Knowsley Council

Knowsley Local Plan: Core Strategy

Technical Report

Planning for Retail in Knowsley

Final Version - Core Strategy Submission Document
July 2013

Contents

0 Executive Summary

Introduction

0.1 This technical report supports the Knowsley Local Plan Core Strategy and its policies concerning planning for retail growth. This version of this report has been produced to support the Core Strategy Submission Version and its policies.

0.2 Using a variety of information sources and evidence base documents, this report sets out relevant influences and policy parameters affecting the level and distribution of additional retail floorspace which could be delivered in Knowsley. These influences include national and regional policy and locally collated evidence.

Background Evidence

0.3 The report addresses a series of questions, firstly to assess the wide range of evidence available to inform the content of this technical report. The evidence (see chapter 2 of the main report) comprises:

- National planning policy documents, which set out the framework for the preparation of Local Plans
- A range of regionally-collected evidence which inform retail requirements
- Locally set policies, including the Sustainable Community Strategy, which directly or indirectly will influence local approaches to retail and service provision
- A vast range of sub-regional and local evidence and information, collected by the Council and its partners, which will inform consideration of existing need and regeneration priorities.

Performance and Potential of Knowsley's town centres

0.4 Chapter 3 of the report assesses the levels of retail need in Knowsley, based on catchment areas for town centres, current performance and available expenditure. This informed the identification of a hierarchy of Knowsley’s retail centres (in policy CS6 of the Core Strategy) and their prospects for growth. The section concludes that:

- The Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study identifies that there is significant "leakage" of expenditure to other areas outside of Knowsley.
- The existing retail hierarchy classification set out in the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (adopted in 2006), and which includes Town Centres, District Centres and Local Centres remains appropriate, subject to clarity on thresholds and re-categorisation of some local centres.
- There are currently 3 town centres (Huyton, Kirkby and Prescot), 3 district centres (Halewood – Ravenscourt, Liverpool Road –

Page Moss and Stockbridge Village), 1 retail park (Cables, Prescot), 24 local centres (sub-divided into major and medium) and a further 17 minor parades within Knowsley.

- Knowsley's settlement pattern ensures that there is an absence of a single centre capable of attaining a dominant position to adequately serve the spatial distribution of localised comparison retail needs.
- A varied distribution of new development between Knowsley's centres is likely to be necessary to reflect the varying deficiencies and regeneration opportunities of differing scale and improvements to existing design and layouts.
- In view of existing performance together with opportunities and needs within Knowsley's town centres, it is considered that the highest levels of growth should be distributed to Kirkby, with lower levels of growth in Huyton and Prescot.
- The district centres within Knowsley have no realistic opportunity or need to enhance their status to be classified as town centres, based upon land availability and scale. This is noting that developments have recently been completed in Halewood and Stockbridge Village which address previously identified needs.
- Potential investment and interventions in Knowsley's local centres (and minor parades) remain small scale and site specific, and there are no realistic opportunities to enhance the status of any individual local centre to a district centre.

0.5 Chapter 3 also explains how the approach in the Knowsley Local Plan meets the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) with regard to the sequential test, impact assessment and the boundary definition of retail centre, primary shopping area, primary and secondary frontages (as appropriate).

Population Demographics

0.6 Chapter 4 assesses the influence of population change and demographics on future needs. The key conclusions are that:

- The general trends of growth focused upon an ageing population and a reduction in the number and proportion of economically active residents are unchanged since the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study was prepared in 2009 and 2010.
- It is unnecessary to remodel or update the population and demographic profile in the projections, as any difference is unlikely to be significant at a catchment level, with any emphasis upon marginal change not justified.

Economic Trends and Forecasting Future Needs

0.7 Chapter 5 of the report considers the influence of economic trends experienced since the two parts of the Knowsley Town Centres and

Shopping Study was completed in 2009 and 2010 as these may affect the future forecasting of needs. This section concludes that:

- The economic downturn reduced growth between 2008 - 2011 to levels which are less than 50% of the long term trends for both comparison and convenience retailing.
- Longer term projections remain indicative due to the exponential effect of differences between projected growth and actual growth, and therefore a degree of flexibility to allow for updated evidence has been incorporated into the Local Plan.
- The projected growth rates for both convenience and comparison retail expenditure set out in the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study exceed the revised projections published by Experian in 2011.
- The Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study can be considered optimistic in terms of growth prospects. In this regard, whilst the potential for the growth rates within the 2009 forecasts being realised cannot be discounted, it is evident that such an outcome is less likely when considering more up-to-date evidence.
- On the basis of the low level of probability of achieving original forecasts, it would not be appropriate to project forward the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study forecast rates for a further two years (between 2026 and 2028) or to calculate additional floorspace requirements accordingly.
- Comparative projections for available convenience retail expenditure suggest a potential range between the 2009 projections and 2011 Experian forecast data of up to £40m per annum (or 5.6% of the overall expenditure) by 2028 within the study area. This could result in a reduction of the upper capacity for additional floorspace (at 70% expenditure retention within the catchment area of Knowsley's centres) of up to 4 461 sq.m gross by 2028.
- There is limited variation in the baseline growth projections for comparison retail floorspace, when comparing the 2009 projections to the 2011 Experian forecast data. However there is significant variation in the proportions of Special Forms of Trading (SFT) with an apparent underestimation in the 2009 forecasts. When this is considered, the available expenditure for comparison retail of the 2009 projections at 2026 exceeds the 2011 Experian forecast data for 2028. In terms of floorspace conversion, the difference in available expenditure could therefore result in a reduction of the upper capacity for additional floorspace (at 32.2% expenditure retention) to 44,730 sq.m gross by 2028 (see Appendix C). This capacity figure is 21,470 sq.m lower than the projections in the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study.
- The scale of potential variation between forecasts justifies the Council’s Local Plan approach of not seeking to uplift the indicative range of quantitative need to account for an additional

two years (2027 – 2028) not originally covered by Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study forecasts.

- Revised calculations applying the Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 9 (September 2011) growth rates data to the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study indicated that the upper growth scenario produces a convenience retail floorspace requirement of 7,191 sq.m gross. This figure is within the range of indicative distribution for convenience floorspace and on this basis, the differing scenarios of potential economic growth rates are accommodated.
- Revised calculations applying the Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 9 (September 2011) growth rate data to the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study indicated that the upper growth scenario produces a floorspace requirement of 44,730 sq.m gross. This figure closely aligns with the Council's preferred approach of 45,000 sq.m in total (including the floorspace associated to the existing Kirkby commitment) being distributed between the three town centres during the plan period up to 2028. The upper capacity has therefore been lowered accordingly on this basis, as the scale of variance relative to the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study is significant and the economic circumstances supporting such levels of retail growth are increasingly unlikely to occur during the plan period. In addition, the scale of upper levels of growth recommended to be distributed to Kirkby in particular, were considered to be inappropriate without further consideration of the impact upon neighbouring centres, following the implementation of the existing commitment.

0.8 Chapter 5 also concludes that:

- The Council's Local Plan proposes that new comparison floorspace be focused primarily in Kirkby with limited growth in Huyton and Prescot. This reflects improved deliverability prospects in Kirkby Town Centre arising from an existing planning permission (24,600 sq.m) in that location with remaining capacity being distributed equally between Huyton, Kirkby and Prescot (4,100 sq.m – 6,800 sq.m). This equal distribution of growth between the three centres will provide sufficient flexibility for sustainable economic growth during the plan period. Sufficient capacity remains in each centre (following the potential expansion of Kirkby and Prescot Town Centres respectively) to accommodate these levels of growth.
- In view of the significant variation between economic forecasts undertaken in 2009 and 2011, it is not considered appropriate to rely solely upon current forecasts for comparison retail growth which could prove pessimistic if prevailing economic circumstances were to change. On this basis, the Local Plan proposes to incorporate an unreserved allocation of up to 7,310 sq.m. (which is not allocated to any specific centre). This will allow sufficient flexibility to accommodate additional growth in the

individual centres commensurate to the distribution recommended by the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study and consistent with the requirements of the NPPF.

- It is intended that the release of an unallocated reserve to supplement the range of floorspace allocated to town centres will remain dependent upon impact considerations relative to neighbouring centres and an updated catchment needs assessment to respond to the effect of any preceding in-centre development during the plan period. The catchment area for a proposed development should not be significantly larger than the centre within which it is located.
- The phasing of development should reflect a front loading of need to accommodate existing commitments in Kirkby, but also retain sufficient flexibility to allow sustainable economic growth in Knowsley's other retail centres. However it is accepted that the implementation of such levels of growth may not be fully achievable in the first five years.
- The Local Plan approach will allow performance monitoring during the plan period and the ability to adapt identified needs and distribution based upon updated evidence such as a revised Town Centres and Shopping Study.

0.9 The leisure sector is dynamic, changing and operator-led. The Council therefore intends to encourage market-led investment in leisure uses and community facilities provided it conforms to the sequential and impact tests within the National Planning Policy Framework. As a consequence, no indicative target sectors or floorspace capacities for these uses are included in Policy CS6.

0.10 Office uses are considered sequentially appropriate in town centres locations and will be guided toward areas which are not primary shopping frontages. No specific target for office floorspace in town centres is proposed as development is intended to be market led. Employment land targets are considered separately in the Technical Report: Planning for Employment Growth.

1. Introduction

1.1 Why is this report needed?

1.1.1 This Technical Report has been completed primarily to inform the Knowsley Local Plan, particularly the Core Strategy. As the Core Strategy is the key overarching document for the Local Plan, it will heavily influence elements of the Local Plan which will be prepared subsequently, including documents which propose site allocations for Knowsley.

1.2 Why plan for retail?

1.2.1 There are several critical reasons why the Knowsley Local Plan must consider the scale of new retail to be planned for in the Borough. Retail development is a major development type in a largely urban area such as Knowsley, and therefore represents one of the significant ways in which the Borough is likely to change.

1.2.2 Planning for new retail assists in responding to arising shopping needs and demands in Knowsley's settlements to ensure that the offer is sufficiently attractive, diverse and accessible for local residents. This supports a link to economic growth by ensuring that Knowsley's centres maintain sufficient viability and vitality of retail function and individuality to reflect their position in the retail hierarchy. A key indicator in this regard is the ability to maintain appropriate retention levels of available expenditure within the respective catchments.

1.2.3 In Knowsley, planning for new retail will help ensure that the Local Plan reflects the aspirations of the Sustainable Community Strategy[1] (SCS) by delivering vibrant and welcoming town centres. Local planning policies relating to new retail are also required to be provided by national policy, where it is stated that local authorities should be positive, promote competitive town centre environments and set out policies for the management and growth of centres over the plan period. Knowsley Core Strategy must therefore contain a robust retail policy approach, which establishes the level of anticipated need for new development to be accommodated in Knowsley over the plan period.

1.2.4 Encouraging investment in town centre development and increased competition between businesses is beneficial in terms of providing an improved choice for consumers, and improvements to productivity and efficiency. However competition between centres (and existing out of centre locations) requires consideration and strategic choices when making decisions on the appropriate distribution of available floorspace. This is informed by the identification of the existing pattern

[1] A Strategy for Knowsley: The Borough of Choice 2012 – 2023 (Knowsley Partnership and Knowsley MBC, 2013)

of retail provision, taking account of retail catchments and levels of accessibility so as to identify ‘gaps’ in the network of centres or the provision of different types of facilities (e.g. local shops, food superstores, department stores or other key shopping facilities).

1.3 Core Strategy preparation to date

1.3.1 The Regional Spatial Strategy[2] for the North West[3] provided (prior to its revocation in 2013) a regional tier of planning policy and retail policies to be applied at the local level. It therefore set the policy parameters within which local authorities could operate.

1.3.2 As standard practice in preparing sound Development Plan Documents, the Regional Spatial Strategy policies were accounted for in the previous stages of preparation of the Core Strategy, including consultation on an Issues and Options Paper, which took place from November 2009 to January 2010. It was anticipated that this approach would be carried forward to influence subsequent stages of the Core Strategy, eventually being incorporated in the adopted version of the Core Strategy.

1.3.3 The RSS provided specific policies for different sub-areas. For areas like Knowsley, in the “outer area” of the Liverpool City Region, the RSS prioritised promotion of economic development, addressing worklessness and working towards urban renaissance and social inclusion. The document also contains important policies about economic development and growth that local authorities such as Knowsley should seek to achieve.

1.3.4 Policy W5 of RSS "Retail Development" required plans and strategies to promote retail investment where it assists in the regeneration and economic growth of the North West’s town and city centres. Investment made is intended to be consistent with the scale and function of the centre, not undermine the vitality and viability of any other centre or result in the creation of unsustainable shopping patterns. In this regard, the policy also included a hierarchy of centres based upon first and second tier retail centres in the North West derived from Policy RDF1, within which Knowsley’s centres are not specifically identified. In this regard, Huyton, Kirkby and Prescot were considered to be third tier centres, where investment will be encouraged in order to maintain and enhance their vitality and viability, including investment to underpin wider regeneration initiatives, to ensure that centres meet the needs of the local community, as identified by Local Authorities.

2 Also known as the “Regional Strategy”, after the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 but referred to for the purposes of this paper as “Regional Spatial Strategy” or “RSS”

3 The North West Plan: Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (GONW, 2008)

1.3.5 The Knowsley Core Strategy has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Regional Spatial Strategy, and therefore includes a distribution of new retail development which is considered to reflect local needs and regeneration requirements without undermining the viability and vitality of neighbouring centres.

1.4 Revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies

1.5.1 The Regional Spatial Strategy for the North West[4] was published by the Secretary of State in 2008. Following the 2010 general election, the Coalition Government signalled its intention to abolish adopted Regional Spatial Strategies[5] with revocation taking place in North West in May 2013 under powers in the Localism Act 2011. Earlier work towards a replacement Regional Strategy for the North West (known as RS2010) was cancelled in 2010.

1.5.2 The deletion of the regional tier of planning policy has left gaps in policy coverage across a wide range of topics and issues including retail policy. There is therefore a need to ensure that the Local Plan, including where appropriate the Core Strategy covers all of the critical policy elements previously provided at the regional level, to ensure that a sound and robust local development plan is produced.

1.5.3 It should be noted that the Regional Spatial Strategy and the evidence which underpinned remains in the public domain as evidence base, following its revocation. This includes work undertaken towards a replacement Regional Strategy, which was progressed in the North West by 4NW and partner organisations during 2009 and 2010.

1.5.4 The Government also published the National Planning Framework (NPPF) in March 2012, which replaced the most of the previous Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes. Nevertheless the broad approach to retail development in terms of needs assessment, sequential approach and impact consideration is largely unchanged from the previous PPS4, notwithstanding a reduction in the overall level of detail of the national policy.

1.5.5 It is within this context of change that this report has been written, bearing in mind that the previous iterations of the document were heavily influenced by the regional policy which has now been abolished.

1.5 Aims of this report

1.6.1 This technical report summarises the main findings of available evidence and explains how this has informed the approach in the Core Strategy. The report forms part of the evidence which underpins the

4 North West of England Plan Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021 (DCLG, 2008)
5 See letter from the Secretary of State to Chief Planning Officers (CLG, May 2010)

planning policies for retail development in the Local Plan: Core Strategy.

1.5.2 This document:

- Collates and considers available evidence and information.
- Assesses the levels of retail need in Knowsley, based upon catchment areas for town centres, current performance and available expenditure.
- Identifies a retail hierarchy.
- Considers the potential influence of recent economic trends and retail completions / commitments in Knowsley.
- Considers deliverability issues for retail development in Knowsley based upon an overview of existing land availability, opportunities and potential constraints in Knowsley's centres.
- Considers the suitability of potential scenarios arising from existing evidence and development of any necessary additional retail policy approaches.

1.5.3 The Report sets out the justification for the preferred scale and distribution of retail development in Knowsley, as identified in the Core Strategy. The report establishes a preferred level of retail provision for Knowsley which is justifiable, deliverable and supported by robust and up-to-date evidence.

2. Background Evidence

2.1 What evidence is available?

2.1.1. Evidence which has been used ranges from national planning policy, which sets the overall aims and strategic policy parameters for retail, down to local studies produced by the Council such as the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study[6].

2.2 National policy and evidence

2.2.1. In March 2012, the government introduced a new and consolidated set of national planning policy within the **National Planning Policy Framework**[7] (NPPF). The NPPF replaced the majority of Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance Notes which previously constituted the government's national planning policy. The NPPF focuses on achieving sustainable development, including guidance relating to the economic, social and environmental aspects of this. With regard to plan-making undertaken by local authorities, the NPPF is clear that plans should seek to positively meet the development needs of the area, and should be flexible in seeking to meet such objectively assessed needs. The NPPF also sets out the soundness tests which Local Plans will be required to meet, as they are submitted for examination.

2.2.2. The NPPF recognises that provision and distribution of retail and main town centre uses is a key component of sustainable communities and delivering sustainable economic growth. A particular focus of the NPPF is ensuring that policies are in place to meet the strategic needs for new retail development, including both the quantitative and qualitative needs. The NPPF also requires the following:

- recognition that town centres are the heart of their communities and the need to pursue policies to support their viability and vitality;
- definition of a network and hierarchy of centres that is resilient to anticipated future economic changes;
- definition of the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, based on a clear definition of primary and secondary frontages in designated centres, and set policies that make clear which uses will be permitted in such locations;
- promotion of competitive town centres that provide customer choice and a diverse retail offer and which reflect the individuality of town centres;
- setting policies for the consideration of proposals for main town centre uses which cannot be accommodated in or adjacent to town centres;

6 Town Centres and Shopping Study: Volumes 1 & 2 (Roger Tym & Partners, 2009 & 2010)
7 The National Planning Policy Framework (CLG, 2012)

- where town centres are in decline, a need to plan positively for their future to encourage economic activity.

2.2.3. The above requirements of the NPPF are relevant to the preparation of the Local Plan: Core Strategy and therefore inform the context of this technical report. Additional NPPF requirements relating to detailed site allocations and retention / enhancement of markets, are more relevant to the subsequent stage of Local Plan preparation (Site Allocations and Development Policies), but will be referred to where appropriate (i.e. potential town centre expansion).

2.2.4. **Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth**[8] (PPS4) set out the national planning policies for employment development up to March 2012. This document formed the planning focus to support the Government's overarching objective for sustainable economic growth, and the promotion of vital and viable towns and cities as important places for communities. PPS4 superseded previous town centre specific policy guidance in the form of the previous PPS6, but did not depart from what has been over a decade of planning policy that promotes the principle of *'town centres first'.* PPS4 was replaced in totality by the NPPF in March 2012, although its companion guidance remains in place.

2.2.5. Up to March 2012, the government's approach to the forward planning activities of local authorities was set out within **Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning**[9] (PPS12). This document provided guidance about how local authorities should go about preparing their plans, in particular focussing on the development of Core Strategies. The document set out the processes and parameters within which plans should be prepared, and also set out the criteria which must be met by the documents that local authorities are preparing to achieve "soundness". There was a clear focus within PPS12 to ensure that all policy content is supported by a robust evidence base which justifies the chosen approaches, and clearly demonstrates that alternative approaches have been considered. This focus was a key driver for the preparation of this technical report, and continues to be reflected in the NPPF, which replaced PPS12 in March 2012.

2.2.6. The government introduced new legislation relating to planning within the **Localism Act 2011**[10]. This legislation amended the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004[11], with regard to preparation of local plans, and also formed the basis for new regulations[12] around the preparation of local plans. The Act sets out the legislative basis for the revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies (as discussed in Section 1 of

[8] Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (CLG, 2009)
[9] Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning (CLG, 2009)
[10] Localism Act 2011 (HM Government, 2011)
[11] Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (HM Government, 2004)
[12] The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 (HM Government, 2012)

this report). The Act also introduces a new responsibility known as the "duty to cooperate", which demands that local authorities demonstrate cooperation with each other and other key stakeholders in the preparation of their local plans and other planning related matters. The Act also brought changes regarding the Community Infrastructure Levy, plan preparation process, and the introduction of the ability of communities to lead on the production of "neighbourhood plans".

2.2.7. The **Office of National Statistics** (ONS) publishes a range of statistics relevant to planning. These datasets which are directly relevant to considering the capacity of main town centre uses to be provided, including population projections and household projections, as well as a range of contextual information such as employment and economic information. A significant proportion of the data produced by ONS is at the Local Authority level or lower, which enables easy comparison with surrounding areas as well as regional or national averages.

2.2.8. The **Department of Communities and Local Government** (CLG) also publishes a wide range of statistics and contextual information. CLG also collate a number of datasets from Local Authorities, helping to inform the national picture for economic projections and forecasting.

2.3 Regional policy and evidence

2.3.1. Work began on a replacement for the Regional Strategy for the North West, known as **RS2010**[13] in 2009. 4NW and NWDA commenced evidence base work for this strategy at that point. However, due to the proposed revocation of Regional Strategies by the government, work completed towards RS2010 was re-directed into a non-statutory regional document known as **Future Northwest**[14], which stated strategic shared priorities for the North West region.

2.3.2. The work undertaken towards RS2010 also involved a range of economic forecasting exercises, linked to setting job growth targets and job target distribution, which have some relevance to main town centre uses such as offices. In order to account for different forecasting methodologies, several different forecasts were used in this exercise, including the Regional Economic Forecasting Panel (REFP) and Independent Local Authority Forecasts, as well as work undertaken by the National Housing and Planning Advice Unit (NHPAU).

2.3.3. **REFP** was a long term baseline forecast for the region published in March 2010. This is a "policy-off" forecast and does not take into account any aspirations and policy interventions. This was developed using forecasts from the three main forecasting houses: Cambridge Econometrics, Oxford Economics and Experian. Regional partners were advised by consultants to use the REFP work as a starting point

[13] RS2010 Part 1: The High Level Strategic Framework (4NW, 2010)
[14] Future Northwest: Our Shared Priorities (4NW, 2010)

for setting employment land and job targets and then work with local authorities in order to reality test the forecasts and factor in policy targets and aspirations. Employment land and job calculations are alternatively addressed in the Planning for Employment Growth Technical Report; however it also remains relevant to main town centre uses, particularly the provision of offices.

2.4 Sub-regional policy and evidence

2.4.1. The **Liverpool City Region Local Enterprise Partnership** will have a critical role in shaping the sub-regional approach to economic growth and enterprise. Although the strategies associated with the LEP are currently being developed, some clear priority projects have been identified, for economic growth, together with employment and skills which will influence retail demand.

2.4.2. A priority relating to Knowsley within the **Liverpool City Region – Visitor Economy Strategy to 2020**[15], relates to Prescot which is identified as a City Region priority for investment in the quality of visitor experience.

2.5 Local policy and evidence

2.5.1. The first Knowsley Sustainable Community Strategy (entitled: **Knowsley the Borough of Choice: Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2023**[16]) sought to ensure that Knowsley has vibrant and welcoming town centres. The strategy also sought to ensure that improvements are made to the general quality of shopping and leisure / evening economy experience.

2.5.2. Knowsley's Sustainable Community Strategy (entitled: **A Strategy for Knowsley: the Borough of Choice**[17]), was prepared partly to respond to changing circumstances between 2008 and 2013, and as some of the priorities established in the first version needed alteration to reflect progress. Whilst still being centred on the same vision of "the Borough of Choice", the updated strategy offers shorter-term priorities to address key issues identified by the Council and its partners, including improving quality of place by achieving vibrant and welcoming town centres retaining local employment and spend.

2.5.3. As the statutory development plan for Knowsley, the saved policies of the **Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan**[18] (UDP) and the evidence collated for this document are still extremely useful. The document also includes policies which provide the current retail

---

15 Liverpool City Region – Visitor Economy Strategy to 2020 (The Mersey Partnership / L & R Consulting, 2009)

16 Knowsley the Borough of Choice: Sustainable Community Strategy 2008 – 2023 (Knowsley Partnership and Knowsley MBC, 2008)

17 A Strategy for Knowsley: The Borough of Choice 2012 – 2023 (Knowsley Partnership and Knowsley MBC, 2013)

18 Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (Knowsley MBC, 2006)

hierarchy and the focus for investment in the existing town centres of Huyton, Kirkby and Prescot. The saved Proposals Map also indicates the location of Knowsley's town and district centres, including their respective boundaries.

2.5.4. The Council commissioned Roger Tym & Partners to undertake the **Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study**[19] in April 2008 in accordance with national guidance and regional policy. This study forms part of the evidence base for the town centre and retail policy aspects of the Council's Local Plan. The study included:

- a health check of Knowsley's three town centres;
- an assessment of need for retailing and other town centre uses up to 2026, taking account of projected change in population and per capita expenditure, and using a survey of households to establish current expenditure patterns, the existing catchment areas of each town centre and how these relate to other centres in the Liverpool City Region;
- an assessment of the Borough's three district centres and its local parades/centres.

2.5.5. The Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study provided an up to date assessment of the health of Knowsley's centres, considered the pattern of provision against local needs, identified gaps or surpluses in provision. The document also made recommendations for action to address weaknesses in the quality and quantity of local shopping provision, including assessment of the scope for diversification of uses.

2.5.6. The study identified that Kirkby Town Centre has the lowest comparison goods turnover for a town centre in Knowsley and has therefore seen its position in the retail rankings fall steadily over the last decade, whilst Huyton and Prescot were also underperforming in terms of expenditure retention. As a consequence, Kirkby in particular is in need of significant intervention and investment if it is to serve its local catchment and compete effectively with neighbouring centres. Major deficiencies were also identified within Kirkby; relating to the absence of a major food superstore, the very limited food and drink offer, the lack of commercial leisure facilities, the predominance of discount / lower end comparison retailers and the inadequate maintenance of the public realm.

2.5.7. The study also reaffirmed that for those centres and areas for which significant investment and regeneration is proposed, several factors need to be taken into account in order to ensure deliverability of projects. In particular the study notes the following:

- financial viability and commercial realism/demand;
- infrastructure availability, and;

[19] Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study Volumes 1 – 5 (Roger Tym & Partners, 2009 & 2010)

- accessibility to suitable and available land.

2.5.8. The Council also commissioned Drivers Jonas in January 2010 to prepare the **Kirkby Town Centre - Capacity for New Retail Floorspace Report**[20]. This comprised research into the capacity for new retail floorspace within Kirkby town centre following the receipt of the Inspectors Report relating to a previous proposal for major development in Kirkby (known as "Destination Kirkby") in November 2009. The conclusions in terms of floorspace capacity were as follows:

- convenience floorspace retail capacity within the range of 7 200 – 8 000 sq.m, and;
- combined convenience and comparison floorspace retail capacity of approximately 30 000 sq.m.

2.5.9. A planning application for a comprehensive phased re-development of Kirkby Town Centre, including a new supermarket and expansion to the south of Cherryfield Drive, was approved in 2011. The proposed convenience and comparison floorspace is consistent with the capacity identified in the Drivers Jonas report.

2.5.10. The Council has had evidence on viability and deliverability for retail development prepared within an **Economic Viability Assessment**[21] prepared by Keppie Massie. The study indicated that retail development is currently viable with the exception of comparison retail in district and local centres and within Prescot Town Centre. Additional detail in terms of other main town centre uses is included in Section 4 of the report.

2.5.11. The **Ensuring a Choice of Travel Supplementary Planning Document**[22] (SPD) was adopted by the Council in September 2010, to support UDP policies relating to transport, in seeking to guide development into the most sustainable locations, enhance provision of walking and cycling routes and ensuring that proposals are accessible, promote sustainable travel patterns and minimise the congestion and pollution caused by vehicles.

2.5.12. Knowsley's central transport strategy is set out within the **Merseyside Local Transport Plan 2011 – 2024**[23], produced on behalf of the Merseyside districts by Merseytravel, the local Passenger Transport Executive. The strategy seeks to ensure that the travel and transport infrastructure in Merseyside supports the delivery of priorities held by the local authorities and their strategic partnerships. This includes ensuring that sustainable travel opportunities are available for residents and businesses, including to and from existing retail centres.

---

[20] Kirkby Town Centre – Capacity for New Retail Floorspace Report (Drivers Jonas, 2010)
[21] Knowsley Local Plan – Economic Viability Assessment (Keppie Massie, 2012)
[22] Ensuring a Choice of Travel Supplementary Planning Document (Knowsley MBC, 2010)
[23] Merseyside Local Transport Plan 3 (Merseytravel, 2011)

Population growth, economic growth and expansion of employment opportunities are considered within this strategy.

2.5.13. The Knowsley **Economic Regeneration Strategy**[24] sets out how the Council and its partners want the Borough to develop in the future for residents, businesses, investors and visitors, seeking to capitalise on opportunities for and tackling challenges to successful economic development. This includes a local retail and hospitality offer that supports aspiration, quality and choice.

Available evidence: Summary

There is a wide range of evidence available to support and inform the content of this technical report. This includes:

- National Planning Policy Framework.
- National datasets around population, household growth.
- Regional level evidence connected with the previous Regional Spatial Strategy and its proposed replacement,
- Locally set policies, including the Sustainable Community Strategy, which directly or indirectly will influence localised approaches to retail,
- A range of national, sub-regional and local evidence and information, collected by the Council, partners and third parties, which will inform consideration of past trends and future forecasting.

[24] Knowsley Economic Regeneration Strategy (Regeneris Consulting Ltd, 2008)

3. Performance and Potential of Knowsley's Centres

3.1 Issues and Evidence

3.1.1. The key issues to be addressed through the Core Strategy include:

- Whether Knowsley's town centres (Huyton, Kirkby and Prescot) should perform a greater role than they do at present as locations for shopping, leisure and other town centre uses?
- Whether there is a case for changes to the hierarchy of town and district centres in Knowsley? and;
- How large each centre should become and what range of uses should be provided in each centre?

3.1.2. To satisfy the above objectives the initial requirement is to assess the health of Knowsley's centres in terms of viability and vitality. This is important to ensure an understanding of how much is spent on shopping in each centre. The Council therefore commissioned the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study[25] which was carried out in two stages.

3.1.3. Stage 1 of the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study (Volumes 1 - 3), included a health check of each centre. The paragraphs below summarise the overall findings of the study in relation to how effectively the three main town centres (Huyton, Kirkby and Prescot) and other smaller district and local centres are performing in terms of expenditure retention, (i.e. the degree to which residents are using these centres as opposed to other centres outside Knowsley).

3.1.4. The study area covered all of Knowsley and extended a little over the border into neighbouring districts. In overall terms the study found that Knowsley's main town centres (with particularly emphasis upon Kirkby) are not competing effectively with other centres outside of the Borough. The study found that there is significant "leakage" of expenditure to other areas outside of Knowsley. In terms of comparison goods spending, (i.e. the provision of items not obtained on a frequent basis such as clothes and household goods), the study found that only 8.5% of residents' expenditure is retained by Knowsley's three existing town centres. Over 90% of expenditure on comparison goods was spent in other centres, primarily Liverpool. In terms of convenience goods shopping, (i.e. the provision of everyday essential items such as food and drinks), only 56.7% was spent in stores in the study area, (i.e. over 40% "leaked" to stores elsewhere).

3.1.5. One of the key challenges identified for the Local Plan is therefore to consider the degree to which this significant "leakage" of expenditure to centres outside of Borough should be reduced, as part of the overall

---

[25] Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study: Volumes 1 – 5 (Roger Tym & Partners, 2009 and 2010)

aim of improving the vitality and viability of Knowsley's centres. In this regard, it is necessary to consider the extent to which town centres within Knowsley could be expanded and / or improved in order to attract and retain the expenditure of its catchment residents.

3.1.6. Stage 2 of the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study (Volumes 4 & 5) utilised the health check information from Stage 1, and provided an analysis of the future need for retail and other town centre uses over the lifetime of the Core Strategy. It is based upon the latest projections of population change and retail expenditure per head, taking account of the initial period of the economic recession from 2008 to early 2010.

3.1.7. The localised information in Stages 1 and 2 of the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study assists the identification of a network and hierarchy of centres in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework.

3.2 Establishing a Hierarchy of Retail Centres and Identifying Prospects for Growth

3.2.1. In defining a hierarchy of centres that is resilient to anticipated future economic changes, it is important to consider the appropriateness of Knowsley's current retail hierarchy. This is identified within the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan (Adopted June 2006) and is reproduced in Figure 3.1 below:

Figure 3.1: Knowsley's Existing Hierarchy of Retail Centres

3.2.2. The approach taken forward in the Local Plan is to retain the same structure of the existing retail hierarchy within Knowsley, which remains compliant with the *'town centres first'* sequential approach of the National Planning Policy Framework toward new development. However minor modifications are necessary to the categorisation of each tier of the hierarchy noting that the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study identified clear distinctions between existing town centres, district centres and local centres in terms of their scale, function and catchment areas where localised needs are served.

3.3 Defining the Retail Hierarchy

3.3.1. In the interest of clarity and in order to identify current and future local centres it is important to define some indicative criteria for each tier. The three tiers of centre are categorised broadly on the basis of current size, number of existing units, retail performance and capacity / opportunity to maintain or enhance their position relative to catchment size as supported. These criteria are detailed below;

- Town Centres
    - a main centre within Knowsley offering in excess of 50 occupied retail units and / or service sector operators offering a range of non-retail services such as banks, building societies and restaurants and local public facilities such as a library, together with;
    - a minimum of 10 convenience units with at least one being a supermarket or superstore.
- District Centres
    - between 20 - 50 occupied retail units, including a minimum of 10 local service operators offering non-retail services, such as banks, building societies and restaurants, as well as local public facilities such as a library, together with;
    - around five convenience units, at least one of which being a supermarket or superstore.
- Local Centres
    - major local centre; minimum of 12 occupied units, with at least 6 local service operators and 2 convenience stores.
    - medium local centres; minimum of 8 occupied units, with at least 4 local service operators and 1 convenience store.

3.3.2. Knowsley's town centres are intended to be accessible larger suburban centres which provide a range of key services such as retail, leisure, community, civic, health and education facilities and financial and professional services.

3.3.3. The district centres within Knowsley provide a range and choice of local service operators including food or convenience store (suitable for top-up shopping), bank, post office, newsagent, off licence, takeaway, café or restaurant, public house, bookmakers, launderette, hairdressers or chemist.

3.3.4. Knowsley's local centres are considered to provide services to meet local needs, by offering a more limited range of convenience provision and local service operators.

3.3.5. Other smaller centres which fail to meet the criteria set out within the hierarchy of higher order centres as set out above, but remain locally important for local service provision will be considered to be minor parades.

3.3.6. The categories are indicative due to the variation in character and local circumstances. Nevertheless the criteria provide some distinction between centres based upon differing scale and retail / service offer for policy purposes.

3.3.7. The full categorisation of Knowsley's town, district and local centres based on the above is included at Appendix A.

3.4 Knowsley's Town Centres and Prospects for Future Growth

3.4.1. The spatial distribution of Knowsley's settlements ensures that no single centre can attain a dominant position to adequately serve the spatial distribution of localised comparison retail needs. Nevertheless, applying the sequential approach of the National Planning Policy Framework requires town centres to be the first priority for strategic retail and leisure development within Knowsley.

3.4.2. The Local Plan approach (within Policy CS6) does not elevate the status and scale of Knowsley's town centres beyond a function primarily serving localised needs and catchment areas. However a varied distribution of new development between the centres is proposed to reflect the varying deficiencies and regeneration opportunities of differing scale and improvements to existing design and layouts.

3.4.3. The Local Plan proposes that Knowsley's three existing town centres (Huyton, Kirkby and Prescot) should retain equal status in the future. However the expenditure leakage of Knowsley's highest order centres emphasises a need for each centre to perform a greater role as locations for shopping, leisure and other town centre uses in the future. This will ensure that the town centres retain their present function in providing a complementary relationship with larger neighbouring centres in the Liverpool City Region (i.e. Liverpool and St. Helens). This conclusion is supported by the low baseline position of the current expenditure retention rate across the three centres in their primary catchment areas, as displayed in Table 3.1 below;

Table 3.1: Town Centre Retention Rates for Convenience and Comparison Expenditure

Town Centre	Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study Catchment Zones	Convenience Expenditure Retention (%)	Comparison Expenditure Retention (%)
Huyton	8, 9 & 10	56%	8%
Kirkby	1 & 2	46%	14%
Prescot (inc. Cables Retail Park)	3 & 4	49%	20%

Data source: Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study Volume 5 (RTP, 2010)
Catchment Zone Maps are available to view within the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study Volume 2 (RTP, 2009)

3.4.4. It is evident from Table 3.1 above, that each of Knowsley's town centres are underperforming in terms of both convenience and comparison expenditure retention. Nevertheless the percentage rates of expenditure should be considered in terms of their localised context, before outliers are emphasised. For example, the expenditure rate in western zones of Huyton is likely to suffer from greater proportions of leakage of comparison expenditure to Liverpool City Centre than other areas of Knowsley, due to factors such as;

- a greater willingness to travel for comparison goods as opposed to convenience goods;
- an enhanced range and choice of comparison retail goods in Liverpool and nearby out of centre destinations such as Edge Lane Retail Park and New Mersey Retail Park;
- the closer proximity of Huyton and its hinterland to Liverpool than Knowsley's other settlements surrounding town centres (in the majority of cases around half the distance);
- enhanced accessibility by public transport;
- a contiguous urban area, with at least 50% of residents in both Zones 9 and 10 being residents of Liverpool with no association to Huyton or Knowsley as a place or a comparison retail destination.

3.4.5. The above factors emphasise the positive performance of the foodstore provision in Huyton which draws the highest proportion of trade from Zones 8 - 10 in cumulative despite the constraints. However to address the anomaly for comparison retail expenditure retention in Huyton, it is reasonable to alternatively consider the percentage rate for Zone 8 alone. This is similar to Kirkby and Prescot primary catchments in so far as Zone 8 comprises Knowsley residents only. In this regard, the expenditure retention for comparison retail is more comparable to Kirkby and Prescot at 14%, despite remaining increasingly vulnerable to competition from Liverpool City Centre and the out of centre Edge Lane Retail Park and New Mersey Retail Park.

3.4.6. The comparison expenditure retention rate in Huyton based upon Zone 8 alone is broadly equivalent to Kirkby. However notwithstanding the equal status of the three town centres, it would be unreasonable to distribute additional floorspace equally on this basis alone. This is noting that the comparative potential for improvement in Huyton relative to Kirkby is limited due to the aforementioned constraints in terms of local circumstances and increased competition. This means that notwithstanding Huyton having the largest population of Knowsley settlements, it remains dependent upon higher order centres to meet its retail needs for comparison goods. In this regard, it is considered unlikely that Huyton could significantly improve its performance without investment of a scale which would elevate its status in the regional hierarchy, retail offer and profile. This appears an unrealistic aspiration noting impact considerations relating to higher order neighbouring centres, together with constraints relating to land availability and levels of developer interest. The latter is due to recent investment in the Asda Wal-Mart in 2004 and the redevelopment of the former Asda site, now known as Cavendish Walk, completed in 2006 which have already resulted in significant improvements in Huyton's retail performance. In addition, the relationship between the catchment areas of Huyton and Prescot, although distinct at the respective scales of retail floorspace currently existing, could be compromised if either centre were to expand rapidly with significant impact upon the resultant smaller centre. It is therefore considered that both of these centres should be aiming to improve their retail performance at a comparable rate. This would ensure that distinct catchments are maintained with the centres focused upon meeting localised needs, as opposed to promoting competition which could negatively impact upon the viability and vitality of either centre.

3.4.7. With regard to Prescot specifically, the consideration of the cumulative performance of both the existing Town Centre and Cables Retail Park in Table 3.1, suggests that it has the highest current expenditure retention for comparison goods. In this regard, the presence of a major foodstore in Cables Retail Park also ensures that there is no gap in convenience provision. This suggests that there is an alternative approach to the recommendations of the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study which emphasised the under-performance of Prescot Town Centre in isolation. In this respect, the Council considers that retail need identification based upon Prescot Town Centre competing as a standalone destination with Cables Retail Park (as per the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study), is neither realistic nor appropriate. The Local Plan approach is more reflective of the current performance of retail provision in Prescot as a whole, by seeking to spread the commercial success of Cables Retail Park towards Prescot Town Centre through improving linkages between the two areas. This is the optimal approach in view of the existing character of Prescot Town Centre which includes heritage designations (Conservation Areas and Listed Buildings). The presence of historical designations limits the potential to remodel existing units and layouts, thereby ensuring few opportunities for the provision of larger modern units within the existing Prescot Town Centre boundary whilst respecting its original character. Any new floorspace should therefore be focused upon enhancing the range of the town centre offer, uses and service. This will ensure a distinct identity and a focus on retail sectors which enhance the character and attractiveness of Prescot Town Centre, whilst complementing other retail uses that can only be accommodated in the larger scale units located within Cables Retail Park.

3.4.8. In contrast to Huyton and Prescot, the settlement of Kirkby is much more self contained that the other urban areas of Knowsley, due to distance from neighbouring retail centres and physical barriers to movement provided by highway infrastructure and urban design. This suggests that Kirkby Town Centre has the potential to retain a significant proportion of expenditure from its local catchment provided that it has a suitable range and choice of retail goods, together with an attractive retail environment suitable to local needs. However the performance of Kirkby Town Centre and the evidence in the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study suggesting a steady decline over the last decade indicates that investment in a critical mass of development is necessary in order to engender confidence amongst investors and potential new operators. At present, major deficiencies exist within Kirkby town centre; relating to the absence of a major food superstore, the very limited food and drink offer, the lack of commercial leisure facilities, the predominance of discount/lower end comparison retailers and the inadequate public realm. Addressing these deficiencies and developing the evening economy in Kirkby are vital to halting the steady decline. The outline planning permission[26] for a comprehensive phased re-development of Kirkby Town Centre, including a new supermarket and expansion to the south of Cherryfield Drive, granted in 2011, is considered to address the majority of deficiencies identified.

3.4.9. Knowsley's town centres based upon their scale and function are considered to be third tier in the regional hierarchy when considering both current retail floorspace and also including existing commitments. Table 3.2 provides a comparison of the scale of Knowsley's centres relative to neighbouring and regional centres for context, indicating that there is a hierarchy of centres within the sub-region (and those immediately surrounding) whereby different centres can clearly be categorised in terms of scale and function based upon overall levels of floorspace. The northern area of the Liverpool City Region contains the primary centre of Liverpool, followed by the secondary centres of St. Helens and Southport which have around 50% less total retail floorspace. The third tier centres in the northern area of the sub-region are the largest of those remaining such as Widnes, Bootle and Skelmersdale, with a range of between 35% - 75% less total retail floorspace than the secondary centres. All three of Knowsley's town

26 Planning Reference: 10/00505/OUT

centres are considered to fall within the third tier, both relative to current retail floorspace and in the case of Kirkby, also post existing commitments.

Table 3.2: Sub-Regional Hierarchy of Centres

Retail Tier	Centre	Total Current Retail Floorspace	Total Retail Floorspace inclusive of Major Schemes[27]
First	Liverpool	242,477	245,977[28]
Second	Warrington	104,160	104,160
Second	Southport[29]	106,930	106,930
Second	St Helens	80,770[30]	101,290[31]
Second	Wigan	100,180	100,180
Third	Widnes[32]	64 204	64 204
Third	Kirkby	21,220	52,376[33]
Third	Prescot[34]	33,768	33,768
Third	Bootle[35]	33,130	33,130
Third	Skelmersdale	20,650[36]	29,650[37]
Third	Huyton	24,690	24,690

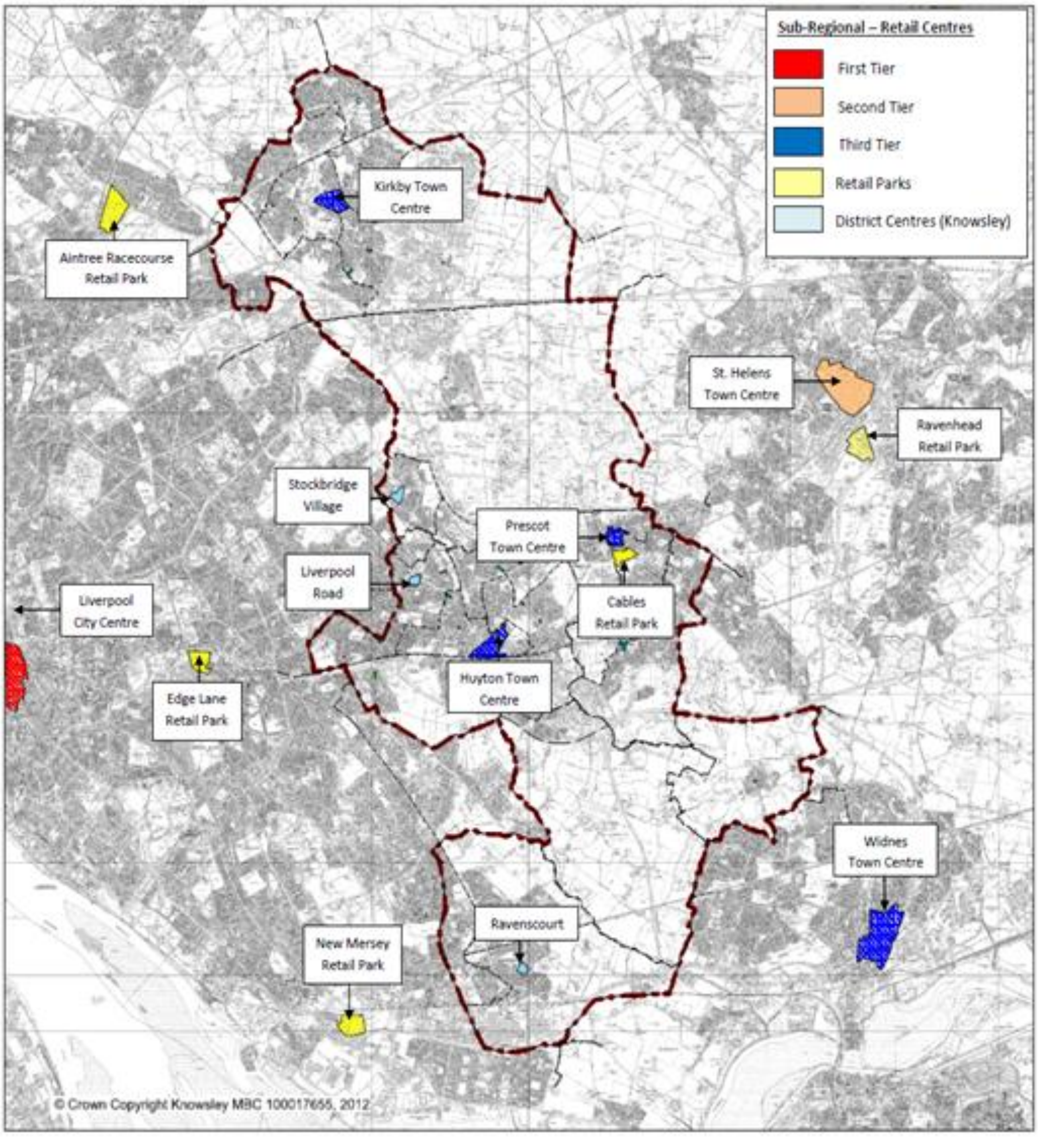
Source: Roger Tym & Partners – Adaptation from Retail Statement of Common Ground for Destination Kirkby, Table 8, Application Proposal Details and RSS W5 – Figures updated from referenced sources by Knowsley Council, 2013

3.4.11. When the existing committed development providing a new supermarket and town centre expansion is completed, Kirkby would become the largest centre in Knowsley. However as demonstrated in Table 3.2 it would remain a third tier centre in the sub-region and therefore would not attain a scale of retail floorspace that would put at risk the spatial strategy for either Prescot or Huyton in meeting their own needs. This is noting that the spatial distribution of the town centres in Knowsley and the distance between Kirkby and both Huyton and Prescot ensure that the polycentric needs are served at a localised level rather than promoting internal competition as retail destinations. In this regard, consumer preferences are always likely to dictate that expenditure leakage in Prescot and Huyton is much more likely to follow traditional competition towards higher order centres such as St. Helens and Liverpool respectively.

27 Following Commitments and Major Proposals (sq.m gross)
28 Includes St. Johns Centre refurbishment.
29 Figure derived from Sefton - Bootle and Southport Heath Checks (2012)
30 Figure derived from St.Helens Retail and Town Centre Use Study (Jan 2012)
31 As per Footnote 36, with additional Chalon Way commitment.
32 Figure derived from Halton Retail & Leisure Study (Jul 09)
33 Figure for Kirkby, includes the current commitment for town centre development / expansion
34 Figure for Prescot, includes Cables Retail Park.
35 Figure derived from Sefton - Bootle and Southport Heath Checks (2012)
36 Figure derived from West Lancashire Retail Study (Jan 2012)
37 Addition based upon the West Lancashire Local Plan – Publication (2012)

3.4.10. With regard to the sub-regional hierarchy of centres, Figure 3.2 displays the spatial distribution of Knowsley's town and district centres together with the larger sub-regional centres nearby.

Figure 3.2: Sub-Regional Retail Centres



3.5 Knowsley's District Centres and Prospects for Growth

3.5.1. The existing district centres of Halewood (Ravenscourt), Stockbridge Village and Liverpool Road (Page Moss) are the secondary tier of Knowsley's retail provision, primarily focused upon local convenience offer, services and small scale comparison goods. These centres provide an important focal point to meet local needs in Knowsley's individual settlements such as Halewood, and the large community areas such as North Huyton and Stockbridge Village.

3.5.2. The Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study identified significant deficiencies relating to the ability of Halewood (Ravenscourt) and

Stockbridge Village to meet the needs of local residents. However in the interim period, both of these district centres have been subject to significant investment resulting in the delivery of a new supermarket in each, together with some additional comparison retail and additional services. In addition, Liverpool Road (Page Moss) is also subject to some commitments relating to small scale remodelling which will improve the range of retail goods and services available.

3.5.3. The Local Plan approach (within Policy CS6) of maintaining the status of the existing district centres provides the appropriate focus and distribution for new development and delivery of anticipated regeneration to support long term viability and vitality relative to their scale and function. However it is considered that the district centres have no realistic opportunity or need to enhance their status to be classified as town centres. This is noting that Halewood and Stockbridge Village have recently completed developments which address their established under-performance and maintain their status as district centres in the long term, whilst securing appropriate provision to serve their local catchments. Nevertheless in terms of future growth, both Halewood and Stockbridge Village have limited prospects given a combination of constraints to land availability and scale of the catchment area supporting the centre. In addition, the Liverpool Road (Page Moss) district centre remains constrained by its proximity to Huyton town centre and the resultant role of providing supplementary service provision to localised catchments and complementing the broader retail offer of the larger centre nearby.

3.6 Knowsley's Local Centres and Prospects for Growth

3.6.1. Knowsley's local centres and minor parades provide communities with a range of provision and services which serve local needs. As there is significant variation in scale and retail offer it was considered appropriate to sub-categorise the centres into major local, medium local and minor parades. This is noting the differing role and function of the range of centres, for example, major centres such as Greenes Road in Whiston and Pilch Lane in Huyton provide a significant range and choice of retail and services, in contrast to minor parades offering a limited number of units and local service operators.

3.6.2. When considering the criteria for categorisation of the hierarchy of centres, Knowsley has 6 major local centres, 18 medium local centres and a further 17 minor parades. The full categorisation is available to view at Appendix A.

3.6.3. The categorisation of each centre is on the basis of its current performance in attaining the thresholds or alternatively the realistic prospects for growth or occupation of vacant units which would allow the centre to achieve it in the future. These judgements were largely informed by the performance and prospects identified in the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study together with subsequent local audits. In general, there is no potential based upon land availability and / or catchment area which would allow growth of a single centre to attain district centre status. This is noting that prospects for growth, investment and increases in retail floorspace are proportionately low and development opportunities remain small scale, such as the recent remodelling through conversion of a public house to a Tesco Express at Greenes Road, Whiston. In contrast, the majority of smaller centres with high vacancy levels appear more suitable for consolidation in circumstances where existing scale and numbers of units appear increasingly unsuitable to meet local needs and / or remain unviable.

3.6.4. In view of the nature of potential growth, investment and interventions in local centres (and minor parades) remaining small scale and site specific, it is intended that the Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Policies will provide detailed policy guidance. This is noting that potential investments and interventions are likely to be locally specific and further evidence collation will be required to identify precise boundaries for each centre.

3.7 Sequential Approach to Site Selection - Preferred Location for Main Town Centre Uses

3.7.1. The sequential approach to site selection for main town centre uses is detailed in Policy CS4 of the Local Plan, with emphasis upon a *'town centres first'* approach drawing upon the hierarchy of retail centres in Policy CS6 (and Appendix A). The sequential test for developments located outside of town centres is a key retail policy consideration within the National Planning Policy Framework, with non-compliance a clear reason for refusal.

3.7.2. Out of centre locations are only likely to be appropriate in policy terms if town centre or edge of centre sites are not available, and provided that they are well served by alternative means of transport, and are acceptable in all other respects including impact. If development is sought for main town centre uses in an edge of centre or out of centre location, it will be important that a thorough assessment is undertaken to explore all reasonable alternative options. If more central opportunities are rejected as part of the proposal, it should be for sound reasons which are clearly explained and justified.

3.7.3. The Council's strategic focus is to prioritise retail investment in town centre locations and to facilitate regeneration. As a consequence, the Council will seek to refuse applications involving town centre uses on the basis of the sequential approach, where it considers that there is, or may be, a reasonable prospect of a sequentially preferable opportunity coming forward which is likely to be capable of meeting the same requirements as the application is intended to meet. In this regard, the principle focus of sequential consideration will be the extent that alternative options have reasonably been discounted on the basis of suitability, availability and viability. With this is mind, due consideration will be given to the sequential test in the context of the following;

- The scale and form of development needed.
- Whether the development is 'location specific' or even 'site specific', or more generalised.
- How the site / proposal in question should be defined in terms of 'in centre', 'edge of centre' or 'out of centre'.
- Whether all more central opportunities been considered / identified.
- Whether all more central opportunities have been thoroughly tested, having regard to their suitability, viability and availability, together with the identified need / demand and the timescale over which it arises.
- Whether the assessment adopted a sufficiently flexible approach in terms of format and scale.
- The potential to overcome any obstacles to the availability of more central sites.

3.7.4. To assist the above, the Local Plan approach provides sufficient focus in terms of convenience and comparison floorspace need during the plan period, and through the hierarchy of centres to direct investment towards strategic priorities. In this regard, it is clear that there is sufficient suitable, available and viable supply of sites for investment during the plan period in all of Knowsley's town centres and related to regeneration priorities to avoid significant development in out of centre locations.

3.7.5. The Council's intention is to update and identify the detailed town centre boundaries and define the location of primary shopping areas, together with primary and secondary frontages (as appropriate) in the Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Policies. These will be supplemented by policy approaches which will assist the sequential approach and provide an appropriate focus to improve the viability and vitality of Knowsley's centres. However in the interim period it is important to indicate the broad locations of potential town and district centre boundaries, together with primary shopping areas on the basis of existing and proposed uses, and pedestrian flows.

3.8 Retail Centre Boundaries and Primary Shopping Areas, Primary and Secondary Frontages

<u>Retail Centre Boundaries</u>

3.8.1. The existing town centre and district centre boundaries are currently identified by allocations on the Proposals Map of the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan 2006 (UDP). The Proposals Map will not be fully superseded until the adoption of the Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Policies, therefore it is important to identify where the potential variations are likely to occur via the strategic approach of the Core Strategy.

3.8.2. With regard to the above, the boundaries of the following centres are anticipated to be largely unchanged from those identified on the Proposals Map:

- Huyton Town Centre
- Halewood (Ravenscourt) District Centre
- Liverpool Road (Page Moss) District Centre
- Stockbridge Village District Centre

3.8.3. The absence of changes to the above is due to the presence of sufficient in-centre capacity through remodelling or land availability to accommodate the scale of required development or recent investment.

3.8.4. Significant changes to town centre boundaries are anticipated to occur in the following locations:

- Kirkby Town Centre
- Prescot Town Centre

3.8.5. The alterations to the Kirkby Town Centre boundary comprise an expansion encompassing land to the south of Cherryfield Drive in accordance with the existing planning permission to ensure sufficient capacity for growth.

3.8.6. The amendment to the Prescot Town Centre boundary is likely to comprise a town centre boundary expansion encompassing the land and premises fronting Sewell Street to create an adjoining link to Cables Retail Park. This is necessary due to the need to improve the retail function through linked trips with Cables Retail Park and the limited capacity for new development and remodelling within the existing town centre.

<u>Primary Shopping Areas and Primary / Secondary Shopping Frontages</u>

3.8.7. Primary shopping areas are locations where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).

3.8.8. The primary shopping areas in Knowsley’s town centres are not specifically identified on the Council’s UDP Proposals Map, however the following broad locations were identified in the supporting text of UDP Policies S3, S4 and S5 respectively:

- Derby Road and Asda Store, Lathom Road, Huyton
- St. Chad’s Parade, Kirkby
- Eccleston Street, Prescot

3.8.9. UDP policy S3 is no longer saved, and UDP policies S4 and S5 will be replaced as part of the Local Plan Core Strategy. In this regard, these broad locations remain relevant in terms of the existing focal point of each centre, aside from minor modifications as follows;

- Huyton – addition of Cavendish Walk to reflect the development of a link between Derby Road and the Asda Store on Lathom Road
- Kirkby – inclusion of retail area to the south of Cherryfield Drive following the implementation of the existing commitment.
- Prescot – reference to immediate surroundings to reflect the inclusion of the Prescot Centre which adjoins Eccleston Street

3.8.10. Primary shopping frontages are likely to include a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. Secondary frontages provide greater opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses.

3.8.11. With regard to the above, it should be noted that primary and secondary shopping frontages were not identified in the UDP or on the associated Proposals Map. The detailed locations of primary and secondary shopping frontages will therefore be identified in the Local Plan: Site Allocations and Development Policies as appropriate. This will supplement policy approaches developed at that stage for primary shopping areas and primary / secondary shopping frontages to provide additional spatial focus for the location of different types of main town centre uses.

3.9 Impact Assessments

3.9.1. The Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study provides evidence of the underperformance and potential vulnerability of Knowsley's centres to competition from the development of main town centre uses in out of centre locations. However there is no suggestion that these circumstances are sufficiently unique to Knowsley to justify a reduced threshold for the submission of impact assessments based upon local circumstances.

3.9.2. In view of the above, the Local Plan approach seeks to remain consistent with the national threshold identified in the National Planning Policy Framework, as there are no local circumstances or evidence which justify a different threshold. An impact assessment will therefore be required if the development exceeds 2,500 sq.m to assess the effects of the scheme on the viability or vitality of any established town, district or local centres.

3.9.3. In assessing whether an impact is significant, it is recognised that new development involving town centre uses will lead to an impact on existing facilities, because as new development takes place in one town centre this will enhance its competitive position relative to other centres. This is a consequence of providing for efficient modern retailing and other key town centre uses, and promoting choice, competition and innovation. In this regard, the important consideration as per Paragraph 26 of the National Planning Policy Framework is whether the proposal would have:

- a significant adverse impact upon existing, committed and planned public and private investment in a centre or centres in the catchment area of the proposal; or,
- a significant adverse impact on town centre vitality and viability, including local consumer choice and trade in the town centre and wider area, up to five years from the time the application is made. For major schemes where the full impact will not be realised in five years, the impact can be assessed up to ten years from the time the application is made.

3.9.4. With regard to the above, the scale of development, type of floorspace proposed, degree of overlap between the proposed development and the role of nearby centres, proximity, and the state of the health of nearby centres are all key factors which have a bearing on the level of town centre impact. In this context, it is clear that the existing under-performance of Knowsley's town centres would indicate that they would be extremely vulnerable to out of centre competition. Furthermore it is important that the Council resist any development which would harm in-centre developments which address the Local Plan's regeneration priorities.

4. Population Demographics

4.1 Influence of Population Change and Demographics

4.1.1. A change in the size and structure of the local population has potential influence upon the available expenditure for each retail centre, together with the range and choice of local services which may be required. This can be influenced by the overall number of people in a locality and the representative change to the existing population: due to natural change attributable to birth and death rates, and also to migration levels.

4.1.2. A detailed analysis of population changes and demographics are included within the Planning for Housing Growth Technical Report. In this regard, key implications for planning for retail in Knowsley are as follows:

- The fall in the working age groups (i.e. 16 - 64) could have implications for the amount of available expenditure, given these age groups are the most economically active and therefore on average have proportionally large amounts of disposable income.
- The significant growth in the older sections of the population (i.e. 65+) will have implications for the provision of localised retail in the long term (e.g. the age group may be less likely to travel and therefore will need accessible local provision).

4.1.3. Notwithstanding the above, the general trends of growth focused upon an ageing population and a reduction in the number and proportion of economically active residents is unchanged since the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study was prepared. On this basis, the existing forecasts are considered to have utilised accurate demographic profile, notwithstanding a reduction in overall population projections as a result of the Census. It is therefore unnecessary to remodel or update the population and demographic profile in the projections, as any difference is unlikely to be significant at a catchment level, with any emphasis upon marginal change. This is noting the potential for overestimation of population totals and therefore available expenditure relative to Census data, which can be accounted for within the flexibility of the approach in Policy CS6.

5 Economic Trends and Forecasting Future Needs

5.1 Economic Trends

5.1.1. The growth in personal income and disposable consumer spending since the 1980s through to the late 2000s, together with population growth during the same period has influenced a long term trend of progressive growth of consumer retail expenditure. These levels are approaching around 3% per annum in real terms, with higher rates attributable to comparison goods spend (ranging from 4% - 6% growth per annum) as opposed to convenience goods spend (ranging from 0.5% - 2% growth per annum)[38]. These historic trends extend beyond a single economic cycle and are therefore reasonably indicative of the long term trends of expenditure growth in the future. However for forecasting purposes the conditions and duration of the current economic cycle cannot be assumed to replicate those in the past, nor can it be assumed that increased levels of expenditure will translate to an equivalent need for additional floorspace as previously experienced.

5.1.2. Economic trends since 2008 emphasise the challenging nature of forecasting floorspace requirements over a fifteen year period based upon historic expenditure growth trends. This is noting that the effects of the economic downturn have reduced growth between 2008 - 2011 to levels which are less than 50% of the long term trends for both comparison and convenience retailing[39]. This has been complicated by the slow recovery from an initial severe recession, resulting in a short term relapse during 2012, which indicates that the timescale for a return to previous levels of growth in consumer expenditure remains unpredictable. In this regard, consumer demand remains suppressed by levels of unemployment and controls of wage inflation, which has a negative impact upon the short term prospects for investment in improvements to the viability and vitality of retail centres. A related impact in this regard has been short term increases in vacancy rates at a local and national level, which has coincided with the financial struggles of a number of high street chain stores. Companies affected in the last four years have included; Clinton Cards, Game, Borders, Barratts, T J Hughes, Jane Norman, Focus DIY, Ethel Austin, Adams Childrenswear, Principles, Allied Carpets, Woolworths, MFI, and Zavvi / Virgin Megastore, many of which have previously occupied units in Knowsley or were potential target retailers for future developments.

5.1.3. In the context of the above, it is clear that previous levels of expenditure growth supported a changing structure of retailing. This was primarily due to greater mobility and car ownership, which facilitated competition for investment in attractive locations and store formats to satisfy the increased willingness of consumers to travel for preferences in a range and choice of goods and services. In contrast,

38 Data Source: ONS Consumer Trends (2012) and Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 7.1 (August, 2009)

39 Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 9 (September 2011)

there is evidence that future expenditure growth may be distributed and focused more widely than upon high street retailing as in the past, due to increases in consumer spending in Special Forms of Trading (SFT), for example, internet shopping. As a consequence of this ongoing restructuring of the retail sector, it can reasonably be concluded that even if levels of growth in consumer expenditure are equivalent to those previously experienced, an equivalent demand for additional floorspace for retailing is unlikely to result.

5.2 Influence of Economic Trends upon Plan Period Forecasting for Floorspace Requirements

5.2.1. To address the unpredictable nature of economic forecasting and the influence of trends relating to SFT, the quantitative needs assessment for 2009 - 2026 undertaken in the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study was informed by a variety of sources. These included sources with expertise in demographics and consumer economic data such as Experian, Pitney Bowes Business Insight (PBBI), Oxford Econometrics, ONS sub-national projections and resident surveys. This enabled appropriate catchment areas for Knowsley's retail centres and a baseline of existing expenditure rates to be identified, together with an informed growth rate to be applied within the range of differing forecasts. This reduced the possibility of relying upon an outlying projection from a single source, thereby making the projections more robust. Nevertheless longer term projections remain indicative due to the exponential effect of differences between projected growth and actual growth, together with the need for the Local Plan to conform to the principles of 'plan, monitor and review'.

5.2.2. In the context of the above, the Council accepts the recommendations of the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study in terms of the aspirational need to plan towards a significantly increased retention scenario of 15% for convenience and comparison floorspace at a Borough-wide level, with a moderately increased retention scenario of 10% reflecting a baseline requirement to achieve improvements to viability and vitality of Knowsley's centres. This approach accords with the National Planning Policy Framework and ensures that Knowsley's needs over the plan period are met as a minimum at the lower level, with aspirations for growth reflected at the upper capacity. However it is evident from the evidence provided that the distribution of the resultant floorspace capacity should be distributed based upon need, regeneration potential and development opportunities, as opposed to an equal proportion to each centre.

5.2.3. There is also a requirement to assess whether it is appropriate for expenditure expectations and associated indicative capacity for retail floorspace in the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study to be projected forward for an additional two years to 2028. In this regard, it is necessary to compare the implications of updated expenditure growth forecasts[40]. These forecasts of retail expenditure per head are not just trend-based but take account of economic cycles in the UK economy. In this regard, the comparative average annual forecast growth rates for both convenience and comparison retail based upon Experian's central case are included in Figures 5.1 and 5.2, with the associated spreadsheets, including associated adjustments to sales density rates, available at Appendix B.

Figure 5.1

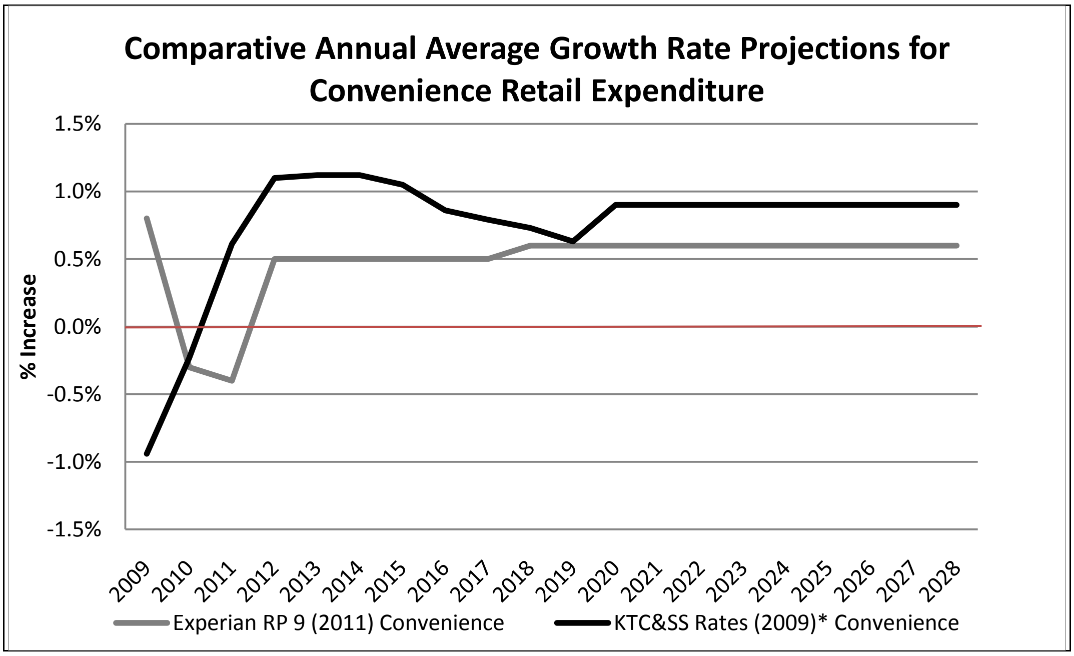
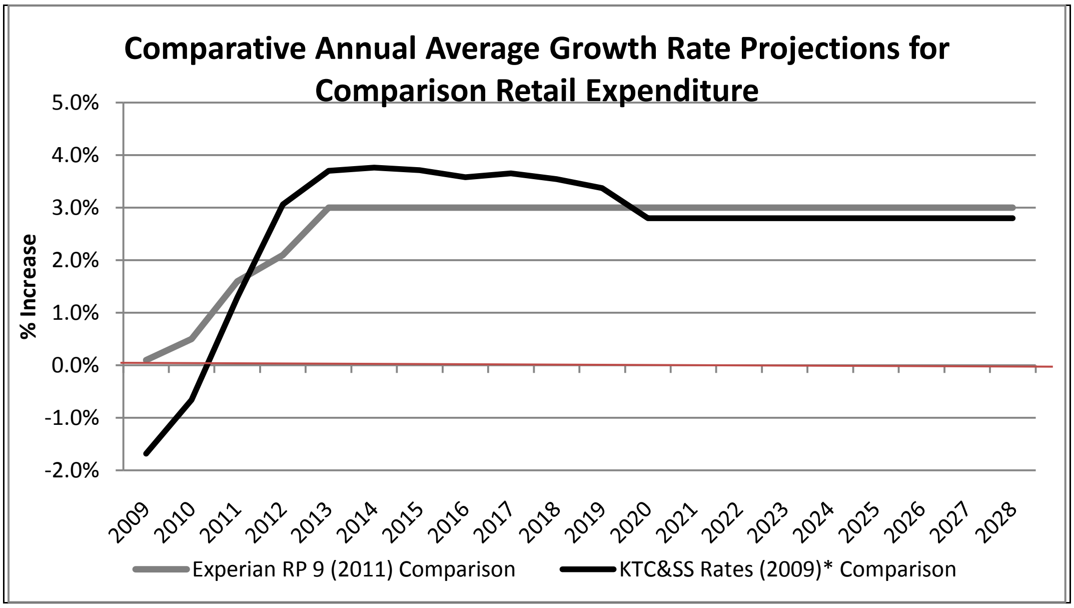


Figure 5.2



40 Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 9 (September 2011)

5.2.4. Figures 5.1 and 5.2 indicate that the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study projected growth rates for both convenience and comparison retail expenditure exceed the revised projections published by Experian in 2011. This suggests that there is a range of potential overestimation, particularly between 2011 - 2019, which cannot be immediately discounted due to the worsening economic conditions and slower recovery than anticipated since the 2009 data which informed the preparation of the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study.

5.2.5. The implication of a differing range of growth rates between 2011 forecasts and 2009 forecasts is that projections within the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study can be considered optimistic in terms of growth prospects. Whilst the potential for the growth rates within the 2009 forecasts being realised cannot be discounted, it is evident that such an outcome is less likely when considering more up-to-date evidence. According to Experian's market outlook[41], optimistic levels of growth equivalent to the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study 2009 long term forecast rates of up to average 2.5% growth of retail spending per head per annum have a probability of around 15%. This is primarily due to a dependency upon the influence of improvements in global trade, associated maintenance of UK market share, uplifts of service sector growth to the level of historic trends for 1997 - 2005 and positive change in Government finances fuelling growth. On the basis of this low level of probability, it would not be appropriate to project forward the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study forecast rates for a further two years and calculate additional floorspace requirements accordingly, without first comparing the potential implications of the most likely scenario from the 2011 forecasts in terms of available expenditure.

5.2.6. Experian's central scenario for long term trends of an average of 2% retail spending per head per annum for the period of 2014 - 2028, which is attributed 65% probability, provides the approximate midpoint between the optimistic scenario and two other alternative scenarios. It is therefore a realistic measure for comparison of the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study rates. The alternative scenarios comprise more pessimistic forecasts based upon the worst case of deflation (10% probability) based on long term prevalence of existing economic conditions without recovery with an average of 1.6% growth per annum between 2014 - 2028, and stagflation (10% probability) based upon a slower than anticipated recovery with an average of 1.7% growth per annum between 2014 - 2028.

5.2.7. The key difference between the 2009 and 2011 forecasts is that in all but the most optimistic scenario it is now clear that growth in retail spending will be much slower than anticipated in the short term up to 2013. In this regard, Experian's central scenario identifies that the rate of recovery experienced in the period of 2009 - 2011 has been much

41 Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 9 (September 2011)

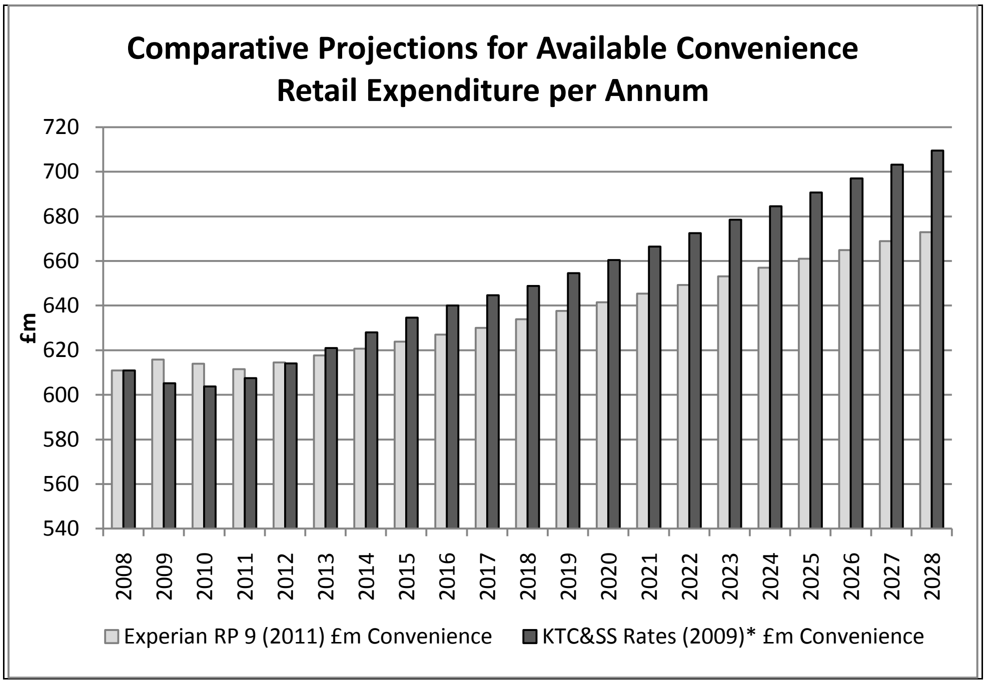
slower than originally forecast due to constraints on economic performance and therefore the 2009 data which relied upon assumptions based upon historic evidence of more optimistic recovery phases. The slow recovery also appears to have a resultant impact upon the medium term projections in the period of 2014 - 2018, with growth during this period remaining much weaker than initially forecast in 2009, for both convenience and comparison retail.

5.2.8. Longer term forecast trends for convenience retail remain below the 2009 forecasts for the period 2019 - 2028, although close to the lower range of long term trends at 0.6% increases per annum. In contrast, the outlook for comparison retail is slightly more optimistic than in 2009. Nevertheless according to Experian[42] comparators for the historic periods of 1970 - 2010, 1980 - 2010 and 1990 - 2010, the forecast annual growth rate of 2.9% per annum would remain around 50% of historic rates.

5.3 Comparison of Retail Expenditure Forecasts for Knowsley based upon Economic Trends

5.3.1. Figures 5.3 and 5.4 below (associated spreadsheets at Appendix C) display the comparison of applied rates from Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 9 (2011) and the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study for convenience and comparison retail respectively.

Figure 5.3:



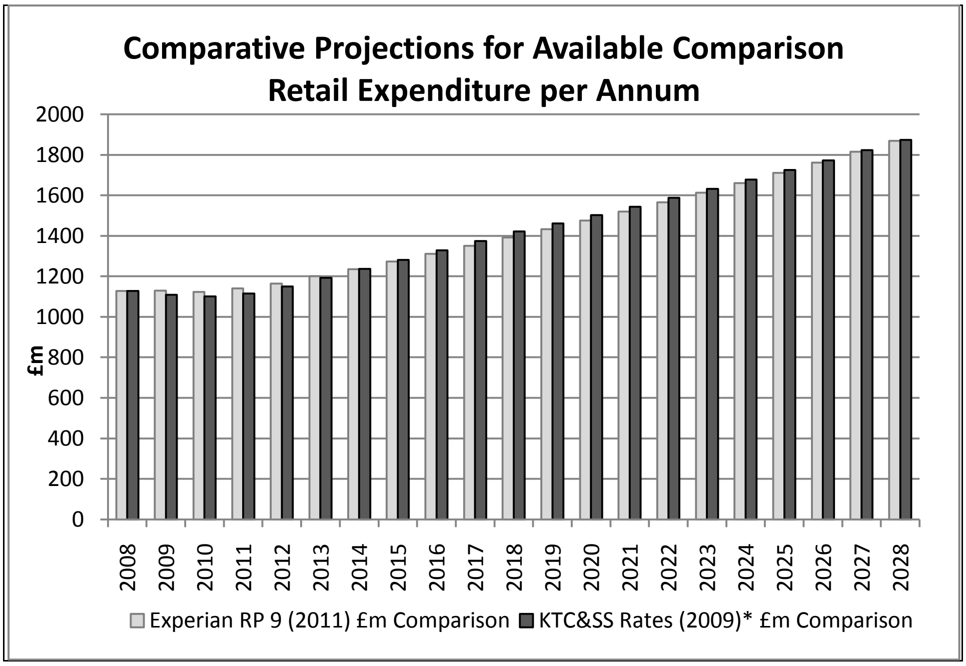
5.3.2. The comparative projections for available convenience retail expenditure suggests a potential range between the 2009 projections

[42] Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 9 (September 2011)

and 2011 Experian forecast data of up to £40m per annum (or 5.6% of the overall expenditure) by 2028 within the study area. When applying this scenario to the methodology of the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study for conversion to floorspace, this could result in a reduction of the upper capacity for additional floorspace (at 70% expenditure retention) of up to 4 461 sq.m gross by 2028 (see Appendix B). This scenario includes potential changes in proportions of SFT, but excludes completions since 2009 - additionally deducted from the Local Plan floorspace range, and existing commitments which are not deducted. This scale of potential variance justifies the Council's approach in not seeking to further uplift the indicative range of quantitative need for Knowsley for the additional two years associated to the plan period. This is noting that upper levels of floorspace to meet needs at a pro-rata annual rate equate to only circa 775 sq.m gross retail floorspace per annum and therefore are well within the range of potential variance relating to the upper capacity of floorspace need.

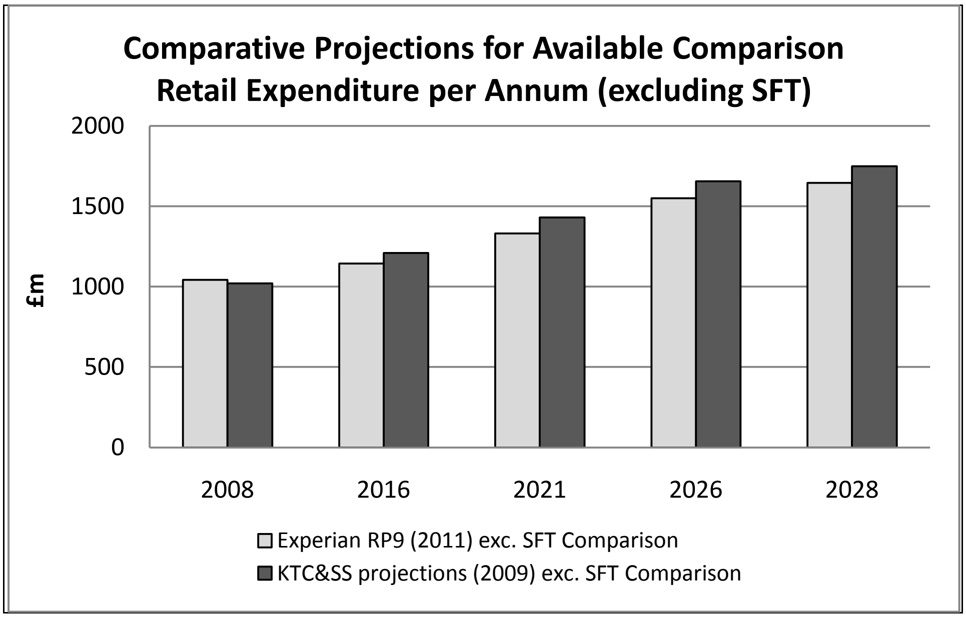
5.3.3. Furthermore the policy approach in the Local Plan (within CS6) relating to convenience retail is appropriate as it will address existing gaps in provision during the early part of the plan period, whilst ensuring flexibility for additional needs to be identified through the 'plan, monitor and review' process. This is particularly important in view of the exponential effect of differences between projected growth and actual growth, which creates a resultant difficulty in accurately forecasting potential need over a 15 year period.

Figure 5.4:



5.3.4. In contrast to the convenience retail comparison, the variation between projections for total available comparison retail expenditure between the 2009 projections and the 2011 Experian forecast data is relatively low at a range of only £4m above (or 0.2% of overall expenditure) by 2028 within the study area. However this trend relating to total comparison retail expenditure should be treated with caution, given that total available expenditure does not necessarily correlate with the actual expenditure likely to be available as capacity for additional floorspace. This is noting the significant differences between forecasts for proportions of SFT (i.e. non store trading), with the net expenditure figure excluding these values included in Figure 5.5 (associated spreadsheets available at Appendix B).

Figure 5.5:



5.3.5. Figure 5.5 identifies that available expenditure for the 2009 projections at 2026 exceeds the 2011 Experian forecast data at 2028. When applying the methodology of the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study relating to floorspace conversion, the difference in available expenditure could result in a reduction of the upper capacity for additional floorspace (at 32.2% expenditure retention) to 44 730 sq.m gross by 2028 (see Appendix C). This capacity figure is 21 470 sq.m lower than the projections in the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study.

5.3.6. The scale of potential variation between forecasts justifies the Council's Local Plan approach of not seeking to uplift the indicative range of quantitative need to account for an additional two years (2027 – 2028) not originally covered by Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study forecasts. Alternatively it is considered that a more robust approach to forecasting is to review and remodel the Local Plan upper floorspace capacity figure within the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study, based upon priorities and deliverability of in-centre development. This is noting a requirement to avoid over-estimation of need resulting from the exponential effect of differences between projected growth and actual growth, together with the difficulty in accurately forecasting potential need over a 15 year period. In this regard, it is considered that the indicative nature of the plan period target will enable sufficient flexibility for additional needs to be identified through the ‘plan, monitor and review’ process in the event that existing economic forecasts and delivery rates are out performed between 2016 and 2028.

5.3.7. The recommendations of the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study inform the Council approach in terms of distribution of both convenience and comparison retail floorspace. These approaches differ slightly, with the priorities for convenience retail relating to a gap analysis of existing food superstores, in contrast to comparison retail which is based around the findings of an evaluation matrix. As a consequence of these varied approaches, the separate retail sectors are considered individually below.

5.4 Distribution of Additional Convenience Retail Floorspace

5.4.1. With regard to convenience retail, the Council supports the approach of the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study. This recommended that the distribution of additional convenience retail floorspace be focused upon deficiencies in the provision of local convenience shopping and other services which serve people’s day to day needs.

5.4.2. Levels of expenditure retention in Knowsley for convenience retail (57%) are much higher than comparison retail (17%). Nevertheless although this retail sector is performing comparatively better, this must be considered in the context of residents being less likely to travel significant distances for convenience goods than for comparison goods. This trend emphasises the need to focus upon addressing local deficiencies where performance is weaker due to a lack of range, choice and quality of convenience goods being available.

5.4.3. The recommendations of the Knowsley Town Centre & Shopping study confirm that there is a requirement for additional floorspace based upon scenarios for expenditure retention in terms of both a 'moderate' increase to 65% by 2026 (8% rise) and 'significant' increase to 70% by 2026 (14% rise). This resulted in a recommended requirement of between 8,700 sq.m and 14,000 sq.m of additional convenience floorspace up to 2026. As previously explained, the Council’s approach is to not seek to further uplift the indicative range of quantitative need for Knowsley for the additional two years covered by the plan period. This is because updated economic forecasts suggest that there could be a potential overestimation relative to the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study forecasts in terms of the upper threshold.

5.4.4. The Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study identified the following areas of deficiency which were significantly below Knowsley’s average expenditure retention rates;

- Kirkby - 46% cumulative convenience expenditure retention in local catchment Zones 1 and 2 which cover Kirkby's community area.
- Halewood - 4% convenience expenditure retention in local catchment Zone 6 which covers Halewood's community area.
- Stockbridge Village - 18% convenience expenditure retention in local catchment Zone 10 which covers Stockbridge Village's community area.

5.4.5. The above statistics correlate with a gap analysis of areas that were outside of 6 minutes drive time of foodstore provision totalling 2 500 sq.m or more, also included within the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study . This work identified the catchment areas in Kirkby, Stockbridge Village and Halewood as the areas of Knowsley currently in deficit relative to convenience provision. As a consequence, the Local Plan focus within Policy CS6 is upon additional capacity in these areas.

5.4.6. In contrast to the more balanced situation for comparison retail floorspace provision during the Local Plan period, most of the need in the convenience sector under the increased retention scenarios arises in the early part up to 2016. This is due to unacceptably low levels of retention existing and in particular an uneven quality of local service provision.

5.4.7. Since the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study was published, planning permissions have been implemented in Halewood (Ravenscourt) comprising a new supermarket and retail units, and a new supermarket and mixed leisure proposal in Stockbridge Village. The scale of the additional convenience retail floorspace commitments in each centre are as follows;

- Halewood (Ravenscourt) - 1,600 sq.m
- Stockbridge Village - 720 sq.m

5.4.8. The above schemes are considered to address the identified deficiencies in Halewood and Stockbridge Village relative to convenience retail provision and remain consistent with the function and scale of retail associated with a district centre. In this regard, , each scheme is proportionate to the scale of a district centre and is therefore sufficient in terms of net additional floorspace to provide sufficient range and choice of convenience goods to address local needs. Following the completion of these developments it is considered that there is insufficient available land, infrastructure or local catchment to support significant additional capacity for new convenience floorspace during the plan period.

5.4.9. On the basis of the above, the scale of recent development is deducted from the overall need identified in the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study, with the resultant indicative distribution of convenience retail floorspace in the Local Plan is displayed in Table 5.1 below:

Table 5.1: Indicative Distribution of Convenience Floorspace

Location	Floorspace Range (gross internal)
Kirkby Town Centre	4,750 sq.m - 7,000 sq.m
Unallocated Reserve to Support Local Needs	1,430 sq.m - 5,380 sq.m
Total (2012 – 2028)	**6,180 sq.m - 12,380 sq.m**

5.4.10. The need for a primary focus upon delivering opportunities in Kirkby in the early stages of the plan period, removes the requirement for specific phasing. This is appropriate given that Kirkby has an existing permission for a convenience unit of between 4,750 sq.m and 7,000 sq.m expected to be implemented before 2016. Convenience retail within the latter part of the Local Plan period to 2028 is anticipated to be focused upon modernisation and replacement of existing facilities within the main centres rather than addressing a specific need for new facilities or a significant increase in convenience floorspace.

5.4.11. In addition, a lower proportion of convenience floorspace remains unallocated at an appropriate scale to enhance localised provision necessary to support housing growth and / or regeneration priorities. This includes the potential need for new and restructured centres of an appropriate scale to support large scale development at Knowsley Industrial Park, North Huyton and Tower Hill, together with provision to meet local needs in the Green Belt locations subject to release through the Local Plan. This should be informed by consideration of catchment area accessibility and the need for qualitative improvement in the range and choice of services. In this regard, an indicative catchment area map relating to the scale and function of Knowsley's existing retail centres is included at Appendix E.

5.4.12. Revised calculations applying the Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 9 (September 2011) growth rates data to the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study in Appendix C indicated that the upper growth scenario produces a floorspace requirement of 7,191 sq.m gross. This figure is within the range of indicative distribution for convenience floorspace and on this basis, the differing scenarios of potential economic growth rates are accommodated. It is acknowledged that the upper growth scenario being based upon the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study has potential to be an overestimation of need, given the economic circumstances supporting such levels of floorspace are now less likely. However in the case of convenience retail the level of potential growth is still considered necessary, given the flexibility within the Kirkby consent which if implemented at 7,000 sq.m of convenience floorspace would reduce the available capacity to support localised needs and regeneration priorities in the remainder of Knowsley.

5.4.13. Notwithstanding the above, in view of the significant variation between economic forecasts undertaken in 2009 and 2011 it is considered appropriate for the Local Plan to incorporate sufficient flexibility to adapt to change during the plan period. In this regard, it is intended that the Local Plan approach will allow performance monitoring during the plan period and the ability to adapt identified needs and distribution based upon updated evidence such as a new Town Centres and Shopping Study in the medium term.

5.5 Distribution of Additional Comparison Retail Floorspace

5.5.1. In terms of comparison retail, the Council considers that the variation in up to date growth forecasts in the Experian Planner Briefing Note 9 (September 2011), justifies a need to reassess the approach to distribution of floorspace recommended by the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study. This is noting the potential for over-estimation between forecasts for comparison floorspace need in 2009 relative to those in 2011, based upon variations in growth rates influenced by the prolonged nature of the economic recession, sectoral change (i.e. more rapid growth of Special Forms of Trading) and the associated long term implications of both. On this basis, the capacity distributed on the basis of Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study evaluated scenarios (Strategic Growth Options 1 - 4), may present approaches that are less likely to represent localised needs during the plan period, than alternatives based upon more up to date growth rates. Furthermore the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study also applied an assumed approach to Prescot Town Centre of competition with Cables Retail Park, which contrasts with the Council’s preferred approach.

5.5.2. To address the above issues, an additional Strategic Growth Option 5 reflecting the Local Plan approach is outlined, evaluated and justified below as the Council’s preferred policy approach, following a brief summary of Strategic Growth Options 1 – 4.

5.5.3. Strategic Growth Options 1 – 4 in the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study Volume 4[43] comprised an evaluation matrix relative to the distribution of comparison retail floorspace focused upon the following key themes which link to sustainability:

- Reducing the need to travel and increasing accessibility
- Marrying opportunity with need
- Promoting environmental quality
- Compliance with regional and national planning policy
- Deliverability
- Contribution to the wider spatial vision for the North West

[43] Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study Volume 4, pg. 38 (Roger Tym & Partners, 2010)

5.5.4. On the basis of the above, the potential growth scenarios tested for the distribution of new comparison retail floorspace based upon the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study estimated capacity were:

1. Dispersal across the Knowsley's three town centres.
2. Emphasis in Kirkby with moderate growth in Huyton and Prescot
3. Focus on Kirkby, with no significant investment in Huyton or Prescot
4. Focus on Kirkby, with moderate investment in Prescot and minimal growth in Huyton

5.5.5. In assessing the above, the scoring mechanism associated to the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study identified the following;

- Option 4 was the most suitable growth scenario of those tested largely due to marrying opportunity with need, consistency with the role and function of each centre and positive deliverability prospects.
- Option 2 was the second highest scoring growth scenario, as although it scored similarly on the majority of criteria as Option 4, there were concerns regarding the physical capacity and deliverability of moderate growth in Huyton during the plan period.
- Option 3 was the third highest scoring growth scenario, as although it scored moderately across the majority of criteria by marrying opportunity with need in Kirkby, it failed to address weaknesses in Prescot and Huyton. It also had the potential to draw trade from outside of its catchment and therefore negatively impact upon surrounding centres.
- Option 1 receiving a negative score and was considered to be unsuitable and undeliverable due to lack of capacity / operator interest in Huyton and Prescot, together with an inability to address the needs and opportunities in Kirkby.

5.5.6. The Council supports the conclusions in the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study that Option 4 is the most appropriate scenario of those tested through the evaluation matrix. However in formulating the preferred approach of the Local Plan, it was considered that Option 4 may not be the optimal solution. This was in view of Option 4's specific approach to moderate growth in Prescot Town Centre being founded upon an assumption of direct competition for expenditure retention with the edge of centre – Cables Retail Park. In contrast, the Council consider that the most appropriate solution for Prescot Town Centre is to focus upon an identity and offer which differentiates and complements the existing provision at Cables Retail Park. This is noting that the combined expenditure retention of Prescot Town Centre and Cables Retail Park for comparison retail is 25% for its localised Zone 3. These combined figures would indicate that Prescot Town Centre / Cables Retail Park has the highest performance of Knowsley's destinations in terms of viability and vitality, and are significantly better than the percentage retention of Prescot Town Centre considered in isolation of 14% in Zone 3. This suggests that the level of investment required to achieve the expenditure levels of the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study (32%) would be lower than forecast in this area, if the performance of Prescot Town Centre and Cables Retail Park is considered together.

5.5.7. In addition, the physical capacity of Prescot Town Centre itself is constrained in terms of significant remodelling due to its historical character and associated designations, together with its sloping topography. The Council's preferred Local Plan approach is therefore to focus upon improved linkages between Prescot Town Centre and Cables Retail Park along Sewell Street, which reduces the potential deliverable retail capacity to a more limited level that is similar to that recommended in Huyton Town Centre. Nevertheless flexibility will also be required to allow for other larger scale schemes such as a link via Station Road. This has a potentially higher capacity, but is constrained on the basis of land availability and viability in current economic circumstances.

5.5.8. On the basis of the above, the Council's Local Plan approach is effectively a Strategic Growth Option 5, with the emphasis on Kirkby with limited growth in Huyton and Prescot. This includes flexibility provided by an unallocated reserve which can be released for additional development in response to in-centre delivery and an updated needs assessment, subject to impact considerations. Appendix D includes an additional evaluation matrix for this scenario which allows comparison with the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study scores. This indicates that the Option 5 (Score – 28) performed marginally better than the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study preference of Option 4 (Score – 26). This is largely due to the improved deliverability credentials of the Kirkby Town Centre and Prescot Town Centre / Cables Retail Park linkage, together with the flexibility provided to respond to sustainable economic growth during the plan period within in-centre locations.

5.5.9. The improved deliverability credentials in Kirkby Town Centre arise from revisions to the overall capacity to reflect an equal distribution of net additional growth between Huyton, Kirkby and Prescot (4,100 sq.m – 6,800 sq.m), above the existing commitment (24,600 sq.m). This equal distribution of growth between the three centres is considered to provide sufficient flexibility for sustainable economic growth during the plan period. Sufficient capacity remains in each centre (following the expansion of Kirkby and Prescot Town Centres respectively) to accommodate these levels of growth. The resultant distribution of comparison retail floorspace (as proposed in the Local Plan) is as displayed in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: Indicative Distribution of Comparison Floorspace

Location	Floorspace Range (gross internal)
Huyton Town Centre	4,100 sq.m - 6,800 sq.m
Kirkby Town Centre	24,600 sq.m - 31,400 sq.m
Prescot Town Centre	4,100 sq.m - 6,800 sq.m
Unallocated Reserve for Hierarchy of Centres	3,710 sq.m - 7,310 sq.m
Total (2012 – 2028)	**36,510 sq.m - 52,310 sq.m**

5.5.10. The overall capacity distributed between Knowsley's town centres reflects revised calculations applying the Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 9 (September 2011) growth rate data to the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study in Appendix C. This indicated that the upper growth scenario produces a floorspace requirement of 44,730 sq.m gross. This figure closely aligns with the Council's preferred approach of 45,000 sq.m in total (including the floorspace associated to the existing Kirkby commitment) being distributed between the three town centres during the plan period up to 2028. The upper capacity has therefore been lowered accordingly on this basis, as the scale of variance relative to the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study is significant and the economic circumstances supporting such levels of growth are increasingly unlikely to occur during the plan period. Furthermore the scale of upper levels of growth recommended to be distributed to Kirkby in particular, were considered to be inappropriate without further consideration of the impact upon neighbouring centres, following the implementation of the existing commitment.

5.5.11. Notwithstanding the above, in view of the significant variation between economic forecasts undertaken in 2009 and 2011, it is not considered appropriate to rely solely upon current forecasts which could prove pessimistic if prevailing economic circumstances were to change. On this basis, it is reasonable to incorporate an unreserved allocation of up to 7,310 sq.m. This will allow sufficient flexibility to accommodate additional growth in the individual centres commensurate to the distribution recommended by the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study and consistent with the requirements of the NPPF. It is intended that the release of this unallocated reserve to supplement the range of floorspace allocated to town centres will remain dependent on impact considerations relative to neighbouring centres and updated catchment needs assessment to respond to the effect of any preceding in-centre development during the plan period. The catchment area for a proposed development should not be significantly larger than the centre within which it is located.

5.5.12. In addition to the above, it is also considered appropriate that the Local Plan incorporate sufficient flexibility to adapt to change during the plan period. In this regard, it is intended that the Local Plan approach will allow performance monitoring during the plan period and the ability to update identified needs and distribution based upon updated evidence such as a new Town Centres and Shopping Study in due course.

5.6 Phasing of Additional Comparison Retail Floorspace

5.6.1. The phasing of development must reflect a front loading of need to accommodate existing commitments in Kirkby, but also retain sufficient flexibility to allow sustainable economic growth in Knowsley's other retail centres. However it is accepted that the implementation of such levels of growth may not be fully achievable in the first five years, therefore the Local Plan approach intends any resultant under delivery relative to the base level at the end of each five year period to be carried forward and added to the base level in the subsequent five year period to ensure appropriate delivery across the plan period. Performance monitoring of delivery in this regard will be managed through the Council's Monitoring Reports.

5.6.2. The resultant phasing of comparison retail floorspace (as proposed in the Local Plan) is as displayed in Table 5.3 below:

Table 5.3: Indicative Phasing of Comparison Floorspace

Time Period	Floorspace Range (gross internal)
2013 – 2017	21,900 sq.m - 31,390 sq.m
2018 – 2022	9,130 sq.m - 13,080 sq.m
2023 – 2028	5,480 sq.m - 7,840 sq.m
Total (2013 – 2028)	**36,510 sq.m - 52,310 sq.m**

5.6.3. The recommended phasing is intended to be an indicative guide and therefore should not be used as a performance measure which would prevent delivery of sustainable plan period growth at the earliest opportunity. In this regard, it is intended that the Local Plan approach will allow flexibility during the plan period and the ability to update identified needs and distribution based upon updated evidence such as a revised Town Centres and Shopping Study. The base date of the time period has been updated, noting the delivery deductions to the Town Centre and Shopping Study forecasts comprising the completion of the developments at Stockbridge Village and Halewood (Ravenscourt) between 2010 and 2012.

5.7 Viability and Deliverability of Retail Development and Other Main Town Centre Uses

5.7.1. The Council has had evidence on viability and deliverability for retail development prepared in an Economic Viability Assessment[44]. In terms of the retail typologies tested, the study indicated that retail development is currently viable with the exception of comparison retail

[44] Knowsley Local Plan – Economic Viability Assessment (Keppie Massie, 2012)

in district and local centres and within Prescot Town Centre. This is largely due to the differing performance of commercial rents, with Prescot Town Centre performing poorly in comparison to Kirkby Town Centre and Huyton Town Centre primarily due to competition from Cables Retail Park, significant vacancy and reduced demand for units from national retailers. This emphasises the need to better capitalise upon the historic value and diversify the offer in Prescot Town Centre whilst improving linkages to Cables Retail Park to improve commercial rents and thereby enhance viability of in-centre development.

5.7.2. In terms of other main town centre uses, leisure uses tested such as food and drink uses are viable throughout the Borough, whilst cinema provision also remains viable in current economic circumstances.

5.7.3. In contrast, other main town centre uses tested such as office developments and bingo provision are not currently viable without funding assistance. The delivery of these types of use during the plan period would require improvements in economic circumstance, and / or cross funding provided by the inclusion of a mix of viable uses as part of a larger scheme. This is noting that marginal losses in town centre locations could be offset by the higher returns and hence profit generated from retail developments.

5.8 Provision of Leisure Uses, Offices and Community Facilities

5.8.1. The leisure sector is dynamic, changing and operator-led. The Council therefore supports the conclusions of the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study that growth in expenditure on leisure services will go to a wide range of activities, with no single activity capturing any significant market share. On this basis, the Council therefore intends to encourage market-led investment in leisure uses and community facilities provided it conforms to the sequential and impact tests within the National Planning Policy Framework. As a consequence, no indicative target sectors or floorspace capacities are included in Policy CS6.

5.8.2. Office uses are considered sequentially appropriate in town centres locations and will be directed toward areas which are not primary shopping frontages. No specific target for office floorspace in town centres is proposed as development is intended to be market led, and employment land targets are considered in the Planning for Employment Growth Technical Report.

Glossary and Bibliography

Glossary

Term	Definition / Explanation
Annual Monitoring Report (AMR)	The Annual Monitoring Report assesses the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which the policies in Local Plan documents are being implemented.
Core Strategy	The Core Strategy forms the central part of the Local Plan and sets out the long term spatial vision, spatial objectives and strategic policies for the Borough. A Core Strategy has the status of a Development Plan Document.
Communities and Local Government (CLG)	CLG is the Government department with responsibility for Planning and Housing.
Development Plan Document (DPD)	Development Plan Documents are Local Development Documents which make up the statutory Local Plan. Once they have been prepared they have to be submitted to the Secretary of State at the Department of Communities and Local Government. They are then examined by an independent planning inspector to make sure that they meet certain tests.
Liverpool City Region (LCR)	Liverpool City Region refers to the sub-regional area, including the authorities of Liverpool, Halton, Knowsley, Sefton, St.Helens and Wirral. The term can also sometimes be used in relation to a wider area, encompassing the authority areas of West Lancashire and Cheshire West and Chester.
Local Plan	The Local Plan is a portfolio of documents that forms the statutory local development plan, including the Core Strategy, Waste Plan and Site Allocations and Development Policies documents. Together these documents will provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy and policies for the local authority area.
Localism Act	The Localism Act was enacted in December 2011. It contained key legislative changes including the abolition of Regional Strategies; new duties to co-operate; changes to the CIL system; and the introduction of planning at the neighbourhood level.

Term	Definition / Explanation
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	The NPPF was introduced by government in March 2012, to form the adopted national planning policy. It replaced the majority of Planning Policy Statements and Planning Policy Guidance notes.
Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS)	The Regional Spatial Strategy is the regional planning document, incorporating a Regional Transport Strategy and providing a broad development strategy for the region for a fifteen to twenty year period. The RSS also informs the preparation of Local Development Documents, Local Transport Plans and regional and sub-regional strategies and programmes. The RSS is due to the abolished under the legislative provisions of the Localism Act.
Regional Strategy (RS)	The Regional Strategy was the document which was due to replace the Regional Spatial Strategy and the Regional Economic Strategy, forming the overarching development strategy for the region. The emerging Regional Strategy for the Northwest was called RS2010, however, work on this document was cancelled in mid-2010. The resulting evidence and framework has been made available, including "Future Northwest", a document containing agreed shared priorities for the region.
Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)	Supplementary Planning Documents provide supplementary information in respect of the policies contained in the Local Plan, and tend to focus on particular issues or on particular places. They do not form part of the Development Plan and are not subject to an independent examination.
Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)	The Local Strategic Partnership creates a long-term vision for the area to tackle local needs. The vision is set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy, including key actions and indicators to help implement the vision.
Unitary Development Plan (UDP)	The Unitary Development Plan is the existing statutory development plan and contains the planning framework to guide development in the local area. It covers a wide range of issues from strategic to detailed policies, and includes a separate Proposals Map including site allocations and designations for various land uses. In Knowsley, the existing UDP is the Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan, which was adopted by the Council in June 2006.

Bibliography

Document / Information Source	Author / Date
National	
Annual Population Survey	Office for National Statistics (2010)
Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 9 (September 2011)	Experian / GOAD (2011)
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	Communities and Local Government (2012)
Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth	Communities and Local Government (2009)
Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning	Communities and Local Government (2009)
Localism Act	HM Government (2011)
Census 2001	Office for National Statistics (2010)
Census 2011	Office for National Statistics (2012)
Sub-national Population Projections	Office for National Statistics (2010 and 2011)
Sub-national Household Projections	Communities and Local Government (2010)
Regional	
The North West Plan: Regional Spatial Strategy to 2021	Government Office for the North West (2008)
RS2010 The High Level Strategic Framework	4NW (2010)
Future North West: Our Shared Priorities	4NW (2010)
Sub-regional	
Merseyside Local Transport Plan 3	Merseytravel (2011)

Document / Information Source	Author / Date
Local	
Knowsley Sustainable Community Strategy	Knowsley Council / The Knowsley Partnership (2008)
Knowsley Borough Strategy	Knowsley Council (2012)
Knowsley Replacement Unitary Development Plan	Knowsley Council (2006)
Tower Hill (Kirkby) Action Area Supplementary Planning Document	Knowsley Council (2007)
North Huyton Action Area Supplementary Planning Document	Knowsley Council (2007)
Knowsley Annual Monitoring Reports 2005 – 2011	Knowsley Council (various)
Knowsley Economic Regeneration Strategy	Knowsley Council (2012)
Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study Volumes 1 - 5	Roger Tym & Partners (2009 & 2010)
Infrastructure Delivery Plan for Knowsley	Knowsley Council (2012)
Technical Report: Planning for Housing Growth in Knowsley	Knowsley Council (2013)
Technical Report: Planning for Employment Growth in Knowsley	Knowsley Council (2013)

Appendix A: Knowsley's Hierarchy of Retail Centres

Name	Area	Type	Units	Occupied	Local Needs Operators	Convenience Stores
Huyton Town Centre	Huyton	Town Centre	100	81	38	11
Kirkby Town Centre	Kirkby	Town Centre	91	79	37	18
Prescot Town Centre	Prescot	Town Centre	141	116	62	17
Cables Retail Park	Prescot	Retail Park	14	14	3	1
Liverpool Road	Huyton	District Centre	30	26	18	6
Raven Court	Halewood	District Centre	18	UC	11	7
Stockbridge Village	Huyton	District Centre	21	20	11	4
Bewley Drive & Broad Lane	Kirkby	Major Local Centre	13	12	7	2
Greenes Road	Whiston	Major Local Centre	24	24	8	3
Hillside Road	Huyton	Major Local Centre	17	15	8	5
Kingsway & Gentwood	Huyton	Major Local Centre	18	17	7	3
Pilch Lane	Huyton	Major Local Centre	20	16	8	3
Tarbock Road	Huyton	Major Local Centre	12	12	7	2
Admin Road	Kirkby	Medium Local Centre	5	5	3	0
Baileys Lane	Halewood	Medium Local Centre	9	9	6	1
Copple House Lane	Fazakerley	Medium Local Centre	11	11	7	2
Dragon Drive	Whiston	Medium Local Centre	9	9	5	1
Glovers Brow	Kirkby	Medium Local Centre	14	10	4	1
Hampton Drive	Cronton	Medium Local Centre	8	8	6	1
Longview Drive	Huyton	Medium Local Centre	10	8	5	1
Mackets Lane	Halewood	Medium Local Centre	10	9	4	0
Manor Farm Road	Huyton	Medium Local Centre	9	9	6	1
Molyneux Drive	Prescot	Medium Local Centre	8	8	6	1
Moorfield	Kirkby	Medium Local Centre	7	6	4	1
Old Rough Lane	Kirkby	Medium Local Centre	12	8	5	0
Page Moss & Dinas Lane	Huyton	Medium Local Centre	13	11	6	1
Park Brow Drive	Kirkby	Medium Local Centre	14	9	6	1
Rimmer Avenue	Huyton	Medium Local Centre	9	8	5	1
Sugar Lane	Knowsley Village	Medium Local Centre	8	7	6	3
Swanside Parade	Huyton	Medium Local Centre	13	12	4	2
Warrington Road	Whiston	Medium Local Centre	10	10	4	1
Acacia Avenue	Huyton	Minor Parade	9	5	3	0
Byron Avenue & Milton Avenue	Whiston	Minor Parade	10	4	4	1
Camberley Way	Halewood	Minor Parade	4	4	3	1
Church Road & Hollies Road	Halewood	Minor Parade	4	4	4	0
Dinas Lane	Huyton	Minor Parade	4	2	1	0
Greystone Road	Huyton	Minor Parade	4	2	2	0
James Holt Avenue	Kirkby	Minor Parade	6	5	5	1
Kennelwood Avenue	Kirkby	Minor Parade	7	6	3	1
Kingsway & Crosswood	Huyton	Minor Parade	5	4	4	1
Longview Drive & Wallace Drive	Huyton	Minor Parade	6	6	4	0
Loweswater Way	Kirkby	Minor Parade	4	4	4	1
Merrivale Road	Halewood	Minor Parade	5	5	3	0
Old Farm Road	Kirkby	Minor Parade	10	8	5	0
Richard Hesketh Drive	Kirkby	Minor Parade	4	4	4	1
Scotchbarn Lane	Prescot	Minor Parade	4	4	3	1
Shop Road	Knowsley Village	Minor Parade	2	2	2	1
Wood Road	Halewood	Minor Parade	5	4	4	0

Appendix B: Expenditure Growth and Forecast Comparisons – Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 9 (September 2011) and the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study

	Expenditure Growth Forecasts - Experian Comparison					
	Experian RP 9 (2011)		**Experian RP 7.1 (2009)**		**% Change 2009 - 2011**	
	Convenience	*Comparison*	*Convenience*	*Comparison*	*Convenience*	*Comparison*
2009	*0.8%*	*0.1%*	*-0.5%*	*1.1%*	*1.3%*	*-1.0%*
2010	*-0.3%*	*0.5%*	*-0.2%*	*-0.4%*	*-0.1%*	*0.9%*
2011	*-0.4%*	*1.6%*	*0.6%*	*1.1%*	*-1.0%*	*0.5%*
2012	*0.5%*	*2.1%*	*0.8%*	*2.5%*	*-0.3%*	*-0.4%*
2013	*0.5%*	*3.0%*	*0.8%*	*2.5%*	*-0.3%*	*0.5%*
2014	*0.5%*	*3.0%*	*0.8%*	*2.5%*	*-0.3%*	*0.5%*
2015	*0.5%*	*3.0%*	*0.8%*	*2.5%*	*-0.3%*	*0.5%*
2016	*0.5%*	*3.0%*	*0.8%*	*2.5%*	*-0.3%*	*0.5%*
2017	*0.5%*	*3.0%*	*0.9%*	*2.8%*	*-0.4%*	*0.2%*
2018	*0.6%*	*3.0%*	*0.9%*	*2.8%*	*-0.3%*	*0.2%*
2019	*0.6%*	*3.0%*	*0.9%*	*2.8%*	*-0.3%*	*0.2%*
2020	*0.6%*	*3.0%*	*0.9%*	*2.8%*	*-0.3%*	*0.2%*
2021	*0.6%*	*3.0%*	*0.9%*	*2.8%*	*-0.3%*	*0.2%*
2022	*0.6%*	*3.0%*	*0.9%*	*2.8%*	*-0.3%*	*0.2%*
2023	*0.6%*	*3.0%*	*0.9%*	*2.8%*	*-0.3%*	*0.2%*
2024	*0.6%*	*3.0%*	*0.9%*	*2.8%*	*-0.3%*	*0.2%*
2025	*0.6%*	*3.0%*	*0.9%*	*2.8%*	*-0.3%*	*0.2%*
2026	*0.6%*	*3.0%*	*0.9%*	*2.8%*	*-0.3%*	*0.2%*
2027	*0.6%*	*3.0%*	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*
2028	*0.6%*	*3.0%*	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*	*N/A*

	Expenditure Growth Forecasts - Experian (2011) against KTC&SS									
	Experian RP 9 (2011)		KTC&SS Rates (2009)*		% Difference		% Annual Average Difference		% Cumulative Difference	
	Convenience	Comparison	Convenience	Comparison	Convenience	Comparison	Convenience	Comparison	Convenience	Comparison
2009	0.8%	0.1%	-0.9%	-1.7%	1.7%	1.8%	-0.2%	-0.1%	-1.7%	-0.4%
2010	-0.3%	0.5%	-0.2%	-0.7%	-0.1%	1.2%				
2011	-0.4%	1.6%	0.6%	1.3%	-1.0%	0.3%				
2012	0.5%	2.1%	1.1%	3.1%	-0.6%	-1.6%				
2013	0.5%	3.0%	1.1%	3.7%	-0.6%	-0.8%				
2014	0.5%	3.0%	1.1%	3.8%	-0.6%	-0.7%				
2015	0.5%	3.0%	1.1%	3.7%	-0.6%	-0.6%				
2016	0.5%	3.0%	0.9%	3.6%	-0.4%	-0.7%	-0.2%	-1.2%	-1.1%	-1.2%
2017	0.5%	3.0%	0.8%	3.7%	-0.3%	-0.5%				
2018	0.6%	3.0%	0.7%	3.5%	-0.1%	-0.4%				
2019	0.6%	3.0%	0.6%	3.4%	0.0%	0.2%				
2020	0.6%	3.0%	0.9%	2.8%	-0.3%	0.2%				
2021	0.6%	3.0%	0.9%	2.8%	-0.3%	0.2%	-0.3%	0.2%	-1.8%	1.2%
2022	0.6%	3.0%	0.9%	2.8%	-0.3%	0.2%				
2023	0.6%	3.0%	0.9%	2.8%	-0.3%	0.2%				
2024	0.6%	3.0%	0.9%	2.8%	-0.3%	0.2%				
2025	0.6%	3.0%	0.9%	2.8%	-0.3%	0.2%				
2026	0.6%	3.0%	0.9%	2.8%	-0.3%	0.2%				
2027	0.6%	3.0%	0.9%	2.8%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
2028	0.6%	3.0%	0.9%	2.8%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

* Based upon midpoints between Experian (2009) and PBBI / OE (2009) - figures are rounded to a single decimal place for consistency

Available Expenditure Growth Forecasts - Experian (2011) against KTC&SS rates						
	Experian RP 9 (2011)		**KTC&SS Rates (2009)***		**Difference between Experian and KTC&SS Rates**	
	£m		**£m**		**£m**	
	Convenience	*Comparison*	*Convenience*	*Comparison*	*Convenience*	*Comparison*
2008	*610.9*	*1127.5*	*610.9*	*1127.5*	*0.00*	*0.00*
2009	*615.79*	*1128.63*	*605.16*	*1108.56*	*10.63*	*20.07*
2010	*613.94*	*1122.98*	*603.77*	*1101.24*	*10.17*	*21.74*
2011	*611.48*	*1140.95*	*607.45*	*1115.45*	*4.04*	*25.50*
2012	*614.54*	*1164.91*	*614.13*	*1149.58*	*0.41*	*15.33*
2013	*617.61*	*1199.86*	*621.01*	*1192.11*	*-3.39*	*7.74*
2014	*620.70*	*1235.86*	*627.96*	*1236.94*	*-7.26*	*-1.08*
2015	*623.81*	*1272.93*	*634.56*	*1281.22*	*-10.75*	*-8.29*
2016	*626.92*	*1311.12*	*640.01*	*1327.99*	*-13.09*	*-16.87*
2017	*630.06*	*1350.45*	*644.69*	*1375.00*	*-14.63*	*-24.54*
2018	*633.84*	*1390.97*	*648.75*	*1421.33*	*-14.91*	*-30.37*
2019	*637.64*	*1432.69*	*654.59*	*1461.13*	*-16.94*	*-28.44*
2020	*641.47*	*1475.68*	*660.48*	*1502.04*	*-19.01*	*-26.37*
2021	*645.32*	*1519.95*	*666.42*	*1544.10*	*-21.11*	*-24.15*
2022	*649.19*	*1565.54*	*672.42*	*1587.33*	*-23.23*	*-21.79*
2023	*653.08*	*1612.51*	*678.47*	*1631.78*	*-25.39*	*-19.27*
2024	*657.00*	*1660.89*	*684.58*	*1677.47*	*-27.58*	*-16.58*
2025	*660.95*	*1710.71*	*690.74*	*1724.44*	*-29.79*	*-13.73*
2026	*664.91*	*1762.03*	*696.96*	*1772.72*	*-32.05*	*-10.69*
2027	*668.90*	*1814.90*	*703.23*	*1822.36*	*-34.33*	*-7.46*
2028	*672.91*	*1869.34*	*709.56*	*1873.39*	*-36.64*	*-4.04*
Total Growth	***62.01***	***741.84***	***98.66***	***745.89***	***-36.64***	***-4.04***

All monetary values are held constant at 2005 prices.
* Figures may differ from KTC&SS due to rounding

Available Expenditure Growth Forecasts - Experian (2011) and KTC&SS comparisons						
	Experian RP 9 (2011)		KTC&SS projections (2009) adjusted after surveys and for SFT rates		Difference between Experian (2011) and KTC&SS adjusted values	
	£m		£m		£m	
	Convenience	Comparison	Convenience	Comparison	Convenience	Comparison
2008	*610.9*	*1127.5*	*610.90*	*1127.50*	*0.00*	*0.00*
2016	*626.92*	*1311.12*	*644.70*	*1338.54*	*-17.78*	*-27.42*
2021	*645.32*	*1519.95*	*674.60*	*1578.67*	*-29.28*	*-58.72*
2026	*664.91*	*1762.04*	*702.90*	*1821.97*	*-37.99*	*-59.94*
2028	*672.91*	*1869.34*	*709.56*	*1925.43*	*-40.66*	*-110.53*
Total Growth	***62.01***	***741.84***	***98.66***	***797.93***		

Available Expenditure Growth Forecasts - Experian (2011) and KTC&SS comparisons												
	Experian RP9 (2011) exc. SFT		KTC&SS projections (2009) exc. SFT		Difference between Experian (2011) and KTC&SS (2009) excluding SFT		Experian RP9 (2011) SFT only		KTC&SS projections (2009) SFT only		Difference between Experian (2011) and KTC&SS (2009) SFT only	
	£m		£m		£m		£m		£m		£m	
	Convenience	Comparison	Convenience	Comparison	Convenience	Comparison	Convenience	Comparison	Convenience	Comparison	Convenience	Comparison
2008	*591*	*1043*	*605*	*1020*	*-13.68*	*22.55*	*19.55*	*84.56*	*5.86*	*107.11*	*13.68*	*-22.55*
2016	*601*	*1145*	*628*	*1210*	*-27.02*	*-65.43*	*26.33*	*166.51*	*17.08*	*128.50*	*9.25*	*38.01*
2021	*607*	*1331*	*656*	*1430*	*-48.47*	*-98.80*	*38.07*	*188.47*	*18.89*	*148.39*	*19.19*	*40.08*
2026	*623*	*1551*	*682*	*1656*	*-59.14*	*-105.58*	*41.89*	*211.44*	*20.74*	*165.80*	*21.15*	*45.64*
2028	*626*	*1645*	*689*	*1750*	*-62.82*	*-105.20*	*47.10*	*217.79*	*20.93*	*175.21*	*26.17*	*42.57*
Total Growth	***34.46***	***602.08***	***83.59***	***729.83***			***27.55***	***133.22***	***14.87***	***58.69***		

Sales Density Growth Rates Experian RPBN 9 (September 2011) growth rates applied to KT&SS 2008 baseline				
	Convenience		Comparison	
	£ per sq.m	% growth	£ per sq.m	% growth
2008	1000.00	-	4500	-
2009	992.00	-0.8	4549.50	1.1
2010	984.06	-0.8	4535.85	-0.3
2011	974.22	-1.0	4567.60	0.7
2012	957.66	-1.7	4649.82	1.8
2013	961.49	0.4	4719.57	1.5
2014	965.34	0.4	4799.80	1.7
2015	969.20	0.4	4881.40	1.7
2016	973.08	0.4	4964.38	1.7
2017	976.97	0.4	5048.77	1.7
2018	980.88	0.4	5134.60	1.7
2019	982.84	0.2	5221.89	1.7
2020	984.80	0.2	5310.66	1.7
2021	986.77	0.2	5400.94	1.7
2022	988.75	0.2	5492.76	1.7
2023	990.72	0.2	5586.14	1.7
2024	992.71	0.2	5681.10	1.7
2025	994.69	0.2	5777.68	1.7
2026	996.68	0.2	5875.90	1.7
2027	998.67	0.2	5975.79	1.7
2028	1000.67	0.2	6077.38	1.7

Appendix C: Convenience and Comparison Retail Capacity Scenarios with Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 9 (2011) growth rates applied using Knowsley Town Centres & Shopping Study Spreadsheet 19c assumptions

Convenience retail - Capacity for Convenience Goods (Lower Scenario - 57.6%) - Experian using KTC&SS Spreadsheet 19c assumptions	
Study Area Expenditure Retention	**2028**
Total Study Area Expenditure	*£672,910,000*
Expediture Retention at 57.6%	*£387,596,160*
Store Turnover	*£371,198,533*
Existing Commitments	*£20,810,600*
Growth in SFT	*£27,550,000*
Residual Expenditure	*-£31,962,973*
Convenience Assessment	
Assumed Sales Density (per sq.m net)	*£10,001*
Floorspace Requirement (sq.m net)	***-3196***
Floorspace Requirement (sq.m gross) - based upon 65% conversion of net to gross	***-4917***
Additional Deductions associated to Completions	
Stockbridge Village (sq.m - gross)	*720*
Ravenscourt (sq.m - gross)	*1597*
Total (sq.m - gross)	*2317*
Floorspace Requirement Post Completions (sq.m - gross)	***-7234***
Existing Commitments	
Kirkby Town Centre (sq.m - gross)	*4500*
Floorspace Requirement Post Completions and Commitments (sq.m - gross)	***-11734***

Convenience retail - Capacity for Convenience Goods (Middle Scenario - 65%) – Experian RPBN 9 growth rates applied using KTC&SS Spreadsheet 19c assumptions	
Study Area Expenditure Retention	**2028**
Total Study Area Expenditure	*£672,910,000*
Expenditure Retention at 65%	*£437,391,500*
Store Turnover	*£371,198,533*
Existing Commitments	*£20,810,600*
Growth in SFT	*£27,550,000*
Residual Expenditure	*£17,832,367*
Convenience Assessment	
Assumed Sales Density (per sq.m net)	*£10,001*
Floorspace Requirement (sq.m net)	***1783***
Floorspace Requirement (sq.m gross) - based upon 65% conversion of net to gross	***2743***
Additional Deductions associated to Completions	
Stockbridge Village (sq.m - gross)	*720*
Ravenscourt (sq.m - gross)	*1597*
Total (sq.m - gross)	*2317*
Floorspace Requirement Post Completions (sq.m - gross)	***426***
Existing Commitments	
Kirkby Town Centre (sq.m - gross)	*4500*
Floorspace Requirement Post Completions and Commitments (sq.m - gross)	***-4074***

Convenience retail - Capacity for Convenience Goods (Upper Scenario - 70%) – Experian RPBN 9 growth rates applied using KTC&SS Spreadsheet 19c assumptions	
Study Area Expenditure Retention	**2028**
Total Study Area Expenditure	*£672,910,000*
Expenditure Retention at 70%	*£471,037,000*
Store Turnover	*£371,198,533*
Existing Commitments	*£20,810,600*
Growth in SFT	*£27,550,000*
Residual Expenditure	*£51,477,867*
Convenience Assessment	
Assumed Sales Density (per sq.m net)	*£10,001*
Floorspace Requirement (sq.m net)	***5147***
Floorspace Requirement (sq.m gross) - based upon 65% conversion of net to gross	***7919***
Additional Deductions associated to Completions	
Stockbridge Village (sq.m - gross)	*720*
Ravenscourt (sq.m - gross)	*1597*
Total (sq.m - gross)	*2317*
Floorspace Requirement Post Completions (sq.m - gross)	***5602***
Existing Commitments	
Kirkby Town Centre (sq.m - gross)	*4500*
Floorspace Requirement Post Completions and Commitments (sq.m - gross)	***1102***

Comparison retail - Capacity for Convenience Goods (Lower Scenario - 17.1%) – Experian RPBN 9 growth rates applied using KTC&SS Spreadsheet 19c assumptions	
Study Area Expenditure Retention	**2028**
Total Study Area Expenditure	*£1,869,340,000*
Expenditure Retention at 17.1%	*£319,657,140*
Stores Turnover in Study Area	*£235,412,199*
Existing Commitments	*£56,599,411*
Growth in SFT	*£133,220,000*
Residual Expenditure	*-£105,574,470*
Comparison Assessment	
Assumed Sales Density (per sq.m net)	*£6,077*
Floorspace Requirement (sq.m net)	***-17372***
Floorspace Requirement (sq.m gross) - based upon 65% conversion of net to gross	***-26726***
Additional Deductions associated to Completions	
Total (sq.m - gross)	*0*
Floorspace Requirement Post Completions (sq.m - gross)	***-26726***
Additional Commitments since the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study	
Kirkby Town Centre (sq.m - gross)	*24635*
Floorspace Requirement Post Completions and Commitments (sq.m - gross)	***-51361***

Comparison retail - Capacity for Convenience Goods (Middle Scenario - 27%) – Experian RPBN 9 growth rates applied using KTC&SS Spreadsheet 19c assumptions	
Study Area Expenditure Retention	**2028**
Total Study Area Expenditure	*£1,869,340,000*
Expenditure Retention at 27%	*£504,721,800*
Stores Turnover in Study Area	*£235,412,199*
Existing Commitments	*£56,599,411*
Growth in SFT	*£133,220,000*
Residual Expenditure	*£79,490,190*
Comparison Assessment	
Assumed Sales Density (per sq.m net)	*£6,077*
Floorspace Requirement (sq.m net)	***13080***
Floorspace Requirement (sq.m gross) - based upon 65% conversion of net to gross	***20123***
Additional Deductions associated to Completions	
Total (sq.m - gross)	*0*
Floorspace Requirement Post Completions (sq.m - gross)	***20123***
Additional Commitments since the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study	
Kirkby Town Centre (sq.m - gross)	*24635*
Floorspace Requirement Post Completions and Commitments (sq.m - gross)	***-4512***

Comparison retail - Capacity for Convenience Goods (Upper Scenario - 32.2%) – Experian RPBN 9 using KTC&SS Spreadsheet 19c assumptions	
Study Area Expenditure Retention	**2028**
Total Study Area Expenditure	*£1,869,340,000*
Expenditure Retention at 32.2%	*£601,927,480*
Stores Turnover in Study Area	*£235,412,199*
Existing Commitments	*£56,599,411*
Growth in SFT	*£133,220,000*
Residual Expenditure	*£176,695,870*
Comparison Assessment	
Assumed Sales Density (per sq.m net)	*£6,077*
Floorspace Requirement (sq.m net)	***29074***
Floorspace Requirement (sq.m gross) - based upon 65% conversion of net to gross	***44730***
Additional Deductions associated to Completions	
Total (sq.m - gross)	*0*
Floorspace Requirement Post Completions (sq.m - gross)	***44730***
Additional Commitments since the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study	
Kirkby Town Centre (sq.m - gross)	*24635*
Floorspace Requirement Post Completions and Commitments (sq.m - gross)	***20095***

Appendix D: Compliance with Assessment Criteria – Option 5

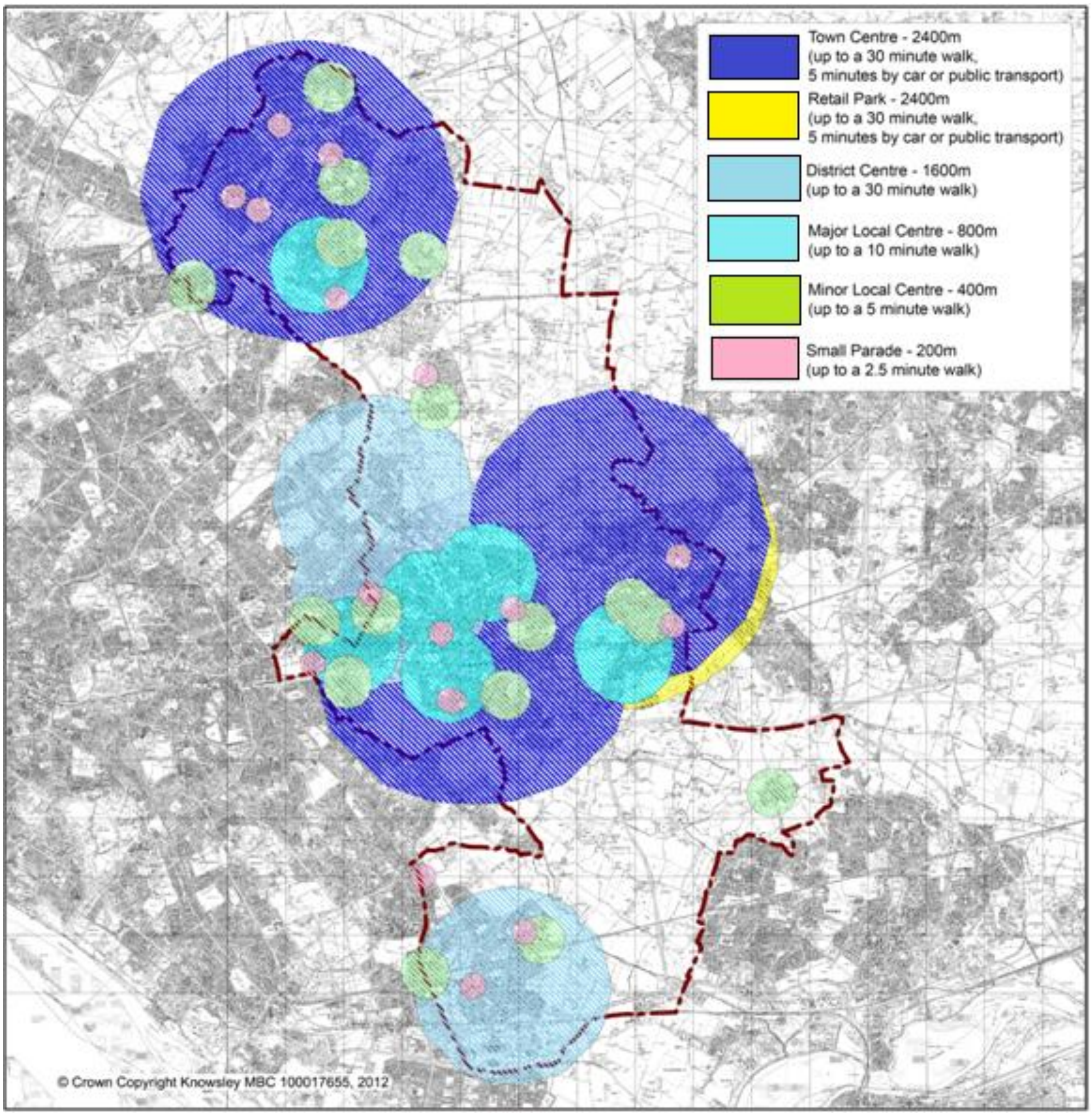
Compliance with Assessment Criteria / Policy Objectives	**Growth Option 5** **Emphasis on Kirkby with limited growth in Huyton and Prescot, with an unallocated reserve to provide flexibility**
Manage travel demand – reduce the need to travel and increase accessibility	**Very Good (+5) -** Access to Kirkby Town Centre by public transport and car is good. Evidence from the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study suggests that Kirkby Town Centre is not currently meeting the needs of its catchment and therefore many residents within the centre's catchment travel elsewhere. The strategy will enable Kirkby Town Centre to best cater for local needs and therefore reduce the requirements for residents to travel for a range and choice of services. The scenario would also address issues in Prescot Town Centre by improving pedestrian linkages between Cables Retail Park to enhance viability and vitality and provides opportunities for accessibility / legibility improvements in Huyton Town Centre.
Marry opportunity to need	**Very Good (+5) -** The retail environment and the range and choice of retail and services in Kirkby Town Centre has suffered from a lack of investment and therefore the locality is failing to reach its potential in terms viability and vitality. Kirkby Town Centre would therefore benefit from the scale of investment and regeneration associated to the existing commitment, with flexibility for further development in the plan period as required and in response to market conditions. Under this scenario, Prescot Town Centre would benefit from a scale of investment proportionate to its needs and role when combined with the function of Cables Retail Park, and together with Huyton Town Centre, would receive sufficient growth to enable local catchments to be served appropriately.
Promoting environmental quality	**Good (+3) -** Environmental quality in Kirkby Town Centre is poor and unattractive with the majority of properties and the public realm appearing dated. Investment at the scale proposed by the existing commitment would secure environmental improvements in Kirkby Town Centre. The strategy would also direct investment to Prescot Town Centre and Huyton Town Centre for further environmental improvements, noting the latter has had recent investment in this regard.
Retail development	**Very Good (+5) -** Policy W5 of the North West Regional Spatial Strategy asserts that investment should be consistent with the scale and function of the centre, so as not to undermine the vitality and viability of any other centre. Although this strategy would involve substantial development in Kirkby, the levels of development associated to the existing commitment are considered to meet the needs of its local catchment area without compromising the wider sub-regional hierarchy. Whilst there is some flexibility in this regard to allow for further growth, this would be subject to impact assessment as controlled through local policy, therefore the approach would accord with RSS policy W5. This strategy would also direct a reasonable amount of growth to Prescot, to support regeneration priorities including better integration with Cables Retail Park that will enhance its existing role, function and consolidate provision relative to future needs. Furthermore, although it appears that Huyton has limited capacity and prospects for growth during the plan period, sufficient capacity is retained to support remodelling opportunities which may arise during the plan period.
Deliverability	**Very Good (+5) -** The approach is consistency with the existing commitments at Kirkby Town Centre, including expansion to the South of Cherryfield Drive, and Sewell Street / Kemble Street in Prescot, with flexibility for additional growth during the plan period subject to impact considerations. This approach is considered the most appropriate to enable delivery of development with a sufficient scale to attract a greater proportion of quality retailers to Kirkby, deliver links between Prescot Town Centre / Cables Retail Park and provide sufficient opportunity to support other appropriate in-centre proposals for sustainable economic growth in accordance with the NPPF.
Contribution to wider spatial vision of the North West	**Very Good (+5) -** The level of growth proposed in Kirkby Town Centre supports the existing commitment which accords with the RSS Policy LCR1 approach towards accessible suburban centres, without compromising the wider sub-regional hierarchy. Levels of growth in Prescot Town Centre and Huyton Town Centre will ensure proportionate growth relative to their scale and function.
Overall assessment	Option 5 performs well against all assessment criteria and is fully in accordance with RSS. Focusing appropriate levels of growth in Kirkby Town Centre would enable delivery of a scheme of sufficient scale to attract quality retailers and support wider regeneration objectives for the town, whilst improving the sustainability of the Borough from a retail perspective. The approach is also beneficial in terms of potential investment in Prescot Town Centre, particularly in terms of prioritised linkages and integration with Cables Retail Park. The approach is also considered to be the optimal solution to ensuring sufficient flexibility for growth in Huyton to meet local needs during the plan period and support sustainable economic growth across all centres, subject to impact considerations.
Overall rating	**28**

The broad definition of each evaluation rating is as follows;

- **Very Good –** This is the highest available score, and a growth option will only attain this rating if it is wholly consistent with the relevant policy objective (+5 points)
- **Good** - A Growth Option will attain this rating if it is substantially consistent with the policy objective (+3 points)
- **Moderate** - A Growth Option will attain this rating if it only partially complies with the policy objective (+1 point)
- **Poor** - A Growth Option will attain this rating if it is substantially in conflict with the policy objective (-2 points)
- **Very Poor –** This is the lowest available score, and a growth option will only attain this rating if it is wholly in conflict with the policy objective (-5 points).

The detailed appraisals of Growth Options 1 - 4 are available to view on Page 38 of the Knowsley Town Centres and Shopping Study Volume 4 – Stage 2 Report.

Appendix E: Knowsley Retail Centres – Catchment Area Maps



For more information log on to
www.knowsley.gov.uk/LocalPlan

You can also get this information in other formats.
Please phone Customer Services on 0151 443 4031
or email customerservices@knowsley.gov.uk

Knowsley Council