

BUILDING

A BETTER FUTURE

Havant Borough Town Centres and Retail Study

May 2026



Havant Borough Town Centres and Retail Study 2026

Purpose of this paper	The purpose of this study is to support and inform the emerging Havant Borough Local Plan – Building A Better Future Plan.
Why?	The findings and recommendations of this study will be used to inform the policies relating to town centres and retail within the Havant Borough Building a Better Future Local Plan. This study also sets out recommendations of the town centre boundaries and hierarchy of centres.
Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• To use national guidance, policy, publications and trends to help inform the approach in the Local Plan to the Borough’s town centres.• To conduct a health check of the town, district and local centres to identify their strengths and weaknesses and to determine where there may be opportunities for improvement.• To propose centre boundaries for each of the town, district and local centres and to provide a centre hierarchy consisting of all centres to help make the town centres more flexible to the changing UK market and resilient to future economic challenges.

Any queries about the report should be sent to:

Email policy.design@havant.gov.uk

Telephone 023 9244 6539

Address Havant Borough Council
Public Service Plaza
Civic Centre Way
Havant
PO9 2AX

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. This study provides an evidence base to inform and support Havant Borough Council's emerging Local Plan – Building a Better Future Plan. The study provides evidence specific to retail and other main town centre uses.
- 1.2. The borough's town centres provide a key source of employment and are at the heart of the borough's communities. The centres offer a range of shops, facilities, services and amenities, and help reduce the need for residents to travel to access essential goods. Town centres often have good transport links to other areas inside and outside of the borough and provide spaces and facilities for social interactions.
- 1.3. This town centre and retail study assesses the centre hierarchy and centre boundaries as defined in the adopted Allocations Plan (2014) and provides recommendations for any amendments to these. The study provides a comprehensive assessment of the individual centres within the borough, examining their role and function and determining whether there have been any significant changes since the last review. The study also identifies and assesses some centres which are not existing designations and recommends them for designation. Primary shopping areas are defined and recommended to applicable centres.
- 1.4. A range of information has been used to produce this study, including national and sub-regional policies, national reports, local audits of retail health and available town centre data. This report has used the most up-to-date data and evidence that is available at the time of writing. A series of health check assessments were conducted in May – June 2024 and January 2025.
- 1.5. Following the publication of this report in July 2025, an update was carried out in March 2026 to assess retail and leisure need within the borough. Planning application data from January 2018 – March 2025 and business rates data from January 2018 – November 2025 were used to complete the retail and leisure need assessment contained in the three town centre chapters of this report.

2. National Policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out a number of national policy guidelines that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should consider when developing a Local Plan. Paragraph 90¹ sets out that planning policies and decisions should ensure the vitality of town centres and support the role that they play at the heart of local communities by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation. Planning policies should define a network and hierarchy of town centres, including the extent of the town centres and primary shopping areas within the plan area and promote their long-term vitality and viability by allowing them to grow and diversify to respond to changes in the retail and leisure industries.

2.2. The NPPF glossary defines main town centre uses as:

Retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres); leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls); offices; and arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

2.3. The NPPF glossary defines a primary shopping area as:

Defined area where retail development is concentrated.

The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

2.4. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) sets out the role that LPAs can play in supporting the management, adaptation, and growth of town centres. LPAs are encouraged to take a leading role in promoting a positive vision for town, district and local centres, by bringing together stakeholders and supporting sustainable economic and employment growth. This also includes considering changes in the economy and the impacts on the centres, whilst planning for adaptation and change. The NPPG sets out that a wide range of complimentary uses can, if suitably located, help to support the vitality of town centres, including residential, employment, office, commercial, leisure/entertainment, healthcare and educational development, as well as temporary uses and specialist housing. Residential development within the centres can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of town centres. An evening and night time offer also has the potential to increase economic activity and provide additional employment opportunities.

2.5. LPAs can help shape and support town centres by setting out a vision within the Local Plan development strategy. The NPPG states that planning policies are expected to define the extent of primary shopping areas, and, where appropriate, also define primary retail frontages where their use can be justified in supporting the vitality and viability of particular centres. There are also a range of planning tools such as local development orders, brownfield registers and compulsory purchase powers which can be used to support town centres to adapt and thrive.

¹ More information can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/7-ensuring-the-vitality-of-town-centres>

- 2.6. The town centre strategy should be based on evidence of the current state of town centres and the opportunities that exist to accommodate a range of suitable development and support their vitality and viability. The strategies can be used to establish a range of criteria, including:
- The realistic role, function and hierarchy of town centres over the plan period
 - The vision for the future of each town centre, including the mix of uses to enhance the overall vitality and viability
 - The ability of the town centre to accommodate the scale of assessed need for main town centre uses
 - The effective use of land
 - Improvement opportunities to the accessibility and wider quality of town centre locations
- 2.7. The NPPG suggests thirteen indicators² which can be used to assess the health of town centres and plan for their future. The thirteen indicators are:
- diversity of uses
 - proportion of vacant street level property
 - commercial yields on non-domestic property
 - customers' experience and behaviour
 - retailer representation and intentions to change representation
 - commercial rents
 - pedestrian flows
 - accessibility – this includes transport accessibility and accessibility for people with different impairments or health conditions, as well as older people with mobility requirements.
 - perception of safety and occurrence of crime
 - state of town centre environmental quality
 - balance between independent and multiple stores
 - extent to which there is evidence of barriers to new businesses opening and existing businesses expanding
 - opening hours/availability/extent to which there is an evening and night time economy offer

Updates to the Use Classes Order and Permitted Development Rights

- 2.8. Updates to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations³ took effect from September 2020. This introduced a new Class E Use Class which contains a mix of uses and is termed 'Commercial, Business and Service'. Class E contains uses such as shops, financial services, indoor sports and restaurants and cafes, amongst some other uses. Also introduced were a new Class F1 (learning and non-residential institutions) and a new Class F2 (local community uses). In addition, some uses have been moved into the 'sui generis' category, meaning they belong to no specific use class.
- 2.9. The Government outlined that the reason for these changes is to allow greater flexibility of uses without the need for planning permission within this class and to help revive retail centres by allowing a greater range of uses. The new Class E allows repurposing of buildings to reflect changing retail requirements and enables different uses to take place at different times of the day.

² Paragraph 006 Reference ID: 2b-006-20190722, revision date 22nd July 2019.

³ [The Town and Country Planning \(Use Classes\) \(Amendment\) \(England\) Regulations 2020](#)

- 2.10. The Government also issued permitted development rights on 1st August 2021 under Class MA of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) which permits the change of Class E to Class C3 (residential), subject to prior approval applications.
- 2.11. It is important to note that these changes have implications for planning policies regarding town centres. Previously, many Local Plans contained policies which aimed to protect certain use classes within designated town centres, in particular to protect a level of retail shops in each centre, however due to the above changes, the ability of local planning authorities to control the mix of uses within town centres is much more limited.

3. Local Strategies

3.1. This section of the report sets out any local strategies which relate to the borough's town centres.

Havant Borough Council Corporate Strategy

3.2. The Council's Corporate Strategy⁴ sets out the Council's outcomes for Havant borough and provides an overall vision for the Building a Better Future Plan. The Corporate Strategy has three themes, as well as one overarching theme:

- Wellbeing
- Pride in Place
- Growth
- A responsive Council

3.3. The Corporate Strategy's Pride in Place theme has the following aspiration:

"We know that when people are proud of where they live, it improves their personal wellbeing and motivates them to help protect and improve their local area. We want to keep our streets clean and safe, to celebrate the unique natural features and heritage of our area, and to safeguard it for future generations. We want to make the borough a place that residents can be proud of and that visitors want to spend time in."

3.4. In relation to town centres and retail, the Council aspires to 'support and champion the regeneration of the borough's town centres'. The Strategy sets out that this will be achieved through enabling improvements to Havant, Waterlooville and Leigh Park town centres. It is envisaged that this will lead to increased footfall, decreased shop unit vacancy rates, reduced crime and anti-social behaviour and improved perception of the local area.

Havant Borough Regeneration and Economy Strategy

3.5. The Council's Regeneration and Economy Strategy⁵ outlines the approach for regeneration in the borough, taking account of the housing and economic challenges it faces. The strategy sets out the areas where transformational change will be targeted, and has three core themes:

- Sustainable places
- Successful people
- Better business

3.6. In relation to town centres and retail, the strategy identifies opportunities to influence, reshape and adapt the borough's retail centres, particularly Havant and Waterlooville town centres. It will provide opportunities to respond to the 'new norm', whereby traditional retail uses are/will be less prevalent now and in the future. It sets out the need to build flexible floorspace to ensure that retail centres become focal points for a diverse range of services and activities that deliver more sustainable outcomes.

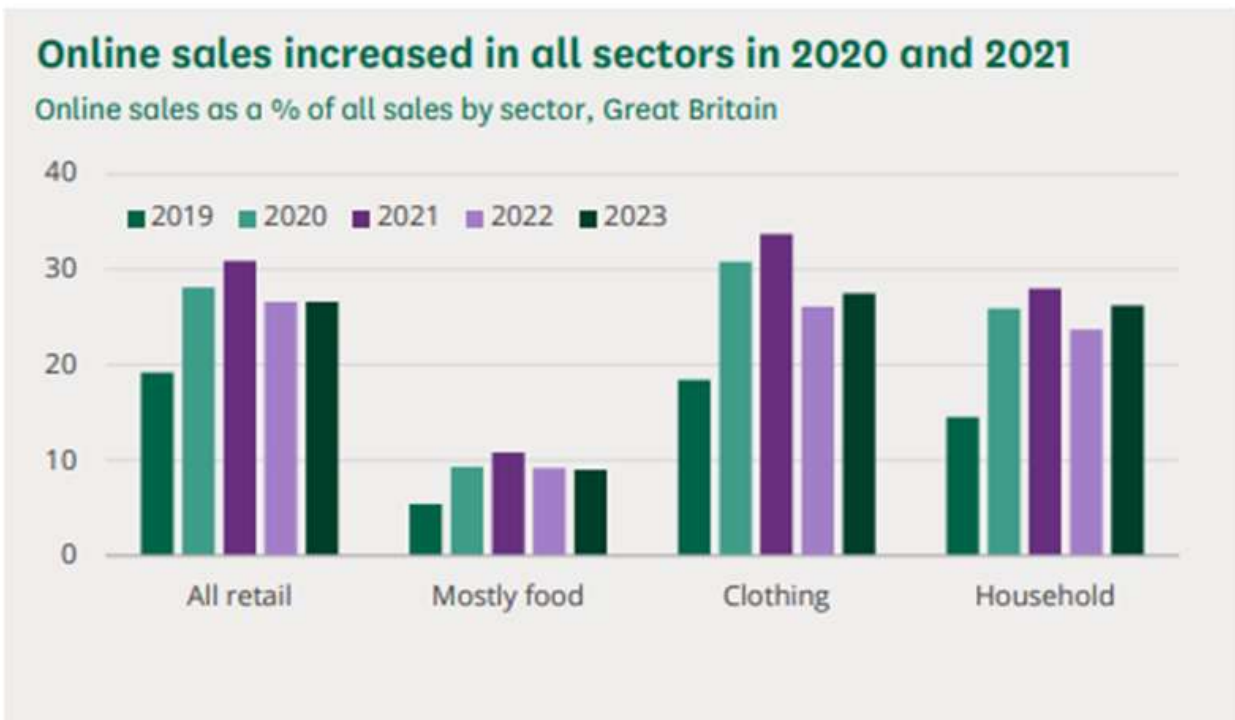
⁴ [Havant Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2024 - 2028](#)

⁵ [Havant Borough Regeneration and Economy Strategy 2022 - 2036](#)

4. National Trends in Retailing and the Economy

National Trends

- 4.1. The retail sector has been faced with significant challenges in recent years due to changes in consumer behaviour, the rise of internet shopping and challenges to the economy. Factors such as leaving the European Union, the COVID-19 pandemic and the cost of living crisis have been key events which have caused changes in economic behaviour. The growth of online shopping and ‘at home’ entertainment has changed the way in which consumers shop, a trend which has been accelerated due to the unforeseen economic factors. This shift in consumer habits has led to further challenges to town and retail centres, including the closure of some retail centres and increased vacancy rates. High streets and town centres are reported to be facing the following five challenges over the next five years: oversupply or retail floorspace/rising vacancy rates, high inflation and prospect of recession, business rates, growth of online shopping and high/rising occupancy costs⁶.
- 4.2. At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020, non-essential retail stores were forced to close, which led to a drastic decline in retail sales. Since the re-opening of stores, data shows that since August 2022, retail sales generally are lower than pre-pandemic levels. Indicators suggest that this is due to the increased cost of living and rising food prices across the country.



Source: ONS, [Retail sales index: Internet sales](#)

Figure 1 - A graph showing % of online sales from 2019 - 2023, showing all retail, food, clothing and household sectors.

⁶ Source: <https://www.lsh.co.uk/explore/research-and-views/research/2023/september/lsh-revo-survey-results-2023?listing=true>

- 4.3. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the rise of internet shopping for retail goods was an emerging trend, however this shift was then exacerbated by the pandemic. Due to the temporary closure of non-essential retail shops, people were forced to online shop, which has led to a permanent change in consumer behaviour. Goods such as clothing, electrical goods, household supplies and food are easily accessible to purchase online, with many services offering next day delivery. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has reported that the UK is still spending substantially more online than before the COVID pandemic, with figures showing internet sales accounted for 19.7% of all official retail sales in February 2020, with this figure rising to 26.6% in May 2022⁷. Data has also shown that 69% of UK residents are more likely to shop online than before the pandemic. Internet sales are shown to be more popular in the UK compared with other European Countries and the USA.
- 4.4. A further effect of the pandemic is that work behaviour has changed significantly, with an increased number of people now working from home or hybrid working. Reports suggest that due to this, more people are visiting local shops and services within close proximity to their homes for essential goods. On the other hand though, this would result in fewer people working from offices in town and city centres, meaning footfall from workers is lower, through a loss of visits during lunch breaks and before and after work.

Vacancy Rates

- 4.5. Nationally, vacancy rates have fallen since the pandemic, however they still remain above pre-pandemic levels. Vacancy rates vary depending on the type of retail setting: vacancies in shopping centres are much higher than vacancies in retail parks. High street vacancy rates are on average between shopping centres and retail parks. The Local Data Company (LDC) report that nationally vacancy rates for retail units is around 13.9%. The British Retail Consortium published figures showing that the UK had lost 6,000 storefronts in the space of 5 years⁸.
- 4.6. Shopping centres felt the greatest impacts of the pandemic and lockdown restrictions, largely due to their indoor setting and lower proportion of essential retail. Vacancy rates within shopping centres have mainly been associated with declining footfall, high rent prices and service charges⁹.
- 4.7. Retail parks represent the most resilient of the three locations, predominantly due to their accessibility by car. Retail parks also host a large number of essential goods retailers, which was fundamental during the pandemic, as well as 'click and collect' and 'online returns' chains. It is estimated that click and collect accounted for 8.4% of total UK retail spending in 2022¹⁰.
- 4.8. High streets have seen an increase in vacancy rates which can be attributed to the rise of online shopping, together with many services which typically occupied high street units such as banks, building societies, travel and estate agents and betting shops moving their services online. Due to this, there has been a knock on effect on retail footfall with consumers having less reason to visit high streets. However, companies are adapting to the changes in national consumer behaviour by offering click and collect services within high streets and shopping centres. Successful stores have integrated this within the physical shopping environment, particularly clothing stores, creating a hybrid environment allowing customers to browse, purchase and collect and return online

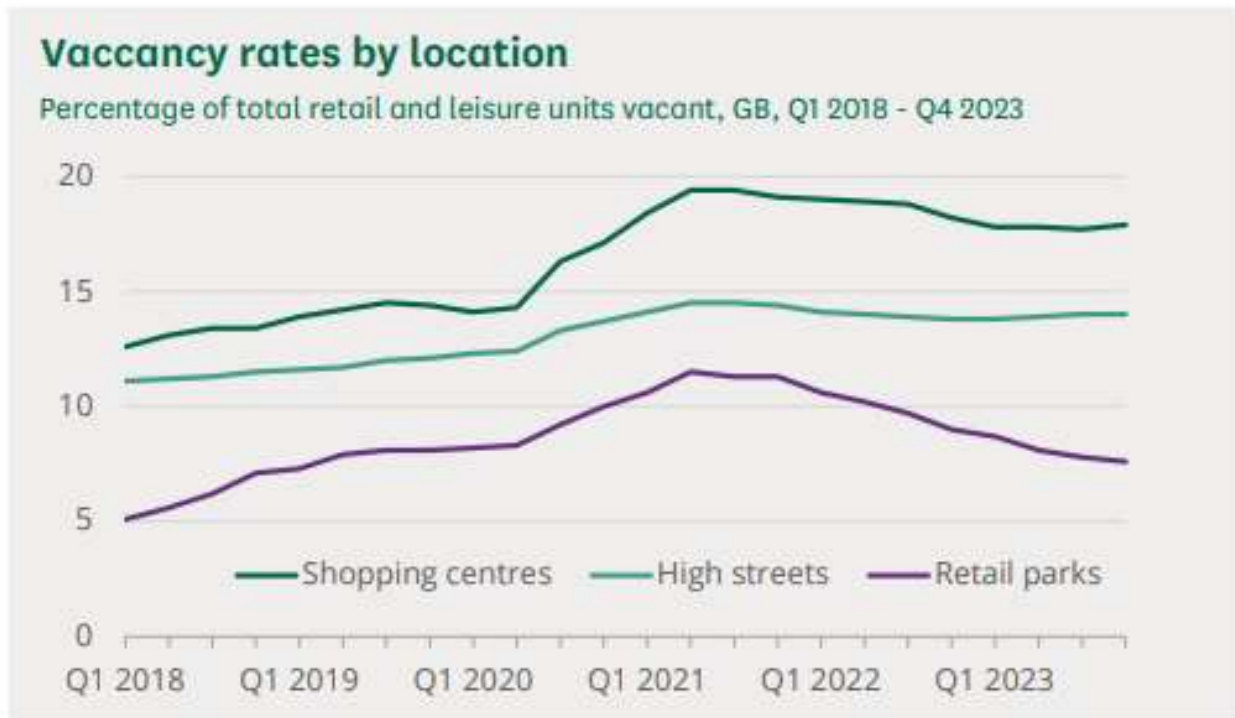
⁷ (Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2022) [How our spending has changed since the end of coronavirus \(COVID-19\) restrictions - Office for National Statistics](#)

⁸ Source: <https://group.legalandgeneral.com/en/about-us/our-purpose/future-proofing-society/home-is-where-the-high-street-is/>

⁹ Source: <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN06186/SN06186.pdf>

¹⁰ Source: <https://home.barclays/news/press-releases/2022/10/click-and-collect-economy-worth-over-p42bn-as-hybrid-shopping-/>

purchases. Retailers are also shifting towards offering services which cannot be offered online, such as repairs, cafés and stylists purchases.



Source: [Local Data Company](#)

Figure 2 - A graph showing vacancy rates from 2018 - 2023 in shopping centres, high streets and retail parks.

The Future of Town Centres and High Streets

- 4.9. The future of town centres and high streets relies on a different approach to the previous focus of providing retail uses. A report from the Built Environment Committee titled ‘High Streets: Life Beyond Retail?’ (2024)¹¹ has found that although retail will still be a key feature of high streets, there is now a greater demand for restaurants, leisure activities and public services such as libraries and health centres in town centres. The report also sets out that a monolithic approach to the futures of high streets should be avoided, as the wants and needs of communities are continuously evolving, and that they should be planned positively for a resilient future by ensuring diversity and adaptability.
- 4.10. A survey by Legal and General (2023)¹², shows that respondents suggest that the high streets are becoming ‘less about transaction and more about the experience – whether this is meeting friends for coffee, grabbing a bite to eat or trying on new clothes’. 36% of respondents stated that local businesses are important for the character of the area and gives a distinct identity to the local community. Furthermore, a report from Lichfields (2020)¹³, which surveyed 16–25-year-olds, found that 59% of respondents stated that eating out was the most popular reason for visiting town centres.

¹¹ Source: <https://publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld5901/ldselect/ldbuiltenv/42/42.pdf>

¹² Source: <https://group.legalandgeneral.com/en/about-us/our-purpose/future-proofing-society/home-is-where-the-high-street-is/>

¹³ Source: https://lichfields.uk/media/6188/the-next-generation-the-future-of-our-town-centres_sep-20.pdf

Conclusions

- 4.11. Overall, this section of the report has highlighted that town centres and high streets have faced a number of economic challenges over recent years, with changes in consumer behaviour and the rise of online purchasing leading to a decline in centres and increased vacancy rates. Much of the research suggests that in order for town centres to continue to be successful, they must become flexible and resilient to future economic challenges and changes. Centres are now considered to be spaces which provide retail needs, as well as providing uses which can enhance social interactions. Town centres must now transition by allowing for a greater variety of uses beyond the traditional retail offer, by integrating online facilities within stores, for example offering click and collect and online returns services and providing a mix of leisure and service uses. This is reinforced through the Government's introduction of Use Class E covered in Chapter 2 of this report.

5. Local Context

- 5.1. Havant borough has a range of town, district and local centres, alongside smaller shops and services, which provide a key a source of employment and are at the heart of the Borough's communities. They help to reduce the need to travel and are vital for residents to easily access essential goods and services.

Town and District Centres

- 5.2. Town centres sit at the top of the Borough's town centre hierarchy and are main destination areas for retail, leisure, office and other main town centre uses¹⁴. Town centres tend to cover a relatively large area and can comprise different character areas.
- 5.3. These areas are sustainable locations, being close to public transport. However, like many other town centres in the country, they face challenges with lack of investment and changing retail patterns. The Council's regeneration ambitions and areas where transformational change is being targeted is set out in the adopted Regeneration and Economic Strategy 2022¹⁵.
- 5.4. There are three centres within the borough which have been proposed as town centres: Havant, Waterlooville and Leigh Park. These town centres will be the focus for regeneration efforts within the borough and will be areas of focus for regeneration and development for town centre uses and housing in the Local Plan. These centres will be discussed and reviewed in the following chapters of this report.
- 5.5. District centres are formed around the historic heart of communities and provide day to day shopping facilities and non-retail services for local communities. They often provide groups of shops, a supermarket, banks or building societies, restaurants and recreation and community facilities. District centres sit below town centres in the centre hierarchy and are smaller in scale. By their nature, they tend to offer more independent retailers and businesses rather than national retailers and brands. They also tend to attract a more local catchment of visitor than that of town centres.
- 5.6. There are two centres within the borough which have been proposed as designated as district centres: Emsworth and Mengham. These centres will be discussed and reviewed in Chapter 9 of this report.
- 5.7. Both town and district centres are formed of two boundaries; the wider designated centre boundary and a primary shopping area¹⁶ boundary. When assessing town and district centres within this report, recommendations will also be made as to the designations for the primary shopping areas.

Local Centres and Local Shops

- 5.8. Local centres sit at the bottom of the centre hierarchy and provide important services for local communities, whilst reducing the need to travel by car. They offer a smaller range of facilities than district centres and are smaller in scale, however each of the borough's local centres vary in their size and character. Each local centre has been identified on its individual character, proximity to other centres and the retail, commercial, business and services they provide. It is therefore

¹⁴ Main town centre uses are defined in the NPPF and set out in Chapter 2 of this report.

¹⁵ [Regeneration and Economy Strategy 2022-2036](#)

¹⁶ Primary shopping areas are defined in the NPPF and set out in Chapter 2 of this report.

important that local centres are identified and protected to ensure their long term vitality and vibrancy for the future.

- 5.9. Local centres can typically contain some of the following: a small supermarket or convenience store, takeaways or cafés, beauty salons and barbers, a pharmacy, newsagents, office and sales uses as well as other specialist shops and services.
- 5.10. There are fifteen centres within the borough which have been proposed as designated local centres: Bedhampton, Gable Head, Rails Lane, West Town, Middle Park Way, Cowplain, Crookhorn, Grassmere, Hambledon Road, Milton Road South, Milton Road North, Hazleton Way, Purbrook, Widley and Southleigh. These centres will be discussed and reviewed in Chapter 10 of this report.
- 5.11. The borough also contains shops and services outside of designated centres which are important in meeting community needs. The proposed approach to these shops and services is outlined in Chapter 11 of this report.

6. Havant Town Centre

6.1. Havant is a compact former market town, which has evolved around the crossroads formed by West Street, South Street, East Street and North Street. Havant town centre benefits from its central location, frequent public transport services to and from Havant Railway and Bus Stations and good motorway links. The centre has a varied range of shops and services and is in proximity of employment areas. The centre comprises 3 character areas: The Historic Core, The Retail Parks and Market Parade, which are detailed below.



Figure 3 – A map showing the character and key areas of Havant town centre.

Area	Description of area and uses
The Historic Core	<p>St Faith's Church and its surrounding area is the birthplace of Havant Town, marking the historic core. It is characterised by many small, local, and independent businesses, smaller retail units, as well as the Meridian Shopping Centre. The area also hosts Havant Bus Station, is in proximity to Havant Railway Station, and provides the connections between the Retail Parks and Market Parade.</p>
	<p><u>The Meridian Centre</u></p> <p>The Meridian Centre is an indoor shopping centre with two floors, decked parking and was opened in 1991. It houses multiple and independent (mainly comparison) retailers, local services and businesses along with Havant Library.</p>
	<p><u>West Street</u></p> <p>West Street acts as the main High Street within the heart of the town centre and provides direct access to the Meridian Centre. The Street is largely pedestrianised, with restricted vehicular access to the east of the Street. Havant Bus Station is located to the north in Elm Lane, with pedestrian access gained through an alleyway. West Street predominantly comprises shops, banks/building societies, estate/travel agents and cafés. The area hosts some multiple retailers including Superdrug, New Look, Boots and Savers. The Street also hosts multinational and national food and drink chains including McDonalds, Wetherspoons, Subway and Greggs. West street also contains a range of independent and local businesses. There is an open street market held twice a week on Tuesdays and Saturdays outside of the entrance to the Meridian Centre.</p>
	<p><u>North Street</u></p> <p>North Street contains a range of uses, with some national brands and independent retailers, typically in smaller units. The Street hosts shops, offices, cafés, takeaways, restaurants, barbers, salons and other local businesses. There is a Waitrose store located to the east of North Street. Havant United Reformed Church is situated to the north of the roundabout junction with North Street and Elm Lane.</p>
	<p><u>Park Road</u></p> <p>Park Road (North and South) is the main road running through Havant town centre and represents a physical division between the west and east sides of the town centre. Pedestrian access to both retail parks is obtained via Park Road. Park Road South has a small parade of units on the western side which extends into the western section of West Street. The parade hosts independent and local shops and services. There is a separate fast food restaurant and drive-through located on the southern junction with Solent Road.</p>
Market Parade	<p>Market Parade was built in the 1960s and comprises three-to-four storey buildings with independent shops, cafés and takeaways at ground floor with flats above. Access to the southern entrance of Havant Railway Station is through the pedestrianised area of Market Parade and Havant Park is located to the west. The public realm is dated and somewhat unwelcoming and there is a poor perception of safety. Vacancy rates here have improved in recent years.</p>
The Retail Parks	<p>The Retail Parks are located just off the M27/A27 junction. The Retail Parks take advantage of their excellent road accessibility and significant free parking. Their success reflects the demand for larger retail units which cannot be accommodated within the town centre's older stock.</p> <p><u>Solent Retail Park</u></p> <p>Large retail units housing major brand multiple stores including Next, Home Bargains, Pets at Home, Hobbycraft, Halfords, Peacocks, Sports Direct and Marks & Spencer. Opposite is a</p>

	<p>Tesco Extra superstore with petrol station and other units including a flooring shop and charity shop. There were no vacancies at the retail park at the time of a site visit.</p> <p><u>Central Retail Park</u></p> <p>Large retail units with multiple retailers including Wickes, Aldi, Dreams, B&M, German Donner Kebab and KFC with a drive-through element. During a site visit it was noted that there was one vacant unit, however, at the time of writing, planning permission has recently been granted for a Pure Gym to occupy this unit.</p>
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Table 1 – Summary of Havant Town Centre’s key areas.

- 6.2. Havant is located on the M27/A27 corridor, with the M27 meeting the A3(M) in the borough, providing a route to London. There are therefore excellent road links from Havant to surrounding towns and cities.
- 6.3. Havant town centre can be accessed from the A27 via Langstone roundabout which feeds traffic directly onto Park Road South running through the middle of the town centre.
- 6.4. Havant Railway Station is directly adjacent to Market Parade, highlighting that this area of the town centre is an important gateway/linkage location. The rail network provides direct routes to Portsmouth, Southampton, Brighton, London Victoria and London Waterloo.
- 6.5. Havant Bus Station is located within the town centre on Elm Lane and provides bus routes to areas of the borough and to Portsmouth, Southsea, Petersfield and Chichester.
- 6.6. Havant town centre has been highlighted as a crime and anti-social behaviour hotspot in the borough, with 1287 crimes reported in the year to September 2024. This follows historic trends of crime hotspots being related to high footfall areas such as town centres.
- 6.7. Crime levels generally increase over the summer months, although these can fluctuate. 141 crimes were reported in this area in June 2024 compared to 105 crimes in November 2024¹⁷. The average number of crimes reported each month for the year was 107.
- 6.8. The most commonly reported crimes in the year to September 2024¹⁸ were:
 - Violence and sexual offences (364 reports received)
 - Shoplifting (208 reports received)
 - Anti-social behaviour (200 reports received)

Retail Health Check

- 6.9. This section provides a health check of Havant town centre, assessing its current performance and condition against indicators suggested in the PPG.
- 6.10. Whilst acknowledging the ‘E’ use class, it was considered that breaking down the uses within this class into different categories would still be appropriate to understand how the centre is used and the types of uses which are prominent within it. The table and chart below represent the findings from the site visit.

¹⁷ Source: <https://www.hampshire.police.uk/area/your-area/hampshire/havant/havant-and-emsworth/about-us/crime-map>

¹⁸ The following data has been taken from the Police.UK database (<https://data.police.uk>) and provides an overview of crime data for the period September 2023 to September 2024 for the Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) Havant 014B, H and G, which cover the town centre area.

Type of usage	% of units within town centre
Retail (shops and stores)	38%
Food and Drink (including cafes, restaurants, takeaways, public houses)	19%
Leisure (including gyms, dance studios, betting shops, amusement arcades, bingo halls)	1%
Beauty/barbers (including hairdressers, beauty and nail salons, barbers, tattoo shops, massage)	17%
Banks and Building Societies	2%
Offices (including estate and travel agents, funeral directors, accountants)	7%
Health Services (including surgeries, pharmacy, opticians, dentists, other health services)	2%
Local/community services (including libraries, community centres)	2%
Other (uses which do not typically fall into any of the above categories)	4%
Vacant units	7%

Table 2 – Types and percentage of uses in Havant Town Centre.

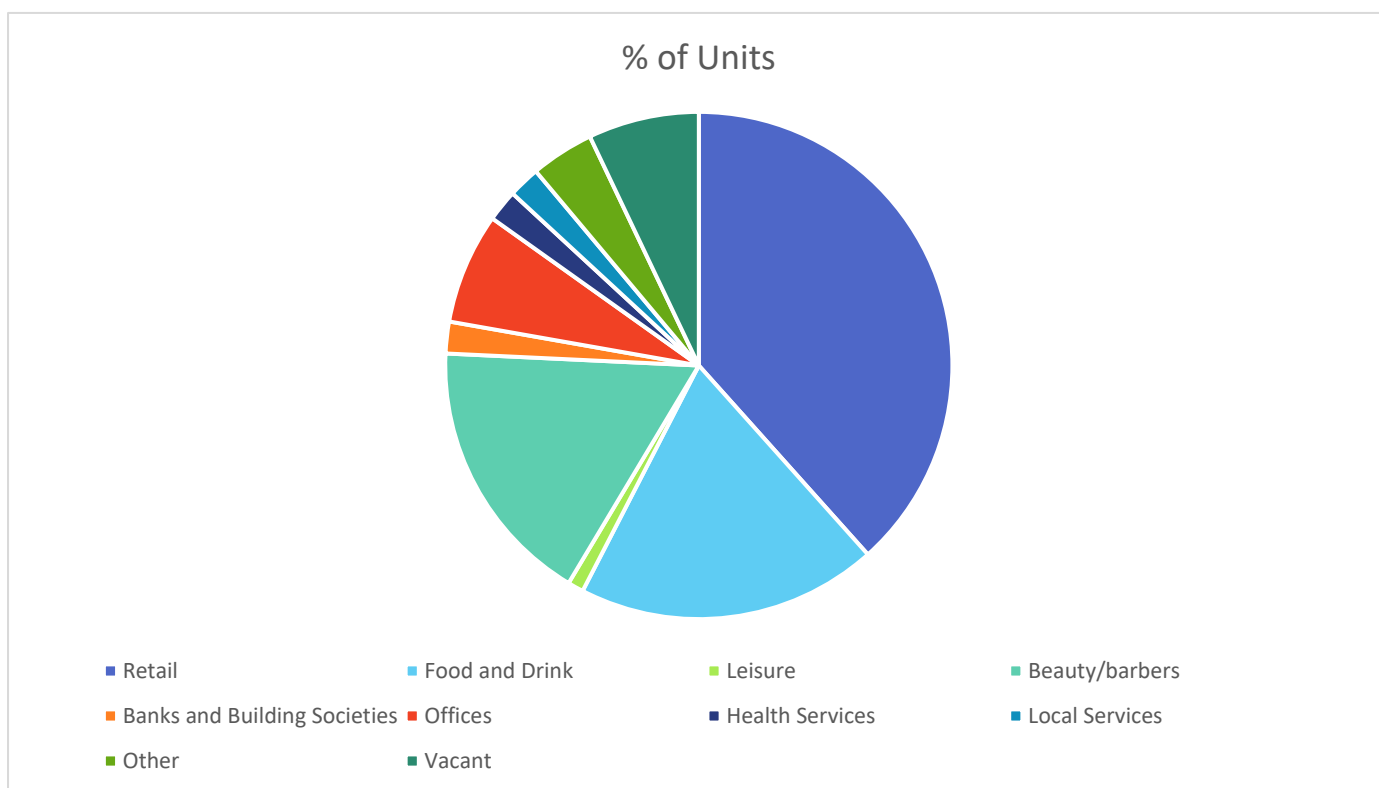


Figure 4 - Chart showing percentage of units falling within different uses in Havant Town Centre.

6.11. Centre analysis shows that retail is the most dominant use within the centre occupying 38% units, followed secondly by food and drink uses at 19% and beauty uses at 17%. The data suggests that there is a varied range of uses contained within the centre.

- 6.12. A site visit to the centre showed that each of the different areas of the centre described in Table 1 above host a different range of uses. Retail uses are situated throughout the town centre, with many of the larger, national stores located in Central and Solent Retail Parks and the Meridian Centre. Discount and charity shops tend to be located in West Street, with many smaller, specialist and independent shops situated in Market Parade, North Street and West Street. Market Parade and the north of North Street contain a high concentration of food and drink uses, with 19 units alone in this area. North Street contains the highest number of office uses, with 7 units. Beauty/barber uses are distributed throughout the town centre, however mainly contained within Market Parade, to the north of North Street and to the west of West Street. The site visit showed that there is a mix of national, multiple and independent retailers within the centre.
- 6.13. The data collected shows that the centres vacancy rate stood at 7%. As set out in Chapter 4 above, the national average vacancy rate is 13.9%, which means that Havant town centre's occupancy levels are better than the national average. Planning policies and regeneration projects, which are detailed later in this section, can help to reduce these vacancy levels and encourage units to occupy a mix of town centre uses.

Retail and Leisure Need Assessment

- 6.14. This section of the report evaluates retail and leisure need in line with the requirements set out in paragraph 90.d) of the NPPF.
- 6.15. Quantitative data has been used to assess the need for retail floorspace in the borough. Both planning application and business rates data has been collected for the town centres showing current and historic vacancies for the existing town centre boundaries, as adopted in The Allocations Plan (2014). This data has been selected for the centres to understand the pattern of vacancies throughout the time period 2018 – 2025 and to ascertain where planning permissions have been granted.
- 6.16. Planning application data for the period of January 2018 – March 2025 for Havant town centre was obtained, including an 800m walking distance buffer around the designated boundary to capture any applications on the edge of centres. The data shows that there was only one¹⁹ planning permission granted for a town centre use²⁰, with the site being located in the designated primary shopping area.
- 6.17. Vacancy rates data for the town centre was obtained from the period January 2018 – November 2025. The data shows which units have experienced vacancies as well as the vacancy length. The trends and analysis for this data have been broken down below.
- 6.18. Havant has a number of vacancies throughout the town centre. Units within the town centre have had an average vacancy length of just under a year and a half.
- 6.19. There have been multiple vacancies within the primary shopping areas such as the Meridian Centre, West Street and North Street which form part of the primary shopping area. Vacancy periods have varied with units along West Street being vacant for an average of a year and a half and vacancies in the Meridian Centre being vacant for an average of just over a year.

¹⁹ Planning application reference APP/19/01260

²⁰ Planning application data was taken for applications relating to classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1A, B1B, B1C, D1 and D2 for the period January 2018 – 31st August 2020. From 1st September 2020 – March 2025, Class E and Sui Generis uses were obtained to reflect the changes in national policy.

- 6.20. There have also been vacancies in the secondary shopping frontage at Market Parade. The length of vacancies varied here, with the average vacancy length for these units was just over a year and a half.
- 6.21. The longest periods of vacancies occur in East Street, with some units being vacant for 11 years. The average vacancy length for units in East Street is over 5 years.

Opportunities

- 6.22. Havant town centre is identified in the Council's Corporate Strategy²¹ as an area for regeneration and in the Regeneration and Economy Strategy²² as one of the four priority areas for regeneration under the 'sustainable places' theme. This includes the creation of new homes and economic infrastructure, as well as developing a more resilient and inclusive economy.
- 6.23. The Council's Regeneration department have ambitious long-term plans to regenerate Havant town centre by providing new homes and enhancing the public realm, incorporating existing assets such as Havant Park²³.
- 6.24. The Council launched a 'Vacant Shop Scheme' aiming to transform vacant shops within the town centre, by creating long-term solutions and encourage a wider offer to the local community. This scheme included eligible projects receiving grant funding to bring empty units back into use. This scheme supported start-up businesses as well as expanding businesses.

Boundary and Primary Shopping Area Review

- 6.25. The Havant town centre boundary as defined in The Allocations Plan (2014) contains East Street. Since then, this area has seen many of the town centre use units become vacant, with many of these being successfully converted to residential properties. Nonetheless, there are still some town centre uses contained within East Street, however they are dispersed between residential and vacant units. Due to this, it is recommended that East Street is removed from the town centre boundary.
- 6.26. The primary shopping area as defined in the Allocations Plan (2014) comprised a large section of North Street and West Street, Solent Retail Park and Central Retail Park. Centre analysis has demonstrated that North Street comprises a range of uses such as retail, takeaways and restaurants, offices and other services. The data shows that retail is not the dominant use within North Street, and therefore it is recommended that this area is removed from the primary shopping area boundary. Additionally, although West Street contains a large mix of retail units, this area also contains a number of other uses such as food and drink, beauty services and banks. Due to the pedestrianised nature of West Street, and in line with 'The Future of Town Centres and High Streets' subsection in Chapter 4 above, it is considered that this area would be more appropriate for a diverse mix of uses contributing to the overall town centre offer. It is therefore recommended that this area is removed from the primary shopping area.

²¹ [Havant Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2024 -2028](#)

²² [Havant Borough Regeneration and Economy Strategy 2022-36](#)

²³ More information can be found at: <https://www.havant.gov.uk/regeneration-and-business/regeneration-havant-borough/havant-town-centre>

- 6.27. A site visit to the centre concluded that both Central Retail Park and Solent Retail Park host larger, modern units, predominantly occupied by retail uses and with no vacancies. It is therefore proposed that these areas only are to comprise the primary shopping area.
- 6.28. The proposed centre and primary shopping area boundaries can be found in Appendix 1.

Hierarchy Review

- 6.29. It is recommended that the centre maintains its position within the centre hierarchy of being a designated town centre.

Policy Recommendations

- 6.30. To ensure that the centre continues to perform its role successfully, it is recommended that there is policy provision within the Building a Better Future Plan which protects Class E uses at ground floor level. The policies should also ensure that these retain active frontages, with residential units located above ground floor level only. It is recommended that Class E uses only should occupy units within the designated primary shopping area.
- 6.31. The regeneration of Havant town centre is a corporate aim of the Council as set out in Chapter 3 above, and it is therefore recommended that there is policy provision in the Building a Better Future Plan which enables successful regeneration of the town centres. Havant town centre is a sustainable location which can provide the opportunity for housing development, as well as a mix of uses including retail, leisure, food and drink, community, office, tourism and cultural uses. It is envisaged that through the delivery of a mix of uses through regeneration schemes, the vitality and viability of the town centre will be improved.

Conclusions

- 6.32. Overall, it is considered that Havant town centre has good accessibility and links to public transport, making it an attractive centre for residents to visit. The centre has a diversity of uses, including multinational, multiple and independent retailers and hosts a market twice a week, which adds to the offer and vitality of the centre. Havant town centre's vacancy rate is better than the national average, with relatively low levels of vacant units, however vacant units occur throughout the centre, including within designated primary and secondary frontages, and consist of units of varying size and layout. Due to the level of vacant units within the centre, it is considered that there is not the need for additional retail or leisure floorspace within the town centre as national guidance requires that main town centre uses should be concentrated in town centres in the first instance.
- 6.33. It is proposed that the centre maintains its position within the centre hierarchy of being designated as a town centre, although alterations to the centre and primary shopping area boundary are considered necessary to ensure that the centre maintains its function.
- 6.34. In order for the town centre to continue to perform its role and be successful in the future, it will need to continue to attract a range of uses and adapt to changing circumstances in line with the research outlined in Chapter 4 of this report. The policy recommendations detailed above will allow Havant town centre to continue to be successful and improve its vitality and vibrancy.

7. WaterlooVille Town Centre

- 7.1. WaterlooVille has existed as a settlement since the 18th century, but expanded considerably in the post-war period to meet the needs of new residential neighbourhoods. Two shopping precincts were constructed during the 1970s: Wellington Way precinct and The Boulevard. The latter links London Road to the Dukes Walk shopping centre, which was completed in 2000.
- 7.2. Many units are located on London Road, which is the traditional main shopping street in the town centre and originally formed part of the A3 road network. The opening of the Maurepas Way in 1981 enabled through traffic to by-pass the town centre, from the Rockville Drive junction in the south, around the west and north of the centre, to the Hulbert Road junction in the north. Arising from the formation of Maurepas Way, London Road was partially pedestrianised between 1981 and 1983 and the character and function of London Road changed to provide a more attractive and safer pedestrian environment.
- 7.3. There are 7 key areas comprising WaterlooVille Town Centre; London Road, Wellington Way, The Boulevard, St George's Walk, Dukes Walk, Wellington Retail Park and Asda. A brief summary of these areas is provided below.

Area	Description of Area and Uses
London Road	<p>London Road is the traditional main shopping street in WaterlooVille and the main High Street. London Road is split between the northeastern pedestrianised section, intersected with St George's Walk and Stakes Hill Road, and a southwestern section which contains a bus lane.</p> <p>The northeastern section has an open feel and hosts a range of uses including shops, cafes, beauty salons, banks, pubs and services. There is a mix of multiple retailers such as WH Smith, Superdrug, Boots and Poundland, as well as independent retailers. This section of London Road also hosts other high street names such as EE, Timpson, Greggs, Santander, HSBC, Halifax, TUI travel agents and a Wetherspoons. There was one vacancy towards the north of the High Street, with a cluster of vacancies occurring around the units adjoining to Wellington Way. The pedestrianised part of London Road is also the location for a bustling street market held once a week on Fridays which attracts visitors.</p> <p>The southwestern section of London Road is narrower and has a different character and feel to the northeastern section. This area comprises a large number of takeaways and restaurants, 10 estate agents, 2 banks/building societies and 4 beauty salons amongst some other shops and services. There were 6 vacancies recorded along the southwestern section, with the majority occurring to the north of London Road.</p>
Wellington Way	<p>The Wellington Way centre was built in the 1970s. It has connections from the surface level car park through the centre to London Road. The centre has high vacancy rates with approximately half of the units unoccupied. Occupied units include: Iceland, charity and specialist shops, and a range of services. The public realm and environment of Wellington Way is not inviting and relatively enclosed in contrast with London Road and Dukes Walk in particular. However, there are Council led schemes and initiatives which have the aim of re-occupying and regenerating the centre, some of which has started to take place at the time of writing.</p>

The Boulevard	The Boulevard, which also dates from the 1970s, is a pedestrianised area to the south east of London Road which links London Road to the Dukes Walk shopping centre. The area has a largely welcoming public realm, with street furniture such as benches, planters, lighting and bins. Due to their small size most of the units are independent traders, however occupiers also include Costa Coffee and O2. This area hosts beauty salons, tattoo parlours, charity shops, a café, a takeaway/restaurant, a travel agents, an opticians, as well as other small shops and services. Waterloo Library is also located within the Boulevard. There was one recorded vacancy within this area.
St George's Walk	St George's Walk provides a direct connection between London Road and Wellington Way with Wellington Retail Park. This area contains a mix of uses including a convenience shop, opticians, Post Office, Subway, salons, a dentist and other services, as well as St George's Church and St George's Church Hall.
Dukes Walk	The Dukes Walk shopping centre consists of a terrace of 11 units, which overlook a large, shared surface level car park offering 3 hours of free parking. Occupiers include Bon Marché, Edinburgh Woollen Mill, Savers, Holland and Barrett, Card Factory, The Works, a card and celebration shop, a charity shop, a barbers, a kitchen sales and hairdressers. To the northeast of the carpark, a larger separate unit hosts One Beyond at the ground floor with Pure Gym occupying the first floor. To the southwest, there is a large vacant unit, which previously hosted Waitrose. Dukes Walk has good connections with London Road via The Boulevard, however otherwise faces away from the rest of the centre.
Wellington Retail Park	The retail park hosts large retail units, mainly housing major brand multiple stores with 3 hours free parking for 530 cars. There are 16 brands within the retail park: Matalan, TK Maxx, M&S Food, Dreams, Bensons for beds, Costa Coffee, Home Bargains, Pets at Home, Carpet Right, ScS, Tapi Carpets, Jollyes, Sharps, The Food Warehouse, Wenzel's, DFS and Worth its Weight. Seven of these retailers offer click and collect services. The retail park is connected to the rest of the town centre on foot via an underpass beneath the A3 as well as a pedestrian crossing over the A3. To the immediate north there is a large Sainsbury's superstore, which also hosts an Argos. This opened in December 2014 and has an adjacent free surface car park and undercroft parking. There were no vacancies recorded at the retail park upon a site visit.
Asda	Extensive supermarket to the northwest of London Road, at the western end of the town centre. The store sells both convenience and comparison goods. Vehicular access is directly from the A3 Maurepas Way and the store has a large free car park which also serves as car parking for visitors to the rest of the town centre, subject to a two hour limit. The store is also accessible on foot via Portland Road and other parts of the town centre. The store offers a click and collect service and parcel collections and returns services. The site also has a petrol station.

Table 3 – A summary of Waterloo Town Centre's key areas.

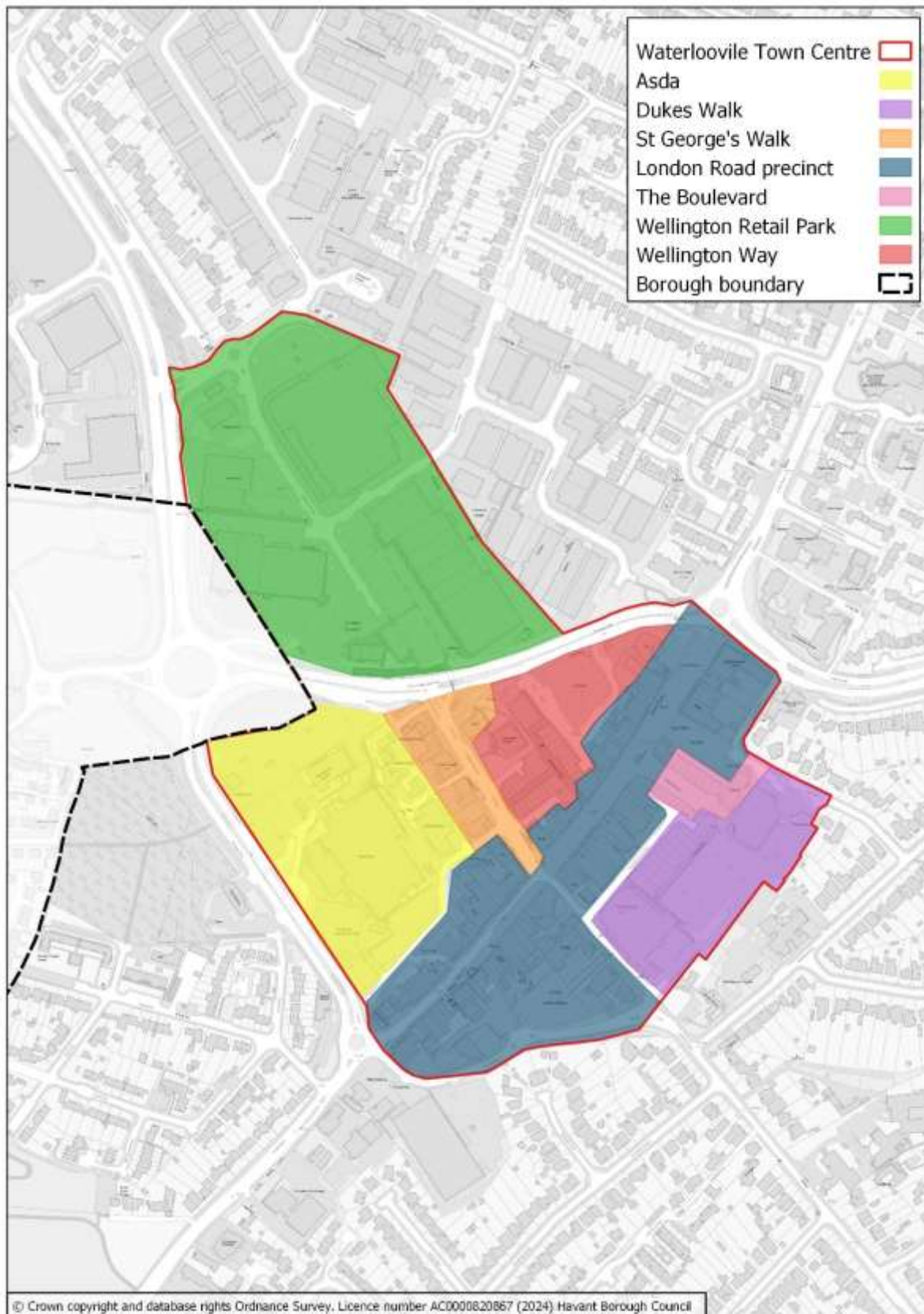


Figure 5 – A map showing the key areas of Waterloooville town centre.

- 7.4. The centre is easily accessible via the A3(M), but not accessible by rail, with the nearest railway stations at Bedhampton and Havant. However, the centre is served with a number of local bus services, providing connections from locations such as Portsmouth, Clanfield, Horndean, Cowplain, Havant, Widley and Petersfield. Waterlooville is part of the A3 ZIP corridor bus priority network, which has improved access to the town by bus since opening in 2008, as well as reducing emissions and helping to improve pedestrian safety by removing through traffic in the town centre. These bus routes and the encircling road network make the area attractive for visitors travelling by car and bus, with there also being several pedestrian routes through the town centre’s shopping precincts.
- 7.5. Crime levels in the town centre are broadly consistent throughout the year, with an average of 43 crimes reported each month in this area. In November 2024, 56 crimes were reported in the town centre²⁴.
- 7.6. The most commonly reported crimes in the year to September 2024²⁵ were:
- Violence and sexual offences (176 reports received)
 - Shoplifting (160 reports received)
 - Public order (102 reports received)
- 7.7. The data highlights that Waterlooville Town Centre experiences a lower level of crime than the Havant and Leigh Park town centres (experiencing monthly averages of 107 and 80 respectively). Despite this, the town centre can still be considered as a crime hotspot, as this LSOA consistently ranks among the LSOAs in Havant with the highest number of reported crimes, following historic trends of crime hotspots being related to high footfall areas such as town centres.

Retail Health Check

- 7.8. This section provides a health check of Waterlooville town centre, assessing its current performance and condition against indicators suggested in the PPG.
- 7.9. Whilst acknowledging the ‘E’ use class, it was considered that breaking down the uses within this class into different categories would still be appropriate to understand how the centre is used and the types of uses which are prominent within it. The table and chart below represent the findings from the site visit.

Type of usage	% of units within town centre
Retail (shops and stores)	32%
Food and Drink (including cafes, restaurants, takeaways, public houses)	15%
Leisure (including gyms, dance studios, betting shops, amusement arcades, bingo halls)	4%
Beauty/barbers (including hairdressers, beauty and nail salons, barbers, tattoo shops, massage)	13%

²⁴ Source: <https://www.hampshire.police.uk/area/your-area/hampshire/havant/waterlooville-north/about-us/crime-map>

²⁵ The following data has been taken from the Police.UK database (<https://data.police.uk>) and provides an overview of crime data for the period September 2023 to September 2024 for the Lower layer Super Output Area (LSOA) Havant 005D, which covers the town centre area.

Banks and Building Societies	3%
Offices (including estate and travel agents, funeral directors, accountants)	9%
Health Services (including surgeries, pharmacy, opticians, dentists, other health services)	3%
Local/community services (including libraries, community centres)	1%
Other (uses which do not typically fall into any of the above categories)	4%
Vacant units	15%

Table 4 - Types and percentage of uses in Waterlooville Town Centre

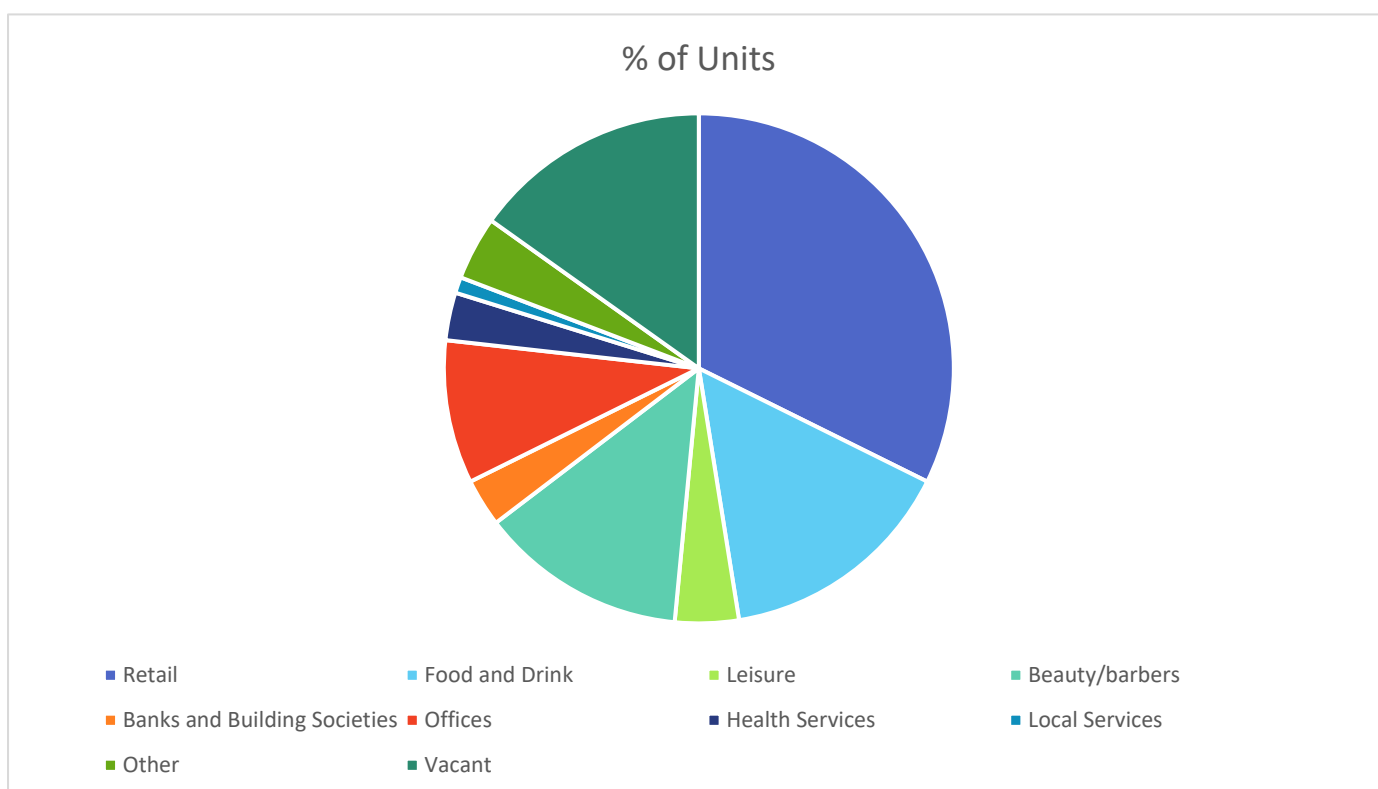


Figure 6 – Chart showing percentage of units falling within different uses in Waterlooville Town Centre.

7.10. The above data shows that retail uses are the dominant use within the town centre occupying 32% of units, with food and drink uses the second highest use at 15%, followed by beauty/barber uses at 13%. Waterlooville town centre performs well in terms of office uses, with the southwestern section of London Road hosting multiple estate agents. London Road also has a number of national banks and building societies, which add to the overall function of the town centre.

7.11. Centre data shows that vacancy rates were 15% at the time of the site visit, which is above the national average of 13.9% outlined in Chapter 4 of this report. There is a significant accumulation of vacant units in and around the Wellington Way Centre. Vacancy rates are acknowledged as an issue for the centre by the Council, with a number of initiatives and schemes being set up to re-occupy vacant units. These are outlined in the following Opportunities sub section.

Retail and Leisure Need Assessment

- 7.12. This section of the report evaluates retail and leisure need in line with the requirements set out in paragraph 90.d) of the NPPF.
- 7.13. Quantitative data has been used to assess the need for retail floorspace in the borough. Both planning application and business rates data has been collected for the town centres showing current and historic vacancies for the existing town centre boundaries, as adopted in The Allocations Plan (2014). This data has been selected for the centres to understand the pattern of vacancies throughout the time period 2018 – 2025 and to ascertain where planning permissions have been granted.
- 7.14. Planning application data for the period of January 2018 – March 2025 for Waterlooville town centre was obtained, including an 800m walking distance buffer around the designated boundary to capture any applications on the edge of centres. The data shows that there were two²⁶ planning permission granted for town centre uses²⁷, with the sites being located outside of the designated town centre boundary.
- 7.15. Vacancy rates data for the town centre was obtained from the period January 2018 – November 2025. The data shows which units have experienced vacancies as well as the vacancy length. The trends and analysis for this data have been broken down below.
- 7.16. Vacancy rates data for the town centre was obtained from the period January 2018 – November 2025. The data shows which units have experienced vacancies as well as the vacancy length. The trends and analysis for this data have been broken down below.
- 7.17. The data shows that there have been a number of vacancies in Waterlooville town centre, with some areas experiencing longer periods of vacancies than others. These have occurred in both the primary and secondary frontages, as well as in units of varying size and layout. The average vacancy length throughout the town centre was one year.
- 7.18. Notably, there have been consistent vacancies in Wellington Way, which forms part of the centres allocated primary shopping area and typically contains smaller units. 24 units within Wellington Way have seen vacancies, with some units vacant on multiple occasions. Vacancy periods have varied in this part of the town centre, with some units vacant on a short term basis and others vacant for a number of years.
- 7.19. Along the main high street, London Road, there have been a mix of vacancies in units of varying size and layout, in units either designated as primary or secondary shopping areas. In total, 21 units were vacant for 3 months or less, with other units seeing longer term vacancies spanning a number of years.
- 7.20. Other vacancies have appeared in the primary shopping area of Dukes Walk and Wellington Retail Park. The average vacancy length for units in both Dukes Walk and Wellington Retail Park is one and half years.

²⁶ Planning application reference APP/18/01072 and APP/21/00399

²⁷ Planning application data was taken for applications relating to classes A1, A2, A3, A4, A5, B1A, B1B, B1C, D1 and D2 for the period January 2018 – 31st August 2020. From 1st September 2020 – March 2025, Class E and Sui Generis uses were obtained to reflect the changes in national policy.

Opportunities

- 7.21. Waterlooville town centre is identified in the Council's Corporate Strategy²⁸ as an area for regeneration and in the Regeneration and Economy Strategy²⁹ as one of the four priority areas for regeneration under the 'sustainable places' theme. This includes the creation of new homes and economic infrastructure, as well as developing a more resilient and inclusive economy.
- 7.22. The Council is working on a range of schemes and initiatives to help regenerate Waterlooville Town Centre³⁰, including the development of a regeneration Masterplan and a public realm improvements scheme. The masterplan sets out a vision and plan for future growth, identifying key areas of growth, future development and identify improvements for the local economy, town centre precinct and its surrounding areas. The masterplan also contains proposals for public realm improvements.
- 7.23. The Council also launched a 'Vacant Shop Scheme' aiming to transform vacant shops within the town centre, by creating long-term solutions and encourage a wider offer to the local community. This scheme included eligible projects receiving grant funding to bring empty units back into use. This scheme supported start-up businesses as well as expanding businesses.
- 7.24. Furthermore, the Council has established a 'Pop Up Shop' scheme, offering local businesses an opportunity to trial a physical store setup without overheads of a long-term lease. This will help to give start-ups space to launch new products, benefit from seasonal spaces and integrate into Waterlooville's community. This scheme will also help to inject vitality into the high street.

Boundary and Primary Shopping Area Review

- 7.25. Waterlooville town centre has a clear, defined boundary. Whilst it is acknowledged that the centre has high levels of vacancies, particularly located in the heart of the centre at Wellington Way, it is considered that, overall, the centre is performing its role in delivering a main destination area for retail, leisure and other main town centre uses. As outlined above, there are a number of Council-led initiatives in place to combat vacancy levels and deliver public realm improvements, which aims to re-occupy the vacant units at the heart of the centre. It is therefore proposed that the boundary of the town centre is to remain unchanged.
- 7.26. The Allocations Plan (2014) allocated Dukes Walk, The Boulevard, central London Road, Wellington Way and Wellington Retail Park as the primary shopping area. Centre analysis has shown that the areas where retail is the dominant use is in Dukes Walk and Wellington Retail Park. A site visit demonstrated that Wellington Way had high levels of vacancies, and therefore, in order to occupy these units, a mix of uses would be encouraged to this area to improve occupancy rates. It is therefore recommended that Wellington Way is to be removed from the primary shopping area boundary. Similarly to Havant town centre, due to the pedestrianised nature of northeastern London Road and The Boulevard, and in line with 'The Future of Town Centres and High Streets' subsection in Chapter 4 above, it is considered that this area would be more appropriate for a flexible and diverse mix of uses contributing to the overall town centre offer. It is therefore recommended that this area is removed from the primary shopping area.
- 7.27. Therefore, it is proposed that Dukes Walk and Wellington Retail Park are to be the primary shopping area.

²⁸ [Havant Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2024 -2028](#)

²⁹ [Havant Borough Regeneration and Economy Strategy 2022-36](#)

³⁰ More information can be found at: <https://www.havant.gov.uk/regeneration-and-business/regeneration-havant-borough/waterlooville-town-centre>

7.28. The proposed centre and primary shopping area boundaries can be found in Appendix 2.

Hierarchy Review

7.29. It is recommended that the centre maintains its position within the centre hierarchy of being a designated town centre.

Policy Recommendations

- 7.30. To ensure that the centre continues to perform its role successfully, it is recommended that there is policy provision within the Building a Better Future Plan which protects Class E uses at ground floor level. The policies should also ensure that these retain active frontages, with residential units located above ground floor level only. It is recommended that Class E uses only should occupy units within the designated primary shopping area.
- 7.31. The regeneration of Waterlooville town centre is a corporate aim of the Council as set out in Chapter 3 above, and it is therefore recommended that there is policy provision in the Building a Better Future Plan which supports successful regeneration of the town centres. Waterlooville town centre is a sustainable location which can provide the opportunity for housing development, as well as a mix of uses including retail, leisure, food and drink, community, office, tourism and cultural uses. It is envisaged that through the delivery of a mix of uses through regeneration schemes, the vitality and viability of the town centre will be improved.

Conclusions

- 7.32. Waterlooville town centre provides local residents with a range of shops and services, meeting their everyday needs. There are a mix of uses contained within the centre, including national retailers, independent stores, cafés, banks and building societies, a gym and community uses such as Waterlooville Library. It is recommended that Waterlooville keeps its position within the centre hierarchy as being a designated town centre.
- 7.33. The centre has relatively high levels of vacant units, although this is consistent with national trends, and there are various Council-led schemes in place which aim to reduce the number of vacancies and improve the public realm in the centre. It is recommended that there is not an additional need for retail or leisure floorspace within this centre, as national guidance requires that main town centre uses should be concentrated in town centres in the first instance, therefore existing vacant units should be occupied first.
- 7.34. In order for the town centre to continue to perform its role and be successful in the future, it will need to continue to attract a range of uses and adapt to changing circumstances in line with the research outlined in Chapter 4 of this report. The policy recommendations detailed above will allow Waterlooville town centre to continue to be successful and improve its vitality and vibrancy.

8. Leigh Park Town Centre

8.1. Leigh Park town centre comprises four distinct but connected areas: Park Parade, Greywell Shopping Precinct, Sombourne Drive and Dunsbury Way. The centre serves the wider Leigh Park community for retail and services, as well as being a community and cultural hub. Each of the four areas are defined below.



Figure 7 – A map showing the key areas of Leigh Park town centre.

Area	Description of Area and Uses
Greywell Shopping Precinct	A late 1960s pedestrianised precinct with a range of unit sizes occupied by national brands and local shops with relatively low levels of vacancy. The majority of units have maisonettes above. Bishopstoke Road car park lies to the north serving the precinct and providing access to the flats above. The Greywell area is the primary focus for retail provision and occupiers include national retailers such as New Look, Farmfoods, Poundland, Card Factory, Greggs, Costa and Savers. Other shops and services include salons, barbers, jewellers, a pharmacy, cafés and shops.
Park Parade	The original 1950s 'High Street', which has more recently been pedestrianised. This area comprises mainly smaller units, with largely secondary functions for the centre. Many of the occupiers here are local, independent businesses, with uses including a gym, takeaways, barbers, hair and beauty salons, pet shop, betting shop and a pharmacy. The units have residential flats above, which are accessed from the rear. There is a car park to the south.
Sombourne Drive	Sombourne Drive forms the eastern boundary of the centre and contains the newest development in the area, a Lidl supermarket and Portsmouth Housing Office. To the north lies a bingo hall, a new sports facility at Front Lawn recreation ground and a few car parks.
Dunsbury Way	A concentration of community buildings which occupy the land adjacent to Dunsbury Way and Bishopstoke Road. This includes a library, two community centres, a day nursery, a craft space and a training facility. The range of services meet the significant demand for community-based services in Leigh Park

Table 5 - A summary of Leigh Park Town Centre's key areas.

- 8.2. Leigh Park town centre is served by bus services in Park Parade, with direct links to Southsea, Portsmouth, Havant, Wecock Farm and Rowlands Castle. The centre is also easily accessible by foot or cycle from the surrounding Leigh Park housing estate. There are also a number of car parks located near to the centre.
- 8.3. There are no direct rail links to the centre, with the nearest railway stations being Havant and Bedhampton.
- 8.4. Leigh Park town centre has been identified as a crime and anti-social behaviour hotspot in the borough³¹, with 968 crimes reported in the year to September 2024. This follows historic trends of crime hotspots being related to high footfall areas such as town centres.
- 8.5. Crime levels are broadly consistent throughout the year with an average of 80 crimes reported each month in this area.
- 8.6. The most commonly reported crimes in the year to September 2024 were:
- Violence and sexual offences (387 reports received)
 - Anti-social behaviour (162 reports received)
 - Public order (114 reports received)

³¹ The following data has been taken from the Police.UK database (<https://data.police.uk>) and provides an overview of crime data for the period September 2023 to September 2024 for the Lower layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) Havant 008A and 010C, which cover the town centre area.

Retail Health Check

- 8.7. This section provides a health check of Leigh Park Town Centre, assessing its current performance and condition against indicators suggested in the PPG.
- 8.8. Centre analysis shows that there is a diverse mix of uses, with retail being the most dominant use within the centre, occupying 40% of units. The second highest uses are beauty salons and barbers occupying 19% of units and food and drink uses being the third highest use comprising 17% of units. The centre also contains leisure uses, such as gyms and a bingo hall and community uses for local residents

Type of usage	% of units within town centre
Retail (shops and stores)	40%
Food and Drink (including cafés, restaurants, takeaways, public houses)	17%
Leisure (including gyms, dance studios, betting shops, amusement arcades, bingo halls)	6%
Beauty/barbers (including hairdressers, beauty and nail salons, barbers, tattoo shops, massage)	19%
Banks and Building Societies	0%
Offices (including estate and travel agents, funeral directors, accountants)	1%
Health Services (including surgeries, pharmacy, opticians, dentists, other health services)	3%
Local/community services (including libraries, community centres)	7%
Other (uses which do not typically fall into any of the above categories)	1%
Vacant units	6%

Table 6 - Types and percentage of uses in Leigh Park Town Centre.

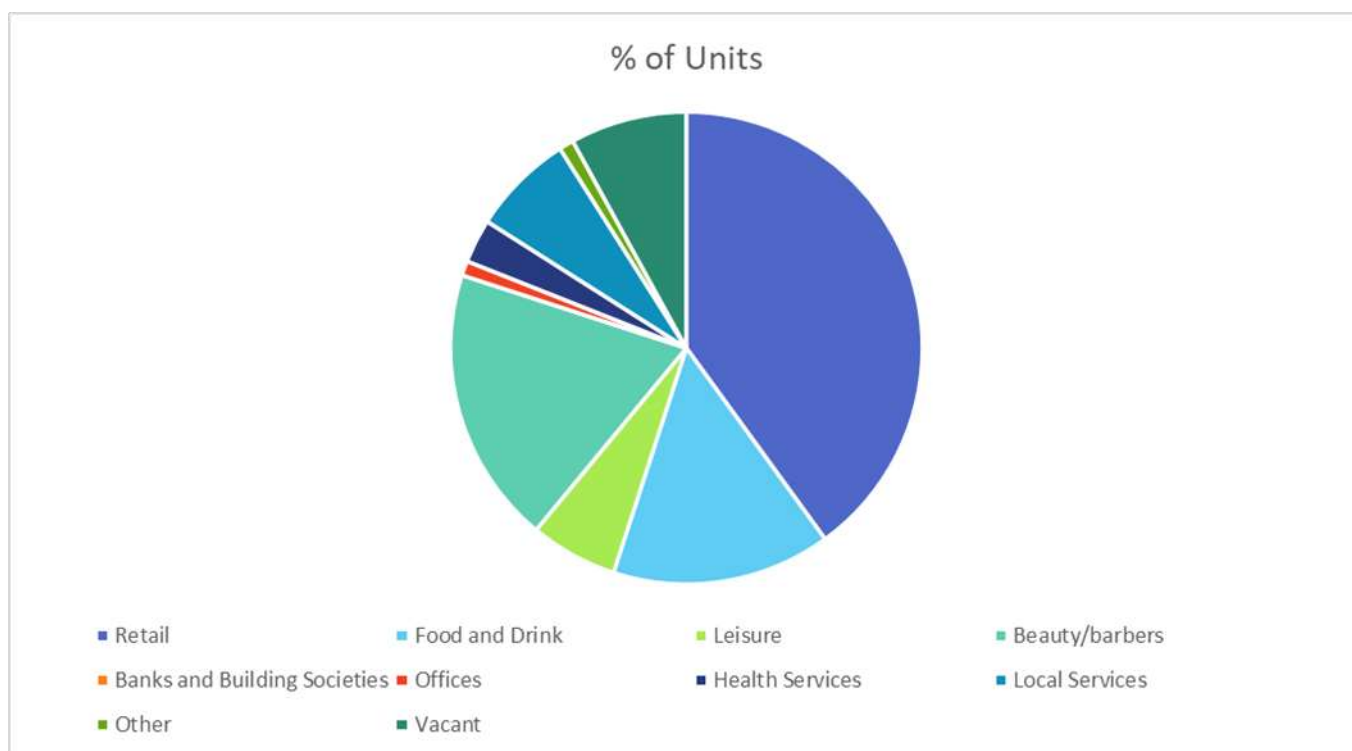


Figure 8 - Chart showing percentage of units falling within different uses within Leigh Park Town Centre.

8.9. The national average vacancy rate is around 13.9%, showing that Leigh Park centre is performing significantly better than the national average. The centre has the lowest vacancy rate of all three of the borough's town centres.

Retail and Leisure Need Assessment

8.10. This section of the report evaluates retail and leisure need in line with the requirements set out in paragraph 90.d) of the NPPF.

8.11. Vacancy rates data for the town centres was obtained from the period January 2018 – November 2025. The data shows which units have experienced vacancies as well as the vacancy length. The trends and analysis for this data have been broken down below.

8.12. Leigh Park town centre has experienced vacancies throughout the centre, including within the designated primary and secondary shopping areas. Across the town centre, units were vacant on average for less than half a year.

8.13. There have been 12 vacancies within the primary shopping area and 5 units within the secondary shopping area. There have been 21 units vacant within the wider town centre boundary.

8.14. Vacancies within Leigh Park centre have typically seen shorter periods of vacancies, for example 19 of the units were vacant for a period of less than a year.

8.15. Overall, vacancies within Leigh Park town centre have occurred throughout the town centre in a mix of unit sizes.

Opportunities

- 8.16. Leigh Park town centre is identified in the Council's Corporate Strategy³² as an area for regeneration, with the area of Leigh Park being identified in the Council's Regeneration and Economy Strategy³³ as one of the four priority areas for regeneration under the 'sustainable places' theme. This includes the creation of new homes and economic infrastructure, as well as developing a more resilient and inclusive economy.
- 8.17. The Council's Regeneration service has set up a 'Vacant Shop Scheme'³⁴ for Leigh Park Town Centre, which aims to transform vacant shops within Greywell Shopping Centre and Park Road, by creating long-term solutions and encourage a wider offer to the local community. This scheme included eligible projects receiving grant funding to bring empty units back into use. This scheme supported start-up businesses as well as expanding businesses.
- 8.18. Furthermore, an Environmental Improvements project has been set up to improve the cleanliness and safety of the area, including installing CCTV. At the time of writing, the Council has secured funding to deliver improvements to the environment in Park Parade and Greywell Shopping Centre and is seeking views on how this can be delivered through options including improvements to lighting, refurbished play equipment, planting and improved street furniture³⁵.

Boundary and Primary Shopping Area Review

- 8.19. Leigh Park town centre has distinct boundaries making up the town centre. It is considered that there are not any areas within the centre which are not performing the role of a town centre or have significant levels of vacancy. It is considered that there are no changes to be made to the existing town centre boundary.
- 8.20. The primary shopping area of the centre as defined in the Allocations Plan (2014) comprised units from Greywell Shopping Precinct. After a health check of the centre, it was recorded that this area of the centre contained the highest proportion of retail uses. It is therefore proposed that the primary shopping area should remain as the units contained within Greywell Shopping Precinct.
- 8.21. The proposed centre and primary shopping area boundaries can be found in Appendix 3.

Hierarchy Review

- 8.22. Leigh Park town centre was designated as a district centre in the Allocations Plan (2014). After a review of the centre, it is proposed that the centre moves up in the centre hierarchy to be designated as a town centre. This is proposed due to the uses presented within the centre, its offer of retail, food, leisure, services and community facilities making the centre a destination for residents.

Policy Recommendations

- 8.23. To ensure that the centre continues to perform its role successfully, it is recommended that there is policy provision within the Building a Better Future Plan which protects Class E uses at ground floor level. The policies should also ensure that these retain active frontages, with residential units

³² [Havant Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2024 -2028](#)

³³ [Havant Borough Regeneration and Economy Strategy 2022-36](#)

³⁴ More information can be found at: <https://www.havant.gov.uk/regeneration-and-business/regeneration-havant-borough/leigh-park-regeneration>

³⁵ More information can be found at: <https://www.havant.gov.uk/regeneration-and-business/regeneration-havant-borough/leigh-park-regeneration>

located above ground floor level only. It is recommended that Class E uses only should occupy units within the designated primary shopping area.

- 8.24. The regeneration of Leigh Park town centre is a corporate aim of the Council as set out in Chapter 3 above, and it is therefore recommended that there is policy provision in the Building a Better Future Plan which enables successful regeneration of the town centres. Leigh Park town centre is a sustainable location which can provide the opportunity for housing development, as well as a mix of uses including retail, leisure, food and drink, community, office, tourism and cultural uses. It is envisaged that through the delivery of a mix of uses through regeneration schemes, the vitality and viability of the town centre will be improved.

Conclusions

- 8.25. Leigh Park town centre contains a mix of uses serving the local community, with a range of shops and services easily accessible to residents. The centre offers a range of comparison and convenience shopping outlets, food and drink offer, as well as leisure facilities. The centre is identified as an area for regeneration efforts, with schemes in place to encourage the occupation of vacant units.
- 8.26. The centre has a moderate rate of vacancies and is not above the national average. Due to a consistent pattern of vacancies in the centre, it is considered that there is not the need for additional retail or leisure floorspace, as main town centre uses should occupy these units first.
- 8.27. Leigh Park Town Centre was previously designated as a district centre in The Allocations Plan (2014). The evidence suggests that the centre should now be designated as a town centre due to the range of uses contained within it.
- 8.28. In order for the town centre to continue to perform its role and be successful in the future, it will need to continue to attract a range of uses and adapt to changing circumstances in line with the research outlined in Chapter 4 of this report. The policy recommendations detailed above will allow Leigh Park town centre to continue to be successful and improve its vitality and vibrancy.

9. District Centres

9.1. The Allocations Plan (2014) designated four district centres within the borough, however after a review of the centres and the centre hierarchy, it is proposed that there should now be only two district centres designated within the borough. The two proposed centres are:

- Emsworth District Centre
- Mengham District Centre

Emsworth District Centre

9.2. Retail in Emsworth began as a small Saxon village which by the year 1239 was granted the right to hold a weekly market. Located within the Emsworth Conservation Area, Emsworth district centre is home to many historic and listed buildings and is found between the Emsworth Millpond and the Brook Meadow Local Nature Reserve (LNR). The section of the district centre south of the A259 is also part of the Chichester Harbour National Landscape.

9.3. Due to the area’s unique setting, surroundings and maritime location, the centre contributes to the day visitor and tourist offering of the borough. As a result, the economy of Emsworth is centred on the district centre. The south of the centre is dominated by independent retailers, restaurants and cafés. In the north, there are further retail, restaurant and community uses, together with several industrial/warehouse units supporting small-scale manufacturing and automotive businesses.

9.4. Emsworth district centre hosts many successful specialist markets and events throughout the year, with a monthly farmers market held around St Peter’s Square. These markets and events are popular among residents and tourists and contribute to the centre’s vitality and viability. It is important that these markets are retained and enhanced, where possible.

9.5. The centre is served with regular public transport, including bus services and Emsworth railway station which is located approximately 0.6km from St Peter’s Square at the heart of the district centre.

9.6. The Emsworth Neighbourhood Plan was adopted in 2021 and forms part of Havant’s Development Plan. Development proposals within the designated district centre must also comply with the policies set out in the Neighbourhood Plan.

9.7. Emsworth district centre is based on three distinct localities, which are defined in the table below.

Area	Description of Area and Uses
The High Street and St Peter’s Square	This area acts as the heart of Emsworth district centre. The retail offer here is dominated by local independent businesses providing important local shops and services. To ensure that the High Street and St Peter’s Square retain and build upon their principal function as a shopping destination, they have been designated as falling within the Primary Shopping Area.
South Street	South Street branches off the High Street and St Peter’s Square and acts as a supporting function to this area. It has a selection of cafés, restaurants, public houses, shops and services. The restaurants and public houses in South Street contribute to a vibrant day and evening economy. Due to its proximity to Chichester Harbour, visitors are attracted from out of the town.

North Street	North Street is separated from the rest of the district centre by the A259 and has a supporting function to that of the High Street and St Peter's Square. North Street provides a cluster of community services and facilities, such as Emsworth Community Centre, Emsworth library and Emsworth Museum. Emsworth Baptist Church and St James' Church are also situated in North Street. This area also has a range of restaurants, takeaways, cafés, medical services, shops, salons and barbers and other services.
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Table 7 - A summary of Emsworth District Centre's key areas.

Retail Health Check

- 9.8. There were no vacancies recorded in the district centre at the time of the site visit. The centre has a large range of independent retailers operating within the centre, with a variety of uses. There are a relatively high number of food and drink uses operating within the centre, which contribute to both the daytime and evening economy. The centre is served with regular public transport, including bus services and Emsworth railway station which is located approximately 0.6km from St Peter's Square at the heart of the district centre.

Boundary and Primary Shopping Area Review

- 9.9. Emsworth's district centre boundary within the Allocations Plan (2014) contained a large proportion of Queen Street. Centre analysis has shown that this area has seen some redevelopment since the previous designation, with the street now mainly comprising residential units, with a handful of services and local businesses located amongst these units. It is considered that this area therefore does not contain a sufficient amount of town centre uses, with a distinct change in character from the adjoining High Street. Due to this, it is recommended that Queen Street is removed from the centre boundary, owing to its primarily residential function.
- 9.10. The Allocations Plan (2014) defines the area around St Peter's Square and the High Street as the primary shopping area. It is considered that this area still hosts the largest proportion of retail within the centre and should remain as the centre's primary shopping area.
- 9.11. The proposed district centre and primary shopping area boundaries can be found in Appendix 4.

Hierarchy Review

- 9.12. It is recommended that this centre maintains its position as a district centre within the centre hierarchy.

Policy Recommendations

- 9.13. To ensure that the centre continues to perform its role successfully, it is recommended that there is policy provision within the Building a Better Future Plan which protects Class E uses at ground floor level. The policies should also ensure that these retain active frontages, with residential units located above ground floor level only. It is recommended that Class E uses only should occupy units within the designated primary shopping area.

Conclusions

- 9.14. In conclusion, Emsworth district centre is considered to be performing its role as a district centre very successfully, with very high occupancy rates and offering a range of shops and services to the local community and catering to the tourist offer. The centre's high offering of independent and local retailers and businesses make the centre attractive and contribute to its overall vibrancy and vitality.

- 9.15. It is recommended that the centre maintains its position as a designated district centre, however an alteration to the centre boundary is recommended, removing Queen Street from the boundary.

Mengham District Centre

- 9.16. Mengham district centre is the largest and most central centre on Hayling Island, with the existing boundary comprising two areas, a southern section at Mengham and a northern section at Gable Head. The Mengham section extends across Mengham Road, Elm Grove, Selsmore Road and Sea Grove Avenue. The Gable Head section of the centre is located north of Mengham and is formed around Elm Grove, extending to Tournerbury Lane.
- 9.17. The two sections are separated by residential properties, with a few sporadic shops and services, as well as Hayling Christian Centre occupying units between the two sections.
- 9.18. The centre provides shops and services for local residents, whilst also accommodating the tourist trade in the peak summer season.

Retail Health Check

- 9.19. Centre analysis showed that the centre hosts a range of independent shops and services, cafés, medical services, a Sainsbury's local store for essential goods, barbers, salons, estate agents, offices, a laundrette, betting shop, restaurant and amongst other services.
- 9.20. There were 3 vacancies recorded within the centre at the time of the site visit, showing that overall, the centre has reasonably high levels of occupancy.

Boundary and Primary Shopping Area Review

- 9.21. As mentioned above, the centre as designated in the Allocations Plan (2014) comprised two sections. Due to the separation distance between the two sections, it is recommended that the Gable Head section of the centre is removed from the district centre boundary. The Gable Head section is proposed to be designated as a local centre and will be addressed in Chapter 10 of this report.
- 9.22. Mengham district centre is now proposed only to contain the section located to the south. It is proposed that there are amendments to the existing boundary, with the supermarket located to the south of Selsmore Road to be included within the boundary, and an extension of the boundary to the north to include the health centre and two units hosting Class E uses along Elm Grove.
- 9.23. The primary shopping area as defined in the Allocations Plan (2014) comprised units within Elm Grove and Mengham Road. It is recommended that the boundary is amended to contain only the units contained within Elm Grove and the supermarket store on the junction between Sea Grove Avenue and Selsmore Road.
- 9.24. The proposed centre and primary shopping area boundaries can be found in Appendix 4.

Hierarchy Review

- 9.25. It is recommended that the centre remains as a district centre within the centre hierarchy.

Policy Recommendations

- 9.26. To ensure that the centre continues to perform its role successfully, it is recommended that there is policy provision within the Building a Better Future Plan which protects Class E uses at ground floor

level. The policies should also ensure that these retain active frontages, with residential units located above ground floor level only. It is recommended that Class E uses only should occupy units within the designated primary shopping area.

Conclusions

9.27. In conclusion, it is considered that Mengham district centre is successfully performing its role as a district centre by providing day to day shopping facilities and non-retail services, as well as providing recreation and community facilities for local communities. It is recommended that the centre maintains its position as a district centre, however it is proposed that the centre boundary is amended to contain only the section to the south.

10. Local Centres

- 10.1. This section of the report provides a review and recommendations of the borough's local centres. There are fifteen local centres identified within the borough, one of these being a proposed centre as part of the Southleigh Strategic Site allocation, which has not yet been built. The proposed boundaries for the local centres can be found in Appendix 5.

Havant & Bedhampton

Bedhampton Local Centre:

- 10.2. Bedhampton local centre is situated along the main Bedhampton Road with the existing boundary comprising two sections; one to the north and one to the south of Bedhampton Road. A site visit to the centre showed that the southern section of the centre contains residential properties to the eastern part, a garage, a newsagent, a car dealership and a community centre. The northern section of the centre contains a convenience store, a barbers, a takeaway, a shop, a funeral directors, residential properties and a newsagent.
- 10.3. It is recommended that the southern section of the centre is removed from the boundary due to the increased residential units and the uses contained here are not typical of the local centre criteria except for the newsagents. It is also recommended that the northern part of the boundary is to be amended to remove the units to the east of the section. This would involve the removal of one newsagents and residential properties from the boundary.
- 10.4. Furthermore, it is recommended that there is an additional section added to the centre boundary located at Belmont Grove. This area contains a Co-op, a newsagents, a barbers and a former restaurant, although vacant at the time of the site visit. The Co-op has a car park for customers, with a small bay for car parking located in front of the small parade of shops. It is considered that this area meets the definition of a local centre and should be included within the Bedhampton local centre boundary.
- 10.5. Overall, it is recommended that there are alterations to the boundary, removing the existing southern section, reducing the northern section to only contain the main parade of units and to include a new section at Belmont Grove. It is also recommended that the centre maintains its position within the centre hierarchy.

Leigh Park

Middle Park Way Local Centre:

- 10.6. Middle Park Way local centre is Leigh Park's only local centre and offers the local catchment convenience shops and services. The existing boundary is split into two sections north and south of Purbrook Way. The centre includes a range of uses such as a Co-op, a convenience store, takeaways, a pharmacy, a salon, a betting shop, and a petrol station to the south. The centre has allocated car parking spaces for customer use. It is considered that the centre plays a vital role in serving the local catchment and meets the criteria to be considered a local centre.
- 10.7. It is recommended that the southern section of the local centre containing the petrol station is removed from the centre boundary as this is not considered a main function of the local centre. It is recommended that the centre maintains its position within the centre hierarchy.

Hayling Island

Gable Head Local Centre:

- 10.8. Gable head is located in the centre of Hayling Island, north of Mengham district centre, on the east of Elm Grove. As outlined in the District Centre section above, Gable Head centre was previously designated as part of the boundary for Mengham District Centre.
- 10.9. The centre hosts a range of shops, takeaways, salons and barbers, a small supermarket and other services.
- 10.10. As set out above, it is recommended that Gable Head is designated as a local centre, separated from the Mengham district centre boundary. It is also recommended that the centre maintains its existing boundary as previously designated.

Rails Lane Local Centre:

- 10.11. Rails Lane local centre is located to the south of Hayling Island next to Hayling seafront. This centre attracts customers from the local catchment, as well as tourists and visitors to the seafront. The centre has a mix of independent shops, hot-food takeaways and cafés as well as a large newsagents, other small shops and services and a public house.
- 10.12. Located opposite the centre are public toilets, a children's play park, a car park and Hayling Light Railway. This local centre is considered to perform its role in providing the local catchment with shops and services, as well as contributing to the tourist offer, and therefore should keep its position within the centre hierarchy.
- 10.13. It is recommended that there is an amendment to the boundary of the centre, with the centre being made up of two parts. One of the boundaries should contain the area to the south of the centre as existing, removing the residential block, garage and petrol station and some of the residential and vacant units on the eastern side of Rails Lane.

West Town Local Centre:

- 10.14. West Town is situated to the south west of Hayling Island on Station Road. The centre contains a range of shops, takeaways, cafés, restaurants, a small supermarket, health care services, beauty salons and other services. There are a number of car parks and a bus service serving the centre. There is also a nearby community centre and open space.
- 10.15. The centre has seen changes since the previous review, with a new development to the south of Station Road which hosts commercial units
- 10.16. It is recommended that the centre maintains its position within the hierarchy. There are no alterations to the centre boundary proposed.

Waterlooville

Cowplain Local Centre:

- 10.17. Cowplain local centre is located to the north of Waterlooville, with the majority of the centre located on the eastern side of London Road (A3). The centre contains some shops and services, including takeaways, cafés, restaurants, estate agents, funeral services, beauty salons and barbers.

- 10.18. Cowplain was previously designated as a district centre, however after a review, it is now proposed that it becomes a local centre within the centre hierarchy. This is due to the centre's linear nature and being situated only on the western side of London Road. The centre does not have the same 'feel' as the other two district centres (Emsworth and Mengham), which are larger in scale and a destination for residents to meet a range of needs. The centre hosts two convenience shops (Co-op and Farmfoods), a few charity shops and a handful of independent retailers, however the centre contains significantly less of a retail offer than the other two district centres within the borough. This centre mainly hosts cafés and food uses, offices and other services. Due to this, it is also considered that there is not an area which could be allocated as a primary shopping area.
- 10.19. For these reasons, it is considered that the centre should be designated as a local centre within the centre hierarchy rather than a district centre.
- 10.20. It is recommended that the centre maintains its existing boundary.

Crookhorn Local Centre:

- 10.21. Crookhorn local centre is situated in the centre of Crookhorn, with the existing centre boundary split into two sections to the east and west of Crookhorn Lane. The western part of the centre has a Co-op, several takeaways, a post office and a salon. The eastern section of the centre contains a community centre and a Church. The centre has allocated parking for customers and is served with a bus service.
- 10.22. It is recommended that the eastern section of the centre containing the community centre and Church is removed from the centre boundary as they are spatially separated from the rest of the centre and, while complementary to the function of the centre, do not form part of the key day to day retail and service function of a local centre. Other policies in the plan may consider the protection of such community uses, separate from the retail policies.
- 10.23. It is recommended that the centre maintains its position within the hierarchy.

Grassmere Local Centre:

- 10.24. Grassmere local centre is located to the northeast of Waterlooville. The centre is made up of one boundary which contains a small supermarket, a pharmacy, beauty salons, offices, a dog groomers, a pub and community centre.
- 10.25. It is recommended that the northern section of the centre containing the community centre and pub is removed from the centre boundary. They are spatially separated by a different access route, and, while complementary to the function of the centre, they do not form part of the key day to day retail and service function of a local centre. Other policies in the plan may consider the protection of such community uses, separate from the retail policies.
- 10.26. It is recommended that the centre maintains its position within the hierarchy.

Hambledon Road Local Centre:

- 10.27. Hambledon Road local centre is located to the northwest of Waterlooville. The existing centre is made up of one boundary and contains a mix of services, shops, takeaways, a convenience shop, a salon, a betting shop, a restaurant and a public house. There are allocated car parking spaces for visitors to use and is served by a bus service.
- 10.28. It is recommended that this centre maintains its existing boundary and its position in the hierarchy.

Milton Road North Local Centre:

- 10.29. Milton Road North is located to the north of the borough in WaterlooVille and is made up of one boundary. This centre consists of a number of takeaways, a convenience store, a betting shop, a beauty salon and other services. There are parking bays situated at the front of the centre and a car park to the rear. The centre is also served with a bus service.
- 10.30. The existing boundary contained the car park to the rear of the centre, it is recommended that this is removed from the boundary. It is also recommended that the centre maintains its existing position within the hierarchy.

Purbrook Local Centre:

- 10.31. Purbrook local centre is located to the southwest of WaterlooVille on London Road (A3) with the existing boundary being made up of one centre boundary. The centre hosts a range of uses, on the eastern side of London Road there are uses including takeaways, salons, barbers, cafés, a public house, a pharmacy, opticians and some residential units. On the west of London Road there is a Church, a pre-school, shop and car sales. It is proposed that the section of the centre to the west of London Road is removed from the centre boundary as these uses are not part of the local centre's definition. It is also recommended that the boundary should only extend north as far as the two Class E uses on the ground floor of the new residential development block.
- 10.32. To the south of Ladybridge Road there is a small parade of units which hosts a café, barbers, takeaway and office/shop. It is recommended that this section is included within the boundary for the centre as an additional section.
- 10.33. Overall, it is recommended that there is an alteration to the site boundary, with the section west of London Road to be removed, along with a section of the eastern side of London Road. It is also recommended that the units south of Ladybridge Road is included within the boundary. It is recommended that the centre maintains its position within the centre hierarchy.

Widley Local Centre:

- 10.34. Widley local centre is situated to the southwest of WaterlooVille and the existing centre has two parts, a southern part located to the west of London Road and a northern part located to the east of London Road. The southern part of the centre contains a range of shops, beauty salons, a barber, an office and dog groomers. The northern part of the centre contains a hot food takeaway, a vet, a dog groomer, beauty salon, office and barber.
- 10.35. It is recommended that this centre maintains its existing boundaries and position within the centre hierarchy.

New Designations

- 10.36. There are three new local centres proposed following an appraisal of the borough. These are detailed below.

Waterlooville

Milton Road South Local Centre:

- 10.37. Milton Road South is proposed to be a newly designated local centre, which lies to the south of Milton Road, WaterlooVille. The area contains a small convenience store, takeaways, a restaurant, a

pharmacy, a barbers and other services. There is a bus stop opposite the centre, making it accessible for local residents. The centre meets the criteria for a local centre as set out in Chapter 5 of this report.

Hazleton Way Local Centre:

10.38. Hazleton Way is a is proposed to be a newly designated local centre, which is located to the north east of Waterlooville. This centre comprises a convenience store, hot food takeaways, a shop and a beauty salon. The centre contains allocated car parking spaces and is served by a bus route. The centre meets the criteria for a local centre as set out in Chapter 5 of this report.

Southleigh

Southleigh Local Centre:

10.39. The allocation for the strategic Southleigh development includes a requirement for a local centre. It is noted in this study as, once it is built, the same policies should apply to this new centre as other centres designated in the Local Plan.

Policy Recommendations

10.40. To ensure that the borough's local centres continue to perform their role successfully, it is recommended that there is policy provision within the Building a Better Future Plan which protects Class E uses at ground floor level. The policies should also ensure that these retain active frontages, with residential units located above ground floor level only.

Conclusions

10.41. Overall, it is vital that the borough's local centres are protected and enhanced in order to deliver shops and services to the local catchment. After reviews of all centres, it is proposed that Cowplain and Gable Head are moved in the centre hierarchy to be designated as a local centres, with Hazleton Way and Milton Road South proposed as new designations. The study has also identified Southleigh as a future local centre as part of the Southleigh strategic development. Furthermore, boundary changes are proposed to the following local centres: Bedhampton, Middle Park Way, Rails Lane, Crookhorn, Grassmere, Milton Road North and Purbrook.

11. Shops, Services and Community Uses Outside of Designated Centres

- 11.1. Shops outside of designated centres play a key role in providing services and day to day needs for local neighbourhoods, reducing the need to travel. These can be part of small parades or stand-alone shops and services within the local community.
- 11.2. In addition, general open access community uses, such as community centres, libraries, and public houses contribute to the vitality of an area and provide key support services and opportunities for socialising and building community cohesion. As the review of town and local centres in this report found, these are often co-located with local centres. Depending on their physical relationship to other parts of the centre, these uses are variously included or excluded from designated centre boundaries. Nevertheless, they warrant protection in their own right.

Policy Recommendations

- 11.3. It is recommended that there is a policy requirement that proposals for Class E or F2 uses outside of designated centres where either the net sale area or premises is less than 280 sqm will be exempt from the sequential test requirements, in order to support such local provision. This threshold aligns with the Sunday trading law definition of small shops.³⁶
- 11.4. It is further recommended that a plan policy is considered to provide protection to community uses, giving the opportunity for the need for the use to be assessed before it is lost to other uses such as housing.

³⁶ [Trading hours for retailers: the law - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/trading-hours-for-retailers)

12. Conclusions and Recommendations

12.1. This section of the report summarises the proposed centre and primary shopping area boundary alterations and amendments to the centre hierarchy, as well as the approach to the policies in the Building a Better Future Plan relating to town, district and local centres and shops and services outside of designated centres.

Centre Hierarchy

12.2. The most significant changes proposed to the centre hierarchy following this review are for:

- Leigh Park to be designated as a town centre rather than a district centre
- Cowplain to be designated as a local centre rather than a district centre
- The Gable Head section of Mengham district centre to be designated as a local centre

12.3. The study has also identified two centres which are proposed as new designations for local centres; Hazleton Way and Milton Road South. These centres provide small shops and services for the local catchment. The study has also identified a proposed local centre at Southleigh as part of the Southleigh strategic development.

12.4. The proposed centre hierarchy is set out in the table below:

Type of Centre	Centre Name
Town Centre	Havant Waterlooville Leigh Park
District Centre	Emsworth Mengham
Local Centre	Bedhampton Gable Head Rails Lane West Town Middle Park Way Cowplain Crookhorn Grassmere Hambleton Road Milton Road South Milton Road North Hazleton Way Purbrook Widley Southleigh* *A new centre has been proposed as part of the Southleigh Strategic Site.

Table 8 – Centre hierarchy containing each of the designated town centres.

Boundary Alterations

12.5. A number of centre boundary alterations are proposed following the results of this study, as outlined in the chapters above. A summary of the boundary alterations for each of the centres are detailed in the table below:

Centre	Boundary alterations
Havant Town Centre	<u>Centre Boundary</u> Amendment of boundary to omit East Street. <u>Primary Shopping Area</u> Amendment of boundary to omit North Street and West Street.
Waterlooville Town Centre	<u>Centre Boundary</u> No changes proposed. <u>Primary Shopping Area</u> Amendment of boundary to omit The Boulevard, London Road and Wellington Way.
Leigh Park Town Centre	<u>Centre Boundary</u> No changes proposed. <u>Primary Shopping Area</u> No changes proposed.
Emsworth District Centre	<u>Centre Boundary</u> Amendment of boundary to omit Queen Street. <u>Primary Shopping Area</u> No changes proposed.
Mengham District Centre	<u>Centre Boundary</u> Amendment of boundary to omit Gable Head section to the north. Addition of supermarket south of Selsmore Road and extension of boundary to the north. <u>Primary Shopping Area</u> Amendment to boundary to omit the units contained within Mengham Road.
Bedhampton Local Centre	Amendment of boundary to omit some units contained within the northern section of boundary and removal of the southern section of the boundary. Addition of the parade in Belmont Grove.
Gable Head Local Centre	No changes proposed.
Rails Lane Local Centre	Amendment of boundary to be split into two sections, omitting the residential block and garage/petrol station.
West Town Local Centre	No changes proposed.
Middle Park Way Local Centre	Amendment of boundary to omit the petrol station to the south.
Cowplain Local Centre	No changes proposed.
Crookhorn Local Centre	Amendment to boundary to omit community centre and Church.
Grassmere Local Centre	Amendment to boundary to omit community centre and public house.
Hambledon Road Local Centre	No changes proposed.

Milton Road South Local Centre	New proposed designation.
Milton Road North Local Centre	Amendment to boundary to omit car park to the rear.
Hazleton Way Local Centre	New proposed designation.
Purbrook Local Centre	Amendment to boundary to omit section to the west of London Road and revision of eastern side of London Road section. Addition of units to the south of Ladybridge Road.
Widley Local Centre	No changes proposed.
Southleigh Local Centre	*Proposed local centre as part of the Southleigh strategic site.

Table 9 – Summary of the boundary alterations for all town centres.

Retail and Leisure Need Assessment

- 12.6. The data analysis within this report has shown that there have been and continue to be vacancies throughout the town centres, occurring in the primary and secondary frontages, as well as the wider centre boundaries. Units of varying size and layout have experienced vacancies, highlighting that vacancies are occurring for a diverse range of units and are not restricted to a specific type of unit. The retail health checks for each of the town centres show that vacancy rates are in line with the national average, as discussed in Chapters 6-8.
- 12.7. National guidance requires that main town centre uses should be concentrated in town centres first. As the town centres currently experience vacant units, these units should be occupied in the first instance. The data analysis in this report demonstrates that due to the presence of vacant units in each of the centres, there is not the demand for additional retail or leisure units within the borough.

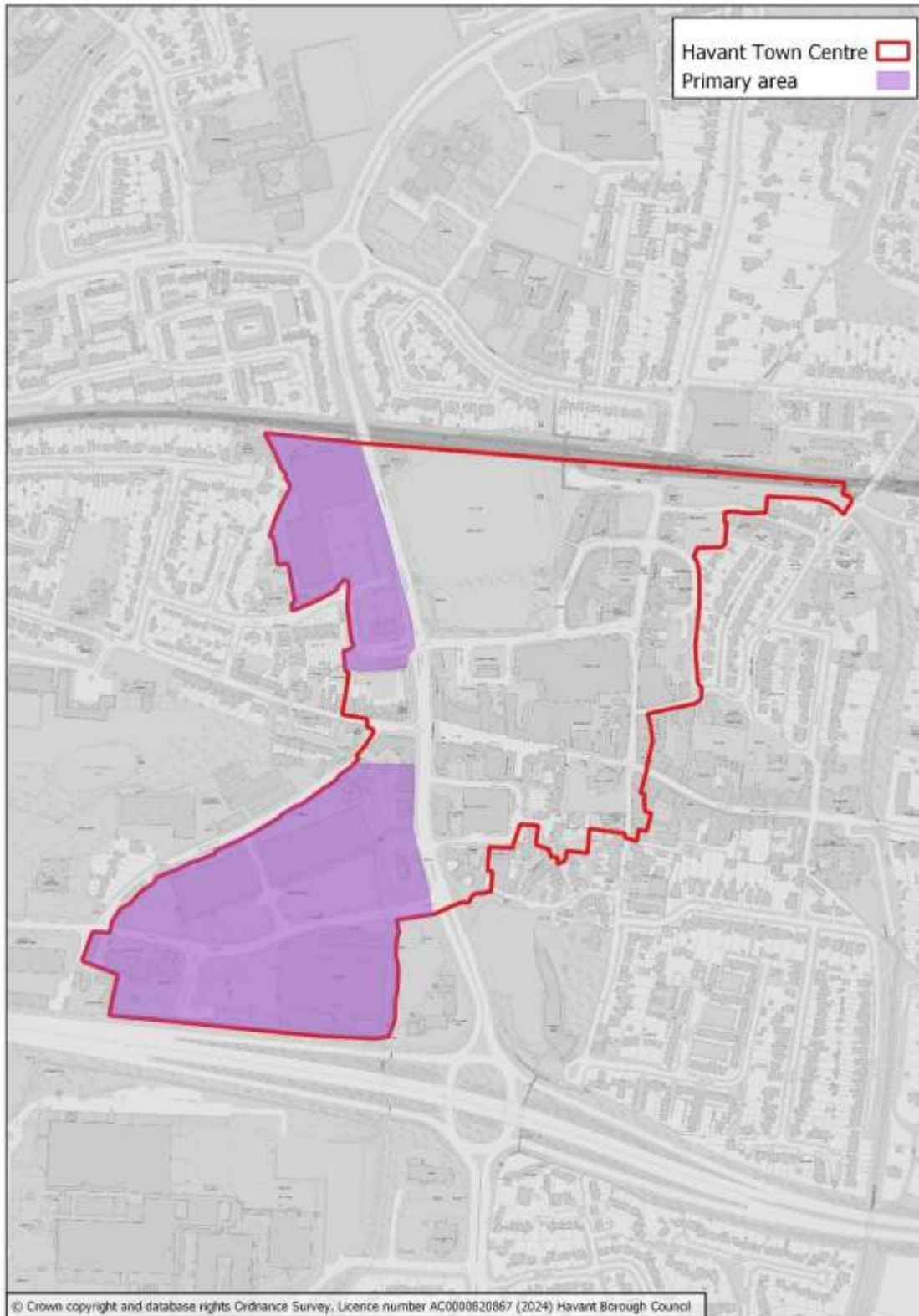
Policy Recommendations

- 12.8. The policy recommendations put forward in this study should be used to inform the Building a Better Future Plan with regard to policies relating to town, district and local centres. This also includes policy recommendations for shops, services and community uses outside of designated centres.
- 12.9. The proposed centre hierarchy should be outlined in policy and include the proposed boundaries as detailed in the chapters above and following appendices.

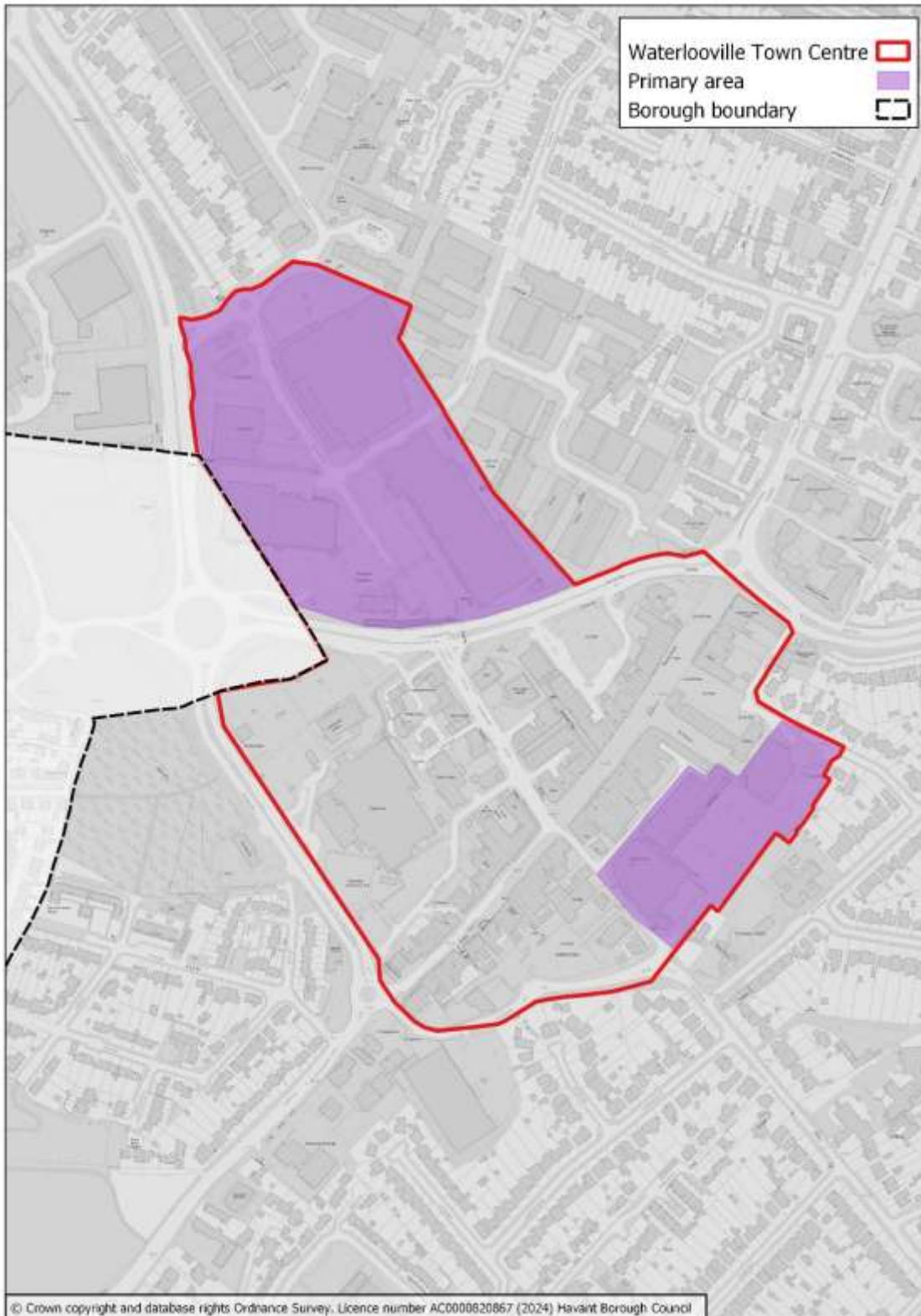
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Appendix 1: Proposed Havant Town Centre Boundary



Appendix 2: Proposed WaterlooVille Town Centre Boundary

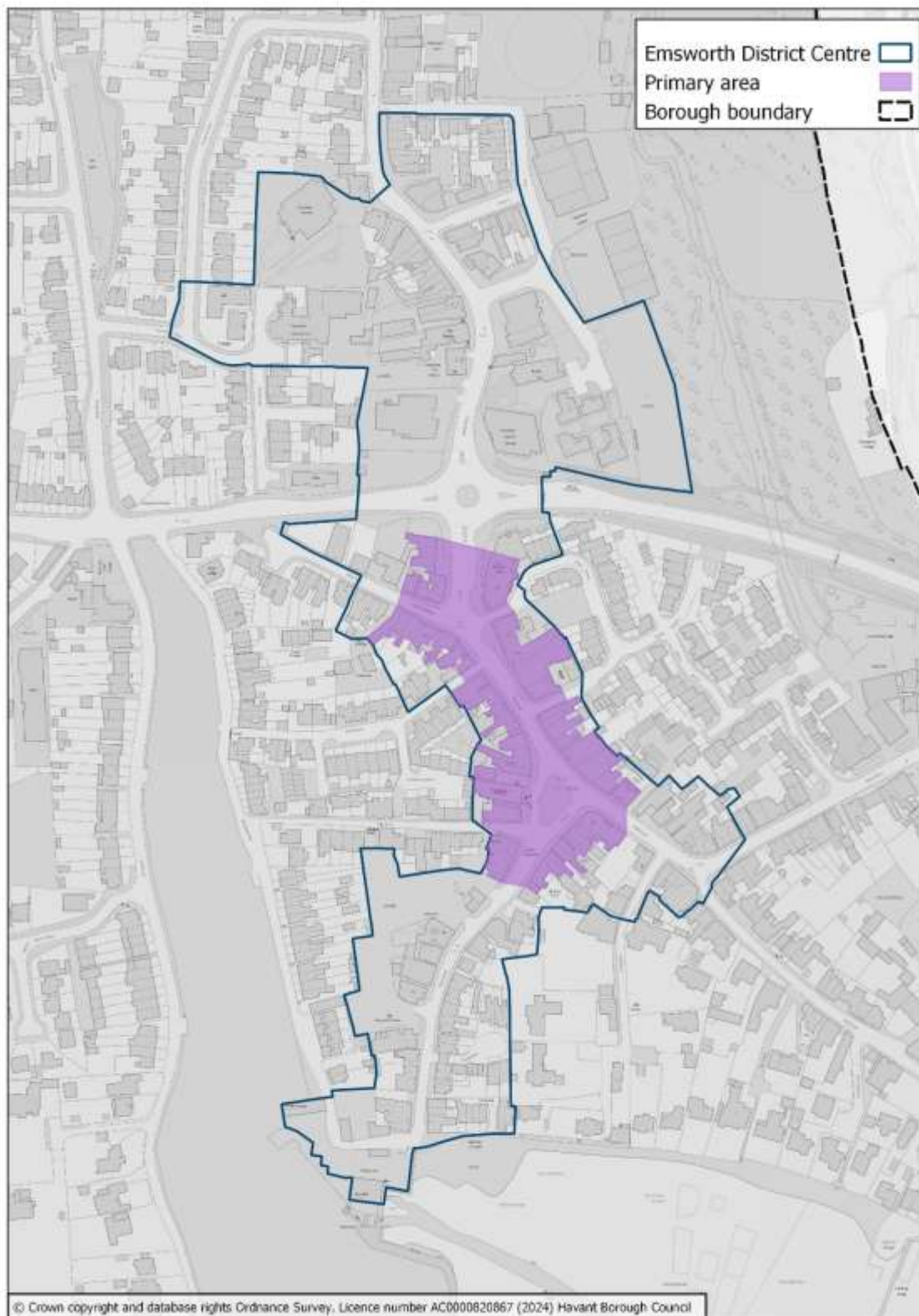


Appendix 3: Proposed Leigh Park Town Centre Boundary

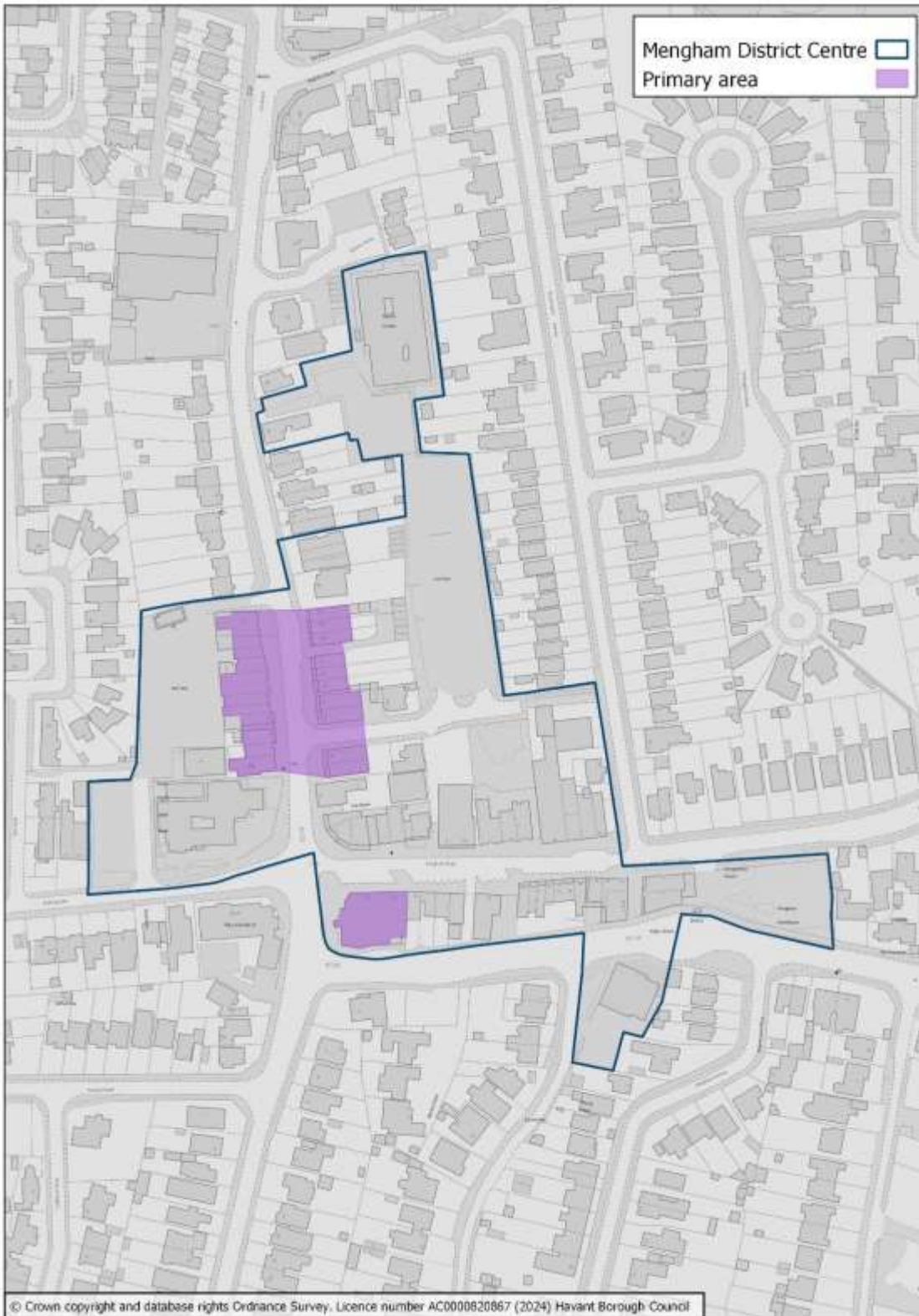


Appendix 4: Proposed District Centre Boundaries

Emsworth District Centre



Mengham District Centre



Appendix 5: Proposed Local Centre Boundaries

Bedhampton Local Centre



Middle Park Way Local Centre



Gable Head Local Centre



West Town Local Centre



Cowplain Local Centre



Crookhorn Local Centre



Hambleton Road Local Centre



Milton Road South Local Centre



Purbrook Local Centre



Widley Local Centre



Hazleton Way Local Centre

