

SUPPLEMENTARY GUIDANCE

STOCKBRIDGE TOWN CENTRE

December 2017



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Further information

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1. Introduction

This Supplementary Guidance sets out the approach to the change of use of shop units within Stockbridge Town Centre.

Stockbridge is one of Edinburgh's nine town centres (including the City Centre) defined and protected in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan (LDP) as a hub for a wide range of activities from shopping, providing local services and as a leisure destination.

The LDP provides a framework for a tailored approach to assessing proposals for change of use applications in individual town centres. The Supplementary Guidance has been prepared in accordance with **Policy Ret 9: Alternative Use of Shop Units in Defined Centres** and applies to all shop units within the town centre.

The Supplementary Guidance aims to deliver two LDP objectives set out in Part 2, Section 6 (Shopping and Leisure) of the Plan:

- To maintain the existing and proposed broad distribution of centres throughout the city and sustain their vitality and viability; and
- To improve the appearance, quality and attractiveness of all centres.

This Supplementary Guidance forms part of the statutory development plan. Applications for change of use must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. To assist in interpreting the LDP the Council issues non-statutory guidance. Guidance for Businesses provides guidance on change of use. This is a material consideration in the determination of applications and should be considered alongside this Supplementary Guidance.

The Supplementary Guidance has been informed by a 'public life street assessment' carried out by design consultants for the Council, which explored how the town centre should evolve to maximise the potential for benefitting public life and a health check which has considered the centre's strengths, vitality and viability, weaknesses and resiliencies.

2. Stockbridge Town Centre

Stockbridge Town Centre (defined in Map 1) is located north of the city centre. Originally a small outlying village, it was incorporated into the City of Edinburgh in the 19th century. The historical expansion of the New Town from around 1813 increased the demand for property, leading to the incremental replacement and development of Stockbridge village. Despite such historical changes, Stockbridge has retained much of its village character and atmosphere, comprising of small shop units and a variety of house types including low rise colonies and terraces. For this reason, it is not quite as densely populated as some of the other town centres (approximately 5,000 people within a walking distance of approximately 400m).

There are a number of listed buildings. The Town Centre lies within the New Town Conservation Area and the New Towns Garden and Dean Historic Garden/Designed Landscape Inventory Site. The southern part of the Town Centre along St Stephen Street, is located within the Old and New Towns of Edinburgh World Heritage Site. Within these designations, specific LDP policies apply to protect and enhance the appearance and setting of the city. It is within close proximity to the Water of Leith.

Jubilee Gardens, located within the Town Centre, is home to the popular Stockbridge Market; a central meeting place for public life every Tuesday and Sunday. It is a diverse and lively Town Centre with a strong identity, supported by a community council.

Shops and other town centre uses

Stockbridge Town Centre consists of a mix of mostly smaller shops and eating places. There are also two small supermarket sized units. Similar to Edinburgh's other town centres, the shops and other uses are predominantly located in ground floor units under traditional tenements. The exceptions to this are Raeburn Place where single storey projections from terraces are common, and the northern side of Deanhaugh Street, where the majority of the units are single storey in height with no residential above.

National retailers are commonplace, particularly along sections of Deanhaugh Street and Raeburn Place. There are also a number of high-end independent specialist operators. These are particularly concentrated towards the southern end of the Town Centre, along streets such as St Stephen Street. Cafes and restaurants are well represented and spread out fairly evenly, resulting in a well distributed level of active evening uses. The area is also well served by services such as hairdressers, pharmacies, a post office, a bank, an opticians, and repair shops. There are no dentists or doctors within the Town Centre boundary itself, but practices are located within the surrounding area.

The mix of uses has been monitored in city-wide shop surveys periodically undertaken since 1986. The survey shows a steady decline in class 1 (retail) use and subsequent increase in other uses since 1986.

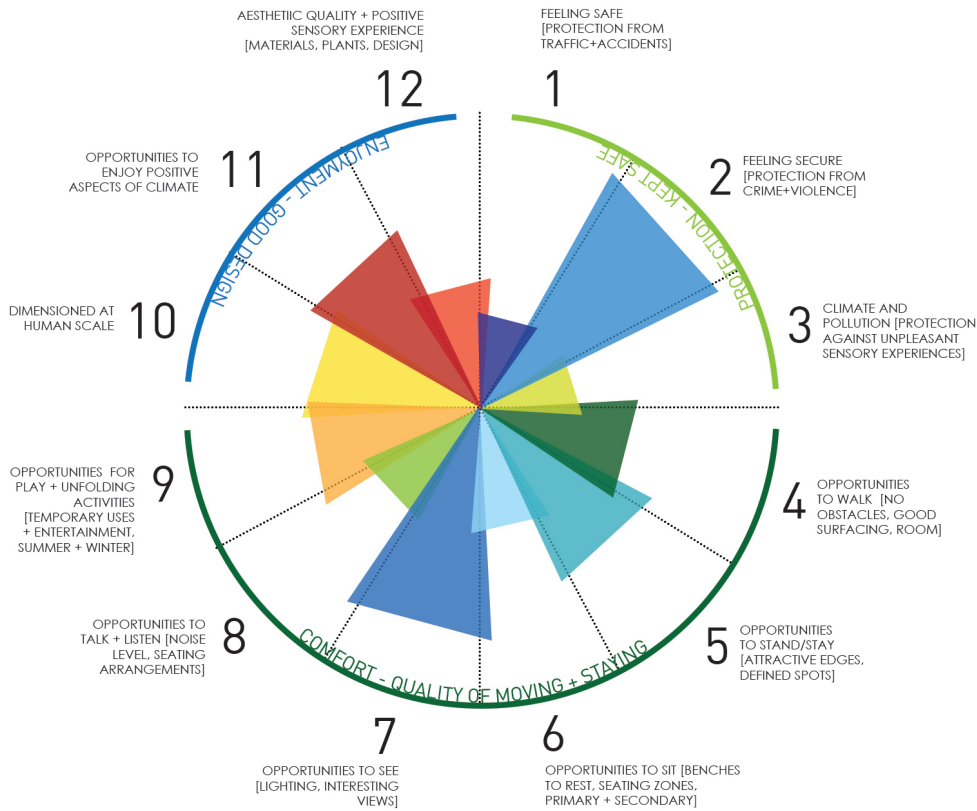
Strengths and weaknesses

To assess how the Town Centre functions in terms of pedestrian and cyclist movement and as a place to visit, a study called a public life street assessment was carried out by design consultants for the Council, and explored how the town centre should evolve to maximise the potential for benefitting public life. This study used a mixture of techniques, including direct observation (pedestrian counts, behavioural mapping and tracing studies), user interviews and land use surveys.

A health check has also been carried out to assess the Town Centre's strengths, vitality and viability, weaknesses and resilience.

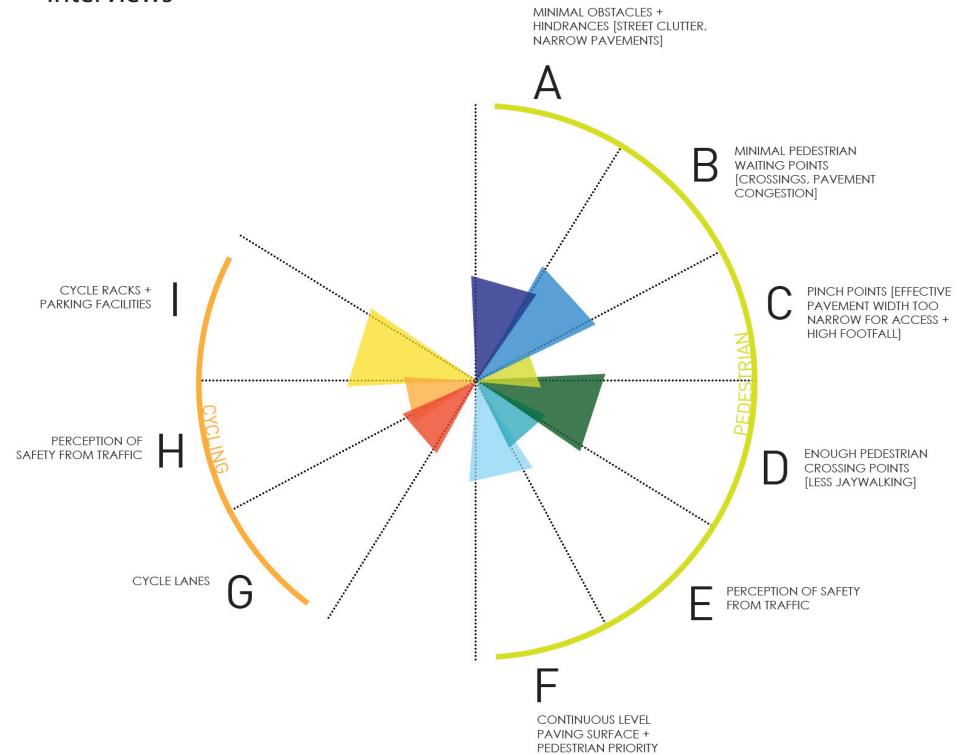
FINDINGS FROM PUBLIC LIFE STREET ASSESSMENTS

Assessed against Gehl's 12 quality criteria



Place Function

Based on direct observation techniques & user interviews



Movement Function

SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

- Friendly village atmosphere and strong sense of community
- Nearby parks, walking routes and green space
- Jubilee Gardens and Stockbridge Market act as a central meeting place for public life
- Low vacancy rate and diverse mix of shops and services
- Positive architectural and historic character and features of interest

WEAKNESSES

- Narrow pavements and prevalence of bollards hinder pedestrian movement
- Priority of vehicles over pedestrians, cyclists and place function
- Parking has been prioritised throughout the town centre
- Lack of cycle facilities including dedicated cycle lanes and enough cycle parking

OPPORTUNITIES

- Make the connection clearer to the Water of Leith to enhance wayfinding
- Remove bollards
- Extend the public realm at key points along the Town Centre, for example at the entrance to St Bernard's Row

THREATS

- Heavy traffic at weekday rush hour
- Perception of drivers that it is an arterial route rather than a place for people
- Resistance from businesses/residents to reduce parking

3. Vision and Principles

The Public Life Street Assessment and health check highlight areas for potential improvement in the Town Centre, particularly relating to the movement and place function. The vision for Stockbridge is to;

- increase the relative importance of pedestrian and cycle movement, whilst recognising the importance of Raeburn Place and Deanhaugh Street as important through traffic routes;
- promote and facilitate staying times by enhancing the character, identity, visual interest and comfort; and
- ensure a mix of uses to meet the needs and demands of the population.

The Supplementary Guidance goes some way to achieve the wider vision through the following 10 principles, which should be considered when submitting and assessing a planning application for a change of use within Stockbridge Town Centre;

1. Supporting high quality shopfront design (see the Council's Guidance for Businesses and Listed Buildings and Conservation Area Guidance for details).
2. Ensuring active frontages to the street by permitting glazing which will allow for natural surveillance, visual interest on the street and encourage street users to stay.
3. Supporting outdoor seating where pavements are wider and micro-climate is favourable, for example the junction of Raeburn Place and St Bernard's Row.
4. Supporting class 3 food and drink uses on corner units where there is an opportunity to activate the public street life.
5. Maximising opportunities for formal and informal outdoor seating incorporating shelter in the form of trees, planters or shop front awnings at key points along the town centre.

6. Ensuring development makes a positive contribution to the public realm by meeting the Street Design Guidance and Edinburgh Design Guidance.
7. Incorporating and enhancing natural and built features where they can contribute positively to the Town Centre, for example the Water of Leith.
8. Supporting additional cycle parking facilities at key points along the Town Centre.
9. Taking opportunities to remove street clutter and other redundant items identified in any relevant street audits prepared by the Council or Living Streets.
10. Ensuring appropriate arrangements are in place for storage of waste, internally and externally.

A number of other programmes and plans have the potential to address some of the other issues highlighted in the Public Life Street Assessment:

- A bus shelter replacement programme has recently taken place. Future replacement programmes will present an opportunity to improve placement of shelters.
- A review of The New Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal is underway. The appraisal manages change and will set out opportunities for enhancement.
- The World Heritage Site Management Plan is currently under review. It sets out how the Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) of the site will be protected. The management plan informs a separate action plan.
- Road and footway investment – Capital Programme.
- The Council's Wayfinding Project could improve navigation, wayfinding and appreciation of assets such as Water of Leith.

- A locality based approach to service delivery operates in Edinburgh. The Town Centre is within the North West Locality. Draft Locality Improvement Plans set out future priorities for the area.
- QuietRoutes – Edinburgh’s local walking and cycling routes.
- A 20mph speed limit has applied to much of the town centre since February 2017. Reduced traffic speed will improve the sense of security for pedestrians and cyclists.
- A trade waste policy applies in the town centre that only allows trade waste to be presented on the street/outside premises for one-hour within set collection windows.

4. Change of Use Policies

The policies apply to shop units.

What is a shop unit? Premises opening directly onto the street and designed primarily for shop use. In some locations the shop unit can be above street level or at basement level but still have direct access and be visible from the street.

Changing a shop unit to a non-shop use will always require planning permission.

What is a shop use? A unit used for the sale of goods (not hot food), e.g. post office, sale of tickets, travel agency, cold food for consumption off the premises, hairdressing, funeral parlour, launderette or dry cleaners.

All where the sale, display or service is principally to visiting members of the public.

Shop use is defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997. These types of use are grouped together and collectively called class 1 shops. The Scottish Government Circular 1/1998 contains guidance on use classes.

Separate policies are set out for defined Primary Retail Frontages and elsewhere within the Town Centre boundary. A Primary Retail Frontage is a group of shop units that has been identified as providing a focus for retail within the Town Centre. The identification and protection of Primary Retail Frontages will ensure that a minimum percentage of units are retained in shop use. The Primary Retail Frontages are below the threshold set in Policy STC1 meaning that there is still potential for other uses to locate here should there be demand. This is critical to the continued health of the Town Centre.

Outwith the areas defined in Policy STC1, there is a wide range of uses. Policy STC2 provides a flexible approach which will allow appropriate uses, whilst accepting that retailing and the role of town centres are changing, to ensure vitality and viability of the Town Centre overall. This should allow for units to capitalise on the outdoor street spaces, improving the public realm and providing for an active public life.

Policy STC 1 – Alternative Use of Shop Units in Primary Retail Frontages

In the Primary Retail Frontages defined in the table below and Map 2, the change of use of a shop unit to a non-shop use will be permitted provided:

- a) as a result of permitting the change of use, no more than one third of the total number of units in the Primary Retail Frontage will be in non-shop use; and
- b) the proposal is for an appropriate commercial or community use which would complement the character of the centre and would not be detrimental to its vitality and viability.

Primary Retail Frontages
4 - 102 Raeburn Place
1 - 47 Deanhaugh Street
1 – 77 Raeburn Place

Policy STC 2 – Alternative Use of Shop Units – Elsewhere within Stockbridge Town Centre

For those locations not identified as Primary Retail Frontage, but elsewhere within the Town Centre boundary, a change of use from a shop to a non-shop use will be permitted provided a proposal is:

- class 2 – financial, professional or other services
- class 3 – food and drink uses
- An appropriate commercial, community or leisure use which would complement the character of the centre, support the main shopping function, and would not be detrimental to its vitality and viability.

Residential use

For placemaking purposes it is important that ground floor uses help bring activity onto the street. Residential units at ground floor level tend to add little vitality to the town centre. Stockbridge already has a large population living within walking distance of the main shopping streets and within the town centre itself, changes from shop use to residential is not supported.

5. Links to other Policies and Guidance

Other relevant policies in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan include:

- Ret 1 Town Centres First
- Ret 3 Town Centres
- Ret 7 Entertainment and Leisure Developments
- Ret 11 Food and Drink Establishments
- Des 13 Shopfront
- Env 1 World Heritage Sites
- Env 3 Listed Buildings - Setting
- Env 4 Listed Buildings – Alterations and Extensions
- Env 5 Conservation Areas – Demolition of Buildings
- Env 6 Conservation Areas – Development
- Env 7 Historic Gardens and Designed Landscapes

Policy Ret 3 generally supports shop uses in town centres. Policy Ret 7 supports leisure and entertainment facilities in town centres. Policies Ret 11 considers the impact on nearby residents for proposals such as public houses and hot-food takeaways. Des 13 supports improvements to shop fronts..

Guidance For Businesses – non-statutory guidance to assist businesses in preparing applications to change the use of a property as well as providing guidance on shopfront design.

One-Door Approach - Food and drink, public house and hot-food takeaway uses will often require other consents and are subject to separate controls by licensing for: alcohol; hours of operation and outdoor pavement seating. For more information on these, see the Council's website on the One Door Approach.

Edinburgh Street Design Guidance - guidance on street design to achieve coherence and co-ordination across the city.

Edinburgh Design Guidance - sets out the Council's expectations for the design of new development in Edinburgh.

New Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal - describes what is special about the conservation area and helps in making decisions on proposals that affect the area's special character.

World Heritage Management Plan- sets out how the Outstanding Universal Value of the site will be protected. The management plan informs a separate action plan.

6. Definitions

Shop unit - As defined in the Edinburgh Local Development Plan (2016), a shop unit is a premises accessed directly onto the street and designed primarily for shop use.

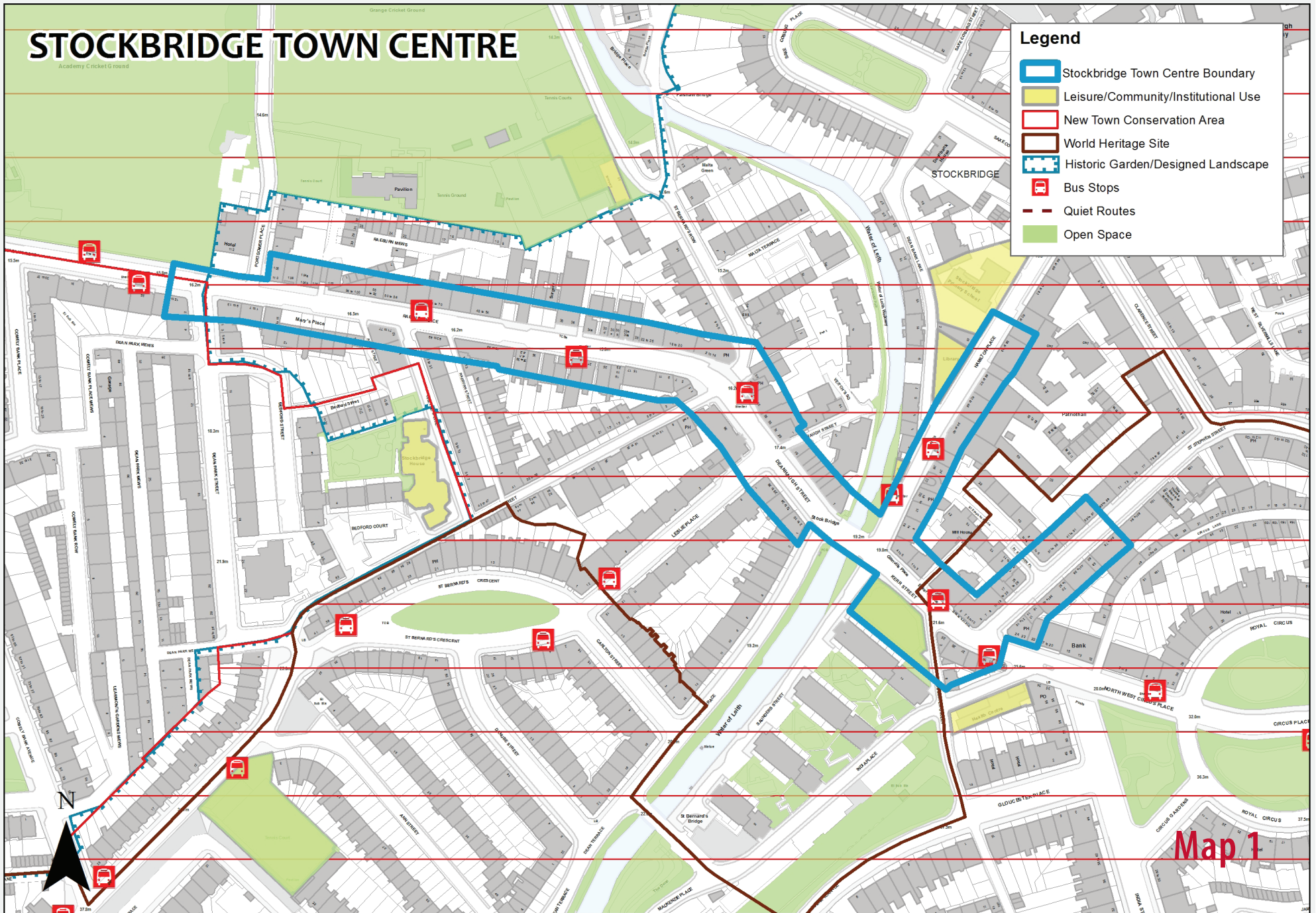
Primary Retail Frontage - a group of shop units that has been identified as providing a focus for retail within the town centre.

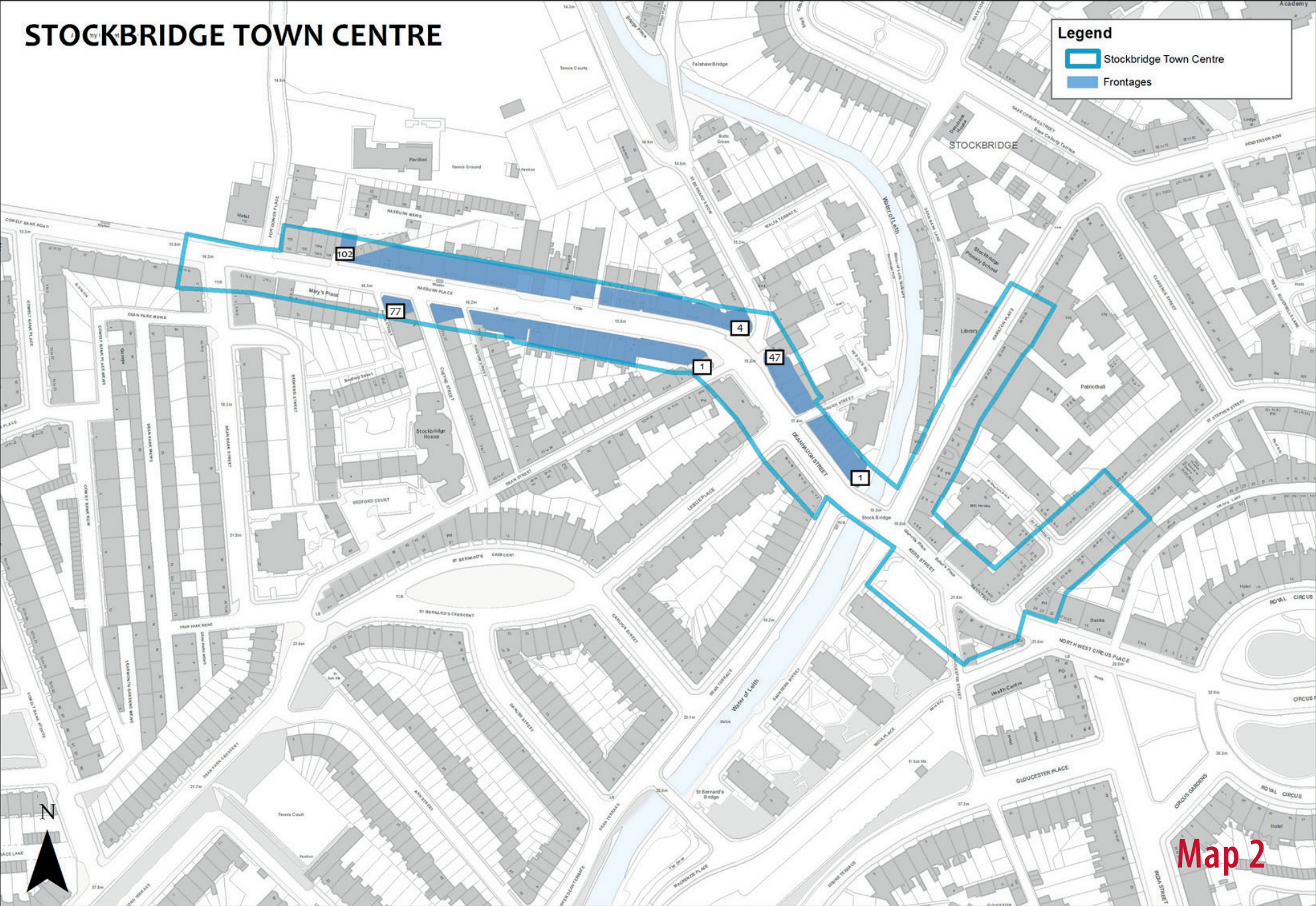
Class 1 shop use - A unit used for the sale of goods to visiting members of the public, for example, post office, sale of tickets, cold food for consumption off the premises, and hairdressing. This is further defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Scotland) Order 1997.

Non-shop uses – Any use falling outwith the definition of class 1 shop use. Examples of non-shop uses are:

- **Service uses** – e.g. lawyers, accountants, estate agents, health centres, tanning salons and pawn brokers.
- **Food and drink** – e.g. restaurant, cafe, snack bar.
- **Commercial/business use** – general office, light industry or research and development, which can be carried out without detriment to the amenity of any residential area.
- **Community use** – e.g. social and cultural activities.
- **Leisure use** – e.g. cinema and gymnasium.
- **Other uses** – e.g. betting shops, pay day loan shops, pubs and hot food takeaways.

Some changes of use are permitted development, for example, a cafe (class 3) being turned into a shop unit (class 1). The Scottish Government Circular 1/1998 contains guidance on use classes.







HAPPY TO TRANSLATE

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بسعنا توفر الترجمة MOŻEMY PRZETŁUMACZYĆ 很樂意翻譯

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