

# 6. HEDON: ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

February 2009

England  
& Lyle



EAST RIDING  
OF YORKSHIRE COUNCIL

## 6. HEDON: ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

<u>Contents</u>	<u>Page no.</u>
Baseline Situation.....	2
SWOT Analysis.....	3
Relationship with Local Strategies.....	4
Role and Function.....	4
Land Use Issues.....	4
Management.....	4
Issues and Recommendations.....	6
Monitoring and Review.....	8
Appendix – Proposed Hedon Town Centre Map	



## BASELINE SITUATION

The Study has made an assessment of the baseline situation, identifying where Hedon town centre is in terms of vitality and viability today. This is set out below to explain how Hedon town centre is performing at present and to provide an indication of how it could be improved in the future.

### General assessment

Hedon town centre is an historic town centre and is very compact and linear in form. The centre mostly comprises independent traders. These factors give it much of its distinctive character. The main foodstore is the Co-op supermarket which is located outside the town centre on the western edge of Hedon. Although the Co-op represents a relatively large development outside the town centre it meets a need which can not be accommodated in the historic town centre and this study has found that in terms of the overall vitality and viability of the centre the impact has not been negative. There is very little physical capacity for growth or change in the town centre because of the historic townscape.



The consultation workshop revealed the perception that the town centre is generally improving, particularly as a result of “*new housing developments in its hinterland, attracting greater footfall from a new population*”. These perceived improvements are evidenced in the findings of this study, with a low level of vacancies being maintained.

### Diversity of Main Town Centre Uses

Hedon is a traditional small market town with a reasonable diversity of uses. The town centre survey shows a total of 34 retail units and 28 service units, with shops representing 52% of all retail and commercial uses. This is higher than the national average of 44%. The centre has a high proportion of convenience goods shops and the number and type of shops is rated as fair for a small market town.

Service uses in the centre represent 43% of all units, which is below the national average. The representation of financial and professional services is good. Business and office premises are rated as fair because of the small size of the centre. The presence of pubs, cafes and restaurants and hotels is rated as poor and the evening economy is not vibrant. The level of cultural attractions including the Hedon Museum and the historic Parish Church are rated as fair. Provision of sports and leisure facilities are limited because of the size of the town.

### Retailer Representation

Boots pharmacy is the only multiple retailer in Hedon, and we rate this factor as poor. There appears to be a limited variety of specialist shops but the consultation workshop considered that the presence of independent shops to be one of the town’s strengths and thus this is rated as fair. A street market is held in Market Place on Wednesdays and this is rated as good. It adds to the attraction of the town for shoppers, although there is the perception that it does cause problems due to the reduction in available parking spaces immediately adjacent to some specialist shops. In this context because of the perceived impact on trade it was stated during in the consultation workshop:

*“It’s beyond me why they have to hold a market in the Market Place ... we may as well shut up shop on Market days.”*

Including the presence of the Co-op supermarket outside the town centre, the availability of food shopping is considered to be good. There is no enclosed

shopping in Hedon and so this factor is not rated. The study shows little evidence of recent investment by retailers. There is no information on retailer demand in the town. There are 4 charity shops in Hedon, which we rate as fair. There are no low quality discount shops and we rate this factor as good.

### Vacant Properties

There were only 3 vacant units in the town centre and the vacancy rate of 5% is good, just half of the national average at the time of the survey. However, the presence of vacant properties was expressed as being a matter of concern in the consultation:

*“Three commercial properties remain unfilled, this used to be unheard of.”*

However, it was since clarified that of the 3 units, one was not up for let, one had been vacant only 2 weeks and the third had been taken after a short vacancy.

### Commercial Performance

In terms of commercial performance, there is no information available on rental values or shopping centre yield in Hedon. This factor is therefore not assessed.

### Pedestrian Flows

Two visits were made on weekday afternoons to Hedon town centre. At the time of our visits, the volume of pedestrian flow in the town centre was moderate and we therefore rate this factor as fair for a town of Hedon’s size.

### Accessibility

Ease of movement for pedestrians, cyclists and the less mobile are all rated as good. Ease of access to the main attractions in the town centre from car parks and bus stops is good. There is free car parking along one side of St Augustine’s Gate and Market Place for 1 hour. The Iveson Close short stay car park (pictured right) offers 3 hours free parking. It is popular and tends to be full much of the time. There are local concerns about commuters using this car park all day and about parking restrictions not being enforced. There is said to be a particular shortage of parking spaces on market days and the consultation workshop felt that the market, especially the traders’ vehicles, could be better managed. Car parking generally in the centre and across study period however is rated as fair.



Hedon appears to be well served by public transport. The consultation workshop thought that public transport is good.

### Customer Views and Behaviour

In the household survey the number of respondents giving views on Hedon was very small and the results are not statistically reliable. However, from the results obtained there is an indication of a high level of satisfaction with the centre, which is rated as good. The main need for changes and improvements is in cheaper/easier car parking. Linked trips are not applicable in Hedon because there are no foodstores in the town centre that would attract main food shopping. Observations made for the study revealed no evidence of linked trips from the Co-op to the town centre.

### Safety and Security

On safety and security we regard the feeling of security in the town centre as good, helped by CCTV in Market Place and St Augustine's Gate. Concerns were raised in the consultation workshop with the level of drug users in the centre.

### Environmental Quality

Hedon has some attractive historic buildings within the centre. Overall, the physical appearance of retail and commercial properties is considered to be fair, which is the same as in the 2001 survey. The Parish Church is very attractive and is a distinctive and dominant landmark in the townscape. The consultation workshop thought the town has an attractive historic character. Overall cleanliness (litter and graffiti) and the general pedestrian environment are rated as good. There are few areas of open space and landscaping in the town centre, and this factor is rated as fair. There are toilets in Watmough's Arcade, which are not well maintained. The availability and condition of toilets is considered to be fair.

The distinctiveness of the town centre is derived from the combination of its historic character, the high proportion of independent retailers, weekly market and good level of services.

## SWOT ANALYSIS

### Strengths

- Hedon is a local centre with a good range of shops and town centre services
- The overall town centre vitality and viability is improving and there is a perception that it is doing well
- The Post Office and bank attract a lot of business to the town.
- The independent traders

- Rent and rates perceived to be fairly competitive and more affordable than in Hull.
- Low levels of retail vacancies
- The Weekly Market
- The historic character and ambience of the town centre
- Good public transport.

### Weaknesses

- Limited development opportunities in town centre
- Perception of weak evening economy
- Perceived quality of the public realm
- Parking problems and failure of pedestrianisation scheme
- Perception of high levels of drug abuse

### Opportunities

- Preparation of the Conservation Area Management Plan and implementation of its recommendations
- Set up a traders group

### Threats

- Lack of town centre development opportunities could limit growth

## RELATIONSHIP WITH LOCAL STRATEGIES

The implementation of the recommendations of this report should be done within the context of relevant initiatives and strategies. These include the draft Hedon Conservation Area Appraisal (2006). The special character and appearance of Hedon, (which caused it to be the first to be designated as a Conservation Area in Holderness), lies in its unique assembly of 18th and 19th

century properties within a constricted town centre into which relatively little 20th century development has intruded.

In terms of new development the Conservation Area Appraisal states that special regard should be given to ensure proposals preserve or enhanced the Conservation Area, recommending that they use matching materials and respect the scale and setting nearby buildings which make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. It is considered that a Conservation Area Management Plan would be a valuable vehicle for the enhancement of the historic environment in the town centre.



### ROLE AND FUNCTION

This study has identified Hedon as being one of the nine District Centres within the East Riding. This reflects the range and number of shops and services, total turnover, percentage of total turnover of the centre and its better than average level of vitality and viability of the centre.

Hedon has been identified in the study as having a particular relationship with Withernsea and Bilton for convenience shopping and Beverley and Hull for comparison shopping.

The town centre has a level of shops and services which are broadly commensurate with a settlement of its size, serving in effect a local or 'district' area. The function of the town centre is largely as a retail and service centre for the local area. This is anticipated to continue into the future.

The following case studies referred to in Section 2 are of particular relevance to Hedon in terms of best practice in market towns:

- Selsey High Street Vision and Action Plan
- Barnard Castle Vision.

### LAND USE ISSUES

It is considered that future development opportunities in Hedon are constrained by the historic environment which characterises the town centre and gives it its distinctive character.

There is evidence of recent refurbishment work to shop frontages at Watmough's Arcade (right), adjacent to the main Iveson Close car park. Car parking provision and management were identified strongly as significant issues facing the traders at the stakeholder workshop. To the north east of the town centre boundary, the site north of Magdalen Gate (adjacent to Public House and church rooms) may provide a suitable location for extended provision of town centre parking. However, the site may have ownership, utilities and protected landscaping constraints. In the meantime, the consultation workshop considered there to be scope to better regulate existing car parking at Iveson Close.



It is proposed to extend the Hedon town centre boundary as indicated on the plan to include St Augustine's Church (left), the Iveson Close car park and the Magdalen Gate car park. The primary shopping area comprises Market Place and parts of St Augustine's Gate. The primary shopping frontages are in the Market Place and the northern section of St Augustine's Gate.

**MANAGEMENT**

The overall management approach recommended for Hedon is to consolidate the existing town centre and to at least maintain the vitality and viability score at 3.3. This could be achieved in part by addressing the issues below and through monitoring town centre performance. The town centre is perceived to be doing very well and some of the problems, such as the parking issues identified result from this success. The principal objective should be to maintain at least the existing vitality and viability score and if possible improve upon it by addressing the identified weaknesses.

**ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

A significant number of issues have been identified as a result of the consultation and our investigations for the study. These must be seen however in the context that the centre scores reasonably well in respect of its vitality and viability in relation to other towns in the East Riding and the UK. Addressing the matters raised would lead to an improvement in its current position. The issues identified are set out below with our recommendations for action.

<b>Community</b>	
<i>Issues</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
The extension of CCTV should be considered as part of an overall review of community safety within the town centre. The increased community police presence, issuing ASBO's and CCTV has been successful.	That a review of community safety is undertaken with a view to tackle perceptions and investigate whether it would be necessary to extend CCTV coverage and other measures as appropriate.
Perception of significant problems of drug use.	Neighbourhood Action Teams should challenge traders' perceptions of drug issues and provide drug awareness training sessions.

Improvements are considered necessary to the provision of public toilets.	Pursue enhancement to the existing toilet provision and consider the use of existing commercial toilets by the public such as in pubs (a similar scheme has been funded by the Welsh Assembly <a href="http://www.wales.gov.uk">www.wales.gov.uk</a> ).
---	---

<b>Culture and Heritage</b>	
<i>Issues</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
Preserve and enhanced the special character and appearance of the Conservation Area	Conservation Area Management Plan would be a valuable vehicle for the enhancement of the historic environment in the town centre. Extend the Hedon town centre boundary as indicated on the plan to include St Augustine's Church and its setting

<b>Development</b>	
<i>Issues</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
Future development of town centre constrained by the historic environment and the centre's landlocked layout.	Explore potential opportunities to intensify existing sites to accommodate small scale development opportunities in the longer term. The Iveson Close car park/ Watmough's Arcade sites provide a notable opportunity but it would be imperative to retain car parking capacity.

6. HEDON: ISSUES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

<b>Economy</b>	
<i>Issues</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
<p><u>Evening economy</u> Consultation found that it was thought that the pub trade is not vibrant and there was an image problem following smoking ban with people outside of pubs etc.</p>	<p>Breweries and publicans are generally beginning to tackle the issue of smoking outside of pubs. Approaches however could be made to the Breweries and the Publicans to see what further can be done to address this perceived ‘image’ problem.</p> <p>A Pub Watch scheme could also be investigated in order to address the concerns expressed regarding anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Breweries and Publicans should be encouraged to invest in the centre.</p>
<p><u>Hedon Market</u> Whilst the Weekly Wednesday Market is considered to be a strength, some traders close on Wednesday PM as trade is affected by lack of parking due to the market.</p>	<p>An assessment should be made to find out what is actually taking place and to see if the issues raised are based in perception or are substantive issues needing to be tackled.</p>
<p><u>Evening Economy</u> Encourage a more café/ restaurant-orientated culture to attract people into the town centre, particularly in the evening after shops close. There is a small number of restaurants in the town centre</p>	<p>The drawing up of the recommended primary shopping areas has been done so as to safeguard the main retail frontages. Careful consideration needs to be given to where non retail town centre uses can be accommodated, given the relatively low number of retail units in the centre and the low vacancy rate. The encouragement should be directed to existing pubs etc.</p>

<p><u>Tourism</u> The consultation revealed the perception that tourist information facilities needed to be improved with signage to the town centre and provision of information within the centre and at the local seaport (ferry terminal) being identified.</p> <p>It was also thought that bus trips to Hedon should be marketed.</p>	<p>A brief review of the tourist information and marketing regarding Hedon should be undertaken to test the validity of the perception and to see if it is correct whether any improvement or further investment is needed.</p> <p>The consultation revealed that the Town Guide acts as an important tourist resource and the use of this should be maximised.</p>
<p>The lack of a traders association and opportunities for local traders to jointly advertise and promote the town was identified.</p>	<p>Set up a traders group.</p>

<b>Environment</b>	
<i>Issues</i>	<i>Recommendations</i>
<p><u>Public amenity</u> Improvements needed to public realm, ie unattractive street furniture in the wrong place etc</p>	<p>The state of the public realm should be assessed through the Conservation Area Appraisal and funds secured to remove surplus street furniture and replace that which is in need of upgrading.</p>
<p><u>Street cleanliness</u> Problems with litter from takeaways despite TC cleaning twice weekly.</p>	<p>Noted. Street cleansing regimes should be reviewed if there is an actual problem of litter to be addressed.</p>

Transport	
Issues	Recommendations
<p><u>Parking &amp; Public Transport</u> Pedestrianisation scheme tried previously but had its shortcomings</p>	<p>Noted. Lessons should be drawn from this in any future schemes.</p>
<p>Parking has been identified as being a significant matter of contention and it is considered to be borne out of the success of the town centre.</p> <p>The following matters were raised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional car parking is required. Car park provision has not kept pace with the residential developments in the town.</li> <li>• Need to regulate existing parking and provide additional fringe parking for workers and disabled parking. The future prosperity of Hedon town centre is linked to ease of parking as the Co-op supermarket on the edge of the town provides 200 free and ample parking spaces.</li> </ul>	<p>It is understood that the Town Council was embarking on a parking study, which should be able to substantiate as to whether there is a problem which needs to be addressed.</p> <p>It is considered that the present parking problems perceived or otherwise, are indeed in part born of success and from the development of the town. It is necessary therefore to undertake an assessment to see whether further action is required.</p> <p>This assessment could also consider the matters raised in the consultation. For example, the provision of delivery spaces and disabled spaces and examine whether any new car park provision may be needed, if management measures are inadequate in freeing up short term spaces. The issue of commuter parking in short stay spaces needs also to be assessed and the promotion of other parking areas as long stay should be investigated as necessary.</p> <p>The use of public transport should be examined to see if this can help to ease parking problems.</p>

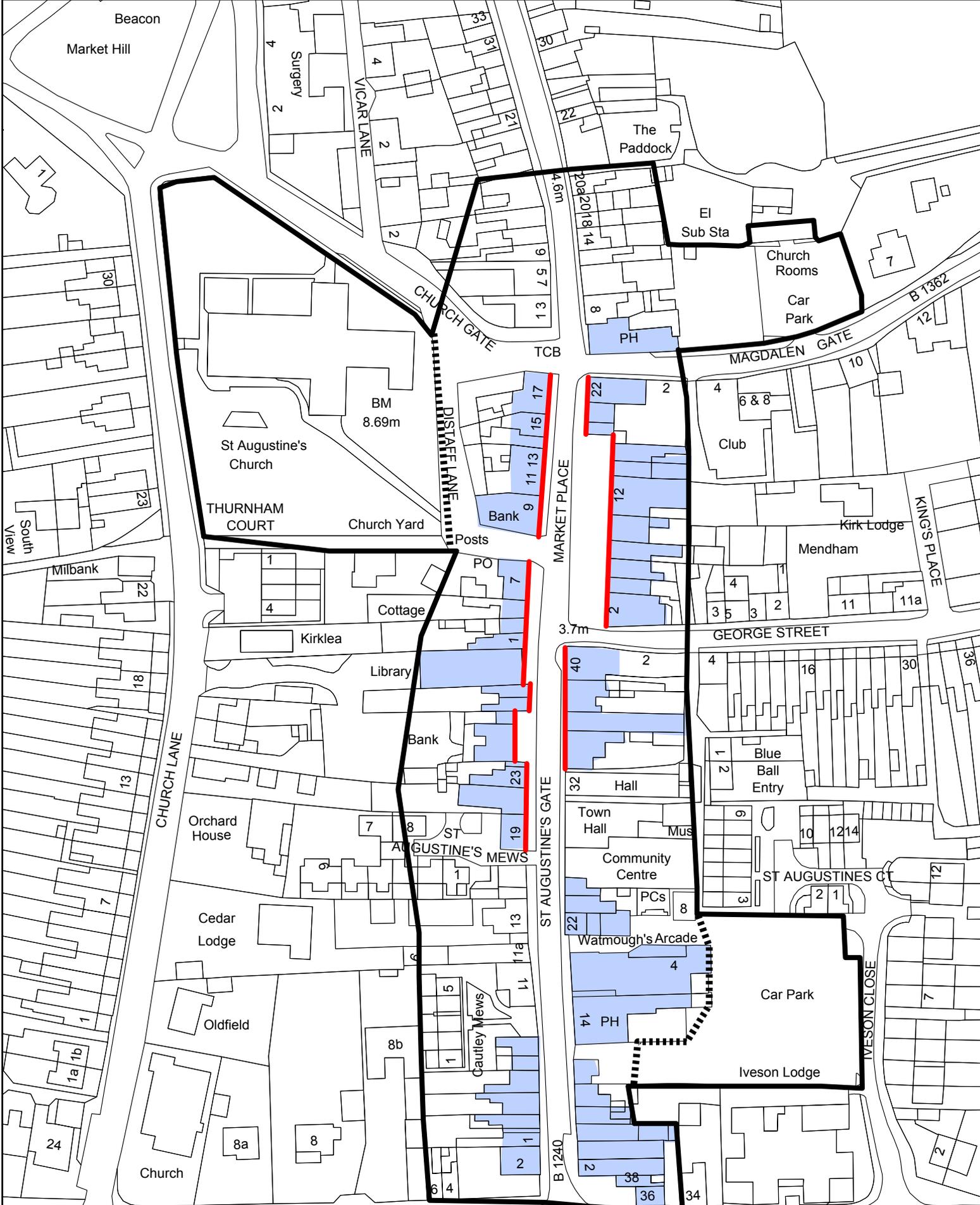
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parking restrictions are not enforced causing huge parking issues</li> <li>• Short stay car parks are used by people parking all day.</li> <li>• Disabled bays and delivery bays required</li> </ul>	<p>These actions should be coordinated with the Local Transport Plan.</p>
---	---

**MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The performance of the town centre should be monitored on an annual basis with the following key indicators being monitored so that any trends can be identified and acted upon promptly, against triggers to be developed by the East Riding of Yorkshire Council. The specific areas to be monitored are:

- Changes in the number and type of town centre units
- Number of multiple retailers against the existing baseline
- Number and type of independent shops
- Changes in retail floorspace
- Number of charity shops against the existing baseline
- Vacancy rate against the prevailing national average and an assessment of vacant properties to see if there are any long term vacant unit
- Number of car parking spaces
- Number of cars parked (particularly Iveson Close car park)
- Pedestrian counts in key locations (including between Market Place and car park)
- Number of people using the market (traders and customers)
- Physical appearance of properties (average score)
- Annual survey to monitor number of people visiting the town centre

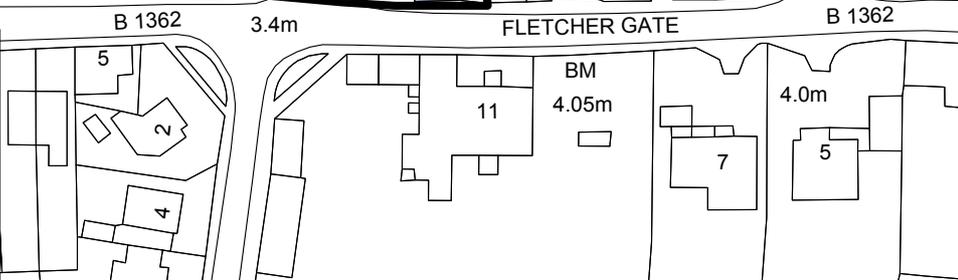
**APPENDIX 1: PROPOSED HEDON TOWN CENTRE MAP**



# Hedon

Scale 1:1250

© Crown Copyright 2008. All Rights Reserved.  
 East Riding of Yorkshire Council 100023383



Map Key:



Primary Shopping Area



Primary Shopping Frontage



Proposed Town Centre Boundary



Existing Town Centre Boundary (where applicable)



Potential Development Opportunity