

BOROUGH OF KETTERING

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Report Originator	Head of Development Services	<i>Fwd Plan Ref No:</i>	
Wards Affected	William Knibb Ward, Northfield Ward, All Saints Ward, St Michaels and Wicksteed Ward, St Peters Ward	26 February 2019	
Title	KETTERING TOWN CENTRE AREA ACTION PLAN – MONITORING UPDATE		

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

To inform Members of the results of the seventh Monitoring Report of the Kettering Town Centre Area Action Plan.

2. INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Kettering Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP) was adopted by the Council on 6th July 2011. The Plan sets out the aspirations for the town centre and surrounding area up until 2021, and sets out the Council's strategy and policies to meet the Plan's objectives.
- 2.2 The adopted AAP includes a policy on implementation and monitoring. The plan sets out a monitoring framework to assess the effectiveness of the Plan in delivering its objectives.
- 2.3 This report has been written to evaluate the progress that has been made in delivering the plan's objectives. The first monitoring update was presented to Members of this Committee in September 2012, in subsequent years officers have reported in November. Last year the report was presented in January 2018, this, the seventh monitoring update reviews the progress made in delivering the AAP in the last 12 months.
- 2.4 Officers have also updated the Kettering Town Centre Health Check; this is attached at Appendix 1. The results of the AAP monitoring exercise is provided in summary below, discussed under the 7 objectives of the AAP.
- 2.5 In addition, this report also considers the impact of the amendments to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended), which were introduced on 30th May 2013 (Statutory Instrument 2013 No. 1101), 6th April 2014 (Statutory Instrument 2014 No. 564), 15th April 2015 (Statutory Instrument 2015 No. 596), 6th April 2016 (Statutory Instrument 2016 No.332) and 6th April 2017 (Statutory Instrument 391). The latest version of the General Permitted Development Order (Statutory Instrument 343) came into force on 6th April 2018.

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- 2.6 A report produced by Knight Frank (2018) which ranked high streets across the country based on how good a town centre is to invest in, placed Kettering 132nd. In comparison, this report ranked Kettering 41st in 2016, which clearly reflects the challenges the town centre is facing.
- 2.7 With regards to other awards or recognition, the Kettering Museum and Art Gallery won an award at the Northamptonshire Heritage Awards which was the Best Exhibition for 'RA250' (Royal Academy's 250th anniversary). This gives some acknowledgement to the investment made in the range and quality of cultural facilities available to visitors to Kettering town centre. The Council were also shortlisted for the 'Best Service Team of Year, Trading Standards and Regulatory Service award at the APSE (Association for Public Service Excellence).

Monitoring Results

AAP Objective 1: Create a zoned, vibrant town centre which makes best use of available land and existing buildings and maximises potential for regeneration

- 2.8 In order to provide a measure of vibrancy in the town centre, comparable footfall counts are used. The following analysis comes from the results of a footfall count conducted in September and December 2018, taking December 2008 as the base date, so an elongated trend can be derived.
- 2.9 In September 2018 the survey shows that footfall decreased on the non-market day (Monday) of 14%, and increased on a market day (Friday), by 0.43%, compared with last year's survey. As the original baseline data was collected in December 2008, a direct comparison cannot be made. Footfall counts on non-market days in December 2016 and 2017 show a decline of 12% and 3.1% respectively. The surveys undertaken in December 2018 indicate a decrease of 12.8% on a non-market day. **Overall, the footfall trend is down.** In comparison, footfall data provided by Springboard, from the Newlands Shopping Centre indicates that footfall decreased by 4.3% and 3% in September 2018 and December 2018 respectively. In addition to this, although not directly comparable, figures for January 2019 show that footfall on Mondays during the month increased by 8%, whilst figures for Fridays show a decrease of 26.5%, both compared to the previous year. Further to this, footfall counted during January 2019 has decreased by 19.5% compared to the same month in 2018.
- 2.10 Figures provided for the market day show fluctuations in pedestrian numbers counted since 2008. This year's figures from the September survey show an increase of 0.43% on a market day compared to last year. The December survey shows a significant decrease of 22.1% compared to last year. It should be noted that the Kettering Christmas Market has been up and running before these surveys were undertaken. This information is shown below in Figure 1 and Figure 2. **There was a significant decline in footfall in December compared to previous years.** Another explanation for a decline in footfall

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could be the competition provided this year by the newly opened Rushden Lakes out-of-town shopping centre, which acts as a new attraction to shoppers.

Figure 1: Footfall Counts in September between 2013 and 2018

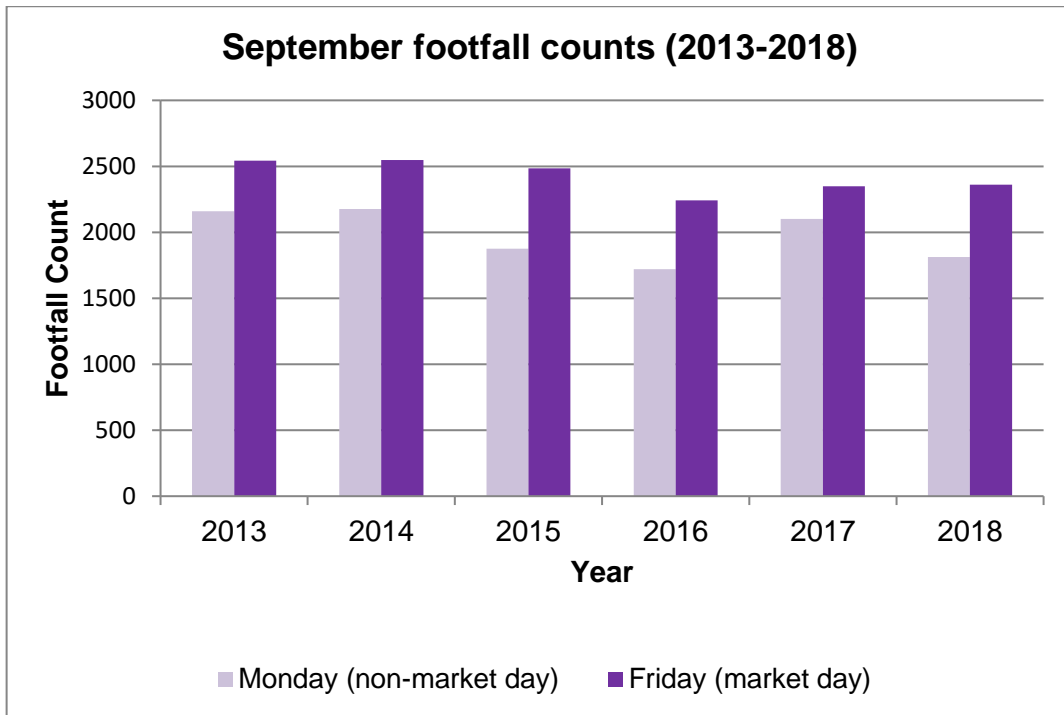
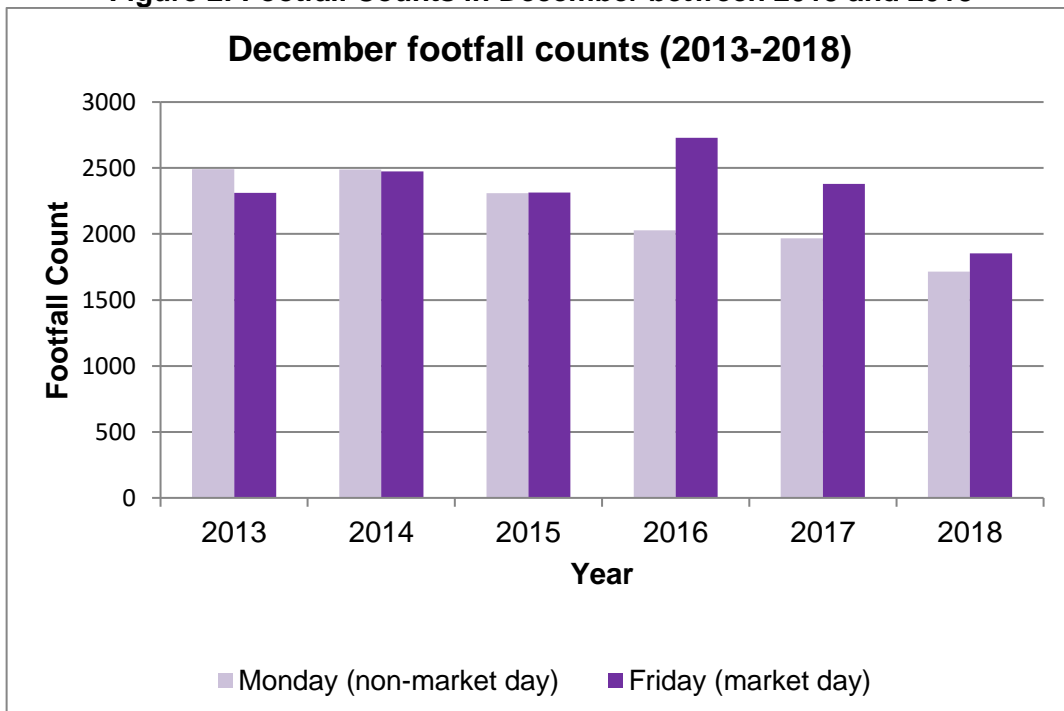


Figure 2: Footfall Counts in December between 2013 and 2018



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2.11 In addition to the footfall counts in the 12 locations used annually, monitoring was also undertaken in Meadow Road. The purpose of this is to determine the use of this part of the town, as well as to gauge the potential access to, and use of, Meadow Road Park. This is connected to the Kettering Town Centre Delivery Plan proposal for a short term delivery project at the Meadow Road Park. The 'Meadow Road Urban Park' scheme aims to enhance the park as a visitor destination by improving the all-round environment for play and general use, and strengthening the area's connection to the town centre. A consultation on these proposals was undertaken last month, the findings of which will be used to influence the final design of the park. Monitoring the footfall in this area of the town centre as part of the annual footfall survey has allowed the Council to establish a baseline level of usage for both Meadow Road as well as the park itself. Monitoring can then be undertaken moving forward once the improvements have been made to this area of the town, to establish the success of the scheme, and the complementary activities that might ensue. The results of this monitoring can be found at Appendix 1.

2.12 The AAP has a floorspace target of at least 38,500m² new office space in the plan area by 2021. In the last year, there has been a gain of 102m² in office floorspace in the plan area. The focus for new office development in the plan area is the Station Quarter. The Council is engaged in discussions with Network Rail and the current train operator, East Midlands Trains, about aspirations for the rail service in terms of the new franchise, electrification of the service, and the potential for development in the vicinity of the station. The new franchise will commence in August 2019, electrification of the line north of Bedford to Kettering and Corby will be complete by December 2019. However, the cascade of the rolling stock may result in a delay in the full running of the new franchise until December 2020. As reported previously, electrification of the mainline beyond Kettering has been cancelled. However, electric power serving the line will extend to Leicester; with the potential that, funding permitting, the rolling stock will operate using electric power at least part of the way to Leicester. The new franchise will separate services, instead creating a peak-time intercity service for the cities north, and a commuter service stopping at towns south of Corby/Kettering. Kettering is identified as the hub station benefiting from some intercity services for passengers to change. This brings with it the potential for Kettering's station to be more attractive for those likely to be travelling more frequently, and as a meeting place for business with the potential to be a catalyst for development in the Station Quarter.

2.13 The AAP has a target for delivering 957 new dwellings in the plan area by 2021. The table below shows those sites in the AAP area to have had housing completions over the last 12 months.

Address	No. of dwellings complete
26a-30a Rockingham Road	5
14 Green Lane	1
4 King Street	1

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Total	7
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2.14 A total of 238 dwellings (24.9%) have been delivered in the town centre in the 7 years since the Plan was adopted. An application for 36 retirement apartments at site SSQ5 (corner of Queen Street/Horsemarket) was approved at Planning Committee on 18th December 2018 subject to a section 106 agreement being agreed. In addition to this 11-12 Newland Street has been demolished to allow for the construction of 2 new retail units, with the addition of 28 flats. This was under construction when surveyed in September 2018.

Cultural Quarter

2.15 At the AAP Examination the Council committed to producing and consulting upon a Development Appraisal for the Cultural Quarter. This has not yet been progressed; however the Council continues to add to the range of public services based at the Council Offices, adding to the visitor numbers in this part of the town centre. In recent years the Probation Service has taken space in the Borough Council offices, joining the Phlebotomy Unit, the Police, Citizens Advice Bureau and other voluntary sector organisations.

2.16 In addition, a project called GLaM (Gallery, Library and Museum) has been set up to bring together representatives from the KBC owned assets of the Museum and Art Gallery and Library which is owned by Northamptonshire County Council. The main purpose of this project is to explore opportunities of how, through place-based regeneration and joining of physical assets, changes can be made in the way communities access and engage with culture and creative industries, unlocking economic growth through skills development, job creation and boosting the visitor economy.

2.17 This project, at present is at an early stage, however a feasibility study has been commissioned in order to assess the options for improving the community facilities and the offering across the cluster of Grade II listed heritage assets, make recommendations for taking a project forward ensuring commercial viability, determine costs and revenue generation.

Restaurant Quarter

2.18 The restaurant units on allocated site RQ2 in the Restaurant Quarter now only occupy Prezzo after Chimichanga closed in spring 2018, since which time the unit has remained vacant. The Kino Lounge opened in August 2015 and continues to operate from the restored character building, The Corn Exchange.

2.19 In May 2016 a planning application was approved for a change of use to an A3 (restaurant/café) with a boutique cinema on the first floor at 4 Market Place. This unit was previously occupied by Mr Ray's since 1983. The unit is now occupied by Wildwood, which opened in summer 2017. Although this resulted in the loss of a long established local business, it adds to the restaurant offer in

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the Restaurant Quarter as well as adhering to the vision for this quarter in accordance with Policy 19 of the AAP. This enhances the night time economy further and will help assist the town centre in maintaining its Purple Flag award. No.7 Market Place has changed from a bar to a hair salon and 17 Market Place, which was previously in use as a public house, The Cherry Tree was at the time of the survey being converted into a restaurant.

2.20 The Market Place at the heart of the Restaurant Quarter was again the venue for the 'Kettering by the Sea' event during July and August. The event proved to be very popular and provided a unique family experience in accordance with the vision of the AAP. It was also the focus for Christmas events during November and December, including the Christmas Lights Switch On and the Christmas Market held on 29th November, which comprised of 25 stalls.

2.21 The Kettering Market includes a general market on Fridays and Saturdays, as well as the flea market on Wednesdays. Whilst the flea market has been resilient, general decline in retail has been reflected in the Friday Market with a decrease in traders by 27% between 2017 and 2018 and Saturday market with a decrease of 25% over the same period. Speciality markets such as Christmas Markets have been successful for example during the Christmas Light Switch On which comprised of 21 stalls. These events help increase footfall and attract additional income to the town centre.

2.22 KettFest, a popular arts and music festival, was held at various venues across the town centre in July 2018. As well as this, The Yards held live music events which enhanced the appeal of Kettering Town Centre as an attractive destination during the evening.

AAP Objective 2: To implement a step change in quality retail offer incorporating 20,500sqm

2.23 The AAP has a target of providing at least 20,500m² new retail floorspace by 2021. It should also be noted that the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, adopted in July 2016 has reduced the requirement for net comparison shopping floorspace to 12,500m². Although it should be noted that 1 in 3 retail units are surplus to requirements nationally, this suggests that this target potentially needs to be reconsidered when a review of the North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy is next undertaken. In the last year there was a net gain of 102m² retail floorspace. A loss of 175m² of retail floorspace was as a result of the demolition of 11-12 Newland Street, which will be replaced by mixed use retail and residential use (KET/2016/0674), at present the scheme is still under construction, as reported last year. However, this will not be recorded this year, given that it was recorded as a loss in last year's survey. However, when completed, a subsequent AAP Monitoring Report will reflect the completion of this unit. The most significant gain was seen at 7 Market Place, which saw 193m² change from restaurant/bar use to a hair salon. In addition to this, 26-28 Rockingham Road, saw 171m² of retail floorspace created after being converted from a restaurant.

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- 2.24 The Newlands Centre, owned by Ellandi, contains a concentration of town centre national retailers, such as Boots, H&M, and TK Maxx etc. Over the years, Ellandi has invested in improvements to the fabric of the shopping centre. To date, proposals for the delivery of a scheme accommodating Phase 1 of the Newlands Centre, compatible with allocated site SHQ1 for new large retail units and additional parking provision have not been progressed. The likelihood of a retail focussed redevelopment scheme of the scale proposed in Policy SHQ1 is now unlikely given the decline in High Streets nationally, and competition from Rushden Lakes to secure major High Street names.
- 2.25 The AAP includes a policy to ensure that no less than 75% of the Primary Shopping Frontage (PSF) is in A1 use (retail). This is to protect retail presence in the main shopping streets to seek to ensure the vitality and viability of the town centre through a strong retail focus. In the last year the retail frontages have increased by 0.1%, and now stand at 71.1%, so below the targeted percentage. Vacancy rates in the PSF are calculated to currently be at 9.86 %. This is an increase of 5.51% in a year, most notably because of the closure of Marks and Spencer in August 2018.
- 2.26 The overall vacancy rate in the Plan area is 13.94%, compared to the national average of 11.1% and is an increase of 4.09% from last year's figure of 9.85%. In previous years Kettering town centre's vacancy rates have been favourable, below the national average; this is the first time for many years that the opposite is the case. The most significant vacant units in terms of frontage meterage from this survey include the Naseby Hotel, which closed in 2016, as well as the Conservative Club on Montagu Street. An application for the Conservative Club (KET/2017/0237) was received in March 2017 for 13 apartments; this application has been approved. In addition, there are 2 vacant sites on Horsemarket on either side of Queen Street. The site to the north of Queen Street had consent for a residential and retail mixed use scheme, which has now lapsed. However the other site, to the south, forms part of a planning application for 36 retirement apartments (KET/2018/0525), this application was approved at Planning Committee on 18th December 2018 subject to a section 106 agreement being agreed. It is acknowledged that it is important to utilise and maximise the potential to deliver housing on unused/vacant sites on previously developed land. Although, this must be where it is considered appropriate, as there is a risk that an introduction of residential properties in the town centre in the wrong locations could result in the potential further loss of other town centre uses, such as retail.
- 2.27 In addition, analysis shows a distinct cluster of vacant units at 11, 11a and 12 Newland Street since August 2009. The 2017 survey showed that these 3 units had been demolished. This site is currently under construction, which when complete will comprise of 2 retail units and 24 flats (KET/2016/0674). When the development is complete, the survey for that year will reflect the new use for this frontage.

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- 2.28 Evidence gathered by Peter Brett Associates, used in guiding town centre policies in the Joint Core Strategy, indicated that “It will be challenging for the Northern Sub-Area to retain its current market share, due to the likely strong comparison goods offer at Rushden Lakes, which can be expected to draw trade from the Northern Sub-Area. The North Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy, adopted in July 2016, includes a policy (Policy 12 – Town Centres and Town Centre Uses) advocating a minimum increase of 12,500m² net comparison shopping floorspace in Kettering town centre by 2031.
- 2.29 The Rushden Lakes out of town retail development in East Northamptonshire was granted consent by the Secretary of State in June 2014. Permission has been granted by East Northamptonshire Council to increase the retail floorspace beyond that approved by the Secretary of State. The first stores opened in July 2017; however more stores have opened since then, with 50 stores open at present, as part of phase 1 of the development. A further application to expand the existing site by 128,122 sq ft, by adding 29 new units was received by East Northamptonshire Council in summer 2018. The development known as ‘Rushden Living’ would add a further 752 car parking spaces as well as a new link road. Kettering and other Borough/District Councils have submitted objections to the application. One significant shared concern is that the proposed new units are of a smaller scale, so would be in direct competition for occupiers that town centres are now seeking to attract.
- 2.30 The impact of Rushden Lakes is evident in Kettering Town Centre, with the closure of a flagship store, as mentioned above, Marks and Spencer in August 2018. In addition to this a number of notable units have closed over the last 12 months, including Gala Bingo, Body Shop, Officers Club, Oxfam and Topshop, which closed in February 2018. More recent closures have seen Burton Menswear vacate their unit in January this year and New Look planning to close for trading on 24th February.
- 2.31 This is further evidence to suggest that stores in town centres are finding it difficult to remain open following continued changes to shopping habits and competition from Rushden Lakes. Further expansion of Rushden Lakes is likely to only further exacerbate the decline of town centres, primarily in the retail sector, not only in Kettering but across North Northamptonshire as a whole.
- 2.32 Future Annual Monitoring Reports will continue to review the health of Kettering town centre in light of changes to retailing across the area.
- 2.33 The plan has a policy to ensure that A4 uses (pubs/bars) and A5 uses (hot food takeaways) do not become excessive and erode the retail function of the Secondary Shopping Frontages (SSF). In the SSF the figures show that both A4 and A5 uses have changed very slightly in the last year. The A4 uses have remained at 15.4% and the A5 uses have decreased from 7.98% to 7.5%. Last year it was stated that A4 and A5 uses should be resisted, in accordance with the adopted policy; this is still the case for both A4 and A5 uses within the Secondary Shopping Frontages.

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AAP Objective 3: To deliver a new residential community and utilise residential uses to support and complement the quarters

2.34 As referenced in paragraph 2.13, the AAP has a target of delivering 957 new dwellings on the allocated sites; 540 to be within the New Residential Quarter. This year, 7 residential units have been completed; however none of these dwellings are on sites allocated in the AAP. It should also be noted that the Council is able to demonstrate a 5 year supply of housing land, as required by national planning policy. The Council recognises the importance of maintaining a residential community in the town centre, including those above existing ground floor retail units, which can directly benefit the town centre through additional spending as well as enhancing the vibrancy of the area. Although this is not monitored specifically, over the past year there has been an increase in residential units in the town centre overall, which also has the benefit of improving surveillance and security in the town centre.

AAP Objective 4: To create a town centre characterised by the high quality of urban design, architecture and public realm and respect for heritage

2.35 The AAP seeks the provision of new high quality public realm as part of the Wadcroft/Newlands retail development and the development of The Yards. In addition, public realm improvements in the form of a Station Plaza are also sought in the Station Quarter. Exploratory discussions are taking place with Network Rail, on the back of proposals for a new stabling facility to the south of the Station, and a target set by the Government for Network Rail to release land to deliver 33,000 new homes nationally. The feasibility of a scheme which adds to accessibility through the station and at its main entrance, rationalising the structure of car parking arrangements, and releasing land for development, are all part of this agenda. In the New Residential Quarter, new public realm is to be delivered as a part of this new development. The Council has published a Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which provides a project plan for new public realm, including at the Meadow Road Park. The Council is proposing to deliver a major upgrade in play and open space in two phases, the first is planned for this summer. Provision exists within the Section 106 Agreement for the developers of East Kettering to fund public realm improvements in due course. In addition, some S106 funding is already secured from other development for this purpose.

2.36 A Section 106 receipt will pay for cycleway improvements on Station Road. Work was undertaken in Spring/Summer 2016 to improve traffic flow at this part of the town centre. This work was completed in June 2016. This has resulted in a marked improvement to movement and flows of footfall in the area. Further planned improvements for Bowling Green Road/London Road/St Mary's Road are expected to better this yet further. This includes working with Northamptonshire County Council to improve the timing of the lights at the junction of Bowling Green Road to assist with traffic flow. This has been

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identified in the Kettering Town Centre Delivery Plan as a short term project which is expected to be undertaken by March 2019.

2.37 The Seats on Streets Local Development Order (LDO) was adopted by the Council on 26th September 2018. This new LDO gives restaurants, cafes snack bars and hotels permitted development rights, subject to certain conditions, to use part of the public realm/ pavements for seating and tables associated with their businesses. It therefore means that only an annual street café licence needs to be obtained. The area of Kettering town centre the subject of the LDO has changed from the previous Order in 2013, and the lifetime of the LDO has been made permanent, so that it does not expire unless otherwise formally withdrawn or amended. The LDO will further encourage the development of a café culture and evening economy, which will attract and benefit visitors to the town centre so that they are able to enjoy food and drink whilst seated outdoors.

2.38 The Council has agreed a delivery programme with Northamptonshire Highways to bring forward the next phase of public realm improvements in the town centre. This phase of improvements, known as Public Realm Phase 4, will bring about a change in the appearance of High Street, Meadow Road, Lower Street and Gold Street with the introduction of new surfacing similar to that in Market Place, and new street furniture. The first elements of the proposals were delivered in 2015 through a new Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) for the zone and a rising bollard scheme at each of the gateways. This has limited vehicular access to this part of the town centre, making it a safer walkable space. The timetable for delivery of the whole project is determined by progress of the East Kettering development through Section 106 receipts, linked in to the speed at which the development builds out.

AAP Objective 5: To create a significant increase in office employment space, along with further regeneration opportunities

2.39 As discussed above, the AAP has a target of at least 38,500m² new office space in the plan area by 2021. In the past year there has been a gain of 102m² of office floorspace. The Council is working with its Station Quarter partners (Network Rail and East Midlands Trains) to establish the feasibility of bringing forward additional uses, including office development in the area. It is hoped to be in a position to report back during the coming year on the findings of a feasibility study.

2.40 The Department for Transport announced in 2012 an £800m investment in the Midland Mainline; this included the cost of electrification and the upgrade of key sections. The investment would improve line speeds, saving journey times, and potentially provide the opportunity to reinstate two trains an hour north from Kettering. Unfortunately, the additional hourly train north has not been confirmed. The construction was originally planned to cover the period 2014 to 2019/20. In July 2017, it was announced that plans to electrify the line north of Kettering, to Derby, Leicester, Nottingham and Sheffield had been cancelled.

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Investment in improving line speeds are still going ahead. It appears likely that 'bi-mode' trains will be selected, to transfer, where possible, from diesel to electric power with the potential for reduced journey times as well as increasing capacity and passenger comfort. This included work in December 2018 and January 2019 which saw work to allow the facilitation of an additional line in advance of the electrification of the line between Sharnbrook, Kettering and Corby. Again this will increase capacity and see a reduction in journey times. Line speeds are also being improved with straightening of the line at Market Harborough. Consents have also been granted for works to extend the platforms at Kettering Railway Station, and accommodate electric cables by reducing the platform canopies as well as the installation of additional signals, lighting columns, station cameras and PA.

- 2.41 A consultation titled 'Future of East Midlands rail franchise' ran from 12th July to 11th October 2017 to seek the views on priorities for the next East Midlands rail franchise, to ensure that the franchise delivers the best railway for passengers, communities and businesses. Responses have been considered, bidders have been shortlisted. The new train company will begin operating in August 2019. It is important for Kettering that as part of the new franchise, the town and the borough as a whole benefits from a more reliable service, which also has the potential to assist in attracting growth and investment to the area, giving improvements in connectivity to London as well as settlements such as Leicester, Nottingham, Derby and Sheffield to the north.

AAP Objective 6: To make a safe, welcoming, walkable and well connected town centre

- 2.42 The plan has a car parking policy for larger housing sites, which requires a car club/car share space for sites of 15 dwellings or above. In the last year no sites of over 15 dwellings have been delivered in the plan area, so no car share spaces have been delivered.
- 2.43 The plan has a policy to provide at least one secure cycle space for each new dwelling. In the last year, no new cycle parking spaces have been secured in association with residential development.
- 2.44 The AAP sets out a number of road and junction improvements in the plan area. Several improvements have been completed, the most recent being at Eskdaill Street, resulting in the introduction of a two-way route within the town centre. These improvements will allow for easier access to the town centre and reduce congestion as well assisting future growth of the town. No progress on the Bowling Green Road/London Road junction improvements have been made to date.

Operational changes are also planned for:

- Montagu Street

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- Silver Street

2.45 The Council is working in conjunction with Northamptonshire County Council to bring forward the next phase of improvements. The County Council published the Kettering Town Transport Strategy for consultation in September 2014. This document sets out the overarching vision for transport in Kettering and sets out a strategy to achieve it.

2.46 Since adoption, no large scale enhancements to car parks on the Station Quarter sites or Wadcroft site have been completed. However, the Council is working to generally improve car parks in the town and was recently successful in achieving the 'Park Mark', which recognises car parking excellence, for the 13th year running.

2.47 The Council, alongside partner organisations, instigated a Purple Flag assessment programme in 2013. Purple Flag recognises quality in the night time economy, in much the same way as Green Flags (Parks) and Blue Flags (Beaches). It brings with it, a useful toolkit for towns looking to improve the town centre environment at night. An overnight appraisal of the town centre was carried out in May 2014 which fed into the production of an Action Plan which identified a series of improvements which need to be made to meet Purple Flag standards. The Purple Flag was awarded in 2015; Kettering has held this accreditation since then. At present the process to renew this accreditation is underway. An overnight assessment will be undertaken in March, with the outcome with regards to being re-accredited as a result of this, expected in May. This award recognises the creation of a safe, clean and inviting environment in the town centre after 5pm. It is important that the standards set since 2015 are maintained to ensure that Kettering sustains its Purple Flag status as it is vital for economic growth and improving the public profile of the town. This shows that despite falls in footfall in December that there is significant success in attracting visitors to the town centre at different points of the day.

2.48 A number of improvements/achievements to the town centre which have helped to maintain interim accreditation through 2018 include:

- Further investment in the Market Place/Restaurant Quarter with the refurbishment of The Old Cherry Tree pub into Billionaire's restaurant
- Kettfest 2018 was the fourth year of this popular arts, culture and music community festival between 13th and 15th July.
- Ctrl-Alt-Delete Fest a free, multi-venue Music and Arts festival growing into its fifth year.
- Successful Purple Flag month promotion.
- Increase in branding awareness via merchandising and Twitter campaigns
- Pop Central received Best Bar One accreditation
- Successful launch of #Staysafe Campaign and "Ask Angela" campaign

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- Crime figures showed a reduction of over 6% between 2017 and 2018
- There has been a reduction in ASB from 2016
- Planned application to the Future High Street Fund, with a maximum grant of up to £25 million which, if successful it will enable investment in infrastructure, land and improvements to the highway network.

2.49 A report showing the findings of the Kettering Town Centre Delivery Plan Conference was taken to Executive Committee on 18th October 2017. In addition, earlier in 2017, an update on the Kettering Town Centre Delivery Plan was taken to Executive Committee on 12th April. This set out the intention to form a Delivery Plan to assist the AAP in meeting some of its objectives through recognising and addressing the challenges the town centres faces with regards to delivery and growth, in the short, medium and long term. At Executive Committee on 14th February 2018 the Draft Town Centre Delivery Plan was approved for consultation. The comments helped shape proposed amendments to the Delivery Plan which were presented and agreed at Executive Committee on 18th April. The final version of Kettering Town Centre Delivery Plan 2018 to 2025 was subsequently published. Further to this, at Kettering Town Forum on 28th January it was reported that the Council are planning to prepare a bid of up to £25 million from the Future High Street Fund, which has been aimed to rejuvenate the country's declining high streets. The deadline for expressions of interest is 22nd March, if successful, the funding will assist and strengthen the ability of the existing Town Centre Delivery Plan to positively enhance the town centre in a time of decline. An update on the Town Centre Delivery Plan, including the Future High Streets Fund was taken to Research & Development Committee on 6th February.

AAP Objective 7: To deliver a green town centre with an emphasis on provision of green infrastructure, renewable energy initiatives and environmentally efficient buildings to encourage green living

2.50 Several of the allocated sites in the New Residential Quarter are likely to be affected by surface water flooding. To ensure flood risk issues are managed, the provision of urban green space and the enhancement of the Slade Brook corridor are being considered in advance of the proposed developments in this area. The AAP committed the Council to the production of a Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) and Green Infrastructure Strategy (GIS). Kettering Borough Council has published both documents in January 2019 and March 2018 respectively. These include a scheme to improve the Slade Brook river corridor as a piece of green infrastructure.

2.51 In addition to this, the Kettering Town Centre Delivery Plan places a strong emphasis on Meadow Road, which lies adjacent to Slade Brook, in acting as a catalyst for improvements to this part of the town centre, with the potential in improving the connectivity and vibrancy of the town centre through engagement with businesses, the community and other agencies. This is despite on-going challenges that the increases in vacancy rates, especially in the retail sector

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indicate. However, through the Kettering Town Centre Delivery Plan as well as a review of the Kettering Town Centre Area Action Plan, attempts are being made to make progress in facing these challenges. This review will take place once the Site Specific Part 2 Local Plan is adopted, which is currently anticipated to be April 2020.

Kettering Town Centre Delivery Plan

2.52 The Council's Executive Committee agreed the Town Centre Delivery Plan on 18th April 2018. The Delivery Plan contains 20 high level town centre projects categorised to be completed in short, medium and long-term periods. Commentary on progress with the short-term projects (by March 2019) are summarised below:

- Eskdaill Street – project complete
- Meadow Road Urban Park – consultation undertaken
- Sheerness House
- Bowling Green Road/London Road Traffic Improvements
- Seats of Streets – project complete

2.53 A consultation on Meadow Road Urban Park was undertaken during December 18/ January 19.

2.54 Other medium/long-term projects to be benefitting from progress include:

- London Road Site Development – the Council has purchased the majority of buildings at the site, and is working towards a new residential scheme for delivery
- County Court Site/ Dryland Street

Implications of the amendments to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (as amended)

2.55 As discussed above, Policy 3 of the AAP seeks to protect the retail focus of the Primary Shopping Frontages (e.g. High Street, Gold Street, Newlands Centre, Newland Street, Market Street) by resisting development that would result in less than 75% of frontages being in A1 (retail) use. The aim of the policy is to ensure that the Primary Shopping Frontages remain the key locations for existing and new retail development. The policy is more flexible in relation to the Secondary Shopping Frontages (e.g. Horsemarket, Silver Street) and allows a greater diversification and mix of uses, including restaurants, cafes, public houses and take-aways.

2.56 In May 2013 the Government introduced amendments to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. The update to the Regulations (Statutory Instrument 2018 No. 343) came into force on the 6th April 2018.

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2.57 This update includes a number of minor amendments to the 2017 version of the General Permitted Development Order, all of which are not relevant. Therefore there is nothing to report in relation to the KTCAAP with regards to these latest amendments to legislation.

3. CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER IMPACT

3.1 The monitoring report is for information only, and no consultation is required.

4. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The monitoring report does not highlight any current trends which may require changes to local policy. However, the Council is engaging with its partners to progress projects as identified in the Kettering Town Centre Delivery Plan, the purpose of this being to continue to deliver improvements in the town centre. This detailed work will help to provide focus for a future review of the AAP.

4.2 The approved out-of-town scheme at Rushden Lakes has policy implications for Kettering town centre and the wider North Northamptonshire area. No policy changes are recommended at this time but this will need to be considered in further detail when the scheme is operating.

5. USE OF RESOURCES

5.1 There are no direct costs as a result of this report. However, required future revisions to existing policy would have resource implications.

6. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Members note that:

- Kettering Town Centre gains interim Purple Flag renewal status
- Overall the night time economy is growing significantly in strength
- Events including the, Christmas Market and Kettering by the Sea continue to promote Kettering Town Centre as an attractive and vibrant destination.
- The Kettfest festival proved to be popular, incorporating arts, culture and music, for a third successive year at various venues.
- Overall vacancy rates have increased to 13.94%; this is less positive than the national average of 11.1%.
- The closure of a number of high profile stores shows the negative impact of Rushden Lakes has had in the retail sector in Kettering town centre.
- A decrease of footfall on a non-market and a small increase on a market day in September, as well as significant decreases on both days in December, compared to last year.

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- A total of 238 dwellings have been delivered in the town centre since the plan was adopted.
- The Council is working with the town centre stakeholders to deliver projects set out in the Town Centre Delivery Plan which provides improvements to Kettering town centre.

Title of Document: Planning Policy Committee Item 6:
Kettering Town Centre Area Action Plan – Monitoring Update
Date: 20th June 2011

Title of Document: Planning Policy Committee Item 7:
Kettering Town Centre Area Action Plan – Monitoring Update
Date: 13th September 2012

Title of Document: Planning Policy Committee Item 8:
Kettering Town Centre Area Action Plan – Monitoring Update
Date: 7th November 2013

Title of Document: Planning Policy Committee Item 8:
Kettering Town Centre Area Action Plan – Monitoring Update
Date: 5th November 2014

Title of Document: Planning Policy Committee Item 6:
Kettering Town Centre Area Action Plan – Monitoring Update
Date: 4th November 2015

Title of Document: Planning Policy Committee Item 6:
Kettering Town Centre Area Action Plan – Monitoring Update
Date: 25th January 2017

Title of Document: Planning Policy Committee Item 5:
Kettering Town Centre Monitoring Update
Date: 23rd January 2018

Contact Officer: Andrew Needham – Assistant Development Officer