Character Area 04: High Street, Walthamstow
Economic Overview

Walthamstow Central

Walthamstow is identified as a Major Centre in the Waltham Forest Unitary Development Plan (2006). It is the largest shopping centre in Waltham Forest and is located in the southern half of the borough. It is a linear shopping centre which stretches for 1,500 metres. There is a busy street market which is situated along the pedestrianised High Street. In addition, a modern indoor shopping environment with large units is provided in the form of Selborne Walk.

The following sections present a brief overview of the Major Centre based on information in the Retail and Leisure Study 2009.

Catchment Area and Visitor Profile

According to the Retail and Leisure Study (2009), shoppers visit the area for a range of reasons including food shopping, non-food shopping and to visit other services. The average reported expenditure on food and grocery is £19.60 per visitor. This is considered relatively low for a centre the size of Walthamstow. Average expenditure on comparison goods is reported at £17.57 per visitor.

The Retail and Leisure Study (2009) also reports that the majority of visitors shop in Wood Street once a week or more (70.7%). A proportion also regularly shop in Central London (27.5%). Most visitors are reported to stay approximately an hour and a half on average.

Accessibility and Movement

Accessibility is a key factor when considering the health and future prospects of a centre. Ease of access and quality of parking are important factors underlying the success and attraction of a centre for customers, businesses and visitors.

Walthamstow is served by Walthamstow Central station which provides frequent overland services to Liverpool Street, Wood Street, Highams Park and Chingford. The station is also the terminus for the Victoria London Underground, thereby connecting the area to central and south London. The centre is served by sixteen bus routes (and three night buses) which provide access to Walthamstow from a range of surrounding locations as well as further afield.

Accessibility by car is good as the centre is located just off the A112, although a survey carried out for the Retail and Leisure Study 2009 indicated that only 13% of visitors had traveled to the centre by car on the survey date, compared with 36% of respondents who walked and 35% who traveled by bus. This suggests that accessibility by car and parking facilities are of limited importance. Nevertheless, there are two multi-storey and Pay and Display car parks within Selborne Walk Shopping Centre and at the Sainsbury store. There are also surface car parks within the centre which are operated by the LB Waltham Forest, as well as on-street car parking.

As Walthamstow centre is surrounded largely by residential accommodation, pedestrian access from the surrounding streets is relatively easy. However, the railway line acts as a barrier to pedestrian movement from the south of the centre.

Environmental Quality

According to the Retail and Leisure Study 2009, the individual units on the High Street are in a reasonable condition and it is noted that the recent shop front improvements initiative funded through Heritage Lottery may have made a contribution to the quality of the units. However, the western end of the High Street is in a poorer condition – the units are not as well maintained and the street environment is unsatisfactory. Nevertheless, there is evidence of recent improvements including street lighting, new benches, bike racks and litter bins.

Selborne Walk is a modern retail mall and therefore provides a very different shopping experience. Shoppers enjoy an indoor, controlled environment with larger units occupied by national multiples. Hoe Street has a similar environment to the High Street, but is more secondary. There are fewer shoppers and the heavy traffic reduces the quality of the shopping experience.
Vision

The longest street market, a bustling pedestrian environment with a wide offer of shops

Simple changes to make shopfronts fit into the proportions of their building facade

Vision Diagram
Walthamstow Street Market

The ‘Developing a Vision for Walthamstow Market’ report was published in November 2009 by Grieg and Stephenson and Nabama Consultancy Services. It explores the options for developing Walthamstow market and how it could enhance and better interact with Walthamstow High Street. A summary of the review findings are below.

The market opened in 1885. It is judged to still have critical mass and to generate significant income, although the number of traders has fallen in recent years. The current offer is predominately clothing, footwear, jewellery, household goods, CDs/DVDs and fruit and vegetables. However, the market is described as currently being in decline and is not meeting its potential.

The appearance of the market is described as poor and there was also considerable waste observed being generated by the operation of the market. Some signage was judged to be of limited impact and effectiveness. The market is poorly linked with the High Street and the market is observed to be struggling to attract quality retailers.

The occupancy observed at the time of the study is reproduced in Figure X.

Figure X: Stall in Occupation by Market Day

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupancy</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Stalls</td>
<td>374</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Market Day</td>
<td>Stalls in Occupation %</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>258</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Existing Market Layout - West End
Extract from Developing a Vision for Walthamstow Market by Greig and Stephenson

Existing Market Layout - East End
Extract from Developing a Vision for Walthamstow Market by Greig and Stephenson
Friday 277 74%
Saturday 328 88%
(Source: Developing a Vision for Walthamstow Market 2009)

The data indicates that Saturday is the best day for trading.

Key management factors which the study has found could be addressed to help reverse the market’s decline include:

★ Improve access for retailers to services such as electricity and toilets
★ Improve cleaning provisions as the cleanliness of the market is described as currently being a serious problem
★ Improve quality control regarding goods on sale
★ Maximise stall allocation to improve range of retailers
★ Improve market layout to reduce cramming and improve shopper experience
★ Improve quality of stalls
★ Increase effort to attract new traders
★ Work with Police to tackle crime and fear of crime – reported crime includes pick-pocketing, thefts, selling of illegal goods and attacks within the street.
Planning Uses: Observations and Recommendations

Diversity of Uses

According to the town centre land use survey covering the centre undertaken by Waltham Forest Council in 2008 and quoted in the Retail and Leisure Study (2009), in keeping with its status as a Major Centre, Walthamstow has broad range of uses which are all generally comparable with the national average. Comparison retailers represent a proportion of 37.3% of total units which is 6.7% below the GOAD national average. Convenience retailers make up 12.1% of units in the centre which is 2.6% above the national average. A1 Services (10.9%) and A3 and A5 uses (14.7%) are all in line with the national average of 10.8% and 14.8% respectively. A2 Services are slightly overrepresented at 15.8% which is 6.3% above the national average.

The figures quoted above do not include street market stalls which offer a range of food and comparison goods. It should be noted that the street market is one of the largest in the country and is an important attraction for the area.

Retailer Representation

Walthamstow’s 191 comparison retail units represent a reasonable range of shops. Indeed, according to the 2008 survey, all categories of comparison goods are sold in the centre, with the exception of ‘cars, motorcycles and motor accessories’. Clothing and footwear is particularly well represented, with a 42.6% share of comparison units which is 16% above the national average. This is by far the most well represented category in the centre. Most of the other categories are therefore under-represented in comparison with the national average, with the exception of ‘jewellers’ (6.3%), ‘variety department and catalogue’ (4.7%), and ‘DIY, hardware and homeware’ (6.8%). There is a good range of major national comparison retailers in the centre, with the Retail and Leisure Study (2009) listing 20 including Argos, BHS, JD Sports, River Island, Topman, Waterstones and WH Smith. National multiples are generally located around the Selborne Walk Shopping Centre and the central/eastern end of the High Street.

There is a good range of convenience retailers in Walthamstow. These include specialist bakers, butchers, newsagents, international foods, frozen food shops and market stalls.

Information is not available as to the precise mix of convenience retailers, but according to the Retail and Leisure Study (2009), there are four large food stores – Asda, Sainsbury, Lidl and Iceland. The convenience offer in the centre is sufficient to cater for main food and grocery shopping as well as ‘top-up’ shopping.

Service uses in Walthamstow are also of a good range. All categories are represented in the centre, meaning that shoppers are able to visit restaurants, banks, estate agents, travel agents, hairdressers and laundries. The representations of these retailers are all broadly in line with the national average.

In addition to the above, Walthamstow centre is also home to other non-retail uses such as a social club, health and fitness club and two snooker clubs as well as a nursery, doctor’s and dentist’s surgeries, health centres and a library.

Vacancies

According to figures from the 2008 survey as quoted in the Retail and Leisure Study (2009), Walthamstow town centre has a vacancy rate of 9.2% of units, which is below the national average of 11.4%. However, this may have increased as a result of the pressures of the economic downturn on smaller, independent retailers, although the Waltham Forest Annual Monitoring Report 2009/2010 suggests that overall vacancy rates across the Borough have remained low despite the recession.

Summary

1 Walthamstow has the largest range of shops and services of all the centres in the Borough
2 The street market is a key attraction and enhances the centre’s character
3 The centre has a good range of independent retailers as well as multiples, most of which are located within Selborne Walk Shopping Centre
4 The centre has excellent public transport links
5 The street environment, despite improvements, is still poor in some areas
6 The evening economy is dominated by hot food takeaways and could benefit from greater choice and diversity
7 The street market is currently under performing and intervention is recommended
Character

Keep List

The market has a mix of various shopfront typologies, from traditional 1930s butchers shops to modern.

In general, the presence of the market overwhelms that of the permanent shopfronts. The market is physically dominant of the width and length of the entire high street and it is difficult to acknowledge the presence of the existing shopfronts.

The High Street is characterised by the use of clear and legible fonts alongside a bold colour palette.

Canopies and signage perpendicular to the shop facade help articulate the street and give each shopfront a presence and unique identity.

Scotch Beef, Butchers
47 High Street, Walthamstow, E17 7BX

Canopy providing external cover to shopfront entrance allows shoppers to view produce from outside area, which encourages shopper into the shop unit

Linens Direct
106a High Street, Walthamstow, E17 7BX

Clear bold signage

Use of blade sign to increase visibility in the high street

Fish Brothers, Pawn Brokers
114 High Street, Walthamstow, E17 7JY

Clear, bold signage
Fashion Fair
184-186 High Street, Walthamstow
E17 7JH

Clear bold signage
Use of blade sign to increase visibility in the high street
Canopy creates covered entrance

Salim and Naeem, Fashion Shop
189 High Street, Walthamstow
E17 7BX

Clear, bold signage
Proposals

Existing: Photographic Elevation
Proposed: Photographic Elevation
Existing elevation observations

L. Manze Pie and Jellied Eel shop has recently been renovated through English Heritage funding.

1. External lighting here is a special intervention specific to the historical restoration of the shopfront. It is not recommended that this type of lighting solution be used elsewhere along the facade.

2. Blade signs are often hidden from view by the market stalls.

3. Shops, like the market stalls, often spread into the busy street.
The addition of a stall riser gives the shopfronts a robustness to deal with the conditions of the busy streetscape and allows for an area of outside display set against it (unlike fully glazed shopfronts).

The addition of a canopy entrance to the shopfront gives more definition to the external space of each shopfront and provides a covered areas for viewing shop goods.

Blade signs are added at higher level to be seen from street-level when the market is in use.

Street Lighting is removed from the pedestrian pathway and placed at high level on the building facades.
Existing streetscape section

The High Street market is currently extremely busy and has stalls tightly packed in along the length of the pedestrianised street, covering approximately 1 linear km.
To create a sense of order and help in the management of market stalls (stopping stalls spreading), it is proposed that stalls could run back to back. This allows for greater space between stalls and shop fronts and creates a double sided market street with permanent shop frontage as well as market stalls. Interaction between the permanent shop fronts (currently masked by stalls) and the market itself is critical in the success of the streetscape.

1. Market stalls sit back to back to create active frontages and stronger relationships with existing shop fronts
2. Existing street furniture and lighting removed to unclutter an already tight space, freeing it up for market stall realignment
3. Blade signs introduced to give the existing shop fronts a stronger presence when the market is in place
4. New street lighting fixed onto building facade to minimise street furniture across street width
5. Electricity and water supply and pavement detail to be integrated into preferred market stall layout (ref. Developing a Vision for Walthamstow Market by Grieg and Stephenson Architects and Nabma Consultantcy Services)
6. It is recommend to mark out stall positions within the paving detail of the street as current stall markings are faded or are missing
7. It is recommended that shopfronts employ the use of canopies to provide covered area for viewing goods along the length of the street and help assert their individual identities
8. New shopfronts should have stall risers to protect and the display area of the shop. This also gives a solid wall from which goods may be displayed outside

Blade sign design guidance

Signs should be a maximum of 400mm in width

Signs should be aligned to the bottom of the first floor window frame and not exceed the window frame height

Street Lighting will be wall mounted onto existing building facades at a constant height (approx. 6800mm)
Economic Overview

Wood Street

Wood Street is identified as a District Centre in the Waltham Forest Unitary Development Plan (2006). The Retail and Leisure Study (2009) describes Wood Street as a small, linear centre stretching approximately 650 metres from Forest Road to Wood Street station to the south. The centre is located 1 km to the east of Walthamstow town centre.

The following sections present an overview of the District Centre based on information in the Retail and Leisure Study 2009.

Catchment Area and Visitor Profile

According to the Retail and Leisure Study (2009), shoppers visit the area for a range of reasons including food shopping, non-food shopping and to visit other services. The average reported expenditure on food and grocery is £10.34 per visitor. Average expenditure on comparison goods is reported at just £2.64 per visitor.

The Retail and Leisure Study (2009) also reports that the majority of visitors shop in Wood Street once a week or more (75.9%). A significant proportion also regularly shop in Walthamstow (80.2%) and Bakers Arms (59.3%). Most visitors are reported to stay almost three hours on average.

Accessibility and Movement

Accessibility is a key factor when considering the health and future prospects of a centre. Ease of access and quality of parking are important factors underlying the success and attraction of a centre for customers, businesses and visitors.

Wood Street is served by Wood Street train station which connects the area to Chingford within approximately 9 minutes and Liverpool Street within approximately 18 minutes. Nearby bus services include 230 and W16 which link to Upper Walthamstow, Leyton Blackhorse Road, Wood Green, Chingford Mount, Highams Park and Leytonstone.

Access by car is good as the area is served by a number of A roads, including the A503 to the north of the area and the A104 to the south. There are five off-street car parks. Four of these are Pay and Display and are located to the rear of retail premises.

As Wood Street is located in a predominately residential area, there are multiple access points to the centre from the nearby streets, allowing easy pedestrian access from the surrounding area.

Environmental Quality

According to the Retail and Leisure Study 2009, Wood Street is a reasonably pleasant environment in which to shop but some of the buildings would benefit from refurbishment. There is evidence of fairly recent public realm improvements which include street lighting, new benches and litter bins.
Vision

An area with a rich history in film making and cinema and some outstanding buildings. A quirky indoor market and some other timber clad buildings provide a special atmosphere.

Separating housing areas from shopping areas defines and clarifies an otherwise sprawling Wood Street.

Vision Diagram

Improvements should be made where necessary to existing ground level conversions from retail to residential.

Shopfronts which are existing but will be converted to residential units should retain the features of a shopfront to allow for change of use back to retail for potential future developments.
Planning Uses: Observations and Recommendations

Diversity of Uses

According to the town centre land use survey covering the centre undertaken by Waltham Forest Council in 2008 and quoted in the Retail and Leisure Study (2009), Wood Street has a good range of different uses to meet a range of requirements. Comparison and convenience retail represent 44.7% and 10.1% of the total units respectively, which is in line with the GOAD retail database national average. Service retail represents 36.4% of total units which is again in line with the national average. In addition, there are two public houses within the study area as at the time of the survey.

Retailer Representation

Wood Street has a broad range of comparison retailers including home improvement shops, antiques and second hand shops as well as discount retailers. All categories of comparison goods retailers are represented with the exception of ‘cars, motorcycles and other accessories’. ‘Furniture, carpets and textiles’ retailers have the highest representation with 15.2% of all units which is in excess of the national average of 9.1%. ‘DIY, hardware and homeware’ retailers are also over-represented with a proportion of 11.3% compared with the national average of 6.6%. However, ‘clothing and footwear’ retailers are under-represented with a proportion of just 11.3% compared with the national average of 26.6%. Jewellers and booksellers representation is also lacking, being 3.5% and 3.8% below the national average respectively. There are no major national comparison retailers in the centre.

There is a good range of convenience retailers on Wood Street, including specialist bakers, butchers and newsagents. Information is not available as to the precise mix of convenience retailers, but according to the Retail and Leisure Study (2009), the main convenience store servicing the centre is the Co-op. This is complemented by a number of smaller independent retailers which meet demand for top-op shopping.

There is a limited range of service retailers in the centre. According to the Retail and Leisure Study 2009, there are no high street banks and only two estate agents. However, there is good provision of restaurants/cafes/takeaways and hairdressers/beauty parlours, representation of which is above the national average.

Vacancies

According to figures from the 2008 survey as quoted in the Retail and Leisure Study (2009), Wood Street has a vacancy rate of 8.8% of units, which is well below the national average of 11.4%. However, this may have increased as a result of the pressures of the economic downturn on smaller, independent retailers, although the Waltham Forest Annual Monitoring Report 2009/2010 suggests that overall vacancy rates across the borough have remained low despite the recession.

Summary

1 Comparison, convenience and service retailing in Wood Street is well represented
2 There are no major national comparison retailers in the centre
3 The main convenience retailer in the centre is Co-op
4 There are no high street banks
5 There is a good range of restaurants/cafes
6 Recorded vacancy rates are low, suggesting good demand for space. However, vacancies may have increased since the economic downturn
7 Shoppers visit the area to take advantage of its range and diversity of retail offer
8 Accessibility by public transport and car is adequate
Wood Street Indoor Market

The indoor market is a special feature of the area. Any upgrade should happen sensitively and retain the current users. The emphasis should on promotion of this gem. Stores are a range of A1 uses from second hand cd sales to electrical goods, specialist cake shops to artist studios. The market lacks natural daylighting but has a diverse and special retail offer which should be cherished.

Town and Country Planning Use Classes

A1 Shops: Convenience
Home Improvements
Supermarkets
A2 Financial:
Banks
Estate Agents
Book Makers
Other
A3 Restaurants
Cafes
A4 Drinking Establishments
A5 Hot Food Takeaway
B1 Business
B8 Storage or Distribution
C3 Dwellings
D1 Non-residential Institutions
Sui Generis
Vacant
Wood Street has a large variety of shopfronts and an extensive sprawling nature which intermingles with residential properties along the street. There is little definition between the end of the shopping street and the beginning of the residential.

**Second Nature, Health Food Shop**  
78 Wood Street, Upper Walthamstow  
E17 3HX

White picket fences  
White weatherboard

**Pie and Mash**  
90-92 Wood Street,  
Upper Walthamstow  
E17

Signage integrated with shopfront canopy

**Wood Street Indoor Market**  
98 Wood Street, Upper Walthamstow  
E17 3HX

Bright coloured cladding emphasises the entrance to the indoor market and distinguishes itself from the rest of the street  
Clear, bold signage  
Original clock
G. White and Sons, Funeral Directors
99 Wood Street, Upper Walthamstow
E17 3HX

Heavenly Touch Florist
125, Wood Street,
Upper Walthamstow
E17 3LL

La Dumitrescu, Romanian Delicatessen
141 Wood Street, Upper Walthamstow
E17 3LX

The Bike Station
The Railway Station, Wood Street,
Upper Walthamstow

Clear signage with integration of shop number into signage
Original stained glass window detail
Stall risers

Clear, bold signage
Canopy covering

Clear, bold signage
Canopy covering

Clear, bold signage
Canopy covering

Special tiles

White weatherboard has a film-set like quality of an old western
Proposals

Existing: Photographic Elevation

1. Shops are frequently intermingled along the residential street
2. Shops have already been converted into residential use in an adhoc and unattractive manner

Proposed: Photographic Elevation

1. Where shops have already been converted into residential, the architecture of the ground floor should relate to the upper floors of the building (refer to shops 227, 231, 233)
2. New applications for change of use from shop to residential will only be accepted if the large scale openings of the shop window are retained, so that conversion back to shopfront can be easily achieved. Residential bedrooms at ground floor level which face onto the street will not be permitted (refer to shops 229, 237, 239, 241)

The council will also prefer live/work combined use of existing shopfronts, as well as use as social infrastructure (creche/ day care centres etc)
Character Area 06: High Road Leyton including pilot project 240-252 High Road Leyton and 267-283 High Road Leyton
Economic Overview

High Road Leyton

Leyton is identified in the Waltham Forest Unitary Development Plan (2006) as a Neighbourhood Centre. Along with Highams Park, it is the largest of these centres and is described as potentially operating at District Centre level. Indeed, the Retail and Leisure Study (2009) describes Leyton as being a small District Centre and this is a designation that has been carried forward into the Core Strategy Preferred Options document (2010).

The designated shopping area extends approximately 750 metres from Windsor Road southwards towards Leyton Underground station, although the study area for this report extends further north towards the cricket ground. As well as the units lining High Road Leyton, the retail area also includes Leyton Mills retail park, a modern retail facility of approximately 12,700 sqm with a range of bulky good, fashion and leisure retailers. Leyton Mills retail park is located near to the Underground station and is accessed from Leyton High Road by a parade with retail on the ground floor. Adjoining this parade is a residential development also with retail on the ground floor.

Catchments Area and Visitor Profile

According to the Retail and Leisure Study (2009), shoppers visit the area for a range of reasons including food shopping, non-food shopping and to visit other services. The average reported expenditure on food and grocery is £15.31 per visitor. Average expenditure on comparison goods is reported at £27.20 per visitor, although this is affected by the presence of Leyton Mills retail park.

The Retail and Leisure Study (2009) also reports that the majority of visitors shop in Leyton between once a fortnight and once a month or less (35.1%). A significant proportion also regularly shop in Walthamstow (51.1%). Most visitors are reported to stay over an hour and a half at the centre.

Accessibility and Movement

Accessibility is a key factor when considering the health and future prospects of a centre. Ease of access and quality of parking are important factors underlying the success and attraction of a centre for customers, businesses and visitors.

Leyton has good accessibility by public transport. Leyton Underground station is located at the southern end of the retail area and connects to Stratford, Liverpool Street and central London via the Central Line, therefore offering good links to the local rail networks. High Road Leyton (A112) is well served by buses including 58, 69, 97, 158 and 308 which link to East Ham, Walthamstow, Canning Town, Chingford, Stratford, Woodbine Place and Clapton Park.

Access by car is good as the area is served by a number of A roads, including the A112 running north/south, and the A106 running east/west. The A12 also runs through Leyton at a lower level to the main retail area and access is possible via the A106. There is some limited on-street, short stay parking on High Road Leyton. There are parking facilities at Leyton Mills which is within easy walking distance of the High Road retail area, but the connectivity between these two areas is uninviting and could be improved in order to encourage more linked trips.

Traffic flow through Leyton was heavy on the day of GVA Grimley’s site visit, resulting in high levels of congestion. This compromises the pedestrian experience through noise and emissions levels as well as inhibiting ease of pedestrian movement across High Road Leyton. The linear alignment of the retail area means that there is limited opportunity for pedestrians to escape the traffic and bustle of the high street. However, access onto the retail area for pedestrians is relatively easy as the majority of the roads leading off from the High Road are residential and pleasant in character. Indeed, the majority of shoppers are potentially local residents using the local shops for convenience or ‘top up’ shopping which would go some way to explain the over-representation of these types of retailers on the High Road. Pedestrian pinch points on the High Road were noted outside the Underground station where there are particularly narrow pavements. Pedestrian flow thins out further to the north, significantly so by the cricket ground.

Environmental Quality

Leyton High Road benefits from a number of historic and attractive buildings including the Grade II Listed Town Hall (now in use as offices), Grade II Listed Leyton Library and the Stratford Cooperative and Industrial Society Building. These give the High Road an element of architectural heritage and diversity which contributes to the centre’s overall vitality. The remaining architecture is largely pleasant and engaging, comprising two to three storey Victorian terraces with associated features such as sash windows, patterned brickwork and decorative stonework. However, many of the buildings have fallen into some cosmetic disrepair which has the effect of subduing the engaging architectural features.

The ground floor retail units are generally well-maintained if sometimes lacking in good design. This, combined with the diversity of the signage of the independent retailers, lends the high street a bustling and engaging if somewhat cluttered appearance. This quality combined with the currently subdued architectural features means...
that there is much latent potential for Leyton to be an attractive and vital retail destination. This potential is not inhibited by the limited number of vacant units as these are generally in a good state of repair, with the exception of the derelict building at the ‘peninsula’ junction with Grange Park Road. This potential is somewhat inhibited by the narrow pavements and relative lack of planting. This means that pedestrians are exposed to the effects of the heavy traffic and pedestrian conditions can sometimes get over crowded. As a result of this lack of space, there is limited seating along the High Road. However, there is an oasis of green space in the form of Coronation Gardens. This is a very pleasant park area which shows signs of having been recently landscaped. It is well maintained. However, there is a Police Dispersal Order in place granting the right to disperse groups of two or more which suggests there is a problem with anti-social behavior in the park, although no evidence of this was noted on the day of GVA Grimley’s site visit.

Leyton Mills retail park is of a much more modern design than the units along the High Road. The parade leading from the High Road towards the main warehouse units is somewhat shabby and lacking in activity as a result of the vacant units on the ground floor beneath the residential element. The walls have been fly-posted and daubed with graffiti. The main site beyond is typical of retail parks in that, in design terms, it is devoted to convenience and efficiency for the car-user.

Vision

Unification of the long radial route from north to south across the borough. A consistency in materiality, signage approach and lighting strategy across not only the pilot shopfront scheme but the whole length of this extensive high street route

Celebrating special corner buildings

Improving of shopfronts along the high road

Cleaning of upper facades to maximise impact

Vision Diagram
Diversity of Uses

On the day of GTA Grimley’s site visit (June 2010), the overwhelming impression with regards retailer representation was that there is a very strong convenience retail presence on High Road Leyton and a relative under-representation of comparison retailing. However, Leyton Mills retail park has a number of national multiple comparison retailers such as B&Q, Currys, and Next which go some way to improving the range and diversity of comparison retailing in Leyton as a whole. High Road Leyton also has a noticeably large number of service retailers such as cafés, restaurants, hairdressers and estate agents. In addition, there are a number of community facilities including a library, as well as a number of pubs.

These initial observations are borne out in figures derived from a town centre land use survey covering the District Centre undertaken in 2008 by Waltham Forest Council and quoted in the Retail and Leisure Study (2009). These indicate that comparison retail in Leyton is under-represented with just 23.1% of units compared with the Goad Retail Database April 2009 national average of 44%. Convenience retail is over-represented with 17.1% of units compared with a national average of just 9.5%, whereas service retail comprises 36.6% of units compared with a national average of 20.3%.

Retailer Representation

As noted above, there is a broad range of convenience and service retailing on High Road Leyton, represented by smaller grocery shops, off licenses, cafés, restaurants and take-aways, the majority of which are independents. A particularly large number of estate agents were also noted. This is unchanged from the results of the 2008 survey as quoted in the Retail and Leisure Study (2009) which indicated that estate agents/valuers represented 31.9% of the service units in Leyton retail area which is well above the 2009 national average of 11.7%. According to the 2008 survey, all other service retail types are broadly in line with the national average with the exception of ‘banks/other financial services’ which is 10% below the national average. With the exception of these deficiencies, the service retail sector is well represented in Leyton.

Comparison retailing is less well represented. According to the 2008 survey, there are 27 comparison retail units in the retail area, of which 25.9% are clothing and footwear stores. This is in line with the Goad 2009 national average of 26.6%. However, the majority of other categories are below national average with the exception of ‘cars, motorcycles and motor accessories’ and ‘other category retailers’ which represent 11.1% and 33.3% of the units respectively. In both cases, this is well above the national average. However, some categories such as ‘toys, hobby, cycle and sport’ and ‘florists, nursery and seedsmen’ are not represented in the Leyton retail area at all. If it were not for the retailers located in Leyton Mills retail park, there would be no national comparison multiples in Leyton. There is therefore room for increased range and diversity of comparison retailing in Leyton.

Vacancies

The proportion of vacant retail property is a key indicator of the relative vitality and viability of a centre. However, it is not an absolute measure and must therefore be treated with caution as vacancies can arise in even the strongest performing of centres. Conversely, the absence of any vacancies, or very low vacancies, can be an indicator that the demand for retail space is outstripping the current supply. This can often restrict new and existing retailers from securing new or enhanced representation.

On the day of the visit, High Road Leyton was well let with few vacancies suggesting good occupier demand for retail space in the area. However, there were notably vacant units beneath the residential development next to Leyton Mills along the parade leading from High Road Leyton towards the retail park. Nevertheless, according to figures from the 2008 survey as quoted in the Retail and Leisure Study (2009), Leyton has a vacancy rate of 8.5% of units, which is well below the national average of 11.4%. However, this may have increased as a result of the pressures of the economic downturn on smaller, independent retailers, although the Waltham Forest Annual Monitoring Report 2009/2010 suggests that overall vacancy rates across the borough have remained low despite the recession.

Summary

1. Leyton retail area is dominated by convenience retailing
2. Comparison retailing is under-represented, although Leyton Mills provides a range of national multiples
3. Service retailing is well represented, however there is a marked over-representation of estate agents and an under-representation of high street banks
4. The majority of the retailers are independents
5. There is a good range of non-retail services
6. Recorded vacancy rates are low, suggesting good demand for space. However, vacancies may have increased since the economic downturn
7. Shoppers visit the area to take advantage of its range and diversity of retail offer
8. Accessibility by public transport and car is good
9. Pedestrian accessibility is hampered by narrow pavements and heavy traffic flows combined with limited opportunities to linger in public spaces
10. There is much latent potential in the quality of the public realm – architectural features are currently subdued and the design of the shopfronts could be improved. More planting could be carried out

In conclusion, Leyton is an area which is currently vital and, judging by vacancy rates alone, viable. However, it is hampered by an under-representation of comparison retailing and a sometimes negative pedestrian experience. This could be improved by harnessing the area’s potential through bringing out the architectural features, improving the design of the shopfronts, improving the public realm and intensifying the current retail offer.
Town and Country Planning Use Classes

A1 Shops: Convenience
Home Improvements
Supermarkets

A2 Financial:
Banks
Estate Agents
Book Makers
Other

A3 Restaurants
Cafes

A4 Drinking Establishments
A5 Hot Food Takeaway

B1 Business

B8 Storage or Distribution

C3 Dwellings

D1 Non-residential Institutions

Sui Generis

Vacant
High Road Leyton Radial Route Character

Keep List

The keep list extends along the radial route across the borough, highlighting some special buildings along its length. These key buildings and features are picked out along the route to inform the character of the high street.

1. The Bell
   617 Forest Road
   E17 4NE

2. Lot One Ten, Antiques
   78 Hoe Street
   E17 4PG

3. The Rose and Crown
   53-55 Hoe Street
   E17 4SA

4. EMD Cinema
   188 High Road Leyton
   E17 4QH
   The Victoria
   186 High Road Leyton
   E17 4QH

5. The Goose
   264 Hoe Street
   E17 3AX

6. Hornbeam Cafe
   485 Hoe Street,
   E17 9AH

7. The Bakers Arms
   575 High Road Leyton
   E10 7EQ

8. Leyton Leisure Lagoon
   763 High Road Leyton
   E10 5AB

9. Billey’s, Carpet Shop
   477A High Road Leyton
   E10 5EL

10. J. Girlington Auctionists
    389 High Road Leyton
    E10 5NA

11. Pilot Shopfronts
    267-283 High Road Leyton

12. Leyton Town Hall
    High Road Leyton
    E10 5QJ
Pilot Shopfronts Character

Keep List

The special nature and character of the surrounding area to the pilot shopfronts can be found along its length through moments of original frieze, tiling, pilasters and capitals which hark back to the street’s original identity as a terrace of Victorian housing.

Barclays Bank, High Road Leyton
Recessed aluminium door pulls and letter box

High Road Leyton
Street name plate

240, High Road Leyton
Stucco panel above shopfront

High Road Leyton
Stone plaque with disused place name

Length of High Road Leyton
Various types of console and pilaster
The High Street Life in Waltham Forest 125

Stucco door and window surrounds
Proposals

Existing Elevation

1. Existing shopfronts have no relationship with their building facade
2. Signage is large and out of proportion
3. Upper terrace appears uncared-for

Proposed Elevation

1. Improve the footway
2. Clean the upper building facade
3. Reinstate the original pilasters
4. Paint the pilasters, consoles and windows white
5. Re-align signage for shopfronts
6. Preserve and repair existing features where possible
7. Addition of terrazzo footmats which define an outdoor area for seating or display
Existing Streetscape

View of High Road Leyton looking north towards Walthamstow
Proposed Streetscape

Impression of High Road Leyton after completion of the pilot shopfront scheme and streetscape improvement works. These shops have been chosen as a pilot project for the borough, to be designed and implemented between 2010 and 2011. The project has been selected for its proximity to the Olympic Park, as well as to overlap with High Street improvements which will also be carried out. The Council will be carrying out a before and after survey and economic assessment to provide evidence for the effectiveness of these kind of schemes.
Existing Plan

Proposed Plan

1. Internal layouts and entrance doors are rationalised

2. Shopfronts are made accessible to all (access ramps are added where necessary)

3. Shutters are installed internally
Typical Shopfront Elevation
Existing street elevation

1. Pilasters and cornices are covered up by protruding signs
2. Proportions of signs do not relate to the rest of the building framework
3. Upper level brickwork is covered with years of dirt and looks unloved

Proposed street elevation

1. Pilasters and cornices are reinstated, cleaned, repainted and painted where necessary
2. Upper brickwork to the terrace is cleaned
3. Good quality shopfronts and materials are retained where possible
4. The heights and sizes of shops signs are made uniform and are illuminated at night
5. Fanlights across the shopfront provide a useful sub-heading advertising specific services and information
6. Fabric awnings encourage activities to spill onto the street and provide shelter
7. New shopfronts are made from timber, with hand-painted timber sign boards
8. New security shutters are internal to the shopfronts and allow unobscured views of the window display even when the shop is closed
9. All glass at low-level is laminated security glass
10. Shopfronts entrances are made accessible to all
Summary: High Street Life in its economic context
Summary

Aims

The High Street Life strategy is an aspirational document with realistic and deliverable outcomes.

The implementation of this work seeks to enhance not only the individual high street shopfront, but also improve the streetscape and environment as a whole for residents, visitors and future inhabitants alike.

Implementation of the guidance in this document is already in force through the pilot shopfronts along Leyton High Road.

As well as developments to shopfronts, there are new streetscape works taking place through the Leyton Links Project as well as other improvements across the borough.

As well as making physical improvements to the borough, it is recommended that the council actively promote their existing offer to enhance the positive effects of this work. We would recommend creating a borough-wide ‘shopping guide’ which highlights the special offer available. A successful example of this can be seen in the borough of Islington where a free booklet is used to promote individual shops, restaurants and markets to those who live within the borough as well as potential visitors. This positive framework can then be built upon and regularly updated as the definitive guide to the borough.

Next Steps

Photomontage of High Road Leyton Pilot shopfronts improvements

Contact Islington

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If you would like this document in large print or Braille, audiotape or in another language, please contact 020 7527 2000.

Shop Islington

Explore your local shops and discover hidden gems in your borough

The ‘Shop Islington’ leaflet
Defining a Borough Identity Through Cultural Retail Offers

Until very recently, most of the international migrants that settled in the borough have been from South Asia, the Caribbean and more recently from West Africa. More recently, the borough has benefited from the influences from Eastern Europe, North Africa, and the Mediterranean. This variety of cultural influences has provided the borough with an impressive and diverse retail offer, and we strongly advise that the council considers establishing frameworks to enable the following activities which support and may help define and promote the benefits of such a wide ranging cultural offer;

★ Character - distinctiveness, retail environment, tenant mix
★ Diversity and a mix of uses - variety and choice, linked areas of different character, increased sense of identity and vibrancy
★ Need to improve life of city centre into the evenings, beyond normal shopping hours
★ Need to provide experiences not achieved at out-of-town destinations
★ Inclusivity - somewhere which meets the needs of everyone in society

There is a strong argument which has shown that smaller retail centres should seek to complement major shopping destinations rather than compete directly, particularly when it is the larger towns and cities that are the primary focus for mixed use developments including elements of leisure and / or residential. It is argued that smaller town centres should seek to differentiate themselves by:

★ Continuing to offer shopping for town centre residents, workers and tourists a limited food offer, newspapers, chemists goods etc., either through one large foodstore or, preferably through the traditional mix of small shops, adding to variety and linking back to the community
★ Supplying a good selection of clothing, footwear and furnishings, but emphasising service and variety rather than trying to compete on price (e.g. similar to a small department store)
★ Selling more fresh foods, specialist foods, high quality food and market stalls
★ Retail branding and marketing as a whole - special events, cultural attractions, eating out, promotional campaigns
★ These aims suggest that local centres can seek to differentiate themselves from larger centres by identifying a niche and offering types of retail which are under served by mainstream retail. Many such communities have high proportions of ethnic minorities and have historically attracted a diverse range of independent retailers who provide local residents with specific, specialist requirements.

As part of celebrating our diverse society, Waltham Forest Council wish to actively promote the borough’s offer and encourage the formation of new businesses.

Recommendations as part of the High Street Life Strategy can be seen below:

★ An international food market day at Walthamstow Market could increase the market’s use on quieter days and represent the variety of cultures found across the borough
★ Wood Street indoor market could be used to showcase and sell culturally diverse art and crafts and gold community workshops
★ Encouragement for ethnic groups to develop more of a presence in the borough through:

  - food markets, craft, fashion, music, dance, festivals
Making small changes to key elements can have a great impact when implementing a shopfront design.

For the pilot shopfront scheme at Leyton, the elements which are likely to have the greatest impact and cost benefit are outlined below:

- Focus on buildings that are prominent in the street - especially corner buildings
- Cleaning the building facade at upper levels
- Repairing and retaining good quality building elements and original features where appropriate
- Internal grilles for security shutters which let passers-by see into the shop even when closed
- Lighting the shop display at night
- Using proportions which follow the rest of the building fabric
As part of this project a number of wider concerns regarding the nature and mix of retail in Waltham Forest’s centres and High Streets have been raised. These include:

- The absence of a mix of cafes and restaurants in centres
- The absence of sit down, family dining options
- The lack of family entertainment options, such as cinemas
- A destination appeal that could diversify and extend the trading hours of businesses

In addition, there is a concern that certain types of businesses are over-represented. The proliferation of betting shops, there are 56 in the Borough, has raised concerns regarding their potential impact. There is also a concern regarding the proliferation of estate agents on one hand, and the decline of traditional public houses on the other.

The London Borough of Waltham Forest will pursue a range of strategies to improve the retail offer and quality of its town centre and high street environments. These approaches can be pursued individually, as a selection or comprehensively. The Council will pro-actively pursue strategies that strengthen the retail catchment and demand in Waltham Forest and supporting inward investment by the type of retail it wishes to have as a priority.

1. Make Retail a Good Neighbour

Manage Customer Behaviour

Consultation has revealed concerns regarding the impact of certain uses, such as betting shops. Anti-social behaviour such as begging and harassment of passers-by has been cited.

The first and easiest response is through active town centre management. Borough staff can approach and work with betting shop owners and managers to ensure that customers are reminded of behaviour requirements. A second step can be through approaches to any individuals involved. The involvement of social welfare agencies, counselling services and community policing may be applicable. Progressively increasing sanctions can be applied over time. A combination of approaches can limit and contain negative behaviour.

Manage Business Behaviour

The Council has a range of licensing and enforcement responses to problem businesses at its disposal. Ultimately, sanctions can include the loss of licensing. In order to achieve this, a documented track record of complaints, notices and action will be required. A focus on the most problematic businesses and robust action against them can be used to encourage other businesses to take more proactive action on their own part.

2. Actively Diversify the Retail Offer

Engage in Town Centre Management

The Council will actively engage with retail landlords to understand and influence their leasing activities. Identification of leases which are ending or where the tenant is a distressed business is an opportunity to assist in marketing. Consultation has identified a desire to strengthen café, restaurant and leisure and entertainment.

Promote the Borough to Retailers you Want

The Council will maintain intelligence on target properties and use its own resources to market the opportunity to businesses. These can include independent operators from other Borough’s across London. Asian, Middle Eastern and Turkish Cafes from neighbouring Boroughs can be encouraged. Orford Road – close to Walthamstow Town Centre – is an example of a collection of independent restaurants.

These can also include regional or national chains. The absence of affordable family friendly dining chains such as Nando’s from the Borough is noticeable. Others, such as Pizza Express, are a small step above in price, but are also popular with families and couples, but are also absent from the Borough. This mid price market will often cluster together, particularly where there is an entertainment or evening shopping offer.

3. Borough Led Redevelopment

Serving as an Example

The London Borough of Waltham Forest is leading the redevelopment of key sites, including the Arcade Site in Walthamstow Town Centre. The Council can play a leading role in diversifying the retail offer, and encouraging alternatives to betting shops, pubs and estate agents through its own role as developer and landlord. The inclusion of a family dining offer in the town centre in the Council’s development requirements could help kick start this market.

The most successful way or retaining historic pub uses is to advance their offer. This means transitioning into restaurant / bar / pub combinations to respond to evolving market tastes. This has been led by major breweries and leisure operators by reformatting, as well as independent investors. The Council will advance this through direct negotiations with operators, chains and independents.

The Council may be in a position to incentivise independent or popular chain cafes where it is the landlord for any retail properties through its lease rates and structure. At the same time, an active inward investment campaign targeted at chains will also ensure that investments are made as soon as the catchment is ready. Where a rich and local mix of shops has been achieved it is often through the lead and coordination of landlords, with Marylebone High Street the primary example.

4. Models for Strengthening High Streets and Retail Areas

There are a number of models for strengthening high streets and retail areas. These typically address topics such as:

- Joint area marketing
- Joint promotions and offers
- Special events and festivals
- Façade maintenance and coordination
- Street cleaning
- Street paving, lighting, furniture and landscape

There are examples of landlords leading in these areas, particularly where a single landlord has extensive ownership interests. London examples include the long term management approach to Marylebone High Street.

Chambers of Commerce and local business organisations can also play an important role in joint marketing, promotions and offers and special events. Where well established, such organisations can play important self governance roles, addressing shopfront activities and facades. The Waltham Forest Business Board, is extremely influential across the borough, and is the key driver behind the Shop Front Pilot scheme in Leyton. Such organisations can also lay the foundation for joint funding of maintenance activities and minor capital improvements.

Examples are also provided by Business Improvement Districts, which bring a range of owners and operators into a shared management and funding model. London examples include: Kingston, Ealing, Croydon and Kingston. The existing BID in Leytonstone Town centre is an approach that could be extended to other town centres in the Borough. It is recommended that the joint work involved in the shopfront improvement programme be used as a springboard for engaging retailers in similar activities. The council is currently pursuing the development of a BID for Walthamstow Town centre.

5. Diversify the Catchment

The Borough’s retail catchment will be diversified as part of its ongoing regeneration and housing strategies. Consultation has led to calls for a new range of retail and leisure activities, such as cafes and restaurant, and evening and weekend activities. These can only be sustainably supported by the population of consumers in the area.

 Retain more of the Borough’s Spending Power

The catchment for Walthamstow Town Centre will be diversified by more effectively promoting it to the residents of the north and east of the Borough. Consultation identified that many residents of these parts of the Borough will travel to other Boroughs and town centres beyond the M25 for dining and entertainment. Retaining more of the Borough’s own retail spending power will be a priority in supporting and diversifying the local retail offer.

Diversify the Borough’s Residential Base

The success of cafes and restaurants is highly dependent on the culture and spending power of the catchment. Promotion of housing development opportunities to a broad socio-economic mix is encouraged. This may mean a shift in focus to a greater representation of middle and higher income earners in the east of the Borough, where many of the traditional centres and high streets are located. Inclusion of housing types that will appeal to such households is recommended.

6. Maintaining Traditional Pubs

The Threat to Public Houses

Traditional pubs are under ongoing threat from long term trends in “third places” outside the home and work. The UK and London has seen a transformation in dining away from home, combining drinking and dining, the expansion of stand up drinking bars aimed at younger people and the expansion of the hours and number of night clubs. The availability of lower price alcohol to drink at home as also undermined the traditional role of pubs. The effects of these long term trends in culture and consumer preferences will be difficult to challenge at a local level. It has been reported that up to one pub or bar closes everyday in London. While a percentage of this will be normal business turnover, with others opening at the same time, there is an obvious long term decline in the traditional London pub.

The Council wishes to maintain a ‘traditional public house’ presence in the borough. These institutions have long played a particular role in community life and are a traditional meeting place. Support for well performing pubs is to be welcomed. A number of strategies for evolving the role and function, and in some cases the ownership of pubs are available.

Evolving the Pub Offer

Traditional pubs have evolved by diversifying their offer. Strategies include an improved food offer, either at the level of snacks or through transformation into a food driven gastropub. There is also a well established transformation of pub buildings to restaurants. Such strategies maintain the building in full use and still provide a place to socialise for residents.

Community Ownership

Communities have also taken over pubs and run them as cooperative community facilities. This entails a non-profit approach and a committed group of local residents prepared to invest personal time over a long period.

The Community Pubs Foundation is associated with the Campaign for Real Ale. The Foundation aims to: prevent the loss of, or inappropriate alterations to, a public house of community, architectural or historical importance; improve the viability of a public house through the provision of community facilities and protect the future of a public house through community ownership. The Foundation will provide advice and small grants to local groups seeking to prevent the loss of their local pub.

Direct Communication with Operators

A direct communication approach with pub landlords and owners to maintain a clear understanding of long term plans for maintaining or closing individual establishments is required to ensure the Council can be proactive as well as reactive in its approach to maintaining the use of pub buildings.

The Council will establish a risk register of pubs to identify those that may close in the next two years. A proactive strategy to promote these as opportunities for other pub, gastro-
There are concerns regarding the personal, family and social effects of gambling, with links to addictive behaviour, associated mental health issues and financial effects on individuals and their families of an expensive habit. There are broad issues relating to the effect of the gambling industry. There are also more localised reports of loitering, begging and harassment in the immediate vicinity of betting shops by Town Centre management officers. These are specific issues relating to this locality. Betting shops in Waltham Forest have generated a disproportionate number of requests for police assistance, for issues relating to criminal damage, theft, assault and public order offences.

Responses to these problems have typically involved site specific actions such as refusal of grant for a premises licence under the Gambling Act to prevent the opening of a new shop.

A range of enforcement tools are also available. Where there is repeated planning enforcement or legal or criminal issues associated with a particular establishment, a well maintained record can be used to close and establishment through a removal of licence.

There is a desire to limit the number of new betting shops in local areas through category based planning control. Waltham Forest’s hot food takeaway SPD regulating location provides some precedent. This will be investigated further through the LDF Core Strategy process.

A well organised and structured evidence base and record of consultation to underpin case by case enforcement and policy development will be prepared by the Council. This will be required to address issues of negative influence for case by case enforcement, and provide evidence that clustering or concentration create a cumulative and additional effect, thereby allowing refusal.

Detailed records of complaints or inappropriate activities associated with betting shops will be maintained in the near term as a precursor to any planning policy action in particular centres and high streets.

Evidence of a concentration of betting shops that exceeds that of other

London Boroughs may also provide potential evidence for limiting future provision. The emerging Localism Bill may provide local communities with greater choice over the activities that are permitted within their areas based on preference.

The London Borough of Islington is currently proposing new regulations that will limit new drinking establishment licences unless it is proved that they will not add to the cumulative impact of other establishments. If successful, this will set a precedent where the performance of existing retailers can determine whether others of the same type should be allowed. This can also be carried out through town centre management functions.

A documented record indicating a cumulative negative effect from the clustering and concentration of betting shops will be maintained.

Addressing the Proliferation of Estate Agents

The presence of estate agents on retail streets is a cause of local concern. The growth of estate agent shop fronts has occurred during a period when the long term position of small, independent traditional retailers has declined across the UK. The resulting vacancies have often been taken up by estate agents and charity shops, raising local concerns about changing character.

A broad based planning policy regulation of estate agents will need to demonstrate a concentration of anti-social behaviour or negative performance in terms of noise, emissions or litter to have any justification. At present, there is not an established record of such issues in the Borough. Research has not identified a methodology from elsewhere in the UK that has demonstrated a sufficiently negative impact to establish a planning policy case.

In the absence of other uses estate agent shop-fronts provide a welcome use of space and maintenance of facades and frontages. Employees and customers help activate the street and provide custom for nearby shops. The alternative of vacant frontages would be a worse outcome, which could lead to a cumulative decline as the rental base reduces.
The location of estate agents can be seen as opportunistic: taking advantage of the lack of competition from other retail uses for the space. This suggests a need for a proactive approach to retail development and inward investment to increase the demand for space from the Council’s preferred retail uses.

A number of estate agent chains have reduced the number of shop front outlets as the number of residential property transactions has reduced across London. The sector is also under pressure from internet marketing and from some increase in direct owner to purchaser sales. The potential vacancies this represents points to a further need to ensure there is a range of other users wishing to take up retail space at Waltham Forest’s retail streets.

The proliferation of estate agent to let boards on retail streets has also been identified as a problem. Under current regulations estate agents are free to erect boards without planning permission so long as they are removed within 14 days of sale or letting. There is a limit of one board per property. It is recommended that the rules are enforced to ensure they are not left up after a letting has occurred. A direct approach to estate agents seen as problematic in this area will be made.

Focused enforcement efforts by councils have been applied in the past. A targeted street survey will be used to identify the illegal boards. Letters can then be sent to the estate agents responsible for the illegal boards, giving them notice to remove them. Those left up can then be removed by the council and the responsible estate agents charged for the work.

The Council will organise a meeting with agents operating in the borough with a track record of long standing boards on high street properties to review legal requirements and present the borough’s intended enforcement approach.

Conclusion

The Council will pursue a range of strategies to improve the retail offer and quality of its town centre and high street environments.

The Council will also pursue strategies that strengthen the retail catchment and demand in Waltham Forest and support inward investment by the type of retail it wishes to have as a priority.

There are frequent concerns among local authorities regarding the proliferation of certain businesses in their retail areas. These include betting shops, estate agents and charity shops, each of which fill the void left by the decline of more traditional retailers. These shops are now frequent occupiers of retail streets across London, including in some of its more affluent boroughs and neighbourhoods. At the same time, the demand for family oriented retail and leisure which can safely extend into the evening hours is a frequent goal.

The London Borough of Waltham Forest will focuses on immediate responses addressing the most problematic businesses, while taking a proactive approach to changing landlord leasing activities and promoting the Borough as a place for the retail, restaurant and family entertainment businesses sought.

A regulatory or limiting approach will be pursued in some cases. A positive positioning approach will also pursued to achieve the retail mix the Council seeks.
Reference Material

*High Street London Report by Gort-Scott*

*Developing a Vision for Walthamstow Market by Grieg and Stephenson and Nabma Consultancy Services*

*TfL Streetscape Guidance*

*TfL Legible London Wayfinding Study Report*

*TfL Legible London Street Clutter Reduction Guidance April 2010*

*Northern Olympic Fringe Masterplan (2009)*

*Waltham Forest Unitary Development Plan*

*London Borough of Waltham Forest Supplementary Planning Guidance Note 8 - Shopfront Design Guide (June 1999)*

*Wood Street AAP Scoping Study by Urban Practitioners (September 2009)*

*Waltham Forest Leyton Links scheme*

*London Borough of Waltham Forest Hot Food Takeaways Supplementary Planning Document*