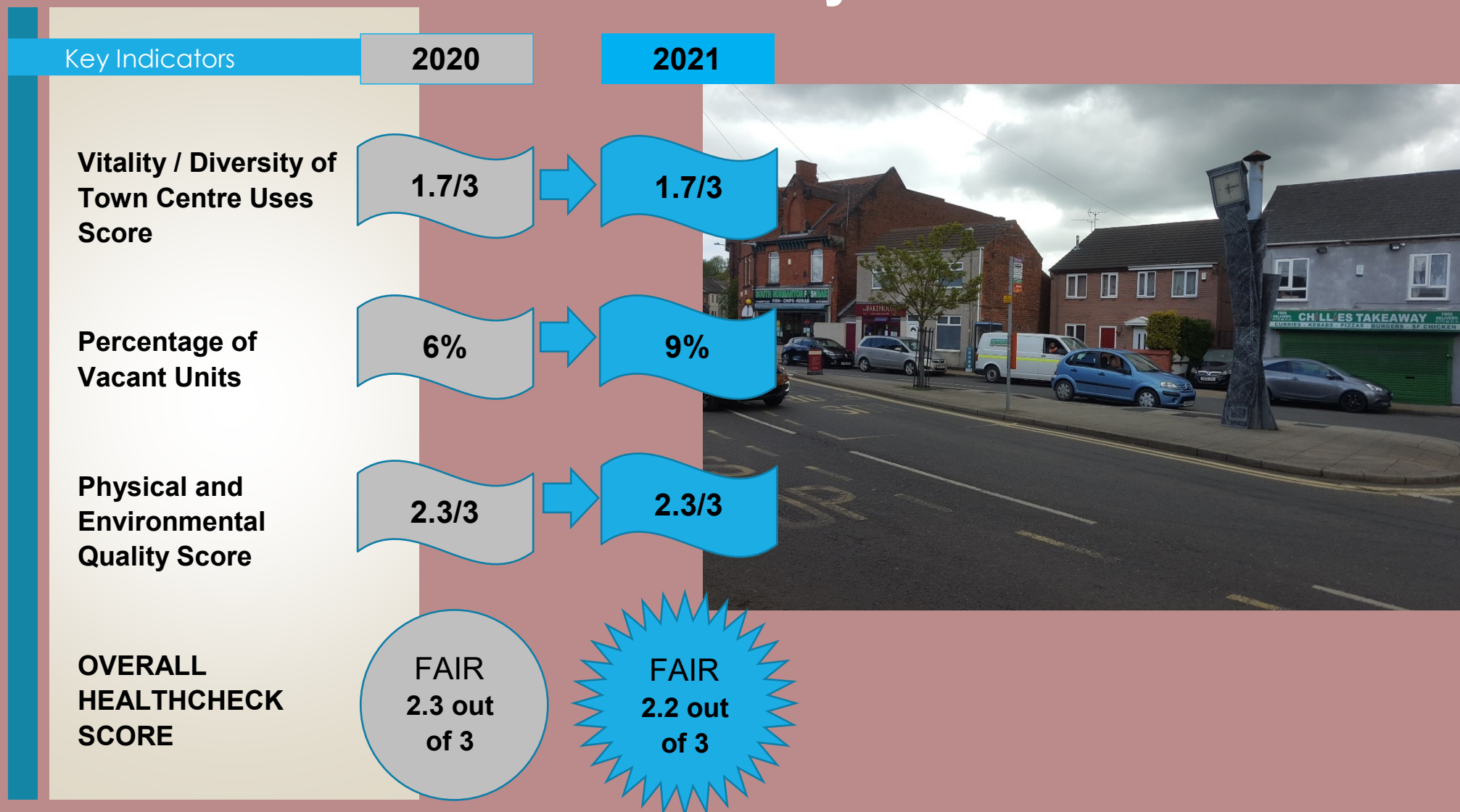


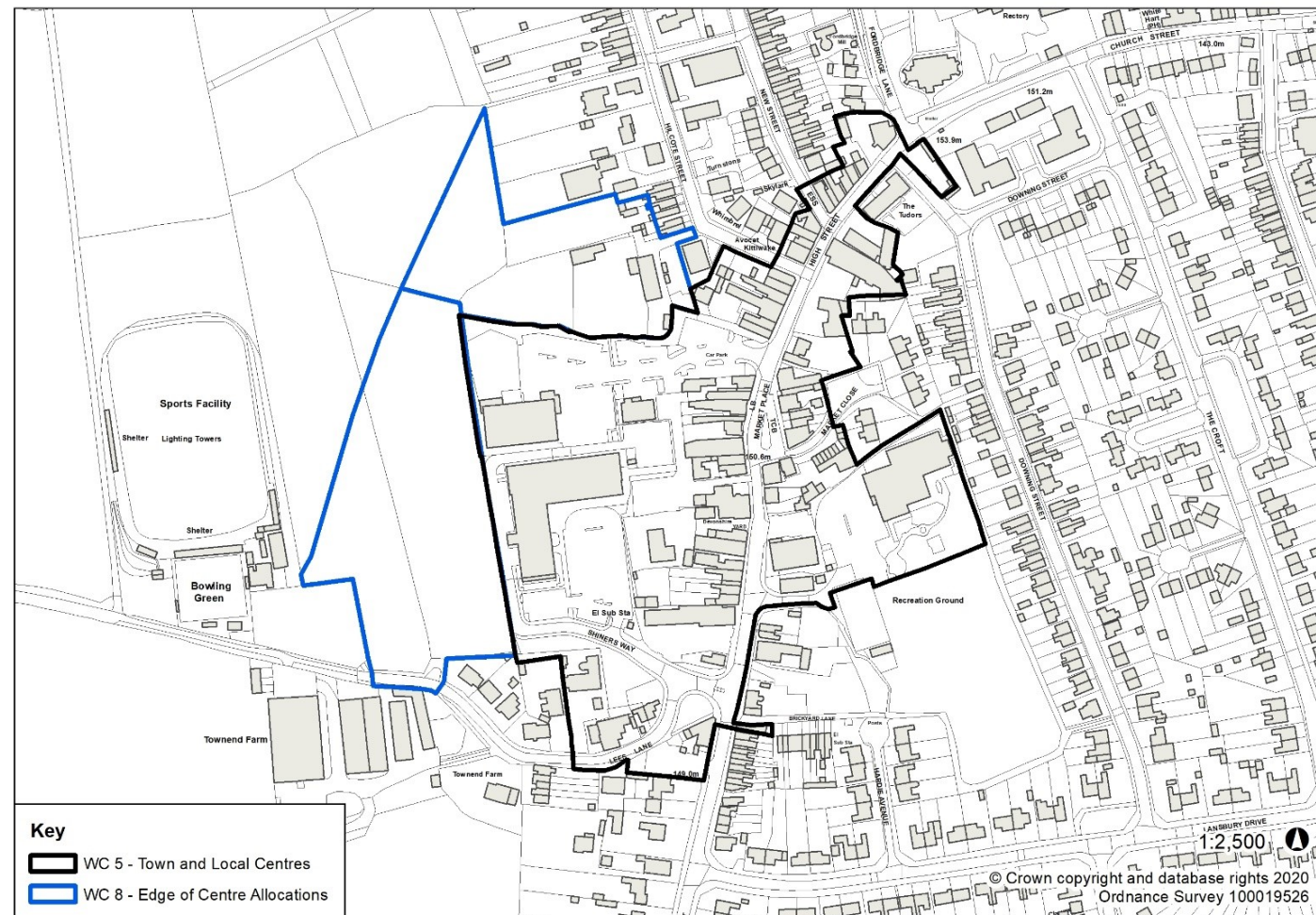
South Normanton – Town Centre Health Check Summary



Introduction

South Normanton is one of the District's largest towns. As a result, its town centre is one of four recognised at the top of the District's retail hierarchy and it provides a range of services and amenities not widely available in the surrounding smaller settlements.

South Normanton Town Centre is focussed around one main thoroughfare comprising Market Street, Market Place and High Street, with a small number of limbs off this axis containing clusters of larger stores and public buildings.



Structure of the Town Centre

Designated Town Centre

To ensure that the vitality and viability of South Normanton town centre is supported and that it is retained as the focus for town centre uses and the heart of community life, the Local Plan for Bolsover District has designated the area shown on the plan above.

This designated town centre is predominantly made up of small independently owned local businesses arranged in a linear fashion along Market Street. There is also a small market place which has been expanded to include some larger modern units set back from the main road to the west.

The town centre area is bounded by the St Michael and All Angels Church and residential uses to the north; the recreational grounds of the Post Mill community centre and residential uses to the east; residential uses to the south; and, open countryside to the west.

The principal thoroughfare running through South Normanton town centre is Market Street which runs north to south through the town centre and incorporates Market Place, High Street and Church Street as it runs northwards.

The town centre is anchored by a Co-operative foodstore, and this is the only major convenience retailer in the town centre. The only other national multiple stores are a Heron Foods Convenience store, Premier convenience store and a NISA Local convenience store.

South Normanton town centre is exposed to two competing retail and service centres of sub-regional significance within 10km (Mansfield and Sutton-in-Ashfield), one competing retail and service centre of more local significance within 5km (Alfreton) and two competing retail and service centres of more local significance within 10km (Kirkby-in-Ashfield and Ripley).



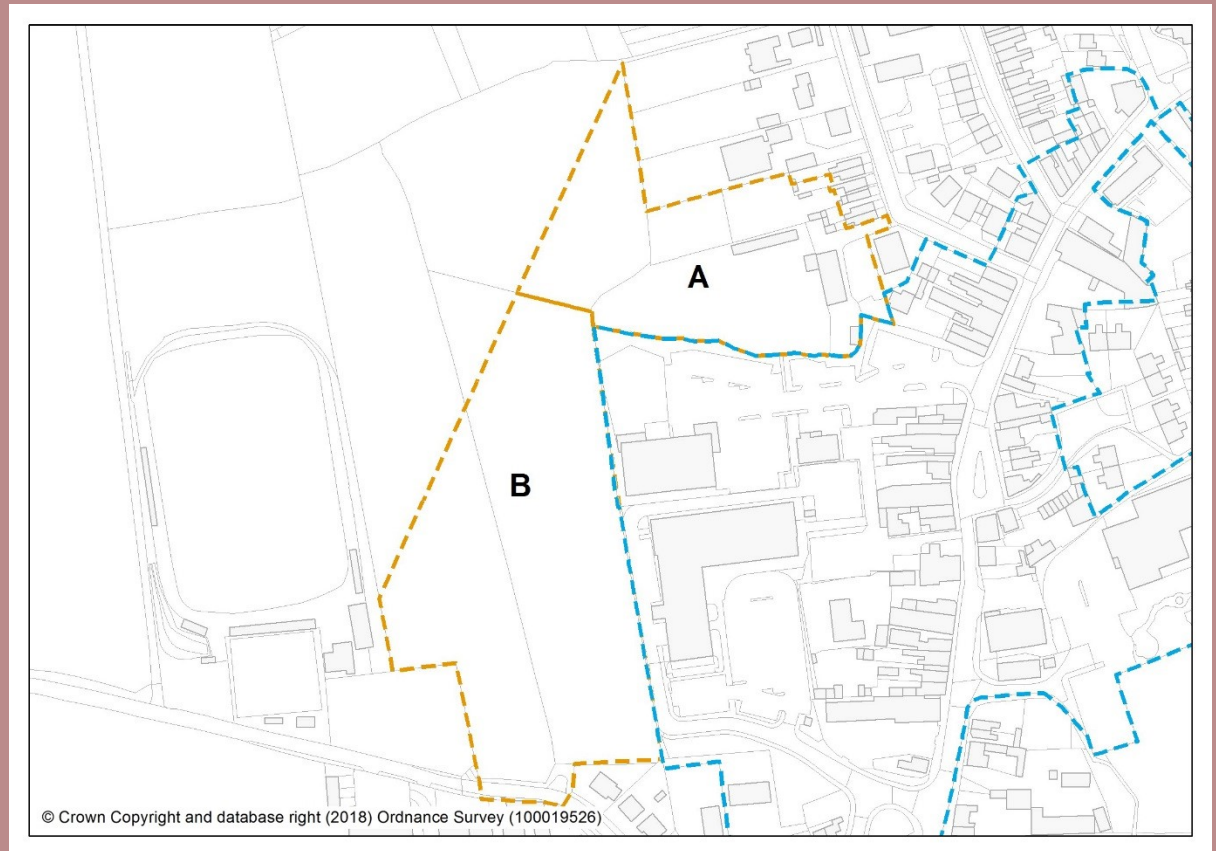
Designated Edge of Town Centre Allocations

To support the growth and prosperity of South Normanton town centre the Local Plan for Bolsover District has allocated two edge of town centre sites to provide additional space for town centre uses (see plan below).

Site A – Land to the west of Market Street and to the north of the Co-operative Supermarket was allocated specifically for new retail to help meet the Council's quantitative needs for convenience goods and its qualitative needs for both convenience and comparison goods.

Site B – Land to the west of the Hub and to the north of Lees Lane was allocated for a range of town centre uses that could include retail, but also offices, leisure, residential, extra care, and community facilities.

At the time of writing, both sites remain available and suitable and are being actively promoted by the landowner's agent.



Vitality / Diversity of Town Centre Uses

Survey dates

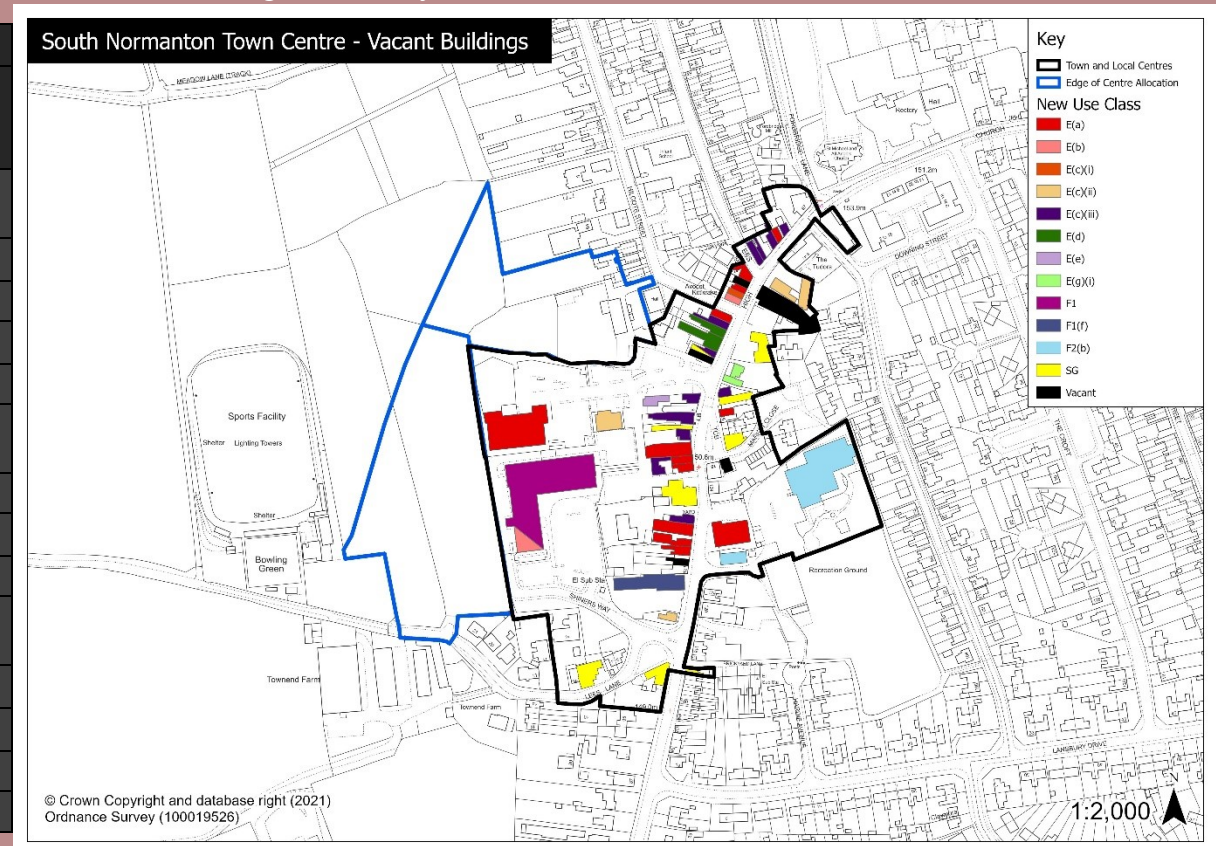
To inform the vitality and diversity of South Normanton's town centre, a survey of all property units within the town centre boundary was carried out in April 2021.

Survey findings

The survey of South Normanton Town Centre revealed that there are 67 separate property units including ground floor residential and a total of 9,983m² of non-residential floorspace.

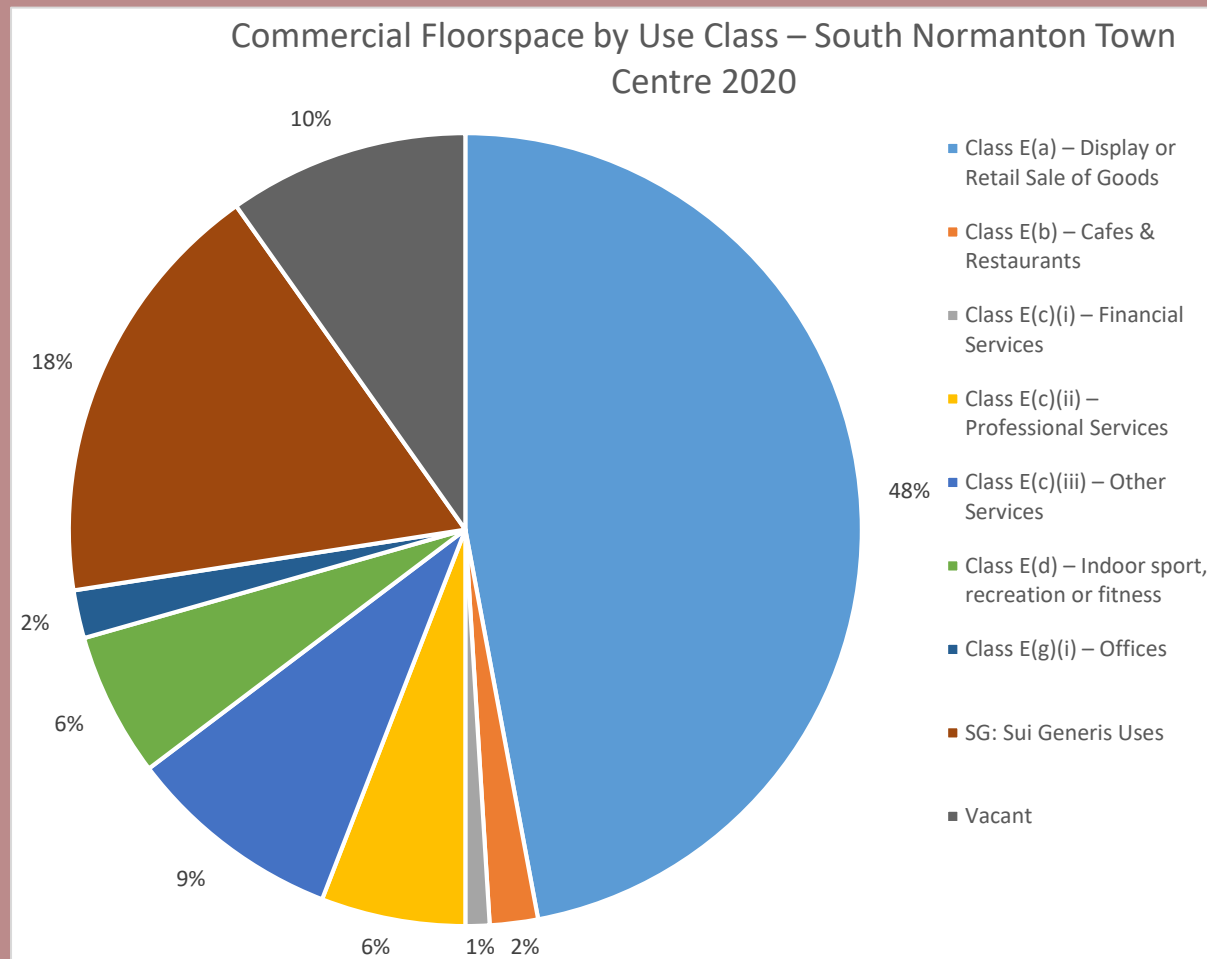
The table below shows the number of units and total floorspace identified during the survey.

South Normanton Town Centre		
Land Use Class	Number of Units	Total Floorspace m ²
Class E(a) – Display or Retail Sale of Goods	14	3,382
Class E(b) – Cafes & Restaurants	2	149
Class E(c)(i) – Financial Services	1	60
Class E(c)(ii) – Professional Services	3	365
Class E(c)(iii) – Other Services	12	629
Class E(d) – Indoor sport, recreation or fitness	2	406
Class E(e) – Health/ Medical Services	1	105
Class E(f) – Crèches/ Day Nurseries	0	0
Class E(g)(i) – Offices	1	150
Class F – Local Community & Learning	4	2,772
SG: Sui Generis Uses	9	1,244
Vacant	5	721
Residential	12	-
Total	67	9,983



Analysis of commercial use

There are 49 commercial properties providing 7,106m² floorspace in South Normanton town centre. These can be broken down into the following land use classes.



Land Use Class	Number of Units	Total Floorspace m ²
Class E(a) – Display or Retail Sale of Goods	14	3,382
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Class E(c)(i) – Financial Services	1	60
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Class E(c)(iii) – Other Services	12	629
Class E(d) – Indoor sport, recreation or fitness	2	406
Class E(g)(i) – Offices	1	150
SG: Sui Generis Uses	9	1,244
Vacant	5	721
Total	49	7,106

An individual analysis for each of the commercial categories is provided below.

Class E(a) – Display or Retail Sale of Goods

48% of the total commercial floorspace in South Normanton is used by businesses selling/ displaying retail goods, a total of 3,382m². There are 14 units selling comparison / convenience goods in South Normanton town centre. These uses are based on Market Street and the High Street.

The majority of the E(a) use floorspace in the centre, approximately 57%, is provided by the two large national multipliers; the Co-operative Supermarket and Premier Stores, both of which are based on Market Street.

Class E(b) – Cafes & Restaurants

The 2 cafes and restaurant uses in the centre account for 2% of the town centre's floorspace, 149m². One of these uses is based on the High Street, the other is on Shiners Way. Both of these uses are cafes/bistros.

Class E(c)(i) – Financial Services

Financial service units account for 1% of the total floorspace in the town centre, 60m². There is 1 unit of this type in the centre, PPR associates, an accountancy firm on the High Street.

Class E(c)(ii) – Professional Services

Professional services (other than health or medical services), make up 5% of the total commercial floorspace in the centre. There are 4 professional services in the centre, 425m², these services include a vets, an attorneys and a funeral directors. These uses tend to be distributed throughout the centre, the majority however are based on Market Street.

Class E(c)(iii) – Other Services

Other services, including retailers that provide services; such as hair and beauty salons, tattooists, and the post office account for 9% of the total commercial floorspace, 629m². There are 12 of these uses in the centre, and these uses are all located evenly across both Market Street, Market Place and the High Street.

Class E(d) – Indoor sport, recreation or fitness

Indoor sport, recreation or fitness uses account for 6% of the total floorspace in the town centre, 406m². There are two units with these uses in the centre, and both are in close proximity to one another on the High Street.

Class E(g)(i) – Offices

Administrative / operational office use accounts for 2% of the total floorspace in the town centre, 150m². There is only 1 of these uses in the centre, Space Owls Ltd, a Business Centre on the High Street.

SG: Sui Generis Uses

Sui Generis Uses make up 18% of South Normanton town centre's commercial floorspace. There are 9 such uses in the centre. These uses include 3 hot food takeaways on the Market Place, 3 public houses and a micro pub, which are spread through the centre, an automotive garage on the High Street, an automotive garage on the High Street, and a betting office on Market Street.

As indicated above, South Normanton town centre contains a number of national multiple retailers and as a general rule these type of recognisable national brands are seen as a strong indicator of the health of a town centre. In understanding this, a national multiple is an enterprise whose chain of outlets has a presence at national level (usually categorised by meeting a predefined threshold) and a multiple retailer is an enterprise that possesses a chain of outlets under the same management and dealing in the same merchandise.

Table Summarising National Multiples in South Normanton

National Multiple		
Type of Retailer	Number	Name
Convenience Retailers	3	Co-operative Supermarket, Premier Store, Heron Foods
Comparison Retailers	1	Well Pharmacy
Misc.	1	Ladbrokes
Total	5	



Conclusions

The health check assesses the overall vitality / diversity of South Normanton's town centre uses using the following established scoring system.

	Very poor (0 points)	Poor (1 Point)	Fair (2 points)	Good (3 points)
Class E(a) – Display or Retail Sale of Goods	No Convenience Retail	Under 15 retail units, OR, under 2,500m ² of GROSS retail floorspace.	15 or more retail units, OR, over 2,500m ² of GROSS retail floorspace.	20 or more retail units, OR, over 5,000m ² of GROSS retail floorspace
Class E(b) & Class SG – Pubs, Cafes & Restaurants	No Pubs, Cafés & Restaurants	3 and under A3 and A4 units, OR, under 1,000m ² of GROSS A3 & A4 floorspace	4 or more A3 and A4 units, OR, over 1,500m ² of GROSS A3 & A4 floorspace	7 or more A3 and A4 units, OR, over 2,500m ² of GROSS A3 & A4 floorspace
Class E(c)(i) – Financial Services	No Financial Services	2 and under financial service units, OR, under 500m ² of GROSS financial service floorspace. No banks.	3 or more financial service units, OR, over 500m ² of GROSS financial service floorspace.	5 or more financial service units, OR, over 750m ² of GROSS financial service floorspace.
Class E(c)(ii) – Professional Services	No Professional Services	2 and under professional service units, OR, under 500m ² of GROSS professional service	3 or more professional service units, OR, over 500m ² of GROSS professional service floorspace.	5 or more professional service units, OR, over 750m ² of GROSS professional service floorspace.
Class E(c)(iii) – Other Services	No Service Retail	Under 10 Service units, OR, under 500m ² of GROSS service floorspace.	10 or more Service units, OR, over 750m ² of GROSS service floorspace.	15 or more Service units, OR, over 1,000m ² of GROSS service floorspace
Class E(g)(i) – Offices	No Office Use	2 and under units, OR, under 500m ² of GROSS floorspace	3 or more units, OR, over 500m ² of GROSS floorspace	5 or more units, OR, over 750m ² of GROSS floorspace
Number of National Multiple Retailers	No National Multiple Retailers	Under 5 National Multiple Retailers	5 or more National Multiple Retailers	10 or more National Multiple Retailers

Against this, South Normanton town centre scored 'fair' for the amount of units selling or displaying retail goods, professional services, other services, cafes/ restaurants and public houses it has, and for the number of national multiples in the centre. However, the town centre scored poorly in terms of how many financial services there are, and how much office space it has. This gives it a rating of "Fair" overall and a score of 1.7 out of 3.

Vacant Units in the Town Centre

Survey findings

Based on the April 2021 survey, 5 of the non-residential units within the town centre boundary were found to be vacant – leading to a vacancy rate of 9%. The amount of vacant floorspace at the time of survey was 721m², which accounts for approximately 7% of the town centre's total floorspace.

Whilst this vacancy rate is broadly in line with the other centres in the District, it still represents a key area where the health of the town centre could be improved. The location of the vacant units in the town centre appears to be random, with no clear pattern, and thus does not identify any specific problem areas within the centre. The vacant units are located on the High Street, Market Place and Market Street, the vacant units are spread throughout the centre.

Length of time units have been vacant

Based on comparisons of the current situation with surveys carried out in 2019, the units in South Normanton have largely remained occupied, or where smaller businesses have failed, units which were vacant have been quickly filled.

There is currently one unit in the town centre which has remained vacant for an extended period of time, namely 123 Market Street. Contact has been made with the owner after it was put on the Council's Vacant Building Register. This property has recently been sold, and will hopefully be coming back into beneficial use over the next year.

Of the other remaining vacant properties, these units were all in use in 2019 and so have only recently become vacant. Of the four of them one of them, the former Nisa Local is being renovated, and is set to become a Go Local in 2021. The remaining three meanwhile will all be placed on the Council's Vacant Building Register and contact will be made to inquire as to the owner's plans for the future, and to help support bringing the properties back into use.



Town Centre Physical and Environmental Quality

Survey dates

To inform the physical and environmental quality of South Normanton's town centre, a survey of the town centre was carried out in April 2021.

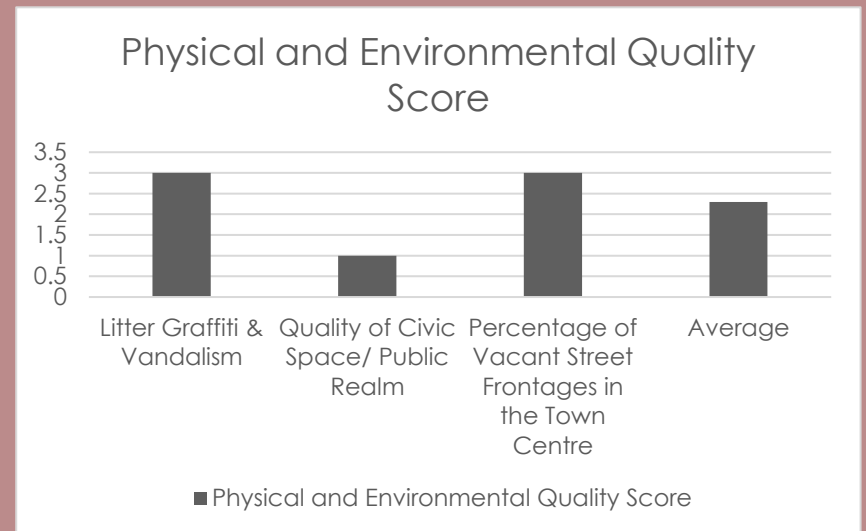
Survey findings

South Normanton town centre is generally well maintained with very little evidence of graffiti and littering. Site visits to the centre identified that there is only a limited amount of civic and green space in the town centre. The town centre's main public space is the small Market Place, although this does not have any real enclosing boundary and does not feel like anything more than a larger section of highway pavement with some public art located there.

Throughout the town centre there are a number of historic traditional brick built buildings, particularly on Market Street, which provide an attractive backdrop to the town centre activity. Generally the quality of the shop fronts and facades in the town centre is good, and the majority are occupied, however a small number of frontages look dated and are in need of repair or renovation.

There are a number pedestrian crossings throughout the centre, often placed appropriately near to car parks and bus stops. However, the footpaths along High Street and Market Place are narrow and leave little room for improving the pedestrian environment. Securing improvements to the small Market Place would enhance the town centre.

Based on this assessment, South Normanton town centre achieved a rating of "Good" and a score of 2.3 out of 3 on the town centre Physical and Environmental Quality matrix.



Key Indicators: Changes between 2020 & 2021 summaries	2020	2021
<p><u>Vitality / Diversity of Town Centre Uses</u></p> <p>Overall the vitality and diversity of uses in the town centre have broadly remained the same between the surveys carried out in May 2019 and April 2021 despite the economic challenges of the global Covid-19 pandemic and the associated lockdown arrangements for town centres across the country. In both years the town centre scored 1.7, 'Fair', overall for the diversity of its town centre uses.</p> <p>On the ground there have been some minor changes, with some businesses closing and others moving in, but for the most part the overall diversity of uses in the town centre has remained stable.</p> <p>Within this picture, there has been a slight decrease in the number of recognisable National Multipliers (National Brands) in the town centre – generally a strong indicator of the health of a town centre. In 2019 there were 6 national brands in the centre and in 2021, this number has decreased to 5 with the loss of the Nisa Local in the centre. However this loss will only be temporary, the former Nisa Local at the time of the survey was already undergoing renovations and is set to reopen as a Go Local, another National Multiple, within the next few months.</p>	1.7 / 3	1.7 / 3
<p><u>Vacancies</u></p> <p>The vacancy rate in the town centre has changed. In the May 2019 survey and prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the vacancy rate was 6% with 3 vacant properties in the town centre, equating to a total of 266m² of empty floorspace. In 2021 the vacancy rate is slightly higher at 9% with 5 vacant properties in the town centre, with a total floorspace of 721m². This is a decline from the previous year, and while not welcome, was not unexpected either due to the challenges presented by the Covid-19 pandemic.</p> <p>There are a number of factors that influence this key indicator but the Council's greater focus on trying to address this issue through the Vacant Town Centre Buildings project will help to address and ultimately reduce the number of vacancies in town and local centres. A number of properties are already well on the way to being brought back into beneficial use as a result of this project.</p>	6%	9%
<p><u>Town Centre Physical and Environmental Quality</u></p> <p>There has been little in the way of change between the 2020 and 2021 surveys as far as the physical and environmental quality of the centre goes. The physical and environmental quality of the centre is still scored as 'Fair', and there are still improvements that could be made through both community and council led initiatives.</p>	2.3 / 3	2.3 / 3
<p><u>Overall Health Check Score</u></p> <p>Perhaps understandably, given the clear economic challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic, between the 2020 and 2021 Town Centre Health Check summaries the overall score for South Normanton town centre has been reduced marginally from 2.3 to 2.2 out of 3. Overall, however, the centre is still scored as 'Fair', and although there has been a marginal decline in the overall score due to vacancies, the centre is performing better than was expected considering the circumstances.</p>	2.3 / 3	2.2 / 3

Key Areas for Improvement

1) To support and enhance the diversity of uses in the centre

At the time of the 2021 survey, South Normanton town centre contained a fair mix of uses. Supporting and enhancing the amount of comparison retail, and professional and financial services in the centre, remain important task, as currently the centre scored poorly for those uses. Furthermore convenience retail, service retail and pub and restaurant uses need to be encouraged and supported, in order to improve the diversity and vitality of the centre's uses. Progress on the edge-of-centre allocations should be actively supported.

2) Tackle the vacant units

Whilst vacant units do not dominate the town centre, there is some evidence that at least one of the units potentially suffer from long-term vacancy. The reasons for this should be investigated and addressed and new uses should be encouraged within this unit. Furthermore efforts should be made to improve the uptake of vacant units so that they can be filled as soon as reasonably possible.

3) Improve pedestrian routes in and around the centre

There are opportunities in the centre to invest in a more pedestrian friendly environment to ensure a pleasant experience for users of the town centre. For example, footpaths along High Street and Market Place were narrow. Improving the Market Place area and providing wider pavements within the town centre and introduction of more street furniture would enhance the pedestrian environment.

4) Positively manage the town centre

To try and ensure that South Normanton town centre is supported, a well thought out positive town centre management strategy, supported by both officer time and financial resources, should be prepared. In doing this, a partnership between town centre traders, stakeholders and the public authorities should be established that seeks to improve the visitor offer, tackle vacant units and encourage local schemes to encourage greater footfall across the whole town centre. This management strategy should then be implemented and sustained.