Sefton District Centres, Local Centres and Shopping Parades Study

Final Report

May 2012

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1.0 Introduction

Objectives of the Study

1.01 WYG Planning & Design (WYG) was commissioned by Sefton Council to produce an update of the District Centres, Local Centres and Shopping Parades Study produced in March 2004 (hereafter referred to as 'the 2004 Study'). The 2004 Study produced a comprehensive review of the existing the existing centres and parades throughout the Borough and sought to highlight the current and future roles which would inform local policy formulation.

1.02 The 2004 Study examined the role and function of the four established district centres (Crosby, Formby, Waterloo and Maghull) and the seven established local centres (Churchtown, Seaforth, Ainsdale, Birkdale, Shakespeare Street, Netherton and Old Roan). In addition, the study also assessed 55 shopping parades (identified by the Council) and provided conclusions as to future designations and policy protection.

1.03 Following the production of the study, it became evident to the Council that there were a number of shopping parades which were not captured by previous surveys that had been identified as part of the Housing Market Renewal Initiative. On this basis, the Council undertook a detailed exercise to identify all of the shopping parades in the administrative boundary so they could be assessed in the future. As a result, the 2012 update now reconsiders the role and function of the same district and local centres but also examines a total of 94 shopping parades.

1.04 The 2012 Study has been compiled based on detailed site visits to each one of the 105 centres/parades (see Figure 1) to ensure that the most up-to-date land use and floorspace data was obtained. It should be noted that as the number of parades has increased significantly and some of the boundaries of the centres/parades in the two studies vary, a direct comparison between the two data-sets is not possible.

1.05 The raw data from the site visits was supplemented by a 'mini' health check assessment (given there were 105 centres to review) of all the locations which helped to form a view on the vitality and viability of the centres. More detailed assessments were provided for the larger centres where more information is readily available on key indicators of health.

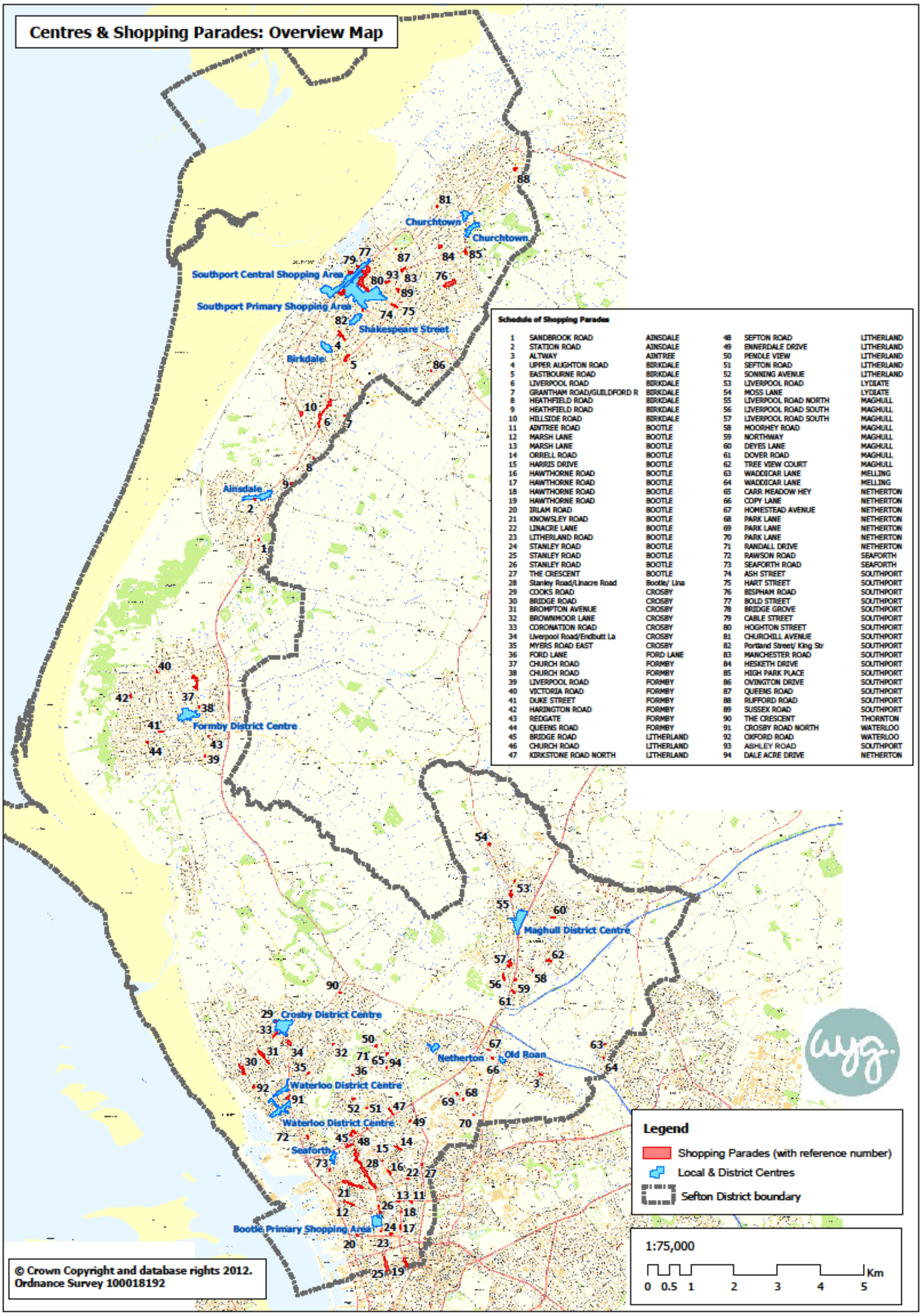
1.06 The Study also seeks to determine the current role of each of the centres and produce strategies to overcome any key constraints which were identified from the site visits. This also reflects the wider underlying national, regional and national planning, retail, economic, social and environmental trends.

Format of the Report

1.07 This report is structured as follows:

- Section 2 provides our review of the national, regional and local retail planning policy of relevance to the Study;
- Section 3 outlines the methodology that has been undertaken to review the Study Area;
- Section 4 summarises our assessment of the current vitality and viability of the district and local centres;
- Section 5 sets out our assessment of the current vitality and viability of the shopping parades;
- Section 6 outlines the overall distribution and provision of facilities in the Study Area;
- Section 7 provides a walk time analysis of the centres and parades; and
- Section 8 summarises our overall conclusions and recommendations.

Figure 1: District & Local Centres and Shopping Parades Overview Map



3.0 Planning Policy Context

Introduction

3.01 Given that this study seeks to provide important evidence to assist in the production of the Local Development Framework (LDF), it is important to review key policy advice and explore how current and emerging national planning policy may impact upon development of retail policy at the local level.

National Planning Policy Framework

3.02 The National Planning Policy Framework was published on 27th March 2012. The Framework replaces all former Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance Notes and some Circulars with this single consolidated document.

3.03 The main theme of the Framework is that there should be 'a presumption in favour of sustainable development'. In terms of plan-making it is stated that local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, with an emphasis on Local Plans having sufficient flexibility to adapt to rapid change.

3.04 In terms of economic development, it is set out within the NPPF's core principles that planning should proactively drive and support economic development to deliver the homes, business and industrial units, infrastructure and thriving local places that the country needs. It is emphasised that every effort should be made to objectively identify and then meet the business and other development needs of an area, with positive responses made to wider opportunities for growth.

3.05 The Framework stresses the Government's commitment to securing economic growth in order to create jobs and prosperity, with the Government seeking to ensure that the planning system does everything it can to support sustainable economic growth. The need for planning to encourage and not to act as an impediment to sustainable growth is stated and therefore it is prescribed that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system. The NPPF seeks to ensure that local planning authorities plan proactively to meet the development needs of business and support an economy fit for the 21st century.

3.06 The NPPF still recognises the need to promote the vitality and viability of towns and cities through the promotion of competition and growth management during the plan period. It also recognises that retail activity should still, where possible, be focused in existing town centres. Retail and leisure proposals which cannot be accommodated in or adjacent to the town centre should have to satisfy an impact test and the sequential approach. In addition, consideration should also be taken of the impact on the vitality and viability of the area, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and the wider area, up to five years from the time of the application and up to ten years for major schemes where the full impact will not be realised in five years.

North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021

3.07 In reviewing relevant policies of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), it should be commented at the outset that the present Coalition Government is committed to abolishing all RSSs, and measures to achieve this are included in the Localism Act 2011 which received Royal Assent on 15 November 201). However, until a Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) has been undertaken and the RSS formally revoked, the RSS still forms part of the statutory development plan.

3.08 The RSS for the North West was published on 30 September 2008 and provides a framework for development and investment in the region over the next fifteen to twenty years.

3.09 Policy DP5 of the adopted RSS seeks to reduce the need to travel and increase accessibility. In this respect, the RSS identifies that development should be located so as to reduce the need to travel, especially by car, and to enable people as far as possible to meet their needs locally. This includes accessibility to range of services and facilities, such as retail.

3.10 In making provision for development, Policy RDF1 states that the first priority for growth and development should be the regional centres of Manchester and Liverpool followed then by the inner areas surrounding these regional centres (which includes places like Bootle under Policy LC2). The third priority should then be the towns/cities within the three city regions of Manchester, Liverpool and Central Lancashire. Southport is identified as one such town. Policy RDF1 goes on to state that, as part of this third priority, development in larger suburban centres within the city regions will accord with the policy provided the development is of an appropriate scale and is located in proximity to where transport networks connect and public transport accessibility is good.

3.11 Retail development is considered by Policy W5. This policy states that:

'Plans and strategies should promote retail investment where it assists in the regeneration and economic growth of the North West's town and city centres. In considering proposals and

schemes any investment made should be consistent with the scale and function of the centre, should not undermine the vitality and viability of any other centre or result in the creation of unsustainable shopping patterns.'

3.12 Although Policy W5 states that Manchester/Salford and Liverpool City Centre should continue to function as the North West's primary retail centres, comparison retail facilities should be enhanced in a number of identified centres (of which Southport is one) to ensure a sustainable distribution of high quality retail facilities. Investment, of an appropriate scale, in other centres (such as Bootle) will be encouraged in order to maintain and enhance their vitality and viability, and to ensure that such centres meet the needs of the local community. In addition, the policy recognises that retail development which supports entrepreneurship, particularly that, which increases the number of independent retailers, should be supported.

3.13 Policy W5 also states that there will be a presumption against new out-of-centre regional or sub-regional comparison retailing facilities, requiring local authorities to be pro-active in identifying and creating opportunities for development within town centres. The RSS also identifies that there should be a presumption against large-scale extensions to such facilities (defined as those providing more than 2,500 sq.m net floorspace) unless they are fully justified in line with the sequential approach established in national planning policy. There is no justification for such facilities to be designated as town centres with plans and strategies.

3.14 The supporting text to Policy W5 states that the 25 centres identified are well developed as vibrant centres, particularly for comparison goods retailing which has traditionally been concentrated in town centres, and should continue this role. Paragraph 6.22 of RSS states:

'Recent research points to a significant growth in retail spending in the North West, which will in turn require the provision of additional retail floorspace across the region. The network of centres identified in Policy W5 will be the primary focus for this future growth and development, although they are not the only centres that should receive development through to 2021. The policy does not preclude the investment of resources in other centres, particularly where this will assist in the regeneration of the centre and the wider area. Future reviews of RSS may need to consider the impact of changes to retail formats on the pattern of both convenience and comparison retailing.'

3.15 Paragraph 6.23 of the RSS acknowledges that the flow of expenditure between sub-regions generally reflects the proximity of population to centres in adjoining sub-regions. New investment should promote sustainable shopping patterns, which result in a reduced need to travel, especially by private car, to access retail facilities of an appropriate type and nature.

3.16 Paragraph 6.24 indicates that local planning authorities will have to prepare retail need assessment for their local development frameworks and that specific retail development schemes will also require the preparation of detailed needs assessments.

Sefton Unitary Development Plan (June 2006)

3.17 The Sefton Unitary Development Plan (UDP) covers the period from 2001 to 2016. The UDP's key objective is to 'make a positive contribution to the prosperity and quality of life of all Seton's communities by promoting sustainable development'. The principles to deliver this include the promotion of urban regeneration, caring for the environment and reducing disadvantage. The central strategy seeks to deliver urban regeneration through a policy objective of regeneration and development, which sees retail development as a key theme to help deliver this objective. The UDP seeks to ensure that where there is a need for major retail development it should be located where it will contribute to the vitality and viability of existing town, district and local centres.

3.18 Chapter 7 of the UDP deals with retail planning matters and sets out the retail hierarchy for Sefton, which classifies Southport and Bootle as the main two town centres for the Borough. These are supported by four district centres, namely Crosby, Formby, Maghull and Waterloo, and then by seven local centres (Ainsdale, Birkdale, Churchtown, Netherton, Old Roan, Seaforth and Shakespeare Street). New retail development is focused on defined town, district and local centres through Policy R1 where there is a requirement for the sequential approach to be applied for new retail development. The UDP also identifies the Primary Retail Frontages in the key centres, namely in Bootle, Crosby, Formby, Maghull, Southport and Waterloo.

3.19 Policy R6 deals with development in district and local centres, stating that these locations will remain the main focus for retail development to serve local needs. The UDP recognises the importance of the local centres, noting that they play a valuable role in providing convenience shopping for local residents. Local centres are described as comprising small groups of shop units which meet local needs usually comprising a general grocery store, a newsagent and a sub-post office. As reflected elsewhere in the UDP, the Policy seeks to ensure that development should be of an appropriate scale to the centre and should not harm the vitality and viability of the centre or any other town or district centre.

3.20 Policy R7 notes that local shopping parades comprise small groups of shops and other services which serve the local area, but contain fewer facilities than a local centre. Many parades comprise a small number of shops, which could include a convenience store, post office, chemist and off licence, with the Policy also noting that the parades also have many vacant units. The UDP identifies that many of the parades have declined in recent years, with reference to this being especially as a result of the growth of large supermarkets and DIY stores which have reduced the demand for local shops. The Policy seeks to bring back into beneficial use units by promoting new developments or the re-use of vacant properties (both at ground and upper floor levels) for a variety of uses, including offices, community and retail in order to improve local facilities and the appearance of an area.

3.21 Policy R9 sets out a number of criteria for proposals for retail development and other key town centre uses on edge-of-centre or out-of-centre sites. It notes that these schemes will only be permitted if there is a demonstrable need for the proposal (now superseded by PPS4), that the proposal satisfies the sequential approach to site selection and that there will be no adverse harm to the vitality and viability of any town, district and local centres either individually or cumulatively. In addition, proposals for out-of-centre locations will also need to demonstrate that they are accessible, or will be made accessible, by sustainable modes of transport, will reduce car use and overall travel patterns and make a positive contribution to regeneration in the Urban Priority Areas.

3.22 Policy R10 allocates the Lanstar site at Litherland for the erection of retail foodstore (which has since been developed by Tesco).

Emerging Local Development Framework

3.23 The Core Strategy Options Paper (forming the first key stage in the preparation of the Core Strategy and which, once completed, will comprise the overriding LDF document setting out the overall vision and strategic objectives for the Borough) was issued for consultation purposes in May 2011. The Paper sets out a series of key retail issues which sought to consider how the centres should adopt to changing patterns in the retail landscape and how local centres can remain competitive, viable and continue to perform a valuable role.

4.0 Methodology

Introduction

4.01 WYG undertook a site visit to each of the 11 district/local centres and 94 shopping parades in the Borough. This ensured that up-to-date fascia and floorspace data of the units at ground floor level could be collected and analysed. The baseline information enabled WYG to assess the composition of each centre, by categorising it against the Goad classification and class use (namely convenience, comparison, financial and business service, retail service and leisure service) system. A record was also taken of the vacant units in each centre. A full analysis of the centres and parades is outlined in **Appendices 2** and **3**.

4.02 In addition to obtaining the diversity of use, the site visits also enabled WYG to undertake a 'mini' quantitative and qualitative health check assessment of each of the centres and parades, using several of the indicators outlined in the former Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (2009). The current National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012) does not provide a list of indicators to be used to assess the health of a centre, however the former Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 4: Planning For Sustainable Economic Growth (December 2009) set out a number of key indicators which should be monitored on a regular basis in order to judge the health of a centre and its performance over time. Due to the limited size of the majority of the centres/parades, it should be noted that several of the indicators could not be reviewed as there is no information available. Annex D of PPS4 set out a number of indicators which can be used to ascertain the relative health of a particular centre. The indicators for this assessment were as follows:

- **A1 – Diversity of Main Town Centre Uses** (by number, type and amount of floorspace);
- **A4 – Retailer Representation and Retail Demand** (including regional retail hierarchy, retailer demand/ranking and retailer requirements);
- **A6 – Vacant Street-Level Property**;
- **A9 – Pedestrian Flows** (footfall);
- **A10 – Accessibility**; and
- **A13 – State of the Town Centre Environmental Quality**.

4.03 Further details of the methodology adopted for assessing the shopping parades are outlined in Chapter 6.

5.0 Summary of the Vitality and Viability of the District and Local Centres

Introduction

5.01 The commentary below provides an overview of the analysis by WYG of the health of both the district and local centres, drawing on the information gathered from the sites visits and supplemented by desk-based research. The commentary is based on the more detailed appraisal of the relevant available information for the 11 district and local centres, alongside a site plan, which is provided in **Appendix 2**. The comprehensive appraisal provides full details of published data sources such as Venuescore, Experian Goad and FOCUS. It should be noted that there was limited information available from several of the data sources due to the limited size of several of the centres.

5.02 Within the Study Area there are four district centres (Crosby, Formby, Maghull and Waterloo). In addition, the UDP identifies seven local centres (Ainsdale, Birkdale, Churchtown, Netherton, Old Roan, Seaforth and Shakespeare Street). Policy R6 of the UDP deals with development in district and local centres, stating that these locations will remain the main focus for retail development to serve local needs.

Health Check Indicator – Diversity of Main Town Centre Uses

5.03 **Table 5.1** shows the total number of outlets and amount of floorspace within each of the 11 established centres, with the data obtained from the WYG site visits. It is evident that Crosby, Formby, Maghull and Waterloo are the key retail and service locations in the area, with high numbers of units and floorspace. However, Ainsdale is the largest local centre by some margin and is very similar in scale to Maghull District Centre.

Table 5.1: Summary of the District and Local Centres (August 2011)

Centre	Total No. of Outlets	Total Amount of Gross Floorspace (Sq m)
Waterloo District Centre	206	28,271
Formby District Centre	101	17,308
Crosby District Centre	98	17,287
Maghull District Centre	81	13,322
Ainsdale	78	13,522
Birkdale	59	6,945
Churchtown	70	7,618
Netherton	31	5,118
Old Roan	17	1,589
Seaforth	54	5,424
Shakespeare Street	40	4,092

Source: Site Visit - August 2011, Floorspace data from Sefton Council and data analysis by WYG

5.04 **Table 5.2** indicates the proportion of the units based on the Goad sub-categories within each of the centres surveyed. Netherton contains the highest proportion of convenience units (including Somerfield and Iceland foodstores), followed by Birkdale and Maghull which are all above the Sefton average and national average figures. In terms of the proportion of comparison goods units, only Formby and Shakespeare Street (Southport) have an above average (both at the national and local level) level of comparison stores, whilst the centres of Old Roan and Seaforth have notably low levels of comparison goods provision.

5.05 Unsurprisingly, given their local role and function, there are a good proportion of retail service units in the centres in comparison to the national average, with Shakespeare Street, Ainsdale and Churchtown in particular accommodating a high level of retail service operators. Crosby, Old Roan and Waterloo all have a good provision of leisure service units in comparison to the national average, whilst Seaforth and Shakespeare Street have a shortfall of this type of use. The largest proportion of financial and business service sector provision is again, unsurprisingly, located in the district centres, whilst the smallest local centres, namely Netherton, Old Roan, Seaforth and Shakespeare Street accommodate the lowest proportions of financial and business service provision.

5.06 **Table 5.2** outlines the overall diversity of use in percentage terms. The vacancy rates highlighted in red were above the national average at the time the surveys were completed in August 2011. Clearly the vacancy rate in Netherton was only just above the national average but there is a major problem in Seaforth with half of the centre vacant.

Table 5.2: Diversity of Use (Outlets) Figures (August 2011)

August 2011	Convenience	Comparison	Retail Service	Leisure Service	Financial / Business	Vacant
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Crosby DC	10.2%	24.5%	15.3%	22.4%	16.3%	11.2%
Formby DC	11.9%	36.9%	14.9%	15.8%	13.9%	6.9%
Maghull DC	13.6%	22.2%	19.8%	17.3%	21.0%	6.2%
Waterloo DC	10.2%	23.8%	13.6%	25.7%	8.3%	**18.4%**
Ainsdale	12.8%	26.9%	24.4%	20.5%	10.3%	5.1%
Birkdale	18.6%	28.8%	22.0%	16.9%	10.2%	3.4%
Churchtown	12.9%	22.9%	24.3%	17.1%	18.6%	2.3%
Netherton	29.0%	22.6%	12.9%	19.4%	3.2%	**12.9%**
Old Roan	11.8%	11.8%	23.5%	29.4%	5.9%	**17.6%**
Seaforth	5.6%	11.1%	9.3%	14.8%	9.3%	**50.0%**
Shakespeare St.	7.5%	40.0%	27.5%	12.5%	5.0%	7.5%
Sefton Average	13.1%	24.7%	18.9%	19.3%	11.1%	12.9%
UK Average*	**8.4%**	**33.4%**	**13.2%**	**21.8%**	**10.9%**	**11.9%**

Source: Site Visit - August 2011, Floorspace data from Sefton Council and data analysis by WYG, *UK Average Figure, Goad, August 2011

5.07 **Table 5.3** indicates the diversity of use (floorspace) within each of the centres surveyed and is based on the Goad sub-categories. Netherton again contains the highest proportion of convenience goods floorspace, with Formby also containing a number of large convenience foodstores (notably Waitrose and Marks & Spencer Simply Food), whilst Old Roan also contains a large Tesco supermarket. In terms of comparison goods floorspace in the centres, only Ainsdale and Shakespeare Street have an above average level, with Old Roan and Seaforth accommodating a low level of floorspace which reflects the lack of comparison units in these centres.

5.08 Consistent with the proportion of retail service units in the centres, there is a good level of retail service floorspace in Shakespeare Street, Churchtown, Birkdale and Ainsdale. Similarly, Old Roan, Waterloo and Crosby all have a good provision of leisure service floorspace, though Shakespeare Street is again under represented in this sector. The amount of financial and business service floorspace also reflects the proportion of units, with the smaller centres again accommodating the least amount of this type of floorspace. The greatest amount of vacant floorspace is located in Seaforth (47.9%), Waterloo (16.9%) and Old Roan (13.5%).

5.09 The district and local centres, like the proportion of units, have an above average level of convenience, retail service, financial/business service and vacant floorspace, in comparison to the respective national average figures.

Table 5.3: Diversity of Use (Floorspace) Figures **(**August 2011)

August 2011	Convenience	Comparison	Retail Service	Leisure Service	Financial / Business	Vacant
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Crosby DC	19.9%	25.8%	9.0%	24.4%	12.4%	8.4%
Formby DC	33.9%	27.9%	8.3%	14.3%	12.4%	3.2%
Maghull DC	21.3%	24.9%	14.0%	17.8%	13.2%	8.8%
Waterloo DC	18.5%	21.5%	9.9%	26.2%	7.0%	**16.9%**
Ainsdale	19.8%	37.3%	16.0%	20.2%	4.6%	2.1%
Birkdale	17.5%	25.7%	18.6%	19.1%	13.4%	5.6%
Churchtown	14.6%	27.2%	19.3%	20.7%	13.9%	4.3%
Netherton	38.4%	20.9%	7.7%	23.4%	1.8%	7.8%
Old Roan	30.4%	8.7%	14.8%	27.4%	5.1%	**13.5%**
Seaforth	4.9%	7.8%	7.9%	23.2%	8.3%	**47.9%**
Shakespeare St.	10.0%	46.7%	20.6%	11.6%	2.7%	8.3%
Sefton Average	20.8%	25.0%	13.3%	20.8%	8.6%	11.5%
UK Average*	**14.3%**	**37.0%**	**7.0%**	**22.8%**	**8.4%**	**9.8%**

Source: Site Visit - August 2011, Floorspace data from Sefton Council and data analysis by WYG, *UK Average Figure, Goad, August 2011

Health Check Indicator – Retailer Representation and Retailer Demand

5.10 The **number of national operators** in a centre can provide an important indicator of the confidence in the location. **Table 5.4** outlines the number of national operators as a percentage of total units in the centre (minus vacancies). Again, it is not surprising to discover that the highest proportion of national operators tend to be located in the largest centres (namely Formby, Crosby and Maghull).

Table 5.4: National Retailers in the Centres (August 2011)

August 2011	No. of National Retailers	Total No. of Units in the Centre (Minus Vacancies)	% of National Retailers
Crosby District Centre	27	87	31%
Formby District Centre	41	94	44%
Maghull District Centre	35	76	46%
Waterloo District Centre	24	168	14%
Ainsdale	11	74	15%
Birkdale	11	57	19%
Churchtown	10	67	15%
Netherton	12	27	44%
Old Roan	6	14	43%
Seaforth	4	27	15%
Shakespeare St.	4	37	11%
Sefton Average	17	66	25%

Source: Site Visit - August 2011

5.11 The **regional retail hierarchy** of the local and district centres, based on Venuescore's UK Shopping Venue Rankings (2011), identifies that the centres of Formby, Maghull, Crosby, Netherton, Litherland and Waterloo have all experienced a decline in their ranking between 2005 and 2011. However, the fall is ranking is 'skewed' by the fact that more centres have been added to the ranking overtime which affects a centres position immediately. This means that comparisons with 2005 results cannot really be made for centres at the lower level.

5.12 Full details of the hierarchy are included in **Appendix 2** and in **Table 5.5**. It should be noted that the hierarchy is not based on the Local Plan designation and several of the centres are not identified by Venuescore due to their limited size. Formby and Maghull are classed as Minor District Centres, whilst Crosby and Waterloo are both classed as Local Centres. The centres have been scored based on a methodology applied at the national level. The scores that are available for certain centres are: Formby (43), Maghull (38), Crosby (23), Netherton (20), and Waterloo (13). Surprisingly, despite its role and size as the largest centre in the study, Waterloo has the lowest score of only 13, with its ranking declining significantly between 2005 and 2011. This may be linked to the fact that it has the highest level of leisure service facilities which affects its overall retail ranking.

Table 5.5: The Sub-Regional Shopping Hierarchy

Centre	Score	Location Grade	Rank 2011	Rank 2007	Rank 2005	Change in Rank '05-'11
Formby	43	Minor District	667	543	605	↓ - 62
Maghull	38	Minor District	760	590	581	↓ - 179
Crosby	23	Local	1,261	886	1,002	↓ - 259
Netherton	20	Local	1,436	1,448	1,222	↓ - 214
Waterloo	13	Local	2,029	1,304	1,282	↓ - 747

Source: Venuescore (2011)

5.13 The relevant Focus reports were reviewed to determine the **retailer demand/ranking** of the district centres of Crosby, Formby and Maghull (no information is available for Waterloo). It was identified that all of the centres (as well as Southport and Bootle) had experienced a fall in their rankings from 2009, though this was particularly marked in Maghull, as evident in **Table 5.6**.

Table 5.6: Retail Ranking of the Centres

	1997	1999	2001	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Southport	97	109	107	115	116	133	149	194	109	103	126
Bootle	296	464	312	553	594	614	545	528	562	413	697
Crosby	409	474	393	572	613	665	696	675	660	440	697
Formby	686	630	621	516	463	517	669	770	522	364	473
Maghull	n/a	878	574	984	1,151	1,149	1,063	1,041	814	511	1,316

Source: Focus Report (December 2011)

5.14 The **retailer requirements** data (**Table 5.7**) also identifies that, alongside national trends, there has been a general decline in the number of retailers seeking to locate in the established centres. The Focus report identified that there were nine retailers seeking representation in Formby in 2010, compared to five in Crosby and just one in Maghull. However, the decline in retailer's requirements will also reflect the national situation where demand has declined rapidly since the economic downturn.

Table 5.7: Retailer Requirements of the Centres

	1997	1999	2001	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Southport	49	51	52	58	57	58	53	42	34	30	25
Bootle	12	8	17	9	9	9	13	14	7	7	5
Crosby	7	7	11	8	8	8	8	8	5	6	5
Formby	3	4	5	10	13	12	7	8	8	9	9
Maghull	0	1	6	2	1	1	2	2	3	4	1

Source: Focus Report (December 2011)

Health Check Indicator – Vacant Street-Level Property

5.15 **Table 5.8** outlines the number of vacant units and amount of vacant floorspace in the centres as at August 2011. Seaforth in particular has a significant level of vacancies, with 50.0% of the units and 47.9% of the floorspace noted as being vacant, in contrast to the national average figures of 11.9% and 9.8% respectively. Old Roan and Waterloo also have notably higher vacancy rates than the national and centre average figures.

Table 5.8: Vacant Units in August 2011

Centre	Total No. of Vacant Outlets	% of Outlets	Total Amount of Vacant Floorspace (sq m)	% of Floorspace
Crosby District Centre	11	11.2%	1,451	8.4%
Formby District Centre	7	6.9%	559	3.2%
Maghull District Centre	5	6.2%	1,173	8.8%
Waterloo District Centre	38	**18.4%**	4,767	**16.9%**
Ainsdale	4	5.1%	287	2.1%
Birkdale	2	3.4%	392	5.6%
Churchtown	3	2.3%	326	4.3%
Netherton	4	**12.9%**	399	7.8%
Old Roan	3	**17.6%**	215	**13.5%**
Seaforth	27	**50.0%**	2,599	**47.9%**
Shakespeare Street	3	7.5%	339	8.3%
Sefton Average	10	12.9%	1,137	11.5%
UK Average*	**-**	**11.9%**	**-**	**9.8%**

Source: Site Visit - August 2011, Floorspace data from Sefton Council and data analysis by WYG, *UK Average Figure, Goad, August 2011.

Summary

5.16 This section briefly summarises the findings from the site visit to each of the centres and highlights several of the outstanding PPS4 Indicators (including pedestrian flows, accessibility and the quality of the town centre environmental quality, etc) which were assessed by WYG.

Ainsdale Local Centre

5.17 Ainsdale is the largest local centre in the Borough, with the site visit in August 2011 identifying that there was a total of 78 units, comprising a total gross floorspace of 13,522 sq m. The centre is anchored by a Co-operative Food and also contains a good overall provision of retail and commercial services. The vacancy rates in Ainsdale, both for the number of vacancies and amount of vacant floorspace is less than half the national average figures. Whilst the proportion of national operators is below the overall centres average, Ainsdale does contain a variety of multiple retailers in the convenience, retail service, leisure service and financial and business service sectors. The pedestrian footfall in the centre was primarily concentrated around the Co-op and the small parade of stores at Sherwood House. In addition to the commercial sector, Ainsdale also contains a public library and police station, with two ATM machines also located in the centre.

5.18 To summarise, the site visit indicated that Ainsdale is an attractive centre which plays an important role as a key retail and service centre for the local area. This is particularly important due to the limited provision available in the nearby shopping parades and its location halfway between Southport and Formby.

Birkdale Local Centre

5.19 Birkdale is an attractive and popular small local centre, with 59 units located in a linear pattern along Liverpool Road comprising a total gross floorspace of 6,945 sq m. The Victorian shopping parades and tree-lined streets create a high quality environment, with the wide pavements encouraging pedestrian movement throughout the centre. Birkdale contains a good variety of retail and service units, including several national and independent convenience foostores, five retail banks and a Post Office, with low levels of vacant units also noted. There was a strong level of footfall in the centre on the day of the site visit, with the concentrated nature of Birkdale encouraging greater pedestrian movement between the units. This is particularly important due to the location of the railway line and level crossing which effectively divides the north and south of centre.

5.20 Birkdale is a strong centre with a good level of high quality national and independent retailers which appear to be trading well. The lack of vacancies in the centre is also a positive indicator. In addition to serving the needs of local residents, due to the type of the shops in the centre (for example Laura Ashley home store and The Brides Room), it appears that Birkdale also attracts shoppers from slightly further afield.

Churchtown Local Centre

5.21 Churchtown is located in the northern area of the Borough, with Southport town centre located approximately 5km to the south west. The site visit identified that there was a total of 70 units comprising a total floorspace of 7,618 sq m. The centre is effectively split into two separate areas on Cambridge Road and Botanic Road, with the health check indicators identifying different characteristics between these areas. Cambridge Road is a busy and well-used centre, with the 10 national retailers all located within this area of Churchtown. There is a strong level of vehicular and pedestrian movement, with a good provision of on-street parking in front of many of the units. In contrast, the units at Botanic Road are operated wholly by independent traders and there appeared to be less footfall in this area. Overall, Churchtown has a good level of convenience, retail service and financial and business service operators, whilst there is a shortfall in the amount of comparison and leisure service units and amount of floorspace. Vacancy rates in the centre were less than half the national average which indicates that Churchtown is performing strongly.

5.22 Churchtown is the northernmost centre in the Borough and it therefore serves an important role for residents in this area of Sefton. The junction of Cambridge Road and Marshside Road is also one of the key routes into Southport town centre, creating additional vehicular and pedestrian movement. To summarise, Churchtown is a popular local centre with a good environmental quality accommodating a variety of national and independent operators.

Crosby District Centre

5.23 Crosby is the third largest centre in the Study Area and comprises 98 units with a total gross floorspace of 17,287 sq m. The majority of the units are concentrated along the pedestrianised area of Liverpool Road and Moor Lane, with the Sainsbury's foodstore the key anchor tenant in Crosby. There is a strong representation from national operators in the centre (31% of units), including Boots, Home Bargains and the Post Office. This reflects Crosby's role as an important retail and service destination in the local area. The centre has a good level of convenience, retail service leisure service and financial/business service operators, though there is a shortfall in the provision of comparison goods units. Notwithstanding this, there is still a strong provision of national comparison retailers in the centre, including Hallmark, Oxfam and Superdrug.

5.24 The vacancy levels in Crosby were broadly similar to the national average figures, with a concentration of vacant units noted in the northern section of Moor Lane. Whilst these vacancies may detract from the overall good environmental quality of the centre, the tree-lined Moor Lane area helps to create an attractive pedestrian route. The outside seating arrangements in front of many of the cafes also makes the area appear more vibrant. Strong levels of pedestrian movement were noted at the Sainsbury's store and the other major national retailers, particularly the large Home Bargains store on Moor Lane.

Formby District Centre

5.25 Formby is located in the middle of the Borough and is the second largest centre (17,308 sq m across 101 units) in the Study Area. Due to the distance of Formby from other established centres, it performs an important role to local residents. It also contains a high proportion of national operators (44%) in all sectors, including Boots, Dorothy Perkins and Nat West. The key convenience anchor stores in Formby comprise the Waitrose, M&S Simply Food and Iceland units, with the high levels of pedestrian footfall experienced around these stores indicating that these are all performing well. In contrast to many of the other centres in the Study Area, Formby contains a good level of multiple and independent comparison operators. There is also a strong provision of retail service and financial/business service units, though there is a shortfall in leisure service operators. Vacancy levels in Formby were noted as being below the national average, with vacancies dispersed throughout the centre.

5.26 In summary, Formby is a popular district centre, with strong levels of national representation and good environmental quality attracting a high amount of pedestrian and vehicular movement.

Maghull District Centre

5.27 Maghull is located in the east of the Study Area and comprises a total of 81 units within a gross floorspace of 13,322 sq m. The busy centre is located at the junction of Westway (B5422), the A59 and Liverpool Road North (A5147). These key vehicular routes ensure a strong level of passing trade. The self-contained parade at Central Square on Westway comprises the majority of the stores, with clusters of other units also dispersed throughout the centre. The key foodstore anchor is the Morrisons unit, which is supported by a variety of other national and independent convenience stores, including Greggs, Lifestyle Express and Timpson. There is also a good provision of retail service and financial and business service operators in the centre, reflecting its important role as a key retail and service destination in the local area. This is also evident in the very high proportion (46%) of units which accommodate national operators (the highest figure of all the centres examined). Pedestrian footfall in the centre was noted as being concentrated at Central Square and the Morrisons store, with the traffic-light controlled crossings between these stores aiding pedestrian movement. In contrast, there appeared to be little activity on Liverpool Road North, although this may be attributable to the lack of national operators in this area.

5.28 Maghull is a popular and well used centre which contains a variety of operators, in addition to a health centre and police station. The presence of a significant number of national retailers in the centre reflects its role as an important shopping destination and clearly demonstrates that Maghull attracts shoppers from a large catchment area.

Netherton Local Centre

5.29 Netherton is a popular local centre in the south of the Study Area and comprises 31 units (5,118 sq m) within a self-contained parade of shops on one side of Glovers Lane. Whilst those centres which accommodate the highest proportion of national operators in the Study tend to comprise those with the greatest number of units (with the exception of Waterloo district centre), Netherton (and Old Roan) is different as despite accommodating a relatively low level of units, it has a very high proportion of national multiples (44% of outlets). The 12 national operators include six convenience stores (including Greggs, Heron Foods, Iceland and Somerfield) and one comparison unit (Home Bargains). There is a shortfall in the provision of financial and business service operators, with only one store (Cash Generator) in the centre, though there are two ATM facilities located outside of the Martins unit and William Hill betting shop. The footfall in Netherton was noted as being strong on the day of the site visit, with wide pavements and the pedestrianised square aiding movement in the centre.

5.30 To summarise, Netherton is a strong centre which has high levels of both national operators and activity. The health centre, nursery and housing office in the north of the centre is also likely to attract passing trade and linked trips to the retail units.

Old Roan Local Centre

5.31 Old Roan is one of the smallest centres in the Study Area, with the 17 units comprising a total gross floorspace of 1,589 sq m. There are two separate self-contained parades of shops on both sides of Altway, with the largest unit identified as the Tesco Express store. The centre accommodates a high proportion of national retailers (43% of outlets), including Domino's, Nat West and the Post Office. There is also a variety of other operators in Old Roan, including three fast food units, a butcher, pharmacy, charity shop and three health and beauty salons. There are three vacant units in the centre, though these appeared to be in a good state of repair and are being actively marketed by property agents. The location of the centre parallel to the A59 (Ormskirk Road) and close to the M57 motorway, ensures that there is a constant flow of vehicular traffic. The centre is also located opposite Old Roan railway station and close to residential properties which will also encourage pedestrian footfall. Pedestrian footfall in the centre was predominantly focused at the Tesco Express store and the Post Office.

5.32 Overall, the local centre is an important retail and service destination, with the visitors to the centre comprising both local residents and passing trade due to the location of Old Roan next to the M57. The high presence of national operators in Old Roan is also likely to attract greater numbers of shoppers.

Seaforth Local Centre

5.33 Seaforth comprises a terrace of units on Seaforth Road and a small purpose-built parade of shops at Stella Precinct. The 54 units comprise a total gross floorspace of 5,424 sq m and include a newsagent, butcher, off licence, pharmacy, three building firms, three fast food outlets, two medical services and a Post Office. There are four national operators in the centre (15% of the outlets in operation), namely Boots Pharmacy, Booze Buster, the Post Office and William Hill. The site visit identified that half of the units were vacant, with these dispersed throughout the centre. The vacancies detract from the overall environmental quality of Seaforth and make the area appear extremely run-down and vulnerable.

5.34 Seaforth is extremely vulnerable, as evidenced by the lack of retail and service provision, the high vacancy rates, the poor environmental quality and the low pedestrian footfall rates which were all noted by WYG on the site visit.

Shakespeare Street Local Centre

5.35 Shakespeare Street is located to the south of Southport town centre, with the 40 units comprising a total gross floorspace of 4,092 sq m. The linear centre accommodates a good level of comparison and retail service outlets, though there is an identified shortfall in convenience, leisure service and financial and business service units. Vacancy rates in the centre are below the national average. Shakespeare Street contains the lowest proportion of national retailers (11%) of the centres in the Study Area, though the high level of independent retailers may be attributed to its close proximity to Southport town centre. There was a lack of pedestrian movement on the day of the site visit, which may also be attributable to the limited number of national operators (4) which are located in the centre and which could help to attract shoppers. There is a lack of financial services in the area, though an ATM machine is available at the Co-operative Food store.

5.36 The centre serves a local function only, with a lack of national operators which in turn impacts on the overall attractiveness of the central as a retail destination.

Waterloo District Centre

5.37 Waterloo comprises a total of 206 units within a gross floorspace of 28,271 sq m. The largest unit is occupied by Co-operative Food on Brighton Road, with other major stores in the centre including Home Bargains and Iceland on South Road. There is a good provision of convenience, retail service and leisure service operators in Waterloo, with deficiencies noted in the comparison and financial and business service sectors. The vacancy rates in the centre are the second highest in the Study Area, with vacancies distributed evenly throughout the centre. Waterloo also contains a low proportion of national retailers (14%), especially when compared to the levels noted in the other district centres.

5.38 To summarise, Waterloo performs an important role in the locality and serves a wide catchment area. However, there are several indicators which suggest that the district centre is performing poorly. In particular, vacancy levels in the centre are high, the proportion of national retailers is relatively low and the regional retail hierarchy figures from Venuescore indicate that it has experienced a significant fall in its rankings between 2005 and 2011.

Conclusions

5.39 The assessment by WYG to determine the health of each of the 11 district and local centres in Sefton has indicated that the majority of these are performing well, are vital and viable centres and perform a key role serving the local population, whilst also continuing to complement the established town centres of Southport and Bootle. However, it is apparent that Seaforth continues to struggle with the high levels of vacancy and the poor environmental quality detracting from the overall health of the centre. Therefore, the Council should carefully consider the future of this centre and at this stage it would seem sensible to down grade the centre to a shopping parade given the lack of facilities and its poor state of health. WYG also believe that Shakespeare Street should be re-classified as a shopping parade, as previously recommended in the 2004 Study. Of the district centres, it would appear that Waterloo is not performing as well although much of this is attributable to the strong leisure service provision which means that the centre is often more vital and viable in the evenings. Whilst Ainsdale (currently a local centre) would appear to be of a similar scale to the other district centres, the lack of a large foodstore anchor would suggest that it would not meet the true definition as set out in the NPPF (and the former PSS4) and it therefore should remain a local centre for now. We are aware that there may be plans to put a supermarket in the centre in the future but these have yet to be realised.

6.0 Summary of the Vitality and Viability of the Shopping Parades

Introduction

6.01 In addition to reviewing the 11 district and local centres in the Borough, 94 shopping parades were also identified by Sefton Council to be reviewed as part of the Study. Site visits were conducted to each of the parades to determine their health and this was supplemented by desk-based research. The detailed vitality and viability assessment and site plan of each shopping parade is included in **Appendix 3**.

6.02 Policy R7 of the UDP notes that local shopping parades comprise small groups of shops and other services which serve the local area, but contain fewer facilities than a local centre. Many parades comprise a small number of shops, which could include a convenience store, post office, chemist and off licence, with Policy R7 also noting that the parades may also have many vacant units. Table 1 in **Appendix 3** provides an overview of the facilities available in each of the parade centres. For the purposes of the analysis, each of the parades has been sorted into 16 defined sub-areas, as outlined below. Please note that the number in brackets after the parade name indicates the relevant map reference.

Filter Methodology

6.03 The site visits enabled WYG to determine the current provision of key facilities in each of the parades, namely whether there was a convenience store (which sold a range of food goods), pharmacy or Post Office. A score of four was then given to the parades which accommodated each of these key attractors (therefore a maximum of 12), with those locations without any of the facilities given a score of zero. A series of composite (weighted) indices were also adopted by WYG which combined a number of variable indicators (namely whether there was an ATM, the percentage of national operators in the centre and the percentage of vacant units) in order to create an overall weighted scoring system. Those parades with one or more ATMs were given a score of 3, those without were given zero. Those parades with more than 25% of national operators were given a score of four, those with between 1 – 24% a score of two and those with 0% given a score of zero. The proportion of vacancies in the parades was also assessed, with those locations with between 0 – 10% of vacant units receiving a score of six, those with between 11 – 24% receiving a score of four, those with between 25% - 49% given a score of two and those with 50% and above given a score of zero.

6.04 The maximum score that any one centre could achieve was 25.

6.05 The results were then collated by WYG, with those parades with a total score of between zero and seven generally deemed a Category 3 (manage effective decline) parade, those with a score between eight and seventeen were classed as a Category 2 (shopping parade) location and those with a total score of between 18 and 25 were Category 1 (key shopping) parades. Full details of the assessment of the parades are outlined in **Table 6.1**.

6.06 However, it should be noted that this quantitative analysis was also supplemented by a qualitative appraisal of each of the parades. The pedestrian footfall and overall environmental health of the parade, for example, were also important considerations which were reviewed by WYG. The previous 2004 Study had also considered that the proximity of the shopping parades to other existing vital local services was another critical element. This 'proximity to other centres' filter was therefore also adopted by WYG for this Study. The final categorisation of the centres may therefore not reflect the total score as shown in **Table 6.1**.

6.07 WYG were able to filter these results and rank the position of each of the centres and parades in the Study Area. This also allowed WYG to benchmark the scores of the centres against each other and identify any deficiencies in the distribution of the facilities in the Borough. A comparison could then be taken with the 2004 Study to identify if there had been any changes between the two Studies. However, it should be noted that the filters used in this Study varied slightly from the 2004 Study due to a greater number of factors from the site visits being reviewed. The environmental quality of the parades and the amount of pedestrian footfall, for example, were both key indicators (as highlighted in the former PPS4) which WYG used to determine the health of the centres. The boundaries of the centres and parades has also varied and therefore a direct comparison between the two data-sets has not been possible. The 2004 Study only reviewed 55 parades, whilst the 2012 Study has assessed 94 parades in the Borough.

6.08 WYG identified three categories that each of the 94 parades could be ranked into, namely Category 1 (key shopping parades), Category 2 (shopping parades) and Category 3 (manage effective decline).

Category 1 – Key Shopping Parade

6.09 These parades, based on the criteria adopted by WYG, contain a strong provision of facilities, accommodate a good proportion of national retailers and there is a low level of vacancies. There is a good environmental quality and pedestrian footfall is high in the parade. It performs a key role in the local area and has a wide catchment area which is normally due to the strong provision of its retail and service provision and its distance from other centres.

Category 2 – Shopping Parade

6.010 These parades contain a good provision of facilities and national operators, but a proportion of the units tend to accommodate independent retailers. Vacancies in these parades vary and these centres tend to comprise fewer units and amount of retail/service floorspace than the Category 1 parades.

Category 3 – No Policy Protection or Manage Effective Decline

6.10 These parades accommodate a limited provision of retail and service operators, with high levels of vacancies identified in these locations. The low level of national multiples in the parade and poor environmental quality is also unlikely to attract many shoppers, as evident by the lack of pedestrian footfall in these parades.

Applying the Filter Methodology

6.11 Table 6.1 indicates the assessment adopted by WYG to sort each of the 94 parades into one of the three categories, with the environmental quality, pedestrian footfall and the proximity of the parades to other local centres also key assessment criteria, as outlined above.

Table 6.1: Parades Filter Methodology

No.	Parade Centre	No. of Facilities*	No. of ATMs¹	% National Operators²	% of Vacancies³	Total Score	Category
1	Sandbrook Road	1	0	0%	25%	6	**3**
2	Station Road	1	0	0%	50%	4	**3**
3	Altway	3	1	50%	17%	23	**1**
4	Upper Aughton Road	2	0	10%	13%	14	**2**
5	Eastbourne Road	0	0	0%	29%	2	**3**
6	Liverpool Road	1	0	3%	6%	12	**2**
7	Grantham/Guildford Rd	2	0	20%	0%	16	**2**
8	Heathfield Rd (North)	0	0	0%	100%	0	**3**
9	Heathfield Rd (South)	1	1	0%	14%	11	**2**
10	Hillside Road	1	0	0%	0%	10	**2**
11	Aintree Road	2	0	17%	8%	16	**2**
12	Marsh Lane (West)	0	0	0%	56%	0	**3**
13	Marsh Lane (East)	0	0	0%	60%	0	**3**
14	Orrell Road	2	1	13%	6%	19	**1**
15	Harris Drive	0	0	0%	0%	6	**3**
16	Hawthorne Road (1)	0	0	0%	0%	6	**3**
17	Hawthorne Road (2)	0	0	0%	67%	0	**3**
18	Hawthorne Road (3)	0	1	25%	34%	9	**3**
19	Hawthorne Road (4)	1	0	7%	55%	6	**3**
20	Irlam Road	0	0	14%	0%	8	**2**
21	Knowsley Road	3	2	15%	25%	19	**2**
22	Linacre Lane	1	0	11%	0%	12	**1**
23	Litherland Road	2	0	14%	36%	12	**2**
24	Stanley Road (1)	1	0	20%	17%	10	**2**
25	Stanley Road (2)	2	0	13%	34%	12	**2**
26	Stanley Road (3)	1	1	0%	0%	13	**2**
27	The Crescent	2	0	25%	11%	16	**1**
28	Stanley/Linacre Road	3	3	5%	37%	19	**2**
29	Cooks Road	0	0	25%	20%	8	**2**
30	Bridge Road	2	1	3%	16%	17	**2**
31	Brompton Avenue	3	1	6%	6%	23	**1**
32	Brownmoor Lane	1	0	22%	0%	12	**1**
33	Coronation Road	1	0	0%	8%	10	**2**

34	Liverpool Rd/Endbutt Lane	1	1	0%	23%	11	**2**
35	Myers Road East	2	0	0%	0%	14	**2**
36	Ford Lane	1	1	20%	29%	11	**2**
37	Church Road (1)	1	0	5%	5%	12	**2**
38	Church Road (2)	0	0	0%	0%	6	**2**
39	Liverpool Road	1	1	40%	0%	17	**1**
40	Victoria Road	0	0	0%	0%	6	**2**
41	Duke Street	0	0	0%	10%	2	**2**
42	Harington Road	2	1	25%	11%	19	**1**
43	Redgate	1	0	0%	0%	10	**2**
44	Queens Road	1	0	25%	0%	14	**2**
45	Bridge Road	1	0	0%	40%	6	**3**
46	Church Road	0	0	0%	0%	6	**2**
47	Kirkstone Road North	2	0	8%	20%	14	**1**
48	Sefton Road (1)	2	1	24%	19%	17	**1**
49	Ennerdale Drive	0	0	17%	0%	8	**2**
50	Pendle View	1	0	0%	25%	6	**3**
51	Sefton Road (2)	2	1	100%	0%	21	**1**
52	Sonning Avenue	1	0	0%	0%	10	**2**
53	Liverpool Road	2	0	13%	11%	14	**2**
54	Moss Lane	1	0	20%	0%	12	**1**
55	Liverpool Road North	2	0	8%	20%	14	**2**
56	Liverpool Rd South (1)	0	0	0%	18%	4	**3**
57	Liverpool Rd South (2)	2	1	28%	10%	21	**1**
58	Moorhey Road	1	0	0%	20%	8	**2**
59	Northway	1	0	25%	0%	14	**2**
60	Deyes Lane	2	1	31%	0%	21	**1**
61	Dover Road	1	0	8%	0%	12	**2**
62	Tree View Court	2	0	14%	18%	14	**1**
63	Waddicar Lane (1)	1	0	50%	0%	14	**2**
64	Waddicar Lane (2)	0	0	0%	20%	4	**2**
65	Carr Meadow Hey	0	0	0%	50%	0	**3**
66	Copy Lane	1	0	0%	25%	6	**2**
67	Homestead Avenue	0	0	0%	67%	0	**3**
68	Park Lane (1)	1	0	0%	0%	10	**2**
69	Park Lane (2)	2	1	50%	0%	21	**1**
70	Park Lane (3)	0	0	0%	33%	2	**3**
71	Randall Drive	2	0	50%	0%	18	**2**
72	Rawson Road	1	0	40%	17%	12	**1**
73	Seaforth Road	1	0	0%	20%	8	**2**
74	Ash Street	0	0	0%	25%	2	**3**
75	Hart Street	0	0	0%	50%	0	**3**

76	Bispham Road	3	1	13%	3%	23	**1**
77	Bold Street	0	0	0%	9%	6	**2**
78	Bridge Grove	0	0	0%	0%	6	**2**
79	Cable Street	0	0	0%	8%	6	**2**
80	Hoghton Street	1	0	17%	4%	12	**2**
81	Churchill Avenue	0	0	0%	17%	4	**3**
82	Portland/King Street	0	0	6%	20%	6	**2**
83	Manchester Road	0	0	8%	0%	8	**2**
84	Hesketh Drive	2	0	13%	0%	16	**1**
85	High Park Place	2	0	10%	0%	16	**1**
86	Ovington Drive	2	0	33%	0%	18	**1**
87	Queens Road	2	1	25%	0%	21	**1**
88	Rufford Road	3	0	8%	0%	20	**1**
89	Sussex Road	0	0	20%	29%	4	**3**
90	The Crescent	3	1	44%	0%	25	**1**
91	Crosby Road North	0	0	0%	17%	4	**2**
92	Oxford Road	0	0	0%	50%	0	**3**
93	Ashley Road	0	0	0%	33%	2	**3**
94	Dale Acre Drive	0	1	0%	67%	3	**3**

Nb. the figures in the number of facilities and ATM facilities tabs in Table 6.1 indicate the number of facilities rather than the score given. * No. of facilities – comprises convenience store, Post Office and pharmacy (each facility receives a score of four), [1] No. of ATM machines (1+ ATM machines = score of 3, 0 ATM machines = score of zero), [2] Percentage of national operators (excluding vacancies in the parade) (25%+ of units = score of four, 24% - 1% of units = score of 2, 0% of units = score of zero), [3] Percentage of vacancies (0-10% of units = score of 6, 11-24% of units = score of 4, 25%-49% of units = score of two and 50%+ of units = score of zero).

Ainsdale Area

6.12 The Sandbrook (1) and Station (2) Road parades both contain four units and each comprise a floorspace below 330 sq m. Whilst there is one key facility in each parade (Sandbrook Road accommodates a convenience store, with a pharmacy located in Station Road), the lack of ATM facilities or national retailers and high vacancy rates (25% and 50% respectively) indicates that these centres only perform a minor role as shopping parades in the Borough. As a result, these have been identified as Category 3 parades.

6.13 Station Road was previously noted in 2004 Study as being located within Ainsdale district centre. WYG believe that, due to its location immediately adjacent to the centre and its small size, it should be considered as being part of Ainsdale district centre rather than a standalone parade.

Altway Area

6.14 The Altway (3) parade is an important retail and service destination, with a strong provision of facilities for local residents, including a convenience store, pharmacy and Post Office. An ATM machine is also located in the Parade, with the high representation from national retailers (50% of the units accommodate multiple operators) indicating that the centre is performing extremely well.

6.15 The 2004 Study had noted that the parade was a well used location serving the local catchment and should be protected. Based on the amended criteria adopted for this Study, WYG believe that Altway should be re-classified from a shopping parade (Category 2) to a key shopping parade (Category 1).

Birkdale Area

6.16 The size and health of the seven parades in Birkdale is varied, with two of the locations (Eastbourne Road and Heathfield Road (North)) being ranked as Category 3 (manage effective decline) parades, with the remaining five parades being classified as Category 2 (shopping parades). Grantham Road/Guildford Road (7) is the strongest parade in the centre, with a good level of facilities, high percentage of national retailers and a lack of vacancies. Upper Aughton Road (4), Liverpool Road (6), Heathfield Road South (9) and Hillside Road (10) are also performing well. In contrast, Eastbourne Road (5) and Heathfield Road North (8) both have a lack of facilities or ATM access, accommodate no national retailers and have high vacancy rates of 29% and 100% respectively.

6.17 The 2004 Study had identified parade nos. 4, 5, 6 and 10 as being Shopping Parades which should be protected, though future changes should be monitored. As part of this Study, WYG believe that

Eastbourne Road (5) should be re-classified as a Category 3 (manage effective decline) parade due to its lack of key facilities.

Bootle Area

6.18 The 18 parades are located close to Bootle town centre and vary significantly in size, accommodating from three (Hawthorne Road 1) to 101 units (Stanley Road/Linacre Road). Similarly, the health check indicators have identified a significant variation in the quality of the parades, with Orrell Road (14), Linacre Lane (22) and The Crescent (27) identified as being the centres with the most vitality and viability. A total of seven parades are classified in Category 3, with six of these parades located along the A5090-Hawthorne Road, to the east of Bootle town centre.

6.19 WYG has revised the classification of two of the centres from the previous 2004 Study, namely: The Crescent (27) and Stanley Road/Linacre Road (28) which have all experienced an improvement in their ranking in the parades hierarchy since 2004. The Stanley Road/Linacre Road parade provides a strong level of retail and service units, though the high vacancy rate and lack of national retailers detracts from the overall quality of the parade. WYG believe that it may be deemed beneficial to split the parade into several small blocks of units, particularly as there appeared to be four distinct areas, as evident on the site plan (**Appendix 3**).

Crosby Area

6.20 The seven parades have all been classified as either Category 1 (key shopping parade) or 2 (shopping parade), indicating that all of these locations are currently performing well and clearly serve an important role in the local area. Brompton Avenue (31) and Brownmoor Lane (32) are identified as being Category 1 locations which reflects the level of facilities and low vacancies in each parades.

6.21 The classification of the Brompton Avenue (31) parade has been amended by WYG to reflect its role as a key retail and service destination in the local area, whilst also noting that it is close to Crosby district centre. The boundary of the parade should also be amended to include the Co-operative Food unit on College Road. WYG also recommend that Cooks Road (29) parade be incorporated into Crosby district centre due to its size and location immediately adjacent to the centre.

Ford Lane

6.22 The Ford Lane parade (36) is a self-contained parade of units which serve an important role in the local area, particularly as it accommodates an ATM facility and Post Office. The parade was not included in the previous 2004 Study, though it has been classified as a Category 2 shopping parade as it serves a strong local role.

Formby Area

6.23 Formby district centre is the second largest centre in the Borough and is an attractive and popular retail and service destination which meets the requirements of a large catchment area. The nearby eight satellite parades also play important roles and meet the day-to-day requirements of local residents. WYG has categorised Liverpool Road (39) and Harington Road (42) as Category 1 key shopping parades, with the remaining parades of Church Road 1 (37), Church Road 2 (38), Victoria Road (40), Duke Street (41), Redgate (43) and Queens Road (44) identified as being Category 2 shopping parades.

6.24 The classification of the parades has not been amended from the previous 2004 Study.

Litherland Area

6.25 The health of the eight parades in Litherland centre is varied, with three of the locations being classified as either Category 1 (key shopping) or Category 2 (shopping) parades, with the remaining two identified as being Category 3 parades. Kirkstone Road North (47), Sefton Road 1 (48) and Sefton Road 2 (51) are the key parades as they contain the majority of the facilities and national operators, with low levels of vacancies also identified in these areas. In contrast, Bridge Road (45) and Pendle View (50) parades contain limited facilities, no national multiples and a high level of vacancies.

6.26 The retail hierarchy of four of the parades has not varied since the 2004 Study, with the remaining four parades not identified in the 2004 Study.

Lydiate Area

6.27 The two Lydiate parades are located to the north of Maghull district centre and perform an important retail and service role for the local area. Moss Lane (54) has been identified by WYG as a key shopping parade (Category 1) due to the presence of the Londis convenience store and its isolated location in the east of the Borough. Liverpool Road (53) parade comprises nine units and is close to the Liverpool Road North (55) parade and Maghull district centre. There is a good level of facilities in the parade and it appeared to be trading well on the day of the site visit.

6.28 The previous 2004 Study had identified Liverpool Road as a shopping parade and Moss Lane as a key shopping parade. The classification of these parades (Category 1 and 2) has not been changed as a result of this Study.

Maghull Area

6.29 The eight parades comprise six centres to the south, one to the east and one to the north of Maghull district centre. WYG has identified that there are three key shopping parades (Category 1), namely: Liverpool Road South 2 (57), Deyes Lane (60) and Tree View Court (62). These accommodate two key facilities each, a good level of national operators and a low proportion of vacancies. Liverpool Road North (55), Moorhey Road (58), Northway (59) and Dover Road (61) are ranked as shopping parades (Category 2) as they contain fewer facilities and a number of indicators are weaker than the identified key shopping parades (Category 1). Liverpool Road South 1 (56) is identified as a Category 3 (manage effective decline) parade as there is a lack of key facilities and national operators in this location, though it is close to parade No's 57, 59 and 61.

6.30 WYG has identified in the Study Area that Deyes Lane should be classified a key shopping parade (Category 1) due to the high level of facilities in the centre and despite its location close to Maghull district centre. It was previously identified in the 2004 Study as a shopping parade. WYG has also re-classified Dover Road from a key shopping parade to a shopping parade (Category 2) as there is a lack of key facilities and national operators in this location (the Lidl foodstore is located outside of the parade).

Melling Area

6.31 Waddicar Lane parades 1 (63) & 2 (64) are located in the east of the Study Area and both have a limited level of retail and service provision. Waddicar Lane 1 consists of only two units (a pharmacy and health and beauty salon), but the adjoining medical surgery is likely to attract additional visitors to the parade. Although Waddicar Lane 2 appeared to be trading quietly on the day of the site visit, the presence of a variety of operators in the parade (including a convenience store, barbers, estate agent and take away unit) indicates that it performs a key role in the local area. Although both of the centres were not identified in the previous 2004 Study, this review has classified both locations as shopping parades (Category 2).

Netherton Area

6.32 The eight parades are located close to Netherton and Old Roan local centres and each comprises between two or eight units. Park Lane 2 (69) and Dale Acre Drive (94) are the only parades that were previously identified in the 2004 Study. Park Lane 2 is classified as a key shopping parade (Category 1) due to the presence of key facilities and national operators, in addition to the lack of vacancies. Copy Lane (66), Park Lane 1 (68) and Randall Drive (71) each contain only a limited provision of facilities, but because each parade accommodates a convenience foodstore, they have been classed as shopping parades (Category 2). The lack of key facilities and high vacancy rates at Carr Meadow Hey (65), Homestead Avenue (67), Park Lane 3 (70) and Dale Acre Drive (94) has meant that these have all been classed as Category 3 parades. It was noted in the previous Study that Dale Acre Drive required comprehensive improvement in order to make it a key shopping parade. This has not taken place, and as a result, it has been identified as a Category 3 site.

Seaforth Area

6.33 Rawson Road (72) is situated halfway between Waterloo district centre and the poorly performing Seaforth local centre, and comprises six units including two convenience stores. It is identified as a key shopping parade (Category 1) as it plays an important role in the area and its location is relatively isolated. Seaforth Road (73) is located to the south of Seaforth local centre and comprises only five units, of which three of these are convenience stores or off-licences. It is classed as a shopping parade (Category 2) due to its provision of convenience foodstores and its close proximity to Seaforth local centre.

6.34 The parades in Seaforth were not reviewed as part of the previous 2004 Study.

Southport Area

6.35 The number of facilities available at the 17 parades in the centre varies greatly, from four to 69 units. WYG has ranked each of the locations and identified six Category 1 parades, six Category 2 parades and five Category 3 parades. Bispham Road (76), Hesketh Drive (84), High Park Place (85), Ovington Drive (86), Queens Road (87) and Rufford Road (88) are the strongest parades, with high levels of facilities and low vacancy rates noted in these locations. WYG identified that the weakest parades were Ash Street (74), Hart Street (75), Churchill Avenue (81), Sussex Road (89) and Ashley Road (93). Five of the parades, namely Bold Street (77), Bridge Grove (78), Cable Street (79), Hoghton Street (80) and Portland Street/King Street (82) are located adjacent to the Southport centre and WYG believe that these should be incorporated into the town centre boundary.

6.36 There have been several amendments from the previous 2004 Study, for example, Ash Street was formerly identified as a shopping parade, though WYG have re-classified the location to a Category 3 parade. Similarly, the classification of Manchester Road (84) has been amended from a Category 1 to a Category 2 parade. In contrast, Hesketh Drive and High Park Place parades have improved their ranking from Category 2 (shopping parades) to Category 1 (key shopping parades).

Thornton Area

6.37 The Crescent (90) is located to the north-east of Crosby district centre and the facilities in this location play an important role in the local area. The previous 2004 Study had identified it as a key shopping parade and WYG recommend that this classification is maintained. There is a strong provision of retail and service facilities in the parade, with the other health indictors also clearly demonstrating that the centre is performing extremely well. Key facilities in the parade include the Londis foodstore, Post Office and independent pharmacy unit, as well as an ATM facility. The lack of vacancies and the high proportion of national operators in the parade is also a good indication of the health of the centre. The Aldi foodstore opposite the parade is also likely to attract additional shoppers to the area.

Waterloo Area

6.38 Crosby Road North (91) and Oxford Road (92) are located close to Waterloo district centre and both contain a lack of key facilities or national operators. Oxford Road in particular also has a high level of vacancies (50% of the 10 units), with one of the units (out of six) in Crosby Road North also vacant. The health of Oxford Road has declined since the previous 2004 Study, with the classification of the parade falling from Category 2 (shopping parade) to a Category 3 (manage effective decline) parade. WYG believe that due to Crosby Road North's limited role as a shopping parade and its close proximity to Waterloo district centre, it may be appropriate to consider incorporating it into the district centre boundary.

Conclusions

6.39 The assessment to determine the health of each of the 94 parades has indicated that the majority of the parades in Sefton are performing well, appear to be trading healthily and perform a key role serving the local population. These are identified as being either Category 1 (key shopping parades) or Category 2 (shopping parades) locations. However, it is also apparent that a number of the parades are performing poorly, with the site visits indicating that the health of these locations may be vulnerable. These are classified as Category 3 parades and tend to be identified by their lack of key facilities, high vacancies and poor environmental quality.

Table 6.2: Hierarchy of the 94 Parades

Category 1 - Key Shopping Parades (24)		
Altway (3)	Orrell Road (14)	Linacre Lane (22)
The Crescent (27)	Brompton Avenue (31)°	Brownmoor Lane (32)
Liverpool Road (39)	Harington Road (42)	Kirkstone Road North (47)
Sefton Road (48)	Sefton Road (51)	Moss Lane (54)
Liverpool Road South 2 (57)	Deyes Lane (60)	Tree View Court (62)
Park Lane 2 (69)	Rawson Road (72)	Bispham Road (76)
Hesketh Drive (84)	High Park Place (85)	Ovington Drive (86)
Queens Road (87)	Rufford Road (88)	The Crescent (90)

Category 2 - Shopping Parades (46)		
Upper Aughton Road (4)	Liverpool Road (6)	Grantham/Guildford Road (7)
Heathfield Road (South) (9)	Hillside Road (10)	Aintree Road (11)
Irlam Road (20)	Knowsley Road (21)	Litherland Road (23)
Stanley Road (24)	Stanley Road 2 (25)	Stanley Road 3 (26)
Stanley Road/Linacre Road (28)	Cooks Road (29)[1]	Bridge Road (30)
Coronation Road (33)	Liverpool Rd/Endbutt L (34)	Myers Road East (35)
Ford Lane (36)	Church Road 1 (37)	Church Road 2 (38)
Victoria Road (40)	Duke Street (41)	Redgate (43)
Queens Road (44)	Church Road (46)	Ennerdale Drive (49)
Sonning Avenue (52)	Liverpool Road (53)	Liverpool Road (55)
Moorhey Road (58)	Northway (59)	Dover Road (61)
Waddicar Lane 1 (63)	Waddicar Lane 2 (64)	Copy Lane (66)
Park Lane 1 (68)	Randall Drive (71)	Seaforth Road (73)
Bold Street (77)[2]	Bridge Grove (78)[2]	Cable Street (79)[2]
Hoghton Street (80)[2]	Portland/King Street (82)[2]	Manchester Road (83)
Crosby Road North (91)[3]		
Category 3 - Manage Effective Decline (24)		
Sandbrook Road (1)	Station Road (2)*	Eastbourne Road (5)
Heathfield Road (North) (8)	Marsh Lane (West) (12)	Marsh Lane (East) (13)
Harris Drive (15)	Hawthorne Road 1 (16)	Hawthorne Road 2 (17)
Hawthorne Road 3 (18)	Hawthorne Road 4 (19)	Bridge Road (45)
Pendle View (50)	Liverpool Road South 1 (56)	Carr Meadow Hey (65)
Homestead Avenue (67)	Park Lane 3 (70)	Ash Street (74)
Hart Street (75)	Churchill Avenue (81)	Sussex Road (89)
Oxford Road (92)	Ashley Road (93)	Dale Acre Drive (94)

[0] - WYG recommends that the adjacent Co-op store is incorporated into the Brompton Avenue parade boundary

[1] - WYG recommends that this parade is incorporated into Crosby district centre

[2] - WYG recommends that this parade is incorporated into Southport town centre

[3] - WYG recommends that this parade is incorporated into Waterloo district centre

* - WYG recommends that this parade is incorporated into Ainsdale local centre

7.0 Distribution & Provision of Facilities in the Study Area

7.01 The 11 district and local centres and 94 shopping parades in the Study Area are distributed throughout Sefton Borough with different concentrations in different areas. For example, the distance of Formby and Maghull district centres from the other settlements means that these perform an important role in serving the needs of local residents in the wider catchment area. The local centres perform a key supplementary role to the larger town and district centres, for example Netherton and Old Roan are located halfway between Maghull and Waterloo district centres and therefore serve an important function for residents in this location.

Location of Convenience Foodstores

7.02 The quality and range of goods sold in the convenience stores in the Borough varies, with the term 'convenience foodstore' applying only to those units which sell a variety of food products, rather than general CTN (confectionery, tobacco and news) stores. In addition, the parades often do not include large supermarkets within their boundary. The survey has identified the location of convenience stores in the Study Area, with 52 of the 94 parades accommodating at least one foodstore unit.

7.03 The northern section of the Study Area includes Ainsdale, Birkdale, Churchtown and Shakespeare Street local centres (alongside Southport town centre), which each contain a good provision of convenience stores. There are 26 shopping parades in this area, of which 11 of these accommodate at least one convenience unit. There is an identified lack of convenience stores in the parades nearest Southport town centre, but this can be attributed to the presence of large supermarkets in and around the town centre, including Asda, Sainsbury's and Morrisons. The Freshway store at Rufford Road (parade no. 88) on the northern periphery of the Study Area is a key unit due to its location in a relatively isolated position in the Borough.

7.04 The central area of the Study Area, around Formby district centre comprises eight parades, of which four of these (nos. 37, 42, 43 and 44) accommodate at least one convenience store. It should be noted that all of the remaining parades include a convenience unit, though for the purposes of this Study, it was deemed that these did not sell a sufficient variety of food products (for example they were off-licences or CTN units). Formby district centre also accommodates an M&S Simply Food unit, Iceland and a large Waitrose store.

7.05 The three centres in the east of the Study Area, namely Netherton, Old Roan and Maghull district centre are supplemented by 19 parades, of which 12 of these accommodate at least one convenience store. Netherton is an isolated local centre, though the presence of 12 national operators in this location, including Heron Foods, Iceland and Somerfield indicates that it serves an important role within a wider catchment area. There is also a strong provision of convenience stores in the southern centres and parades in the Borough, with good levels recorded close to Crosby district centre. Of the 41 parades in this area, 25 of these accommodate at least one convenience store.

Location of Pharmacies

7.06 The site visits identified that pharmacies are dispersed throughout the Study Area, with 30 of the parades accommodating at least one pharmacy unit. The northern area of the Borough includes several pharmacies in each of the district and local centres, as well as in seven of the parades. Formby district centre includes three pharmacies, with parade no. 42 (Harington Road) to the west of the centre also accommodating an independent chemist. There is a strong provision of pharmacies in the south of the Study Area. As noted in the 2004 Study, the pharmacies in Netherton and Old Roan local centres perform a key role in this area of the Borough as there is a lack of other stores in the surrounding parades. Bootle and Southport town centres both contain two pharmacies each, with the centres and local parades clearly playing an important role in supporting the provision of these services in the Borough.

Location of Post Offices

7.07 All of the district and local centres, with the exception of Churchtown, accommodate a Post Office, though parade no. 84 is close to the centre and does contain one. A total of 17 of the 94 parades accommodate a Post Office and these tend to be located on the outskirts of the centres. There are eight Post Offices in the north, two in the centre, ten in the south and six in the east of the Study Area (including the district and local centres), with a particular concentration around Bootle.

Summary

7.08 The Study has undertaken a detailed quantitative and qualitative assessment of the retail and service provision within the 11 district and local centres and 94 shopping parades in the Borough. It is clear that the parades play a key role in supporting and enhancing the role of the centres by providing a more localised day-to-day service for residents. In addition, the parades enable the local population to travel shorter distances to access basic retail and service provision in their area.

8.0 Walk Time Analysis of the Centres and Parades

8.01 WYG has also undertaken a review of the distribution of the centres and parades in the Borough, based on a walk-time analysis. Access to local convenience facilities is an important part of meeting a community's day-to-day needs and can help complement the retail, leisure and service provision in the larger district and local centres.

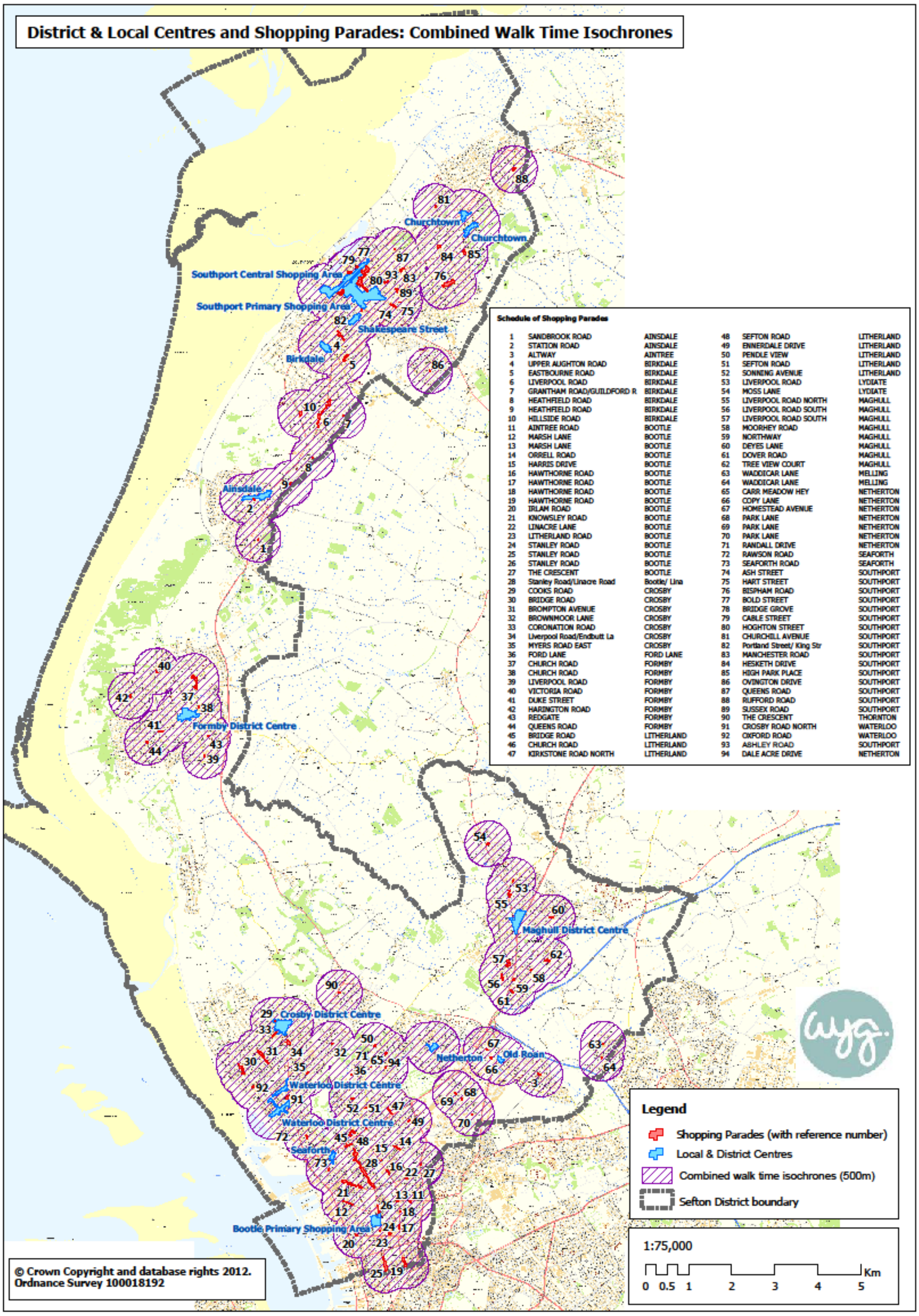
8.02 WYG has undertaken a broad assessment to establish whether the existing network of district/local centres and parades is sufficient to meets the needs of the local community across the borough. WYG believe that an acceptable walking distance to local convenience facilities should ideally be 500 metres but not exceed 1 km[1].

8.03 **Figure 8.1** illustrates 500m distance isochrones from the parades and the district and local centres. It should be noted, however, that **Figure 8.1** only shows the 11 district/local centres and the 94 parades which have been studied as part of this Study. For example, whilst it appears that Hightown village is unsupported by retail and service facilities within an identified parade, it actually accommodates a Post Office, small village store and pharmacy.

8.04 **Appendix 4** illustrates the full set of walk time plans.

[1] The Institute of Highways & Transportation (IHT) in Guideline for Journey on Foot (2010) (Table 3.2) state that an acceptable walking distance for shopping is 400 metres with a preferred maximum of 800 metres. WYG believe that the adopted 500 metres for the purposes of this assessment in based on a point between the two IHT thresholds

Figure 8.1: District & Local Centres and Shopping Parades Combined 500m Walk Time Isochrones (2012)

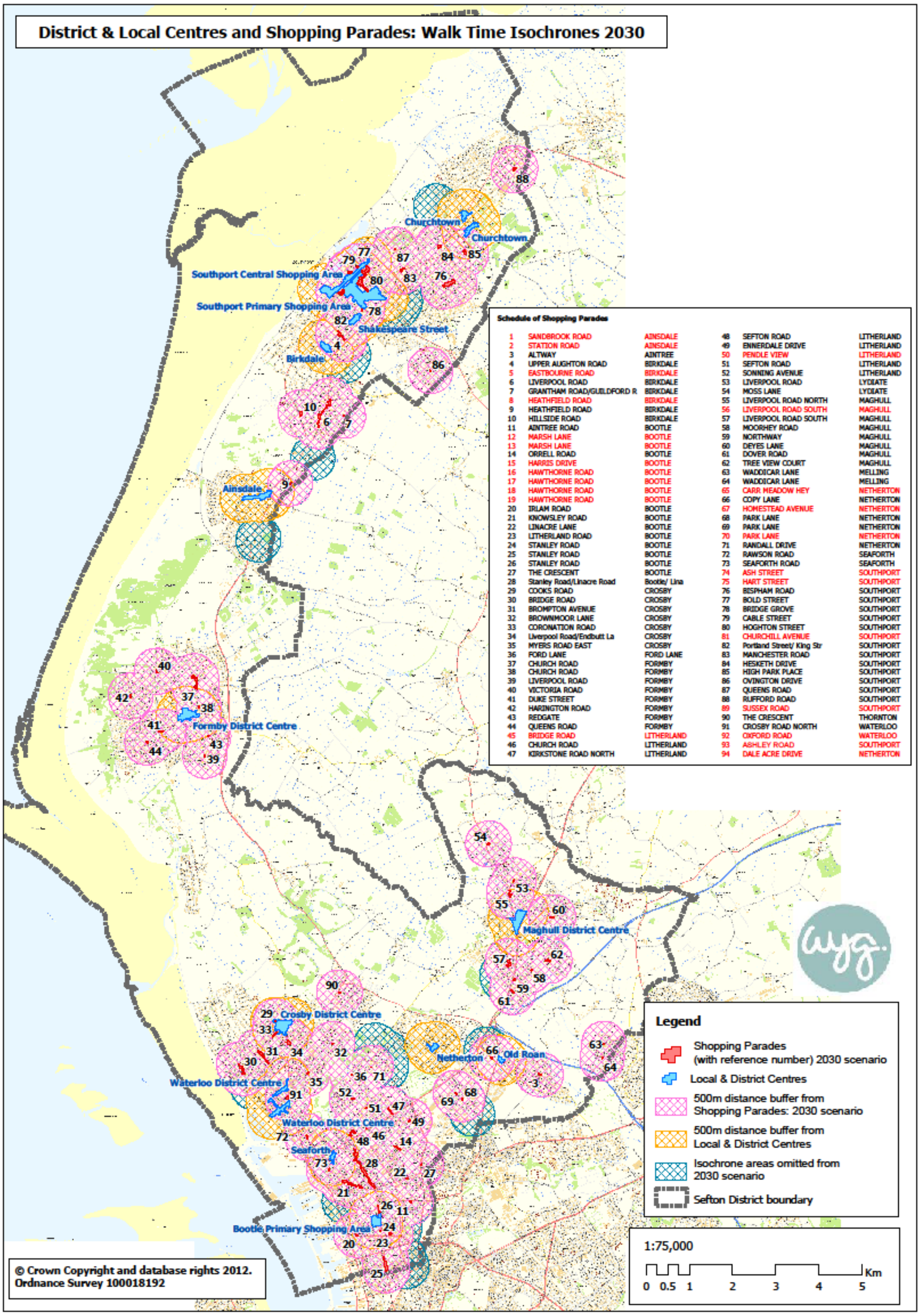


8.05 **Figure 8.1** indicates that there are several areas in the Borough where there is an existing shortfall of services within 500m of a parade or a district/local centre. These comprise:

- To the west of parade no. 70 (though this primarily comprises an industrial estate);
- To the north-west of Crosby district centre (though a Category 1 parade (31) and Crosby district centre itself are located close-by);
- To the northern edge of Netherton (though it is close to Netherton which is a healthy local centre);
- To the east of Crosby district centre (though two Category 1 parades, namely 32 and 90, are located immediately adjacent to this area);
- To the south of parade no. 90 (though no. 90 is a Category 1 parade);
- To the west of Ainsdale (though it is close to Ainsdale which is a healthy local centre);
- Hightown village (though the settlement does contains a Post Office, small village store and pharmacy);
- The western edge of Formby, to the south of parade no. 42 and the west of parade no. 44 (though no. 42 is a Category 1 parade (including a Spar and Martins) and no. 44 is a Category 2 parade (including a Lifestyle Express));
- The south and western area of Birkdale (though this is close to Southport town centre and Birkdale which is a healthy local centre);
- The north-eastern edge of Formby, to the north of parade nos. 37 and 40 (though both are Category 2 parades and include a Spar and Freshfield News);
- To the south-east of Southport town centre (though no. 86 is to the south of this area and no. 76 is to the north are both Category 1 parades. In addition, this area also includes a hospital, college the Meols Cop/Kew Retail Parks which accommodate several national operators (including Argos, B&Q and Tesco Extra); and
- To the north of Churchtown local centre (though the Category 1 parade no. 88 is located to the east of the area and the suburb of Marshside in this area includes two Co-op foodstores (including one with a gross floorspace 2,406 sq m) and Fylde Road pharmacy (plus medical centre).

8.06 **Figure 8.2** identifies 500m distance isochrones around the district/local centres and parades, as well as illustrating those areas of the Borough which would not be served by a 'protected' parade. It therefore, helps indicate if there would be any deficiencies in the provision of retail and service facilities, or whether it would make any difference as residents would still be able to access the required facilities, albeit at a different parade. It is useful in evolving the future policy direction of the Local Development Framework as it has allowed WYG to review which Category 3 parades should be taken forward through as having no policy protection/managed decline and which should actually be retained as Category 2 parades because they serve an important local function.

Figure 8.2: District & Local Centres and Shopping Parades Combined 500m Walk Time Isochrones (2030)



Schedule of Shopping Parades

1	SANDBROOK ROAD	AINSDALE	48	SEFTON ROAD	LITHERLAND
2	STATION ROAD	AINSDALE	49	ENNERDALE DRIVE	LITHERLAND
3	ALTWAY	AINTREE	50	PENDLE VIEW	LITHERLAND
4	UPPER AUGHTON ROAD	BIRKDALE	51	SEFTON ROAD	LITHERLAND
5	EASTBOURNE ROAD	BIRKDALE	52	SONNING AVENUE	LITHERLAND
6	LIVERPOOL ROAD	BIRKDALE	53	LIVERPOOL ROAD	LYDIATE
7	GRANTHAM ROAD/GUILDFORD R	BIRKDALE	54	MOSS LANE	LYDIATE
8	HEATHFIELD ROAD	BIRKDALE	55	LIVERPOOL ROAD NORTH	MAGHULL
9	HEATHFIELD ROAD	BIRKDALE	56	LIVERPOOL ROAD SOUTH	MAGHULL
10	HILLSIDE ROAD	BIRKDALE	57	LIVERPOOL ROAD SOUTH	MAGHULL
11	AINTREE ROAD	BOOTLE	58	MOORHEY ROAD	MAGHULL
12	MARSH LANE	BOOTLE	59	NORTHWAY	MAGHULL
13	MARSH LANE	BOOTLE	60	DEYES LANE	MAGHULL
14	ORRELL ROAD	BOOTLE	61	DOVER ROAD	MAGHULL
15	HARRIS DRIVE	BOOTLE	62	TREE VIEW COURT	MAGHULL
16	HAWTHORNE ROAD	BOOTLE	63	WADDICAR LANE	MELLING
17	HAWTHORNE ROAD	BOOTLE	64	WADDICAR LANE	MELLING
18	HAWTHORNE ROAD	BOOTLE	65	CARR MEADOW HEY	NETHERTON
19	HAWTHORNE ROAD	BOOTLE	66	COPY LANE	NETHERTON
20	IRLAM ROAD	BOOTLE	67	HOMESTEAD AVENUE	NETHERTON
21	KNOWSLEY ROAD	BOOTLE	68	PARK LANE	NETHERTON
22	LINACRE LANE	BOOTLE	69	PARK LANE	NETHERTON
23	LITHERLAND ROAD	BOOTLE	70	PARK LANE	NETHERTON
24	STANLEY ROAD	BOOTLE	71	RANDALL DRIVE	NETHERTON
25	STANLEY ROAD	BOOTLE	72	RAWSON ROAD	SEAFORTH
26	STANLEY ROAD	BOOTLE	73	SEAFORTH ROAD	SEAFORTH
27	THE CRESCENT	BOOTLE	74	ASH STREET	SOUTHPORT
28	Stanley Road/Linacre Road	Bootle/ Lina	75	HART STREET	SOUTHPORT
29	COOKS ROAD	CROSBY	76	BISPHAM ROAD	SOUTHPORT
30	BRIDGE ROAD	CROSBY	77	BOLD STREET	SOUTHPORT
31	BROMPTON AVENUE	CROSBY	78	BRIDGE GROVE	SOUTHPORT
32	BROWNMOOR LANE	CROSBY	79	CABLE STREET	SOUTHPORT
33	CORONATION ROAD	CROSBY	80	HOGHTON STREET	SOUTHPORT
34	Liverpool Road/Endbutt La	CROSBY	81	CHURCHILL AVENUE	SOUTHPORT
35	MYERS ROAD EAST	CROSBY	82	Portland Street/ King Str	SOUTHPORT
36	FORD LANE	FORD LANE	83	MANCHESTER ROAD	SOUTHPORT
37	CHURCH ROAD	FORMBY	84	HESKETH DRIVE	SOUTHPORT
38	CHURCH ROAD	FORMBY	85	HIGH PARK PLACE	SOUTHPORT
39	LIVERPOOL ROAD	FORMBY	86	OVINGTON DRIVE	SOUTHPORT
40	VICTORIA ROAD	FORMBY	87	QUEENS ROAD	SOUTHPORT
41	DUKE STREET	FORMBY	88	RUFFORD ROAD	SOUTHPORT
42	HARINGTON ROAD	FORMBY	89	SUSSEX ROAD	SOUTHPORT
43	REDGATE	FORMBY	90	THE CRESCENT	THORNTON
44	QUEENS ROAD	FORMBY	91	CROSBY ROAD NORTH	WATERLOO
45	BRIDGE ROAD	LITHERLAND	92	OXFORD ROAD	WATERLOO
46	CHURCH ROAD	LITHERLAND	93	ASHLEY ROAD	SOUTHPORT
47	KIRKSTONE ROAD NORTH	LITHERLAND	94	DALE ACRE DRIVE	NETHERTON

8.07 The following section summarises the impact that the removal of the 21 Category 3 parades would have on the local area (in addition to those previously highlighted in paragraph 8.05) by 2030.

- **Ainsdale** – It is evident that the removal of parade no. 1 would cause a major deficiency in the provision of facilities in the south of Ainsdale. The parade currently comprises an independent mini-supermarket, a take-away unit, vehicle accessories store and a vacant unit. WYG recommend therefore that parade no. 1 is re-allocated as a shopping parade (Category 2). As outlined in Chapter 6, it is recommended that parade no. 2 (Station Road) is incorporated into Ainsdale local centre.
- **Birkdale** – Heathfield Road (8) parade only comprises three vacant units and despite **Figure 8.2** indicating that there may be deficiency in this area by 2030 (if it is not protected), Ainsdale local centre and Category 2 parade nos. 6, 7, 9 and 10 are located close-by. Similarly, the close location of Eastbourne Road (5) to Birkdale and Upper Aughton Road (4), means that WYG recommend that these remain Category 3 parades.
- **Bootle** – There is a concentration of facilities in the Bootle area, of which seven of the locations have been classed as Category 3 parades. **Figure 8.2** identifies that the removal of four of these parades (12, 17, 18 and 19) would have a limited impact on the provision of services in the local area. WYG do not believe that these parades should be re-classified as they are all located close to Category 2 parades and Bootle town centre.
- **Litherland** – The impact of the removal of two Category 3 parades 45 (Bridge Road) and 50 (Pendle View) in the south of the Borough varies. Parade no. 45 is surrounded by a number of other parades (including the Category 1 – no. 48 parade) and, therefore, it should be retained as a Category 3 parade. The Pendle View Parade is currently in a poor state of repair and would clearly benefit from being redeveloped. In order to enable this, and ensure that there is an adequate provision of good facilities in this area, WYG would recommend that it be re-classified as a Category 2 parade.
- **Maghull** – The designation of Liverpool Road South 1 (56) as a Category 3 parade should be retained as it is located close to the Category 1 – Liverpool Road South 2 (57) parade and three other Category 2 parades and its decline would not harm residents' access to facilities.
- **Netherton** – There are currently four Category 3 designated parades in this centre, namely no. 65 (Carr Meadow Hey), 67 (Homestead Avenue), 70 (Park Lane) and 94 (Dale Acre Drive). The classifications of all of these should be retained, due to their location close to other healthy parades or centres. The parade no. 67, for example, is located close to the Category 2 parade no. 66 and Old Roan local centre which are both performing well.

- **Southport** – The five Category 3 parades in Southport (namely nos. 74, 75, 81, 89 and 93) accommodate a limited provision of facilities and WYG do not believe that their removal will adversely affect the health of the local area, particularly as they are all located in close proximity to other key centres, including Southport town centre and Churchtown local centre.
- **Waterloo** – The Oxford Road parade (no. 92) is located close to Waterloo district centre, the Category 1 parade no. 31 (Brompton Avenue) and the Category 2 parade no. 30 (Bridge Road). Its classification as a Category 3 parade should therefore be retained as it performs a limited role and is surrounded by several other healthy locations which are equally accessible.

8.08 WYG therefore recommend that parade no. 1 (Sandbrook Road) in Ainsdale and parade no. 50 (Pendle View) in Litherland are re-classified as Category 2 parades in order to ensure that there is a sufficient provision of retail and service facilities in these areas by 2030. As a result, the future planning policy strategy of these parades will need to safeguard such provision in the emerging Local Development Framework, to ensure that these areas have continued access to key services in the short to long term.

9.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

9.01 The Study has reviewed the health of each of the key retail and service locations in Sefton Borough by determining the vitality and viability of each of the district, local and shopping parade centres. Detailed site visits to each of the centres were conducted and the data from this has enabled WYG to identify a series of indicators (based on the criteria in the previous PPS4) which could be used to assess their vitality and viability. A hierarchy of the 94 parades was also created which used the quantitative and qualitative base-data results from the site visits and filtered these using a scoring system, with the result that each of the parades was classified into three categories as outlined in Chapter 6.

District & Local Centres

9.02 The 11 district and local centres are dispersed throughout the Borough and vary both in terms of the number of units that are accommodated there and their current strength. The site visits identified several health check indicators which show that the majority of the centres are performing well and perform a key role serving the local population, whilst also continue to complement the established town centres of Southport and Bootle. However, the analysis has also identified that three of the centres, namely Seaforth, Shakespeare Street and Waterloo, are showing some signs of vulnerability (particularly Seaforth). The 2004 Study had also previously noted that both Seaforth and Shakespeare Street were in a poor condition and the health check indicators which have been reviewed for this Study has confirmed that the vitality and viability of these two centres is still poor. The previous Study had recommended that Shakespeare Street be re-classified as a shopping parade, and WYG believe that, based on the filter mechanism adopted (see **Table 6.1**), it should be designated as a Category 2 shopping parade. The same conclusion should also now be applied to Seaforth where consideration should be given to reclassifying this centre as a shopping parade unless significant investment can be secured in regenerating its future.

9.03 As for Waterloo, whilst the retail offer has decline somewhat, we must not loose sight of the fact that this centre has a very strong evening economy which makes it somewhat unique within the borough. Therefore, whilst the centre may not be as vital and viable in the daytime and from a retail perspective, there are clear signs of vitality in the evening which will need to be carefully managed if the centre is to meet the needs of the whole community.

Shopping Parades

9.04 The 94 shopping parades perform a key role in the Study Area, providing important day-to-day retail and service facilities for local residents. Whilst the health check indicators identified that the majority of the parades are performing well, there is still a significant proportion of parades that are vulnerable and performing poorly.

9.05 As outlined in Chapter 6, WYG believe that minor amendments should be made to the boundaries of several of the shopping parades. In particular: Station Road parade (2) should be incorporated into Ainsdale local centre, Cooks Road parade (29) should be incorporated into Crosby district centre, Bold Street (77), Bridge Grove (78), Cable Street (79), Hoghton Street (80) and Portland/King Street (82) parades should be incorporated into Southport town centre and Crosby Road North (91) should be incorporated into Waterloo district centre. WYG also believe that the boundary of Brompton Avenue parade (31) should also be amended to include the Co-operative Food unit on College Road, particularly as it has been identified as a Category 1 key shopping parade. The disjointed nature and high level of vacancies in the Stanley Road/Linacre Road parade (28) also indicates that it may be beneficial to split the parade into several smaller blocks of units. The recommendations in Chapter 8 also identified, based on the walk-time analysis in **Figure 8.2**, that parade no. 1 (Sandbrook Road) in Ainsdale and parade no. 50 (Pendle View) in Litherland should be re-classified from Category 3 to Category 2 parades.

9.06 WYG do not believe that any of the shopping parades should be re-classified as either district or local centres.

9.07 **Table 9.1** has therefore been amended to take account of the previous retail hierarchy appraisal outlined in **Table 6.2** and the walk-time analysis in Chapter 8. The former Shakespeare Street local centre has also been classified as a Category 2 parade.

Table 9.1: Revised Hierarchy of the 87 Parades

Category 1 - Key Shopping Parades (24)		
Altway (3)	Orrell Road (14)	Linacre Lane (22)
The Crescent (27)	Brownmoor Lane (32)	Brompton Avenue (31)º
Liverpool Road (39)	Harington Road (42)	Kirkstone Road North (47)
Sefton Road (48)	Sefton Road (51)	Moss Lane (54)
Liverpool Road South 2 (57)	Deyes Lane (60)	Tree View Court (62)
Park Lane 2 (69)	Rawson Road (72)	Bispham Road (76)
Hesketh Drive (84)	High Park Place (85)	Ovington Drive (86)
Queens Road (87)	Rufford Road (88)	The Crescent (90)
Category 2 - Shopping Parades (42)		
Sandbrook Road (1)	Upper Aughton Road (4)	Liverpool Road (6)
Grantham/Guildford Road (7)	Heathfield Road (South) (9)	Hillside Road (10)
Aintree Road (11)	Irlam Road (20)	Knowsley Road (21)
Litherland Road (23)	Stanley Road (24)	Stanley Road 2 (25)
Stanley Road 3 (26)	Stanley/Linacre Road (28)	Bridge Road (30)
Coronation Road (33)	Liverpool Rd/Endbutt L (34)	Myers Road East (35)
Ford Lane (36)	Church Road 1 (37)	Church Road 2 (38)
Victoria Road (40)	Duke Street (41)	Redgate (43)
Queens Road (44)	Church Road (46)	Ennerdale Drive (49)
Pendle View (50)	Sonning Avenue (52)	Liverpool Road (53)
Liverpool Road (55)	Moorhey Road (58)	Northway (59)
Dover Road (61)	Waddicar Lane 1 (63)	Waddicar Lane 2 (64)
Copy Lane (66)	Park Lane 1 (68)	Randall Drive (71)
Seaforth Road (73)	Manchester Road (83)	Shakespeare Street (former local centre)
Category 3 – No Policy Protection / Manage Effective Decline (21)		
Eastbourne Road (5)	Heathfield Road (North) (8)	Marsh Lane (West) (12)
Marsh Lane (East) (13)	Harris Drive (15)	Hawthorne Road 1 (16)
Hawthorne Road 2 (17)	Hawthorne Road 3 (18)	Hawthorne Road 4 (19)
Bridge Road (45)	Liverpool Road South 1 (56)	Carr Meadow Hey (65)
Homestead Avenue (67)	Park Lane 3 (70)	Ash Street (74)
Hart Street (75)	Churchill Avenue (81)	Sussex Road (89)
Oxford Road (92)	Ashley Road (93)	Dale Acre Drive (94)

º - WYG recommends that the adjacent Co-op store is incorporated into the Brompton Avenue parade boundary

9.08 The 2004 Study had identified 19 key shopping parades (34%), 30 shopping parades (52%) and 8 parades which would be afforded no policy protection or their decline managed (14%). As identified in **Table 9.1**, WYG has created a revised hierarchy of 87 of the parades, of which 24 were identified as Category 1 - key shopping parades (28%), 42 are Category 2 – shopping parades (48%) and 21 are Category 3 – no policy protection/manage effective decline parades (24%). It is evident that there has been a decline in the proportion of key shopping parades and a representative increase in the proportion of 'manage effective decline' parades.

9.09 However, a direct comparison between these figures should be treated with caution as the 2012 Study has assessed far more parades than in the previous study. In particular, it has reviewed parades which were not included in the 2004 Study as they may have contained an insufficient level of units/floorspace or they were performing poorly. It should be noted that a high proportion of the new parades which were reviewed as part of this Study have been classed as Category 3 parades. A comparison between the same centres which were identified in both the 2004 and 2012 Studies has identified that the majority of the parades have remained in the same category, with seven parades improving in their rankings and six experiencing a decline in their hierarchy position. It should also be recognised that as the boundaries of the parades have also altered between the 2004 and 2012 Study, a direct comparison between the two datasets is not possible.

Conclusions

9.10 Overall, the Study has highlighted that the district/local centres and parades in Sefton Borough are performing well and provide a good level of retail and service provision in the local area. These centres should be protected and suitable policies formulated to ensure their future vitality and viability. The classification of the parades has also identified 24 key shopping (Category 1) parades and 42 shopping (Category 2) parades which should also be protected as part of the emerging policies in the Sefton Local Development Framework, although it will still be important to allow some flexibility to ensure the policies do not impact adversely on their future health. These parades are currently performing well and contain a good level of facilities for local residents. In contrast, the remaining 21 (Category 3) parades are vulnerable, with the health check indicators adopted for this Study showing clear signs of decline. WYG believe that Sefton Council should not seek to protect these parades through planning policy and should leave their future to market forces or manage the effective decline of these parades as part of wider regeneration initiatives.

Appendices

Appendix 1:

District & Local Centres

and Shopping Parades

(Key Maps 1 - 6)

Appendix 2:

Detailed Health Checks of the District & Local Centres

Appendix 3:

Detailed Health Checks of the Shopping Parades

Appendix 4:

Additional Walk Time Plans