national retail multiples in the town centre area. This gives a good indication of how the centre is performing in relation to attracting national retail outlets and its current performance in the retail hierarchy. For the purposes of the health check process, national multiple retailers are defined as being part of a network of nine or more outlets (as used in Goad Category Reports), whose presence in a town centre is recognised as enhancing the retail attractiveness to local consumers.

4.7 In 2008 there were no national multiple retailers as defined by GOAD, although some other well-known national multiple retailers were represented in Clay Cross town centre in 2008:

- Somerfield
- Ladbrokes
- Halifax Building Society
- Age Concern Charity Shop
- Co-op Travel Agent
- Nisa Metro
- Lloyds TSB Bank
- Fultons Foods
- Derbyshire Building Society
- Peak Pharmacy
- Natwest Bank
- Betfred

4.8 In 2008 national multiple retailers took up almost 30% of total ground floor retail floorspace. This is made up of 64.9% convenience, 3.8% comparison and 31.3% service. There are only two national comparison stores – one is a charity shop and the other is a pharmacy with multiple branches in the midlands and north. The service uses are banks/building society, bookmaker and one travel agent.

4.9 In 2013, largely due to Tesco, national multiple retailers made up almost 50% of total ground floor retail floorspace. The other new multiple retailers in the town centre is Barnardos Charity Shop. The one loss since 2008 is

Somerfield. Ladbrokes is now a William Hill and Halifax is now Santander. The break down is 45.9% convenience, 45.7% comparison and 8.4% service.

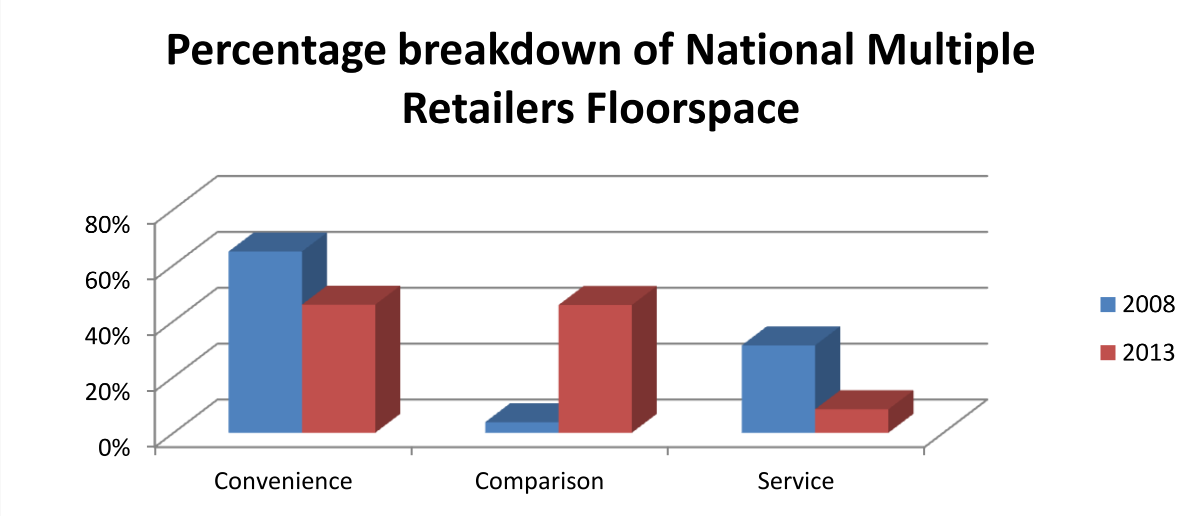



**Table 5: Multiple Retailer representation 2008 and 2013**

| | 2008 | | | | 2013 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **National Multiple Retailers** | **Ground floor retail** | **% Total** | **Units** | **% Total** | **Ground floor retail** | **% Total** | **Units** | **% Total** |
| **Convenience** | 1274.38 | 64.9 | 3 | 25.0 | 3587.8 | 45.9% | 4 | 22.2% |
| Comparison | 75.3 | 3.8 | 2 | 16.7 | 3576.4 | 45.7% | 6 | 33.3% |
| Service | 614.85 | 31.3 | 7 | 58.3 | 658.05 | 8.4% | 8 | 44.4% |
| **Total** | **1964.53** | **100.0** | **12** | **100.0** | **7822.25** | **100.0%** | **18** | **100.0%** |

* Fulton Foods occupies 3 units.

4.10 Although there are increases across the sectors, it is interesting to note that the real increase has been in the number of units and amount of floorspace in comparison multiple retail. This is as a result of occupants in the new Bridge Street units, including Pets at Home, a charity shop and as in 2008, a pharmacy with multiple branches in the midlands and north, as well as Tesco.

## 5.0 Capacity for Growth or Change

5.1 The ability of a town centre to grow in terms of regeneration, consolidation or expansion is imperative in maintaining the health and diversity of uses in a centre. The National Planning Policy Framework emphasises the need for local authorities to maintain a supply of suitable sites to cater for the needs of town centre expansion to 'allocate a range of suitable sites to meet the scale and type of retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural, community and residential development needed in town centres'.

5.2 This section covers indicators ii, iii and v as set out in paragraph 1.8. It is important to consider edge of centre & out of centre locations in terms of any impact on the health of the centre itself, alongside the potential capacity and indicators of market demand such as shop rents. There are no edge or out of centre retail or town centre use schemes around Clay Cross, and non planned, although the 204 acre former Bi-Waters site (along with land off Derby Road and former Egstow pit) will include a new local centre along with new homes, employment space, and a hotel. (The site changed ownership in July 2013 and the masterplan is currently being reviewed). There are however a range of sporadic edge and out of centre developments with town centre uses. In 2013, there were 2 churches, 2 A1 comparison retail units, an A1 service retail and a D1 leisure use on the edge of the town centre boundary. Three of these units are on Bridge Street, which could potentially form a logical extension to the town centre boundary.

**Capacity**

5.3 The Clay Cross Regeneration Framework identified development opportunities at land and buildings north of Market Street (including the job centre and car park, and the former Soap Box retail unit), the old schools sites (for which there is a development brief) and the potential to demolish the Parish Council building. There is also a parcel of publically owned land between the schools site and Broadleys.

5.4 The 2008 Retail Capacity Study quantitative capacity analysis indicated there was potential for about 1,757 sq m net convenience goods sales floorspace in North East Derbyshire District up to 2016. The study noted that the proposed Tesco store at Clay Cross was expected to accommodate the need for a large food store in the south of North East Derbyshire. It also stated that the Tesco development commitment would also absorb some of the comparison growth in the south of the District, which, was projected to be 2,300 sq m. The Tesco Extra includes 2110 sq m of comparison floorspace, which does absorb almost all of the projected comparison growth.

5.5 The 2008 study identified two sites at Clay Cross for new retail development - Eldon St Car Park (up to 1,000 sq m gross at ground floor level) and Clay Cross Fire Station, Market St (up to 2,500 sq m gross at ground floor level).

**Shop Rents and Demand**

5.6 Comprehensive information was unavailable for retail yields and rental values. In January 2014 there was one shop on High Street being marketed at £5,200 per annum for 466 square feet. Limited information is available on the demand for retail space and quality of the units in Clay Cross, although a survey undertaken in June 2013 (by England and Lyle on behalf of the Co-op) scored 115 town centre properties on their physical appearance:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 Very Poor | 0 | 0% |
| 2 Poor | 39 | 34% |
| 3 Fair | 64 | 56% |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 4 Good | 12 | 10% |
| 5 Very Good | 0 | 0% |
| Total | 115 | |
| | | |
| Average Grading | 2.8 | |

5.7 It is clear that there is scope to improve the appearance of premises in the town centre, particularly when considering that the properties to score a 4 ‘Good’ were all on the New Bridge Street development with the exception of three units on Market Street. If the quality of existing premises was improved this may attract new businesses.

## 6.0 Vacancy Rates

6.1 The distribution of vacant units and other associated uses (i.e. charity and other outlets with rate rebates) provide an indicator of the attractiveness of an area to new business, although it should be noted that vacancies in outlets occur not only when an area is economically unattractive to potential businesses, but also due to redevelopment, building renovation or changeovers between tenants. This section covers indicator vi as set out in paragraph 1.8.

6.2 The ground floor retail vacancy rate in Clay Cross in 2008 was 8% by premises and 6.8% percent by floorspace. In 2013, the rates were 12.3% by premises (national average is 11.54% GOAD data 2012), and 13.8% by floorspace (national average is 9.38% [1]GOAD data 2012). The number of empty units has increased from 9 to 16. The losses are mainly created by businesses (and services such as the surgery and health centre) re-locating to the new Bridge street units. There are three significant retail losses created by the closure of Somerfield (approx. 925 sq m total floorspace) and the Soap Box (over 500 sq m total floorspace) on Market Street.

6.3 In 2008 the vacant units were mainly located in Bridge Street Industrial Estate, High Street and Market Street, and to a lesser extent on Eyre Street. In 2013, the picture is slightly different, with most vacancies on High Street (in particular what was the surgery in the Victoria building), Market Street and Bridge Street (including two of the new units yet to be let).

6.4 In 2013 there were 7 charity shops in the town centre, accounting for 5.4% of ground floor retail units and 2.8% of ground floor retail floorspace. This compares less favourably to both the 2012 GOAD survey where charity shops accounted for 4% of units and 2.3% of floorspace, and the national averages of 2.6% for units and 1.7% for floorspace.

## 7.0 Accessibility

[1] GOAD floorspace data is footprint floorspace, and the site area without the building lines. It is not directly comparable to the data in this health check but provides a useful national average benchmark.

## Travel and Accessibility

7.1 Clay Cross is well served by public transport, with regular buses to and from surrounding towns of Chesterfield, Bolsover, Alfreton and Matlock, also serving smaller settlements such as Holmewood, Danesmoor, North Wingfield and Ashover. Situated on the A61, the town experiences significant through traffic as well as people visiting the town by car. There is a good amount of public and private surface car parks in the town, with much of it free. In 2013 there are 12 public car parks providing 346 spaces, 30 of which are disabled bays. Tesco provides 678 spaces, of which 42 are disabled bays. Private car parks can accommodate 328 vehicles, and offer 20 disabled bays. There is also on-street parking on Cross Street, Eldon Street, Grundy Street, Smithy Avenue and Victoria Street.

7.2 Facilities for cyclists are limited. The first phase of the pedestrian walkway through the town (the esplanade) associated with the new Bridge Street development is improving the accessibility and environment for pedestrians, although the narrow pavements on High Street and high volumes of traffic create difficulties for those walking in some areas of the town.

7.3 In May 2013 a questionnaire on the health of the districts town centres was sent out to the Citizens Panel. 544 responses were received. 46.9% of respondents visited Clay Cross most often out of the four town centres. The vast majority (78.4%) use the car to travel to Clay Cross, with 12.9% choosing the bus, 5.2% walking and only 0.4% cycle.

7.4 61.5% are satisfied with the footpath routes into the town centre, although this was the lowest out of all four centres. Similarly with the road network access, although most respondents were satisfied (73%), this was slightly below the average across the four towns. Further, a significant number of people (26.5) were dissatisfied with road traffic with regard to accessing the town centre.

7.5 Around half of respondents (45.2%) were satisfied with the local bus service in accessing the town centre and the location of bus stops (54.4%). Out of the four towns, there is the relatively low level (14.8%) of dissatisfaction with amount of carparking space in Clay Cross, and most respondents (72.7%) were satisfied with the location of the parking in relation to the town centre.

7.6 Of those that expressed a view about cycle routes, it was evenly split in terms of those who were satisfied / dissatisfied (12.2% each), with slightly more dissatisfaction than satisfaction with cycle parking (9.8%).

7.7 Around 12% of respondents were dissatisfied with footpaths/paving, which is less that the other three towns, and over 20% dissatisfaction with pavement repairs. Similarly, over a quarter of respondents were dissatisfied with street furniture. These figures indicate a poor pedestrian environment in accessing the town centre, and perhaps these issues contribute to the low level of people walking into town.

## Shopmobility

7.8 Shop-mobility is a service that helps all people who consider themselves to have mobility problems (whether through disability, illness or injury) to continue to get around the town centre independently, with freedom, confidence and dignity. The council runs a shopmoblity scheme for Clay Cross, and has also produced a leaflet entitled ‘An Access Guide to Clay Cross’ which details facilities such as level/ramped access, wheelchair accessible, internal steps etc. for the shops and community premises in the town.

7.9 In the town centre in 2013 (including Tesco), 6.8% of car parking bays were disabled bays. This is slightly above the recommended 6% of bays (or 3 bays per carpark) as set out in the DETR Advisory Leaflet 5/95.

## 8.0 Perception of safety/ occurrence of crime

8.1 The actual occurrence of crime and anti-social behaviour and the public perception of safety are important factors for the health of a town centre. Clay Cross town centre is served by the Clay Cross and North East Policing Section of Derbyshire Constabulary Division. Figures from December 2013 confirm that over 10 incidences of anti-social behaviour in the town centre were reported. The current priorities for the Clay Cross Safer Neighbourhood Area are drug dealing across the Safer Neighbourhood Area and Shoplifting from all retail premises in the Clay Cross area.

8.2 The results of the May 2013 Citizens Panel survey showed that in terms of feeling safe within the town centre, only around 5% of respondents were dissatisfied, although it is worth noting that the majority of respondents visit the town centre during the day, with only 3.9% visiting after 6pm.

8.3 In terms of security, there are a limited number of CCTV cameras on Market Street and High Street, and a shop watch scheme. There is also increased police patrol as an action on the Safer Neighbourhood priority.

## 9.0 Environmental quality

9.1 Air Quality is monitored by the council. Reporting for 2013 (monitoring locations High Street and Rykneld Court) showed that pollutant levels are below the air quality objective.

9.2 The built environment of the town centre offers limited access to open spaces, particularly public spaces benefiting from trees and landscaping. The only public open green spaces within the town centre boundary are two small areas to the east of High Street, that provide visual breaks in the street scene but do not provide high quality areas for the public to use and enjoy. The Conservation Area, designated in 2010 does offer protection against demolition of and inappropriate changes to the town’s heritage assets, but unfortunately many of the buildings are in a poor state of repair.

9.3 The May 2013 Citizens Panel survey found that half of respondents were satisfied with the cleanliness of the town centre, with a considerable number either neutral or dissatisfied. Less than 1% were dissatisfied with the street lighting, but 18% were dissatisfied with sculptures and public art. There appears to be an issue with green infrastructure, with around 50% of respondents being either neutral or dissatisfied with regard to open space, trees, landscaping and planting.

9.4 Only around a quarter of respondents felt that Clay Cross town centre had a distinctive character, and that the town centre area was well defined. Less than 50% agree that the buildings and/or layout make it easy to find your way around the town centre, and even fewer, markedly less than the other four towns, feel that the streets in the town centre are pedestrian friendly.

9.5 20% felt that graffiti and property damage was a big problem, with slightly more viewing litter as a big problem. Although less than 20% felt that the smell from traffic or other pollution in the town centre was a big problem, this was markedly higher that the other three towns.

## 10.0 Town Centre Initiatives

10.1 The Clay Cross Regeneration Framework provides an action plan to secure improvements to the town centre. These projects and objectives will be taken forward into the Local Plan. In addition, as part of the work on the Framework, a number of local businesses formed a group. The Clay Cross Town Centre Group is a grouping of local businesses and trades people (30 members in July 2013) with objectives to:

1. To create an attractive, vibrant and diverse town centre that will encourage businesses to grow and improve tourism.
2. Improve safety and security for businesses, local people and visitors.
3. Promote educational and training opportunities within the local community.
4. Increase recreation and leisure facilities in the town centre and surrounding Community.
5. To undertake any activities that the group feel will benefit the Clay Cross North and South Wards of the District Council.

## 11.0 Customer and residents' views and behaviour

11.1 Consultation responses from the 2013 Citizens Panel survey highlighted a number of issues relevant to the analysis of Clay Cross Town Centre. Respondents were asked about frequency of visits to the town centre for different reasons/facilities, and most commonly used Clay Cross for weekly and monthly food shopping. The other reasons/facilities were less well used, with significant numbers of respondents only rarely or never visiting – 44.6% for non-food shopping, 66.1% for financial and professional services, 72.8% for services, 75.9% to eat and drink, and 83.4% for leisure.

11.2 Only around 10% think that the choice of shops and eating/drinking places is good/excellent, with services faring slightly better at around 20%. Choice is obviously an issue, indeed nearly 60% of respondents would like to see a wider variety of shops in the town centre, particularly small independent shops and clothes shops.

11.3 When asked about favourite thing about Clay Cross town centre, there were many comments, but the most often cited were free parking, friendly, compact and easy to access, and the new Tesco store, although there were more comments about Tesco when asked about the least favourite thing . Other commonly cited ‘least favourites’ were too many takeaways, vacant shops and run down appearance, traffic, lack of choice, and lack of defined centre to the town centre.

11.4 Many respondents thought that the biggest opportunities for the town centre were the potential to enhance the market and provide indoor market, and to build on the good location on the A61with additional free carparking and a train station. Opportunities for creating pedestrian only areas were also cited, as was the need to create a new centre to the town centre. The old Bi-Waters site is seen as an opportunity also.

## 12.0 Strengths and Weaknesses

| **Strengths** | **Weaknesses** |
|---|---|
| Good bus station location | Limited retail and food offer (compared to other centres) |
| Town centre Conservation Area | Increasing vacancy rates in terms of numbers of units |
| Relatively flat topography of the town | No real commitment to reinstate train station |
| Clay Cross 2020 Regeneration Strategy | Poor facilities for cyclists |
| Free Car Parking | Busy traffic |
| Close to Leisure Facilities and Parks | Littering and State of Public realm |
| Access to schools | Poor image of town centre to pass-by traffic |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
| Supermarket to attract more National multiples at the potential development sites | Increasing traffic congestion |
| Potential development sites identified in emerging District Plan | Potential increase of crime and anti-social behaviour |
| Town Heritage Initiative bid | Further deterioration in facades |
| Clay Cross 2020 projects | Proximity and competition from other centres – Chesterfield and Alfreton |
| Pedestrianisation of Market Street | Lack of defined centre |

| | |
|---|---|
| Re-invigorate market and include farmers’ or specialised markets | |

## Appendix 1: Note on Outlet Types

Convenience Retail:
A1 shops which are visited for daily needs including Bakers, Butchers, Greengrocers & fishmongers, Grocery and frozen foods, Off-licences and home brew, Confectioners, tobacconists, newsagents

Comparison includes
A1 shops which are visited only occasionally for higher order goods which people often compare prices for from different retailers. These include shops selling Footwear & repairs, Men's & boys wear, Women's, girls, children's clothing, Mixed and general clothing, Furniture, carpets & textiles, Booksellers, arts/crafts, stationers/copy bureaux, Electrical, home entertainment, telephones and video DIY, hardware & household goods, Gifts, china, glass and leather goods, Cars, motorcycles & motor accessories Chemists, toiletries & opticians, Variety, department & catalogue showrooms, Florists and gardens, Sports, toys, cycles and hobbies Jewellers, clocks & repair Charity shops, pets and other comparison

Service Retail includes
A more diverse category which includes Restaurants, cafes, Hairdressers, beauty parlours & health centres, Laundries & drycleaners, Travel agents, Banks & financial services (incl. accountants), Building societies, Estate agents & auctioneers and Transport Services (which include sui generis taxi offices, rail/bus ticket offices etc); (Takeaways are normally included within this category, but have been separated into their own category due to the particular issues associated with this use.)

Leisure includes Clubs, sports, amusement arcades

Community Facilities includes religious buildings, health and education and community halls

Office includes B1 use offices – both private and public sector.

Other
Employment, Advice/info, Post Office

## Appendix 2 – Evening Uses 2008 and 2013

### Evening Uses (Sq M Floorspace)

| | 2008 | | | 2013 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Type** | **Sq M** | **% Evening Uses** | **% Total Floorspace** | **Sq M** | **% Evening Uses** | **% Total Floorspace** |
| A3/A5 Food | 1195.7 | 37.6% | 5.7% | 1056.1 | 35.1% | 3.7% |
| A4 Public House / A3 Food | 1255 | 39.5% | 5.9% | 1154 | 38.3% | 4.1% |
| D2 Leisure | 730.3 | 23.0% | 3.5% | 800.4 | 26.6% | 2.8% |
| **Total** | 3181 | 100.0% | 15.1% | **3010.5** | **100.0%** | 10.6% |

### Evening Uses (Units)

| | 2008 | | | 2013 | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Type** | **Number** | **% Evening Uses** | **% Total Units** | **Number** | **% Evening Uses** | **% Total Units** |
| A3/A5 Food | 18 | 64.3% | 11.1% | 15 | 57.7% | 8.5% |
| A4 Public House / A3 Food | 8 | 28.6% | 4.9% | 7 | 26.9% | 4.0% |
| D2/Leisure | 2 | 7.1% | 1.2% | 4 | 15.4% | 2.3% |
| **Total** | 28 | 100% | 17.3% | **26** | **100.0%** | 14.7% |