



**EAST RIDING**  
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**TOWN CENTRES AND  
RETAIL STUDY**

**Volume 3:  
Market Towns  
Issues and Recommendations**

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In March 2008 England & Lyle were appointed, as sub-consultants to Pell Frischmann, to undertake a Town Centres and Retail Study for East Riding of Yorkshire Council (ERYC) under the Council's Framework Agreement with consultants. The study is jointly commissioned by the Council's Forward Planning and Economic Development Services. The overall aim of the study is to provide a robust and detailed basis for promoting the future prosperity, vitality and viability of the towns/service centres in the East Riding. The study reviews existing town centre/service centres and provides evidence to inform the preparation of the East Riding Local Development Framework (LDF) and to develop a forward thinking development strategy for town centres in the East Riding.

1.2 The results of the study are contained in three reports. Volume 1 is the Main Study Report, supported by Appendices in Volume 2. The present report is Volume 3 which focuses on Issues and Recommendations for Market Town Centres in the East Riding.

1.3 Part 1 of this report sets out the Context for the Issues and Recommendations. It provides some background on market towns research and good practice nationally, highlighting lessons to be learnt from retail and town centre strategies which have been successful in other parts of the country. A summary is then made of the key issues from the findings of the Volume 1 report relating to the nine market towns in the East Riding. These key issues have been addressed in the more detailed assessment of Issues and Recommendations for each town.

1.4 Part 2 of the report considers Issues and Recommendations for each of the market towns – Beverley, Driffield, Hedon, Hornsea, Howden, Market Weighton, Pocklington, Snaith and Withernsea. Whilst the individual Issues and Recommendations reports have been developed specifically for each centre, they have been developed within the context of the hierarchy and the roles and functions identified within the study so that the development of these

centres is complementary and will help to strengthen town centre provision within the East Riding of Yorkshire as a whole. The role of a centre is concerned with its position in the hierarchy; the function of a centre is concerned with its local distinctiveness.

1.5 Beverley and Driffield are Principal Town Centres in the hierarchy; the other towns, with the exception of Snaith, are District Centres acting as local service centres; Snaith has a more localised role as a Local Centre.

1.6 All of the Issues and Recommendations reports have a common structure and content which is outlined in Section 3 of this report.

### 2. MARKET TOWNS RESEARCH AND GOOD PRACTICE

#### Study Brief

2.1 The Study Brief notes that the East Riding has a network of market and larger towns. Each town has a unique character and acts as a service centre for the town and a rural hinterland. The vitality and viability of the town centres is seen as a key element for developing the East Riding's competitiveness as a business and visitor destination and as an attractive, well-serviced place to live. Pressures from developments, changes in lifestyle and competition from larger retail areas and the Internet have, and will have, an increasing impact on the vitality and viability of the towns. The independent retail and leisure sector is regarded as an important element of the offer in all the towns. Equally, the requirements of national and regional multiples need to be accommodated in ways that preserve the character of the existing town centres and are sensitive to local heritage and Conservation Area objectives.

2.2 The Council wishes to identify a role for each town and a range of measures for each town/service centre which will help to maintain and develop the role identified, whilst avoiding an undue detrimental effect on the neighbouring towns.

2.3 The overall aim of the Town Centres and Retail Study is to provide a robust and detailed basis from which the Council, with the Local Strategic Partnership, can develop a proactive, plan-led approach to promoting the future prosperity, vitality and viability of the towns/service centres in East Riding. It should:

1. Identify other comparable towns in other parts of the UK and identify examples of best practices where retail and town centre strategies have been successful and lessons that could be learnt for East Riding's market towns.
2. Make recommendations on how the management of the town centres could be developed over time to meet their role and function e.g.

developing a specialist or a niche offer, improvements to streetscape and urban design, levels and types of business support and town centre management issues (including car parking provision and signage and advice on the management of the evening / night time economy where relevant).

2.4 The Brief indicates that recommendations should identify complementary strategies that will be beneficial to the East Riding of Yorkshire. Recommendations should be made in the form of a prioritised action plan with quantifiable measures identified appropriate to the size and function of the town and potential resources available.

2.5 During the course of this study it has been agreed with Council Officers that it is not appropriate for this report to try to develop detailed action plans for individual market towns. It is beyond the scope of the study to deal with all the issues and consultations that would need to be covered. The focus of the Brief for this report is to identify the main issues and set out broad recommendations for each town that can be used by the Council and its partners in developing action plans in the future.

#### Regeneration of Market Towns

2.6 Market towns have become the focus of many of the initiatives that have been developed in town centre regeneration in the UK in the last 20 years. The trends and challenges are well recognised and have been summarised in the Trends section of the Volume 1 report. Town centres are crucial to creating sustainable communities and the Government is committed to developing and supporting successful, thriving, safer and inclusive communities, both urban and rural. The Government's key objective for town centres is to promote their vitality and viability.

2.7 Market towns make a significant contribution to the economic, social and cultural life of the UK. They are a crucial element of rural life. They provide the hub for employment, retail, professional and public services for

communities living in and around the town. They also offer a centre for community activities, leisure and tourism. Market towns enjoy a number of strengths and advantages. They often have a high quality built environment and strong historical roots. Many have a core of concerned local residents who are willing to take action. Each market town is unique in its character, each using its strengths to overcome the challenges posed by social and economic change.

2.8 Some traditional town centres, including market towns are prospering but others are in decline. Ways need to be found to revitalise declining centres. Success means retaining their roles as the heart of their community and important sources of jobs, as well as shops and services. Some towns have found ways of improving their shopping offer, diversifying their attractions, coping with the car, creating a pride of place, and resourcing local initiatives. Experience shows that improving quality rather than simply expanding the range of attractions is the key to successful town centre regeneration.

2.9 A number of bodies and organisations have been formed to promote town centre regeneration with a particular emphasis on traditional centres including market towns.

- Action for Market Towns is a membership organisation dedicated to promoting the vitality and viability of small towns through an integrated approach including providing services and advice for market towns, and supporting a network for market towns nationally.
- The Association of Town Centre Management promotes management of town centres by the public and private sectors, and has developed an extensive knowledge bank of good practice initiatives.
- The English Historic Towns Forum promotes contact between local authorities and other agencies involved in management of historic towns and cities. It also researches and produces good practice guidance.

2.10 Local authorities have an important role in town centre regeneration as

part of the planning process and through the implementation of regeneration projects. This Section of the report refers to some of the ways in which local authorities have been able to achieve success in promoting market towns.

### **Market Towns in the Yorkshire and Humber Region**

2.11 Yorkshire Forward's Renaissance Market Towns (RMT) programme was launched in 2002 as a 10-year plan to support sustainable rural towns in Yorkshire and Humber. As one of Yorkshire Forward's flagship projects, RMT aims to ensure that the region's 'rural capitals' are places where people want and are able to live, work, invest and visit. The objective of the RMT programme is to generate sustainable development through:

- development of 'Town Teams' to drive the RMT process forward, and
- masterplans for the implementation of projects.

2.12 To date the RMT programme has focused on more than 20 market towns in the Region. In the East Riding the programme includes the Howdenshire area, comprising Howden and Gilberdyke.

2.13 Beverley, Driffield and Withernsea benefitted from support under various rounds of the Government's Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) scheme. In Beverley, Driffield and Withernsea dedicated support to the Renaissance Partnerships ceased at the end of the SRB programmes, but further funding for 3 years was secured in August 2006 from Yorkshire Forward and East Riding of Yorkshire Council through the Community Infrastructure project and three Renaissance Coordinators (2.6 full-time equivalent posts) were employed. Similarly Hornsea and Market Weighton benefitted from inclusion in the pilot Market Towns Initiative programme (MTI) but dedicated support to the partnerships ceased at the end of the programme. Further funding for 3 years was secured through the Market Towns Renaissance project (MTR) and three Renaissance Coordinators (2.6 full-time equivalent posts) were employed to support Hornsea, Market Weighton and also Howdenshire. The Renaissance Coordinators' role is to

support and develop sustainable local partnerships to develop long term town/area Renaissance plans, with a portfolio of prioritised projects with defined delivery mechanisms and lead the delivery of the action plans.

2.14 Yorkshire Forward has commissioned research to inform the RMT programme. One of these research reports, published in February 2008, assesses the economic performance of ‘rural capitals’ in the Yorkshire and Humber Region. It examined 30 rural settlements in the region to identify their functions and their impacts in relation to how well they perform in fulfilling these functions. Four of these settlements are in the East Riding – Pocklington, Driffield, Hornsea and Withernsea. Settlements have a variety of functions, depending on their characteristics. Some of the key findings are that:

- There are a number of threats to rural settlements including a decline in their role as economic centres and a decline of the high street and traditional retail services.
- Some settlements risk becoming dormitory towns where key services are not economically viable. Others may become too dependent on visitors.
- It would be desirable for rural settlements to become more self-contained in terms of employment.

2.15 Yorkshire Forward has also commissioned research on car parking. A detailed report was produced by consultants in 2007 on how car parking can be managed in the Region’s market towns. It recognises that parking is one of the key issues facing renaissance market towns. The key findings are that:

- providing parking is a customer service, providing good access to a town for residents, workers, shoppers and other visitors
- parking is an asset which needs to be managed so that spaces are made available for customers when and where is appropriate for their needs
- the relationship between parking and economic performance is weak, but generally positive; it is not the case that making changes to the way parking is managed will adversely affect a town’s economy.

- better management of parking can enable more productive use of (sometimes very limited) public space within towns
- parking management can be a very powerful tool in order to manage parking effectively
- there is a need to first understand the town’s needs
- parking management should be part of a broader integrated approach to transport
- public and stakeholder consultation is a good thing.

### **National Research on Market Towns**

2.16 Research carried out for the former Countryside Agency on assessing the Market Towns Initiative (MTI), published in 2004, concluded that in many market towns across England the MTI had acted as a catalyst, drawing together disparate groups and activities, and provided the tools to engage the local community and a wide range of partners. It created a sense of identity, helping to instil a feeling of pride and sense of purpose within the community. The key lessons learned from the research are as follows:

- Good relationships between partners, agencies and the community are important.
- The community should be consulted and involved.
- Learn from the experience of other market towns.
- Expectations should be managed and limited.
- There exists within market towns the skills, experience and commitment of local people to take a lead in the regeneration of a town.

2.17 Other research concerned with town centre regeneration, rather than market towns specifically, highlights lessons from current practice where local authorities have adopted a positive approach to development and town centre management. Seven aspects of performance are identified.

1. A shared vision between local authorities, traders, property owners and the community.
2. A strategy for town centre revitalisation (through the planning system).
3. A balance of projects and programmes (short and longer term).
4. An appropriate partnership or champion.
5. Using public funds to make an impact (e.g. in shopfronts and public realm improvements).
6. Effective organisation and co-ordination between agencies.
7. Monitoring results.

2.18 A report by Business in the Community in 2004 entitled ‘Putting down roots in market towns’ highlights the fact that the role of business has been fundamental to the health of market towns for centuries. Market towns are the very heart of a wider rural community, bringing business, people and activities together to create prosperity and a real sense of identity and belonging. In recent years some market towns have been in decline for various reasons ranging from the centralisation of business to the overall decline in the agricultural economy. But this decline can be reversed so that market towns can re-establish themselves as vibrant and vital centres in the rural economy. The report includes several case studies on business and the local economy, the role of the local community and improving the local environment.

2.19 A desk review of several articles and seminar papers on issues in town centre regeneration shows a number of common themes that characterise centres which have been successful in attracting shoppers and visitors.

- Investment in new developments and improvements to ensure that centres maintain their market share.
- Creating opportunities for town centre development and growth.
- Diversity of the retail and leisure offer, especially independent shops.
- In larger centres retail circuits can have benefits in terms of footfall and changing shopper behaviour.
- Good access by car and parking.
- Strong town centre management.

- Creating an image for the town centre.
- Attractive public realm.
- Attractive evening economy.

2.20 In 2005 the former ODPM published a report entitled ‘How to Manage Town Centres’. The report deals with strategic management and tackling issues. It states that a strategic approach to managing town and city centres is essential for making them attractive and safe, and for sustaining their vitality and viability. It requires commitment from many locals and public authorities, businesses and individuals to work towards a shared vision for their town centres. The following steps are recommended:

1. Have a shared vision and strategy for delivery.
2. Work with partners.
3. Encourage responsible trading.
4. Change behaviours of the minority.
5. Deploy reassuring presence (community safety officers and wardens).
6. Get people home safely (public transport and taxis).
7. Tackle street fouling.
8. Reduce litter, noise and commercial waste.
9. Prevent illegal fly-posting.
10. Encourage management innovations and deploy good practice.

2.21 An aspect of market town improvements that has been raised by the Council during the course of the study is “distinctiveness”. This has become more topical since the publication of the New Economics Foundation’s report on ‘Clone Town Britain: the loss of local identity on the nation’s high streets’. Market towns can be distinctive places to live, often with a fine heritage and historic buildings and the potential to act as a centre of cultural activity. Recent studies on distinctiveness have highlighted some key features in making a centre distinctive:

- A good balance of multiples and independents. Independents and specialist shops are particularly important in smaller centres.
- Provision of food and drink outlets.

- Absence of charity shops and cheap discount shops.
- Physical appearance of the centre including distinctive street furniture.
- Attractive buildings including maintenance of upper floors.
- Short stay parking for shoppers and visitors.

### **The Future of Market Towns**

2.22 A study commissioned by Yorkshire Forward's RMT programme and published in January 2008 considers 'Market towns of the future'. It aims to identify the opportunities and threats facing market towns as a result of worldwide, national and regional challenges over the next 25 years. The study is based on a broad understanding of the place that market towns hold within the Yorkshire and Humber Region, together with their economic and social role. It takes account of the main characteristics of different forms of settlements and the ways in which they depend on each other, and investigates the likely effects of some of the main causes of change. It takes a view on the influences of social trends, climate change, developments in information and communications, globalisation, security issues and shifts in styles in the way governments make and deliver policies.

2.23 The study accepts that the main causes of change are as follows:

- Climate change
- The decline in agriculture reversing itself
- Towns and cities becoming more dependent on each other
- Young adults continuing to be educated in cities
- Further developments in technology
- Some people continuing to be more disadvantaged than others
- Environmental migrants, economic migrants and refugees making areas more culturally varied
- Genetics becoming a more advanced part of food production
- Increasing tensions between the world's communities
- An ageing population.

2.24 An article in The Times on 21 November 2006 is headed 'How market towns will be saved by the Internet'. It states that "climate change will be one of the main drivers for change in the workplace over the next decade, restricting the freedom to travel and raising the cost of transporting goods. Companies, especially global corporations, will have physical economies that are much more local, but with a superimposed knowledge economy that is free from the limitations of geography. People will move to places that offer the facilities they need or aspire to. Having a good range of schools, shops and healthcare facilities within affordable range will become vital, leading to the resurgence of the old market towns as hubs for the local physical economy."

2.25 "Each market town will have a specialisation to attract residents, such as a top theatre, a world-class sporting venue or an artists' colony. This process is already emerging, with towns such as Ludlow becoming famous for its food, or Brighton for its night life. Most market towns already have railway stations, which will become the preferred method of long-distance travel. Most are also historic centres of food production, which have been left high and dry by the supermarket revolution — but already the localisation process is starting with the rapid growth of farmers' markets selling local produce."

2.26 "But market towns will only appear to be local economic centres in the physical world. Most of the global economy will by then be operating in the virtual world, with practically all commerce taking place online. It would be a mistake, however, to believe that all the people labouring at their computers in their home offices will be engineers, marketing people or creative types. Many will be working in a distributed sweatshop, answering sales calls or providing technical help. Others will continue to travel to work (but increasingly by bicycle or shared transport) to offices in the market town that act as nodes in an international company."

2.27 Although the Yorkshire Forward study takes a very long term view and develops various scenarios based on these factors, it is relevant to the future of market towns in the East Riding because it shows that the context for making changes and improvements in market towns is changing. It shows the need to

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take a flexible view of the issues in individual towns. Similarly the Times article is futuristic but it illustrates that market towns will continue to change and adapt to changes in the economy and technology. These changes could be beneficial to towns in the East Riding, reducing the need to commute to larger towns and cities and increasing demand for local services and facilities.

### Lessons from Good Practice

2.28 The final part of the Section draws some lessons from good practice based on studies and reports concerned with market town regeneration and projects in different parts of the UK. The findings are summarised below and comments are made afterwards.

<i>Somerset Market Towns Forum – promoting market towns</i>	
Events organisation	Importance of successful community-led events
Access to the countryside and linear routes	Priority to countryside access and pedestrian and cycle travel
Tourism and marketing	Locally organised groups to attract visitors
Interpretation projects and town trails	Interpretation panels and visitor information
Physical image of the town	Enhancing the town's image to visitors
Facilities	Information for visitors (local information centres)
Available support	Support from local authorities

<i>Market Town Regeneration Strategy for the Forest of Dean</i>	
Strengths	Independent retailers; strong community support; desire to improve centres; local partnerships; free car parking available.
Weaknesses	Retail leakage; declining pedestrian flows; limited range of shops; lack of multiples; neglected buildings and shop fronts; traffic problems.
Opportunities	Retailer support; community interest; attractive environmental setting; private sector investment; opportunity to recover retail leakage.
Threats	Success of surrounding towns; competition from supermarkets; lack of investment in the public realm; commuters shop outside the local area.

<i>Sussex 5 Towns Network</i>	
Accessibility	Promote train links to London and road links between towns
Independent retailers	Promote diversity of retail offer
Tourism	Seaside experience; coastal heritage; galleries and craft shops; café culture
Public realm	Public spaces as focal points and locations for events
Leisure facilities	Restaurants, bars, cafes; children's facilities; indoor leisure attractions.
Connectivity	Improve linkages between town centres and beaches
Linked trips	Integrated approach to car parking

<i>Chichester District Council – Selsey High Street Vision and Action Plan</i>	
Heritage and culture	Promoting Selsey's heritage to visitors; creating a welcome to Selsey; events programme; potential of displaying local art; Visit Selsey Initiative
Vibrant Retail Economy	Renovation and restoration of traditional shop frontages; improve retail offer to serve local market; marketing and promotion of shops; develop 'retail manifesto'; support and encourage retail start-ups; support businesses in High Street
Improve and enhance the physical environment	Slow down traffic and create a safer environment; undertake design statement; regenerate key sites in High Street; develop landscaping scheme; improve signage; parking

<i>Middlewich Vision Action Plan (Cheshire)</i>	
Environmental improvements	Enhance canal corridor; promote cycle and walking routes; new access to countryside; restore derelict sites and buildings; enhance public realm; improve appearance of town gateways
Transport and accessibility	Reduce through-traffic; improve pedestrian safety and flow; improve access to bus station; support re-opening of rail line; improve access for pedestrians and cyclists
Economy	Regenerate town centre in daytime and evening; promote and develop tourism; support existing businesses.
Social and community	Develop facilities and services for local community e.g. public space, leisure & recreation

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<b><i>Northallerton RMT (North Yorkshire)</i></b>	
Managed workspace	Potential project to provide a managed workspace facility
Town Hall lighting and town square enhancements	Improved and more efficient lighting and improvements to front of Town hall area
Improved signage	Enhanced gateway signage and improved pedestrian signage to aid navigation around town centre
Voluntary sector	Provide high quality town centre facility for a range of voluntary and community sector organisations

<b><i>Helmsley, Kirkbymoorside and Pickering RMT (North Yorkshire)</i></b>	
Helmsley	Old Railway Line Conservation Project; regeneration of Helmsley Sports and Community facility; improvements to car park at Arts Centre
Kirkbymoorside	Improvements to roundabout on A170; hanging baskets; improvements to Ryedale View playing area; public footpath improvements; new Kirkbymoorside Training Facility
Pickering	Create accessible path around Pickering Castle; feasibility study for extension to business park; extreme adventure and community park

<b><i>Upper Calder Valley RMT (West Yorkshire)</i></b>	
Hebden Bridge	Pedestrianisation of town centre
Todmorden	Create new marketplace at Bramsche Square to stimulate economic regeneration of town and hinterland; create new public space through demolition and new public realm
Sowerby Bridge	New mixed use development at Copley Valley; develop new market in the heart of the town
Mytholmroyd	Develop Ted Hughes heritage project

### Action for Market Towns

2.29 Action for Market Towns (AMT) is a membership organisation dedicated to promoting vibrant and viable small towns through an integrated

approach. This is achieved by providing services and advice for market towns through membership, supporting effective self-help in market towns through regional networks and serving as an authoritative voice for all market towns at a national level.

2.30 AMT recognises that small towns are critical employment and service centres for the countryside, and they serve up to a quarter of the nation's population. Yet these towns face many challenges - loss of services due to centralisation, out-of-town shopping, and car parking and traffic congestion. All are obstacles to prosperity that threaten vitality and viability.

#### ***Haslemere and Villages Rewards Scheme, Surrey***

Launched in November 2005, Haslemere Rewards is a loyalty card scheme supporting and promoting Haslemere and its villages' unique mix of small independent businesses. The scheme, using smart card technology, offers a branded loyalty card to independent businesses that wouldn't normally be able to afford a conventional loyalty scheme – such as the 'Nectar' card. Customers are encouraged to shop locally and see Haslemere businesses giving something extra. There are over 4,000 Haslemere Rewards cards. The success of the scheme is dependent on effective promotion and this has been done with flyers, newsletters, window stickers, point of sale material, a website and use of press releases and editorial.

#### ***Sleaford Business Improvement District (BID), Lincolnshire***

Business Improvement Districts are relatively new to the UK. Because they involve an extra levy on business rates, the process of setting them up involves detailed consultation and business planning culminating in a vote by the business community itself. Sleaford was the first market town in the country to successfully establish a Business Improvement District (BID) covering the whole town. In Sleaford, the main benefits of a BID were seen as improved security in the town, dealing with car parking problems and promotion of the town itself. The BID has established a town warden security patrol and a zero-tolerance business watch scheme, as well as buying the Active crime Intelligence System (ACIS). On the promotion front, a coordinated campaign has been devised for promoting the town with the strapline 'Another good reason to visit Sleaford'.

### ***Barnard Castle Vision, County Durham***

Barnard Castle Vision aims to deliver a 20 year programme of investment that will create a town that is open to change, eager to experiment, respectful of its past and ambitious for its future. Extensive local consultations have resulted in initiatives including securing funding for streetscape and transport strategies for the town together with detailed site appraisals of potential development sites; discussions to bring improved healthcare facilities and higher education delivery to the town, and the establishment of a retail distinctiveness guild to build the town's reputation for independent retailing.

### ***Richmond Heritage Partnership Scheme, North Yorkshire***

The Richmond Heritage Partnership Scheme is bringing new vitality to Richmond and boosting the economy by facilitating the restoration and repair of empty spaces to provide office units above shops along with the restoration of shop fronts, the repair of the historic fabric of buildings, and the enhancement of the townscape through a programme of environmental improvement. The issue of redundant empty spaces, particularly 'over the shop' premises is common to most market towns. Richmondshire Swale Valley Community Initiative (RSVCI) identified that there were a number of redundant first floor properties in Richmond town centre that were locked into a cycle of 'disuse and decay' which contributed to an overall image of decline and a general rundown character in the town centre. Through the award of grants, this innovative scheme has been a great success and has pointed a way in which other market towns could improve the vitality of their town centres. There has been a reduction in vacant units in the town centre and the character of the town has been made more attractive for both residents and visitors. Another project in Richmond that has been a notable success is the initiative by the Richmondshire Building Preservation Trust to restore and convert the redundant Grade II\* station buildings for use as a cinema, restaurant, community meeting rooms, offices and commercial units.

### **Association for Town Centre Management**

2.31 The Association for Town Centre Management has produced good practice guides for several regions in Britain showcasing examples of initiatives and projects which have won awards for their contribution to improving town centres. Some examples which are particularly relevant to market towns are as follows.

### ***Maldon Shoppers Loyalty Card Scheme, Essex***

Shoppers Loyalty Card scheme involving independent retailers. The scheme offers immediate cash discounts on all purchases in participating outlets, based on the possession of an electronic 'smart' shop and save card. Shoppers pay an initial fee and discounts increase according to their level of spend and frequency of purchases at each outlet. Retailers set their own discounts using a rented stand-alone card reader. A key factor is the absence of any requirement for users to record their personal details or to amass 'loyalty points.' The scheme has highlighted the benefits of a co-operative approach across the independent sector. It provides evidence that by working together town centre management and local independent traders can have a real impact on retaining local spending in the face of competition from larger centres.

### ***Dumbarton Town Centre Action Plan***

This project, managed by Dumbarton Town Centres Initiative, in partnership with West Dumbartonshire Council and Scottish Enterprise, is delivering a strategic and holistic vision for the town through a series of themed programmes to improve public amenities and enhance the physical environment. Works have included shop front facelifts, extended car parking, improved street lighting, new signage, restoration of listed buildings and landscaping. The Action Plan has brought a unified focus to the regeneration of Dumbarton. The public realm improvements have enhanced key pedestrian routes and improved disabled access. Together with better safety and security, they have contributed to a feeling of positive change that has acted as a catalyst for private sector interest and investment.

### *Sunday Farmers Market in Falkirk*

The Falkirk Farmers Market was established to satisfy growing public demand and maximise the benefits for local trade by providing a major new attraction on Sundays, traditionally the town centre's quietest period. Working with Falkirk Council and the town's two main shopping centres, a major marketing campaign was implemented to promote the event, leading to a highly successful launch. The two shopping centres experienced an increase in footfall and many individual stores reported increased turnover. The market has now become a key ingredient in the continued upsurge in Sunday shopping in Falkirk, generating a sustained increase in town centre sales that has led to more Sunday opening and better co-ordination of opening times.

### *Safe Nights Out in Banbury (Oxfordshire)*

This award recognises the achievements of town centre management in identifying key issues, creating an action plan and establishing a multi-agency working group to deliver a range of safer socialising initiatives in Banbury. A key issue was the creation of an alcohol-free zone in the town centre, which has proven a highly effective way to eliminate problems with antisocial drinkers and reduce unsightly and potentially dangerous alcohol-related refuse, such as cans and bottles. A safer transport pilot scheme has also demonstrated the value of a night bus service to alleviate the risk associated with large numbers of people congregating in the centre late at night.

### *Refurbishing Worcester's High Street*

This project was triggered by an audit conducted by the City Centre Forum, in consultation with retailers and other key stakeholders, which identified the need for improvements in the city's High Street. One of the earliest pedestrianisation schemes in England, ease of access and circulation had become impaired by the effects of subsequent shopping development and increased visitor numbers and there was a clear demand for improvements in line with the latest advances in design and construction techniques. The new scheme aimed to simplify the overall design, renovate, re-site and replace street furniture, meet the need for level access to shops and businesses and replace over-large trees.

2.32 Examples of regeneration of market towns and larger historic centres can also be found across continental Europe. As in Britain there has been a new urban retail renaissance in much of Western Europe encouraged by strong public/private partnerships which see developers, local councils and municipalities working closely together. Some of the key features of European case studies are:

- Sustainable development
- Creating attractive centres that are accessible on foot, by car and by public transport
- Emphasis on conservation and restoration of historic centres
- Re-use of historic buildings
- Building on culture and heritage traditions
- Revitalising the town centre as the retail core
- Encouraging outdoor activities such as the café culture
- Improving the public realm and the pedestrian environment
- Creating focal town squares
- Lively and high quality street markets

2.33 The common themes in the case studies we have reviewed are:

- Sustainable developments for pedestrians and cyclists to make centres more accessible and to improve linkages within centres
- Creating a safer and more pleasant pedestrian environment within centres
- Attracting more visitors to the towns
- Improving the retail offer, especially independents
- Improving the evening economy
- Improving the physical appearance of the towns, including shop fronts and other buildings
- Environmental improvements, especially high quality public realm and landscaping
- Taking advantage of heritage and cultural assets
- Local community projects

2.34 It should also be noted that market towns are often in competition with other. They have overlapping hinterlands and catchments. This is certainly the case with the market towns in the East Riding. Therefore initiatives in one town could increase its attraction relative to other neighbouring towns. A comprehensive strategy is needed so that improvements in one market town do not have unintentional consequences for other towns.

2.35 The next Section takes forward these lessons from research and good practice and applies them to the findings of the analysis of issues in the East Riding market towns.

### 3. OVERVIEW OF KEY ISSUES IN MARKET TOWNS

#### Identification of Issues

3.1 The focus of this report on Issues and Recommendations is to prepare a concise review of the Issues in each of the market towns in the East Riding and to make recommendations to address these issues. The identification of key issues comes from the assessments in the Volume 1 main report as summarised below.

1. The study has included a number of elements. Firstly the existing situation in respect of each of the town centres has been reviewed. Community consultation has been undertaken with workshops held in each centre between the end of May and the beginning of July 2008 with members of the local community. Detailed household telephone surveys were also commissioned from a specialist market research company to collect evidence about shopping patterns and the use of the centres and attitudes towards them.
2. An assessment of the 'health' of each of the centres has also been made looking at a range of factors. England & Lyle has been able to draw upon the previous retail studies that it has undertaken for the Council to look at how the centres have performed over time.
3. The centres have also been examined in terms of their wider role and function in the East Riding and to see how they relate to each other. This has allowed a hierarchy of centres in the East Riding to be drawn up and the relationships between the function of the towns to be identified.
4. Finally, all of the collated information and the assessments have been drawn together in this report which considers the issues and makes a number of recommendations.

3.2 The study identifies the role and function of each of the market towns and this report looks at how these role and functions can be achieved and sustained in the future. It sets out practical and deliverable recommendations to strengthen the town centre retail and leisure 'offer'.

3.3 The study also provides evidence to inform the preparation of the East Riding Local Development Framework (LDF) and to develop a forward thinking development strategy for town centres in the East Riding.

3.4 The Council has highlighted a number of specific points it would like to be covered in the Issues and Recommendations reports.

- What is the local distinctive function of each town? e.g.
  - what is the function of each town within the hierarchy of centres?
  - do towns have a tourist/leisure/commuter function etc for only the local area or beyond?
  - are these functions appropriate, desirable and sustainable?
  - how does the function fit within the context of the neighbouring towns, the rest of East Riding and national and regional trends?
  - should these functions be supported and developed or an alternative function proposed?
- The role and function of each town should directly influence what issues are identified as a concern and then what the recommendations are.
- The report should contain evidence from other comparable towns and identify examples of best practice where retail and town centre strategies have been successful and lessons that could be learnt for East Riding's market towns.
- Where there is a difference between expert and local opinions, this should be clearly stated. Where the issues are local perceptions, recommendations should be framed to address the perception (e.g. through marketing or signage rather than increasing provision).
- Where workshop/survey comments are included as direct quotes (or paraphrased) the report should state whether the evidence agrees with these statements.
- The key indicators for monitoring should contain town issue specific indicators that focus on identified issues.

3.5 Section 2 of this report has given examples of lessons from the experience of comparable market towns elsewhere in the UK. We have

examined a number of studies and reports concerned with market town regeneration and projects to highlight best practice where retail and town centre strategies have been successful and lessons that could be learnt for East Riding's market towns.

3.6 To assist in understanding the Issues and Recommendations reports, the table in the Volume 1 report setting out the schedule of Health Check indicators is also included as an Appendix in this Volume 3 report.

3.7 This report also includes maps of all the market towns indicating the existing and proposed town centre boundaries, the identified primary shopping area, primary shopping frontages and any development opportunities.

3.8 Details on how the consultation workshops were conducted and the number of participants are included as an Appendix in the Volume 2 report.

#### **Structure and Content of the Issues and Recommendations Reports**

3.9 From our assessments in Volume 1, the background review of market towns research and good practice in Section 2 of this report and our discussions with the Council, the outline of the structure and content of the Issues and Recommendations reports we have adopted is shown below.

3.10 It has been agreed with the Council that the Issues and Recommendations reports should be concise and not repeat the findings of the Volume 1 report in terms of technical analysis, the health check appraisals or the consultation workshops. The reports take the findings of Volume 1 and bring out the key issues in each centre and recommendations for action.

*Baseline Situation*

*SWOT Analysis*

*Relationship with Local Strategies*

*Role and Function*

*Land Use Issues*

*Management*

*Issues and Recommendations*

- Community
- Culture and Heritage
- Development
- Economy
- Environment
- Transport

*Monitoring and Review*

*Town Centre Maps*

#### **Relationship between Market Towns in the East Riding**

3.11 This study has shown that the market towns in the East Riding have a close relationship in terms of their roles and functions. The four principal town centres (Bridlington, Beverley, Goole and Driffield) exert an influence over the all parts of the East Riding for shopping, leisure and other services. The largest centres, Bridlington and Beverley, have an influence over the greater part of the total area. Driffield has a smaller catchment area which also falls within the catchments of both Bridlington and Beverley. Goole has a

geographically distinct and limited catchment to the west. Most of the East Riding falls within the wider catchment of Hull for higher order shopping, and the Pocklington area falls within the wider catchment of York.

3.12 The smaller centres in the East Riding, of which 7 are market towns, have more localised catchment areas. These market town centres have catchments which comprise the towns and their surrounding rural hinterlands. The centres serve the day to day needs of these area but they all fall within the catchments of the larger centres:

- Howden and Snaith lie within the catchment of Goole
- Market Weighton lies within the catchment of Beverley
- Pocklington lies within the catchment of York
- Hornsea lies within the catchment of Beverley
- Hedon and Withernsea lie within the catchment of Hull.

3.13 The overlaps between the catchments reflect the operation of the retail hierarchy and the way that people visit shops and services of different types. They reflect the fact that market towns are generally attractive places that have a strong role as the focus for economic and social activity. They have a range of facilities that cater for their role and function.

3.14 Market towns in England are also popular places to live. Research by Halifax Estate Agents indicates that 73% of market towns have higher average house prices than the neighbouring towns in their county, while 70% of market towns have seen stronger house price growth than the English average over a period of years. Beaconsfield in Buckinghamshire is the most expensive market town in England followed by Winchcombe in Gloucestershire and Cranbrook in Kent. Stanhope in County Durham recorded the strongest house price growth over a five year period, followed by Alford in Lincolnshire and Saltburn in Redcar & Cleveland. Market towns in northern England have seen the strongest gains. The least expensive market town is Ferryhill in County Durham followed by Immingham in North Lincolnshire and Crook in County Durham.

### Comparable Towns

3.15 Volume 1 of this study has highlighted the health of the main town centres in the East Riding and has identified a vitality and viability for each town. The health check approach is based on a systematic appraisal of a total of 40 factors based on the indicators listed in PPS6. Each factor is scored on a 5-point scale and an overall vitality and viability index is calculated which can be compared with other centres and used to monitor changes in a centre over time.

3.16 The vitality and viability indices for 2008 are shown below in descending order of vitality and viability. An average score is 3.0 and the scores range from 3.0 in Withernsea up to 4.0 in Beverley.

Beverley	4.0
Driffield	3.5
Pocklington	3.5
Cottingham	3.4
Hessle	3.4
Howden	3.4
Bridlington	3.3
Hedon	3.3
Elloughton-Brough	3.3
Hornsea	3.3
Goole	3.2
Snaith	3.2
Market Weighton	3.1
Withernsea	3.0

3.17 Our assessment of the market towns in the East Riding and comparisons with other market towns elsewhere in the country shows that generally market towns in the East Riding have an average to good level of vitality and viability. Beverley has a particularly high level of vitality and viability. It is a successful and attractive town centre. Other centres in the East Riding are also

relatively attractive and have a better than average level of vitality and viability, notably Driffield, Pocklington, Cottingham, Hessle and Howden. Only Withernsea and Market Weighton can be considered to have a ‘fair’ level of vitality and viability but the health of both centres has improved since 2001.

3.18 Beverley’s good vitality and viability index can be compared with other towns we have assessed which also have a high level of vitality and viability – Northallerton, Harrogate, Lincoln and Chesterfield.

3.19 Towns with a better than average index of vitality and viability (around 3.5) such as Driffield and Pocklington can be compared with Scunthorpe, Selby, Worksop, Kendal, Bishop Auckland and Lichfield.

3.20 Towns with a ‘fair’ level of vitality and viability (around 3.0 to 3.2) such as Withernsea and Goole can be compared with Malton, Filey, Keighley, Stockton-on-Tees and Berwick-upon-Tweed.

3.21 No towns in the East Riding have a poor level of vitality and viability. None of the market towns in the East Riding could be said to need major improvements in their trading performance or appearance. The recommendations we propose are important in ensuring the continued improvement of these towns but they are not measures that are required to overcome serious physical or economic problems. In general the East Riding market towns do not face the problems that are typical of small towns in former coalfield areas of the North of England which have been subject to market town initiatives, for example in the Dearne Valley of South Yorkshire, Crook in County Durham and Harworth/Bircotes in Nottinghamshire.

**Key Issues**

3.22 The nature of the issues identified in each of the market towns depends largely on their function. Some are centres with potential for growth and some have a limited potential. Some are centres with a historic character and

townscape where the opportunities for change are restricted. Some are serving their present role adequately but others are in need of improvement. Some are essentially centres meeting the needs of local residents; others also have an attraction for visitors. The coastal towns have a distinctive function as a destination for seaside visitors. The Issues and Recommendations in Part 2 reflect these differences.

3.23 However, there are many issues in common between the market towns. These are listed below in the main headings used in the detailed reports.

Community	information and signage; events; safety and security; toilets; anti-social behaviour, etc.
Culture & Heritage	leisure and entertainment facilities; historic buildings; conservation issues; tourism, etc.
Development	potential for new development; physical opportunities for new development; effects of new developments; non-retail uses, etc.
Economy	investment; competition; independent shops; charity shops; vacant units; markets; quality of shopping; linked trips; footfall; cafes and restaurants; the evening economy; seasonality of tourism, etc.
Environment	historic environment; public realm; environmental improvements; shop fronts; cleanliness; ‘clone towns’, etc.
Transport	car parking; bus services; pedestrian accessibility; pavements, etc.