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EDINBURGH ECONOMIC NEEDS STUDY: RETAIL

**A REPORT TO THE CITY OF
EDINBURGH COUNCIL**

SEPTEMBER 2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The **Edinburgh Economic Needs Study** suite of reports supports the City of Edinburgh Council's City Plan 2030 and the evidence base for City Plan 2040. This report covers the city's **retail market**. Others in the suite assess the city's economy and its visitor accommodation, office, industrial and leisure markets.
2. Recent changes in Scottish **planning policy** (NPF4) continue the 'town centre first' principle, but with new, updated requirements for Local Development Plans (LDPs). LDPs should support sustainable futures for the network of city centres, town centres, local centres and existing commercial centres. NPF4 also introduces the principle of 20-minute neighbourhoods and requires the preparation of town centre visions. The sequential test for retail development outside town centres is now much more stringent, and under the Edinburgh LDP a retail impact assessment may be required. The town centre first principle now extends to other uses that generate significant footfall. The implications of NPF4 are that it is essential that sites for future retail development are identified in LDPs. Edinburgh's shopping and leisure uses are mainly provided across a *network of centres* distributed across the city, identified in the LDP and analysed in this report.
3. The **retail sector** is focusing on the largest destinations, alongside a shift to online shopping accelerated over the past five years by the pandemic then the inflation-and-interest rate cycle. While competition from retailers has re-emerged for prime destinations and convenience shopping remains resilient, shopping mall redevelopment proposals in many regional towns now often replace comparison retail floorspace with other uses. Food & beverage and leisure continue to be important complementary uses and help to diversify more challenged locations. There has been no development of major new centres in Scotland since the St James Quarter in 2021. New retail parks are commonly a mix of budget comparison goods stores and food discounters.
4. Edinburgh's prime retail activity is concentrated in the **city centre**, which has emerged as Scotland's prime shopping destination with a very large retailer base including major brands and is out-competing comparable UK cities. This has been catalysed by the new St James Quarter which has led an eastward shift of the prime retail core and has more than offset the closure of some major city centre stores, which in turn are in demand for alternative uses and ground floor retail. Market activity and occupier demand are now more focused on alternative uses such as leisure and food & beverage rather than comparison shopping.
5. Edinburgh's **town centres** continually adapt to local demand through diversification. Among the city's **commercial centres**, retail parks are in-demand and (perhaps paradoxically) are supported by restrictive planning policies, while existing shopping malls are diversifying or remodelling to meet their retail, leisure and alternative use potential. The average size of a retail unit has risen across all locations except in the City centre. Edinburgh also has a large complement of **local centres** and further retail units outside of defined centres serving its local neighbourhoods. The city is well-served by a broad mix of **supermarket** brands and formats.
6. St James Quarter aside, **development** activity is weak by historic standards (discount retailers are an exception) and the large majority of market activity is the continuing reuse of the city's existing retail stock.
7. Forecast **convenience expenditure** growth is very low. Current expenditure potential of £1,649 million currently rises to £1,663 million by 2035 (+0.8%). Expenditure growth is driven by forecast population increase, as the expenditure per capita declines slightly. The study divides Edinburgh into five zones. Analysis of the convenience shopping patterns indicates roughly 75% of expenditure is retained in each zone, apart from the City Centre which is not a destination for convenience shopping. The shopping patterns indicate that convenience inflows to Edinburgh equate to about 16% of total residents' expenditure while outflows are 4%.
8. Edinburgh is well-served with **supermarkets and discount foodstores**. The relationship between convenience expenditure, floorspace and turnover in each zone indicates little over-trading above industry average levels, except in East Edinburgh. Indeed, turnover levels are below average in North and West Edinburgh. Broadly speaking, this means limited current requirements for more convenience floorspace.
9. There are few **convenience retail planning consents** in Edinburgh, totalling around 6,200 sq.m. gross. These are mainly supermarket applications. One of the proposals has recently been completed and has opened (Lidl). There are however mixed convenience and comparison consents awaiting planning determination, notably including the proposed new town on the western edge of the city.

10. The study presents both a low and a high forecast of **spare convenience expenditure capacity** to support additional floorspace up to 2035 (*while noting that forecasts beyond five years will carry more uncertainty*):
 - 10.1 Under the **low** forecast, there would be no spare convenience expenditure over the next ten years. The main reason relates to under-trading below average levels in Zone 2 (North) and Zone 5 (West). Forecast convenience expenditure growth is quite low, with additional expenditure not materialising until after 2030.
 - 10.2 Under the **high** forecast, there would be potential to claw back convenience expenditure leakage and attract some new inflows, at modest levels. The proportion of convenience expenditure leakage from Edinburgh is low, which limits to the scope for claw back. Also, the potential to attract new convenience expenditure will be limited, especially as the market for large supermarkets and superstores to draw trade from wide areas is currently dormant. Therefore, under the high forecast there would be a small amount of spare convenience expenditure capacity over the next ten years.
11. In the **comparison retail sector**, a substantial proportion of expenditure is now made on-line. In this study, it is estimated at 35% currently, rising to a forecast 45-50% by 2035. The upward trend seems likely to continue because it is driven by customer attraction to online shopping, i.e. it is market-led. The effect of increasing on-line shopping is to reduce the amount of additional comparison shop floorspace required in the future.
12. Total **comparison expenditure potential** in Edinburgh is £1,618 million at present. Analysis of the comparison shopping patterns indicates very high inflows of expenditure to the City Centre, confirming its destination role. For Edinburgh as whole, inflows from neighbouring local authority areas and from visitors equate to 66% of total residents' expenditure while outflows to other locations are much lower at 11%. Notably, Zone 3 (East) attracts very substantial expenditure from East Lothian and Midlothian to the commercial centre at Fort Kinnaird. At 6%, the town centres' share is low and their main strength is other uses, including convenience, services and leisure.
13. The **distribution of comparison turnover** across Edinburgh's network of centres reveals that the City Centre accounts for 50% of the total and the Commercial Centres 33%; together these account for the large majority of the city's comparison goods turnover.
14. Existing **comparison retail planning consents** amount to some 21,600 sq.m. gross floorspace. In addition, there are several recent mixed use development applications awaiting determination, notably the proposed new town centre by West Town Edinburgh Ltd (20,100 sq.m. of retail floorspace although the mix is not yet known).
15. Forecast spare **comparison retail expenditure capacity** will support those existing retail planning consents plus some additional comparison floorspace to 2035. The forecast spare capacity is:
 - 15.1 At the **low** end of the range of forecast spare capacity, 50% of comparison retail spending is assumed to be on-line by 2035. Total comparison retail spending in Edinburgh would be £1,661 million (+2.7%). There is no forecast spare capacity for 2025-30 or for the ten-year period 2025-35 under this scenario.
 - 15.2 At the **high** end of the range of forecast spare capacity, 45% of comparison retail spending is assumed to be online by 2035. Total comparison retail spending in Edinburgh would be £1,837 million (+12.9%). There is £209 million forecast spare capacity by 2035. The equivalent average net retail floorspace would be about 19,000 sq.m. net by 2035.
16. The share of internet spend is the key variable. While the low forecast appears to more closely match market trends at present, this is inherently uncertain over the medium-to-long term. The market is more likely to support prime City Centre projects - such as the Jenners refurbishment - and these may prove more resilient to on-line shopping. Therefore, it is reasonable to consider the *low-to-high range* as also being broadly consistent with the market. It should be monitored again, in say 5 years' time. There would be some potential capacity for new comparison floorspace including the undetermined development applications, notably the proposed new town centre on the western edge of the City. None of this implies much support for increasing the levels of comparison floorspace in the existing town centres generally, beyond improvements in quality. Efforts to improve the quality of the eight town centres through the planning process are therefore of fundamental importance.

01 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Edinburgh Economic Needs Study forms part of the evidence base for Edinburgh's Local Development Plan. The Study is divided into five sector reports: offices, retail, leisure, industrial and visitor accommodation. The reports are to support implementation of the City Plan 2030 and preparation of the upcoming City Plan 2040, ensuring alignment with the requirements of National Planning Framework 4.
- 1.2 This retail report contains population projections, the policy framework, analysis of market trends, expenditure trends, and modelling of retail floorspace and turnover. It contains projections of potential spare retail expenditure capacity up to 2035 with implications for retail floorspace. The study is produced by lead consultant Ryden in association with retail experts Roderick MacLean Associates.
- 1.3 The report is provided in the following sections:
 - 01 Introduction
 - 02 Retail zones and population
 - 03 Retail policy framework
 - 04 Retail trends
 - 05 Edinburgh retail
 - 06 Convenience expenditure and turnover
 - 07 Convenience expenditure capacity
 - 08 Comparison expenditure and turnover
 - 09 Comparison expenditure capacity
 - 10 Summary and conclusions

Appendix A. Retail Zones and Ward boundaries

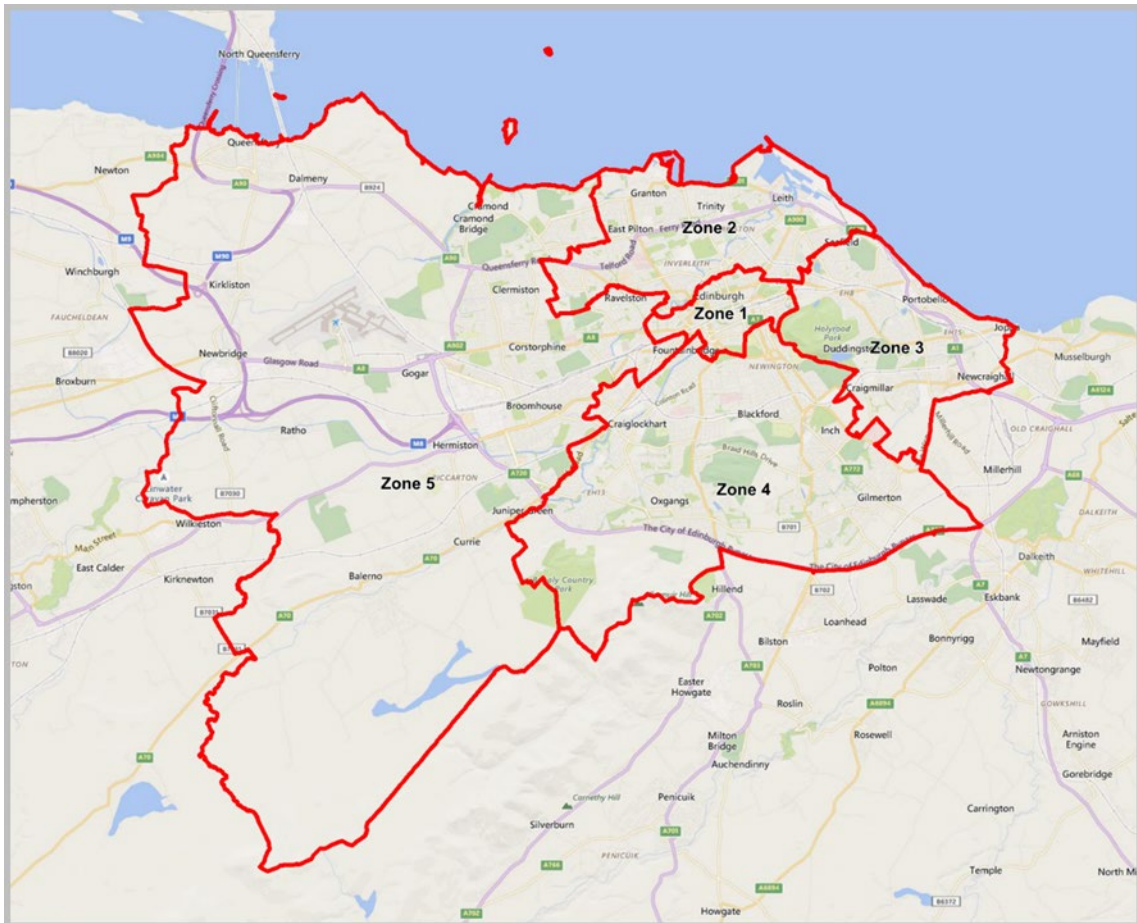
Appendix B: NEMS Edinburgh household interview survey – list of questions

02 RETAIL ZONES AND POPULATION

RETAIL ZONES

2.1 This section outlines the Based on research in the 2018 Edinburgh Retail and Leisure Commercial Needs Study¹, the current study divides Edinburgh into the same five zones deriving from analysis of shopping patterns of residents between different parts of the City and their relationships to the City Centre. The zones are illustrated on Figure 2.1. Each zone is composed of wards. There are 17 in total, and the boundaries are shown in the map and table in Appendix A. Definition of the zones relates to the findings of a 1,600 sample household shopping telephone interview survey by NEMS Market Research in October 2018 (see Appendix B). While the zones are not strictly retail catchment areas, the survey findings show that the turnover in any zone was mainly contributed-to by residents of that zone, apart from the City Centre (Zone 1).

FIGURE 2.1: EDINBURGH RETAIL ZONES



Source: Edinburgh City Plan 2030: Commercial Needs Study 2018 - Retail and Leisure

¹ <https://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/download/14225/city-plan-2030-commercial-needs-studies>

POPULATION

2.2 Table 2.1 shows the current and projected population of Edinburgh up to 2035. The projections are based on the National Records Scotland (NRS) 2018 based population projections (still the latest available at sub national level).

TABLE 2.1: EDINBURGH POPULATION PROJECTIONS 2025, 2030 AND 2035

	NRS Mid-year 2021	2025	2030	2035
Zone 1 City Centre	32,104	33,139	34,049	34,833
Zone 2 North	126,678	130,763	134,351	137,447
Zone 3 East	64,022	66,087	67,900	69,465
Zone 4 South	153,249	158,191	162,532	166,277
Zone 5 West	150,417	155,267	159,528	163,204
Total- City of Edinburgh	526,470	543,447	558,360	571,226
Note The zones comprise groups of wards. The Mid-year population estimates for 2021 derive from National Records Scotland (NRS) The populations in 2025, 2030 and 2035 derive from the NRS 2018 based population projections for the City of Edinburgh, apportioned to the zones.				

2.3 Projected population growth for the City is 5.1% for the ten- year period 2025-35.

03 RETAIL POLICY FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 This section summarises the latest Scottish national planning policies on retailing and town centres. It also identifies the retail policies in the local development plan for Edinburgh in the City Plan 2030, adopted in November 2024.

NATIONAL PLANNING FRAMEWORK 4

- 3.2 National Planning Framework 4 (NPF4) is the national spatial strategy for Scotland, which was approved and adopted by the Scottish Government in February 2023. On town centres and retailing, it continues the 'town centre first' principle from the now superseded SPP (Scottish Planning Policy), but with important changes including new, updated requirements for inclusion in Local Development Plans (LDPs). Pages 81-85 of NPF4 are most relevant to this study.
- 3.3 LDPs should support sustainable futures for the network of centres, including city centres, town centres, local centres, and existing commercial centres where appropriate. A new requirement is to include the principle of 20-minute neighbourhoods, as defined in Appendix F to NPF4. A town centre vision must also be incorporated in the network.
- 3.4 There is a new requirement for LDPs to assess and identify where clusters of non-retail uses are adversely impacting on the community. Additional drive-thru facilities will only be supported if the location is identified in the LDP and they would not adversely impact on the principles of local living and sustainable travel.
- 3.5 **NPF4 Policy 27** gives support for development proposals that improve the vitality and viability of city, town, and local centres. Development proposals will be consistent with the 'town centre first' approach. These include uses that generate significant footfall, which are: commercial, leisure, offices, community, sport and cultural facilities, public buildings such as libraries, education and healthcare facilities, and public spaces.
- 3.6 Policy 27 does not support development proposals outside city, town, and local centres unless a *town centre first assessment* (page 82 of NPF4) demonstrates that all centre/ edge of centre options have been discounted, the scale of the proposal cannot be reasonably altered to be accommodated in a centre, and the impacts on existing centres have been thoroughly assessed to demonstrate no significant adverse effects on their vitality and viability.
- 3.7 **NPF4 Policy 28** is specific to retailing. LDPs should consider where there may be a need for further retail provision. This may be where a retail study identifies deficiencies in retail provision in terms of quality and quantity in an area; or when allocating sites for housing or the creation of new communities, in terms of the need for neighbourhood shopping and supporting local living. Also, LDPs should identify areas where proposals for healthy food and drink outlets can be supported.
- 3.8 Under Policy 28:
- a) Development proposals for retail (including expansions and changes of use) will be consistent with the town centre first principle. This means that new retail proposals:
- i. will be supported in existing city, town and local centres, and
 - ii. will be supported in edge-of-centre areas or in commercial centres if they are allocated as sites suitable for new retail development in the LDP.
 - iii. will not be supported in out of centre locations (other than those meeting policy 28(c) or 28(d)).
- b) Development proposals for retail that are consistent with the sequential approach (set out in a) and click-and-collect locker pick up points, will be supported where the proposed development:

- i. is of an appropriate scale for the location;
- ii. will have an acceptable impact on the character and amenity of the area; and
- iii. is located to best channel footfall and activity, to benefit the place as a whole.

c) Proposals for small new scale neighbourhood retail development will be supported where the proposed development:

- i. contributes to local living, including where relevant 20-minute neighbourhoods and/or
- ii. can be demonstrated to contribute to the health and wellbeing of the local community.

- 3.9 The main change from the former SPP is that the provisions of the sequential test for retail development outside town centres are much more stringent. Retail proposals outside town centres are only consistent with national policy if they are on edge of centre sites and in commercial centres identified to include retailing. Out of centre locations are now contrary to national policy, except for minor neighbourhood retail proposals.
- 3.10 There is no specified requirement for traditional supporting retail impact assessments, nor threshold sizes of proposed new floorspace above which an impact assessment is required. The need for a retail impact assessment could however remain part of the discussion with applicants at the pre-application stage. For example, the circumstances might include ensuring that a proposed development is of an appropriate scale for the location, or where an application in a commercial centre would displace trade from town centres.
- 3.11 The implications of NPF4 are that it is essential that sites for future retail development are identified in LDPs during the preparation consultation process. Once an LDP is adopted, retail site development opportunities will be plan-led, with minimal opportunities to accommodate emerging new, market-led demand retail sites during the LDP lifespan.

USE CLASS 1A (PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS)

- 3.12 As from 1st April 2023, there is a new Use Class 1A (Scotland Order), which combines former Use Classes 1 and 2. There are also new permitted development rights for change of use from Class 1A to Classes 3 and 4.

REGIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY

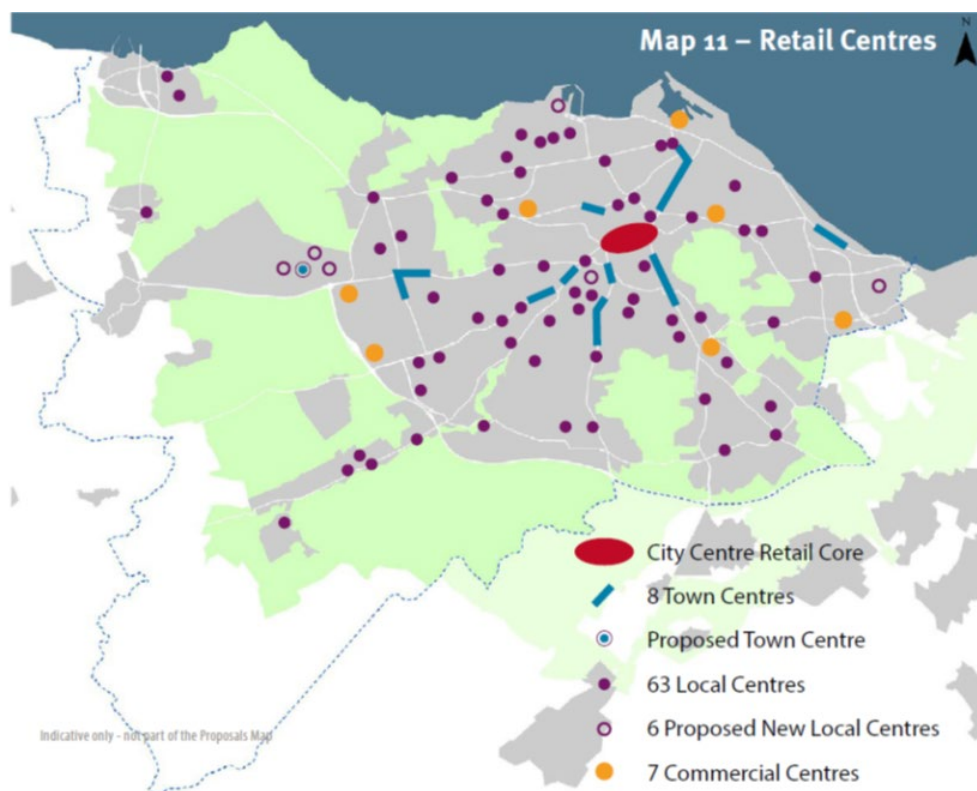
- 3.13 The Planning (Scotland) Act 2019 removes the need for the preparation of Strategic Development Plans. Instead, the Act introduces the new concept of Regional Spatial Strategies. These are non-statutory documents which provide a spatial representation of the key regional land use issues across the region.
- 3.14 Although non-statutory in nature (they do not form part of the development plan and will not hold status in planning decisions), their purpose is to guide the development of National Planning Frameworks and Local Development Plans. An interim Regional Spatial Strategy for Edinburgh and South East Scotland City Region², approved by SESplan, the City Region Deal Directors and the constituent SESplan authorities, was submitted to Scottish Government for consideration as part of the engagement process for NPF4. The interim Strategy is based on the Strategic Development Plan 2 spatial principles, City Region Deal projects, the latest Local Development Plan from each SESplan authority and recognition of the need for cross boundary sustainable transport initiatives and infrastructure to address connectivity and capacity issues which are too heavily dependent on private car usage.
- 3.15 The strategy promotes a place-based approach to community development and recognises the need to repurpose town centres where retail units are not performing optimally. This might include integrated service provision such as education and community uses and also health and social care facilities.

² Comprising City of Edinburgh, East Lothian, Fife, Midlothian, Scottish Borders and West Lothian local authority areas.

EDINBURGH CITY PLAN 2030

- 3.16 In Edinburgh, shopping and leisure uses are mainly provided in the following *network of centres* distributed across the city, as shown in Figure 3.1 and Table 3.1. The centres are covered by Policy 28 noted at paragraph 3.8 above.
- **City Centre:** The retail core of the city centre is the largest shopping centre in the Edinburgh City Region with a wide range of shops and other entertainment, leisure and cultural uses and excellent public transport services
 - **Town Centres:** The other eight town centres serve as focal points for their local communities by providing a diverse mix of shopping facilities and other commercial and community services. Each of the town centres is characterised by mainly traditional shop units under tenements located on main roads with good bus services. There is potential for a new town centre in West Edinburgh in connection with new development as set out in Part 4, Table 14 of the City Plan 2030.
 - **Local Centres:** There are 63 local centres located across the city and 6 new local centres are proposed in connection with new development as set out in Part 4, Table 14 of the City Plan 2030. These contribute to the quality of life and sense of identity of neighbourhoods by providing local shops and other services within walking distance. The city's local centres are very diverse and vary from larger local centres with covered malls such as Wester Hailes, through to arterial routes such as Easter Road and Davidson's Mains, to smaller parades of shops in the villages of Currie and South Queensferry.
 - **Commercial Centres:** Seven shopping malls and retail parks of varying size and character are identified as commercial centres. The individual characteristics of each centre and their potential future role, which includes mixed uses at certain centres, are set out in Part 4, Table 14 of the City Plan 2030.

FIGURE 3.1: EDINBURGH RETAIL ZONES



Source: Edinburgh City Plan 2030

TABLE 3.1: NETWORK OF CENTRES (FROM TABLE 14 IN THE CITY PLAN 2030)

City Centre		
Edinburgh City Centre		
Town Centres		
Corstorphine	Gorgie / Dalry	Leith/Leith Walk
Morningside/Bruntsfield	Nicolson St/Clerk Street	Portobello
Stockbridge	Tollcross	West Edinburgh (Proposed new centre)
Local Centres		
Ashley Terrace	Balgreen Road	Blackhall
Boswell Parkway	Broughton Street	Brunstane (Proposed new centre)
Bryce Road, Currie	Buckstone Terrace	Chesser
Chesser Avenue	Colinton	Comiston Road
Corslet Place	Craiglockhart	Crew
Crewe Road North (new)	Dalkeith Road	Davidson Mains
Drylaw	Drumbrae	Dundas Street
Dundee Street	East Craigs	Easter Road
Ferry Road (East)	Ferry Road (West)	Forrest Road
Fountainbridge (Proposed new centre)	Gilmerton	Goldenacre
Gracemount	Granton Waterfront (Proposed new centre)	Hillhouse Road/Telford Road
Jocks Lodge	Juniper Green	Liberton Brae
Main Street, Balerno	Main Street, Kirkliston	Marchmont North
Marchmont South	Mayfield Road	Milton Road West
Moredun Park Road	Muirhouse/Pennywell	Oxgangs Broadway
Parkhead	Pentland View Court, Currie	Piershill
Polwarth Gardens	Queensferry (Centre)	Ratcliffe Terrace
Restalrig Road	Rodney Street	Roseburn Terrace
Saughton Road North	Scotstoun Grove, Queenferry	Sighthill
Stenhouse Cross	Viewforth	Walter Scott Avenue
Waterfront Broadway	West Maitland Street	Western Corner
West Granton Road (new)	West Edinburgh (Proposed new centres)	Whitehouse Road
Wester Hailes		
Commercial Centres		
Cameron Toll	Craighleith	Hermiston Gait
Meadowbank	Newcraighall/The Jewel	Ocean Terminal
The Gyle		

Source: Edinburgh City Plan 2030

- 3.17 **LDP Policies:** The retail and town centre policies are on pages 138-143 in the City Plan 2030. These are summarised in the following paragraphs:
- 3.18 **Re 1 Town Centres First Policy:** Planning permission will be permitted for retail and other uses which attract a significant amount of people including commercial leisure uses, community and cultural facilities and where appropriate libraries, education and healthcare facilities in the following order of preference:
- Town centres (including city and local centres)
 - Edge of town centre
 - Other commercial centres as identified in the plan
 - Out of centre locations that are or can be made easily accessible by a range of sustainable transport modes.
- 3.19 Where a retail or leisure development with a gross floorspace over 2,500sq.m. or occasionally for smaller proposals, is proposed outwith a town centre and contrary to the development plan, a retail impact analysis will be required sufficient to demonstrate that there is no significant adverse effect on the vitality and viability of existing town centres. This is different from NPF4 (at paragraph 3.10 above) which no longer sets a formal threshold but could still require an impact assessment depending upon the circumstances. Town and local centres within adjoining local authority areas will also be considered when assessing retail impact if they fall within the intended catchment area of the proposal.
- 3.20 **Re 2 City Centre Retail Core:** Planning permission for retail development in the city centre retail core will be permitted having regard to the following considerations:
- a. whether the proposal will provide high quality, commercially attractive units to a high standard of design that will strengthen the role of Edinburgh as a regional shopping centre, safeguard historic character and improve the appearance of the city centre,
 - b. whether the proposal will reinforce the retail vitality of the shopping streets in the retail core,
 - c. whether the proposal has paid special attention to upper floors if not to be used for retail purposes, and how these

may be put to, or brought into, beneficial use which will enhance city centre character,

d. whether the proposal will help to create a safe and attractive pedestrian environment, safeguard historic character and improve the appearance of the city centre including the public realm.

3.21 Planning permission will be permitted for retail development on sites which adjoin or can form an effective extension to the city centre retail core if it is clear that no suitable sites are available within the city centre retail core, and subject to considerations a) to d) above.

3.22 **Re 3 Town Centres:** Planning permission will be permitted for retail development within a town centre, where it has been demonstrated that:

- a. there will be no significant adverse effects on the vitality and viability of the city centre retail core or any other town centre,
- b. the proposal is for a development that will be integrated satisfactorily into the centre and will help to maintain a compact centre,
- c. the proposal is compatible, in terms of scale and type, with the character and function of the centre,
- d. the proposal will reinforce the retail vitality and improve the appearance, including public realm, or
- e. it can form an effective extension to the centre by promoting linked trips with safe and easy access to the town centre, where it is clear the proposal will help to improve the accessibility of the centre for all transport modes.

3.23 Planning permission will be granted for retail development on sites which adjoin the boundary of a town centre or can form an effective extension to the centre, and if it is clear that no suitable sites are available within the town centre itself, and subject to considerations a) to e) above

3.24 **Re 4 Alternative Use of shop units in the City Centre and Town Centres:** In the City Centre Retail Core and town centres, change of use of a shop unit to a non-shop use will only be permitted if it can be demonstrated that:

- a. The change would not undermine the retail function of the centre, and
- b. The proposal is for appropriate commercial, community or business use, which would complement the character of the centre and would not be detrimental to its vitality and viability.

3.25 The Council's city centre and town centre planning guidance will be used to assess whether the change of use would undermine the retail function of the centre. These guidelines have been prepared following detailed analysis of each centre and set out detailed advice tailored to identify the appropriate balance of uses within each centre to maintain their vitality, viability and deliver good placemaking.

3.26 **Re 5 Local Centres:** Planning permission for retail development in or on the edge of a local centre will be permitted provided the proposal:

- a. can be satisfactorily integrated into the centre,
- b. is compatible, in terms of scale and type, with the character and function of the centre,
- c. makes a positive contribution to the shopping environment and appearance of the centre,
- d. would not have a significant adverse impact on the city centre retail core or any town or local centre, and
- e. is easily accessible by public transport, foot and cycle.

3.27 Proposals for non-retail development in a local centre or on edge of a local centre which would have a detrimental impact on the function of the centre will not be permitted.

3.28 The change of use of a shop unit in a local centre to a non-shop use will be permitted provided:

- f. The change of use would not result in half of the units in the centre being in non-shop use, and
- g. The proposal is for an appropriate commercial, community or business use, which would complement the character of the centre and would not be detrimental to its vitality and viability.

3.29 **Re 6 Commercial Centres:** Proposals for retail floorspace requiring permission in a Commercial Centre (see Table 3.1) in the City Plan 2030 will not be supported unless it can be demonstrated that:

- a. the proposal will address a quantitative or qualitative deficiency within its catchment area, and will be restricted to a scale which makes good this deficiency,
- b. all potential town centre and edge of town centre options (including the city centre retail core) have been thoroughly assessed and can be discounted as unsuitable or unavailable,
- c. the proposal will not have significant adverse individual or cumulative impacts on any other town, local or commercial

centre and, in particular, will not impact adversely on the strategy and objectives for enhancing the vitality and retail attractiveness of the city centre retail core, and

- d. the scale, format and type of development proposed is compatible with the centre and the proposal will assist in making the centre more accessible by public transport, walking and cycling, contribute to less car travel, and will improve the appearance and environment of the centre.

3.30 **Re 7 Out of Centre development:** Proposals for retail development in an out-of-centre location will only be permitted provided it has been demonstrated that:

- a. the proposal will address a quantitative or qualitative deficiency or will meet the needs of a growing residential or working population across its catchment area,
- b. all potential sites, either within or on the edge of an identified centre (see Part 4, Table 14 in City Plan 2030), have been assessed and can be discounted as unsuitable or unavailable,
- c. the proposal will not have a significant adverse effect, either individually or cumulatively with other developments, on the vitality and viability of any existing centre,
- d. the site is or can be made easily accessible by a range of sustainable transport modes and will reduce the length and overall number of shopping trips made by car.

3.31 **Re 8 Alternative Use of Shop Units in Other Locations:** Outwith defined centres, planning applications for the change of use of a shop unit will be determined having regard to the following:

- a. where the unit is located within a speciality shopping street (defined on the Proposals Map and in Appendix B in the City Plan 2030), whether the proposal would be to the detriment of its special shopping character,
- b. where the unit is located within a predominantly commercial area, whether the proposal would be compatible with the character of the area,
- c. whether the proposal would result in the loss of premises suitable for small business use,
- d. whether there is a clear justification to retain the unit in shop use to meet local needs, and
- e. where residential use is proposed, whether the development meets the requirements of Hou 4 Conversion to Housing.

04 RETAIL TRENDS

ECONOMY

- 4.1 The consumer economy creates demand for retail goods and services. The need for retail premises is derived from that consumer demand, however that dependency has loosened since the 1990s as online shopping has steadily increased its market share.
- 4.2 During the second quarter of 2025³ Scotland's economy grew by 0.2%, contributing to year-on-year growth of 0.9%. In July 2025 the rate of consumer price inflation in the UK rose again to 3.8%. The Bank of England now anticipates inflation will fall to within its 2% target closer to 2027. Accordingly, the Bank has continued its cautious reduction in interest rates with a fifth cut since August 2024 to reach 4%.
- 4.3 The Scottish Fiscal Commission forecasts growth of 1.2% for 2024/25 and for 2025/26 and 1.8% for 2026/27.
- 4.4 Edinburgh's economy is reviewed for this suite of studies in BiGGAR Economics' Edinburgh Economic Needs Study: Economic Overview (February 2025). The report identifies that the city's retail sector accounts for approximately 26,000 jobs. At 7% this is a lower proportion of the city's jobs than the Scottish figure of 8.7%, although that may be due in part to Edinburgh having very high job numbers in other economic sectors. Despite a positive market review below and a net inflow of consumer expenditure shown later in this report, retail is one of only two sectors in Edinburgh (along with wholesale) to have lost jobs (-2000) and businesses since 2015, as online shopping, the pandemic, store closures and inflation have taken their tolls.

RETAIL PERFORMANCE

- 4.5 Recent retail performance has been affected by the challenging economic and sector conditions. During the inflation and interest rate cycle of 2022-24, Scotland recorded its largest drop in living standards since records began in 1988 (Scottish Fiscal Commission). As these economic conditions ease, real disposable income driven by earnings growth is now expected to recover to 2021/22 levels by 2026/27. This allied to the reduced price inflation and falling interest rates noted above are positive medium term signals for retail sales, although rising operating and employment costs are dampening retailer performance too.
- 4.6 According to the Centre for Retail Research, almost 170,000 jobs were lost in retail in the UK during 2024. This is an increase of 41.9% over 2023 and the highest figure since the pandemic year of 2020. Almost a third of the job losses were due to business failures across 38 major retailers including The Body Shop, Carpetright, Ted Baker, Homebase, Lloyds Pharmacy and most recently Quiz Clothing. Positively though, Carpetright and The Body Shop have been offered lifelines by other retailers. While this trend is reducing, the balance of job losses in 2024 was in fact due to store rationalisations rather than business failures.
- 4.7 Green Street analyses store losses and reuse across the UK since the pandemic in 2020. One-third of these - more than 3,000 stores - were fashion including the Arcadia brands such as Topshop, Dorothy Perkins and Burtons. Nearly 1,300 chemists were lost (mainly Lloyds Pharmacy) and 1,300 electrical goods retailers (notably Carphone Warehouse). The market has adjusted, often through lower rents, to reoccupy 80% of these stores. As well as existing and new retail formats moving into these sites, diversification into food & beverage, retail services and entertainment is common and further changes of use for vacant stores are likely.
- 4.8 Looking at the most recent market data, the Scottish Retail Consortium (SRC) and KPMG reported a 0.1% year-on-year boost in retail sales in July 2025, while retail sales fell by 0.5% month-on-month. Total food sales fell by 1.4% while total non-food sales increased by 1.4%.
- 4.9 Consumers continue to show some concern, with the most recent (Q2 2025) Scottish Consumer Sentiment survey published by the Scottish Government had a net balance of -8.9% (where a balance of zero would be neither negative nor positive). SRC footfall figures for July 2025 show a fall of -1.3% year-on-year for Scotland although Edinburgh city centre's footfall increased by 0.6%.

³ GDP First Quarterly Estimate 2025 Q2 (April to June)

- 4.10 Against this challenging backcloth, the retail property market is stabilising and taking clear shape. In-demand prime pitches, destination malls and retail parks are sustaining or improving their market performances. This is consolidating their dominance over traditional towns and in particular failing older shopping malls, many of which are being redeveloped. Despite some business failures, demand from expanding retailers has improved alongside continuing diversification into food & beverage, leisure, showrooms and health & beauty. The convenience shopping sector is a well-established network of superstores and steady new investment by discounters and local convenience stores.

COMPARISON RETAIL

- 4.11 The principal drivers of change in comparison shopping are market concentration into larger centres and the growth of online shopping. Summaries of these trends and the implications for retail locations are provided below.
- 4.12 **Market concentration** has occurred over a number of decades as the UK's multiple retailers have focused on the largest centres. Increasingly affluent and mobile consumers sought a wider choice of goods and services, which could only be provided at dominant regional centres such as Edinburgh city centre and in destination malls and destination shopping parks such as Edinburgh's Fort Kinnaird. For some retailers the formats are changing too, towards more experiential formats involving activities and experiences, such as the Lego store in St James Quarter. As this market concentration has progressed, many regional town centres have seen a long-term decline in their multiples retailers and market performances. As a result, the number of truly prime shopping destinations in Scotland has shrunk dramatically in recent years.
- 4.13 Consumer behaviour has changed emphatically towards a higher proportion of shopping transactions being made **online**. According to the ONS, the online share of all retail sales (including non-comparison goods) increased from 5% in 2006 to 26-30% in 2024. As a result, less comparison goods sales floorspace is required as product and price comparisons are also made on computers and mobile devices. Leading retail brands such as Next and John Lewis (Edinburgh's major anchor store) are now omni-channel. Retailers are now focused on right-sizing their portfolios into the optimum units in the best locations.
- 4.14 Some growing comparison goods retailers such as behemoth Amazon, Shein, ASOS, Boohoo (to rebrand as Debenhams) and TEMU are online-only. Meanwhile, social shopping on platforms including TikTok, Facebook, Amazon, Pinterest, Snapchat and Instagram Reels is forecast to increase by 55% from 2024 to 2028, to more than £1 trillion globally (Statista). Existing media such as YouTube are also expanding into social shopping. In this way online shopping is integrating product searches and social media with purchasing.
- 4.15 The early signal for the shift to online trading was the migration and branch closures of services such as travel, banks, insurance and estate agencies. Sixty-eight percent of UK bank branches have closed since 1986⁴. This particularly affects traditional town centres, including those in Edinburgh's suburbs. The trend is not all one-way and some travel agencies for example have opened new outlets or franchises.
- 4.16 The most obvious locational casualties of both online shopping and market concentration are shopping malls built in the 1970s to 1990s. These offered multi-level department, variety and comparison shops alongside a food court and leisure uses. Many now have permanent vacancies and require remodelling due to their physical inflexibility. In Edinburgh, the Gyle Centre experienced increased vacancies but is now attracting new occupiers, while Ocean Terminal in Leith is being remodelled to include housing and leisure uses and Cameron Toll is diversifying to include a hotel. In the city centre, Waverley Market is diversifying to include leisure uses, restaurants and bars. While these purpose-built centres experienced rising vacancies, most have not entered the spirals of decline seen in regional towns.
- 4.17 In terms of store types, department and variety stores have been worst affected. Lichfields estimates that 85% of UK department stores have closed over the past decade. Edinburgh city centre lost House of Fraser and sister store Jenners as well as Debenhams, Arcadia brands, BHS and Mothercare. For example, of the UK's 124 Debenhams stores vacated in 2020, half (49%) are occupied by retailers such as Marks & Spencer, House of Fraser, Primark, The Range and Sports Direct or are proposed for retailers. The other half have been repurposed for alternative use (26%) or are still vacant (25%). Edinburgh's former Debenhams' are: being demolished (Ocean Terminal); and being converted to a hotel (Princes Street). Johnny Walker Whisky Experience opened in the former House of Frasers while

⁴ House of Lords, January 2025

the former Jenners on Princes Street is proposed for retail, hotel and café use. Against this trend however, John Lewis committed to the retention and major redevelopment of their anchor department store in the new St James Quarter.

- 4.18 The winners are retail warehouse shopping parks offering purpose-built units and parking for an increasing range of occupiers including supermarkets and discounters, fashion, leisure and food & beverage and (emerging) healthcare. Retail parks with foodstore anchors trade particularly well. Edinburgh's Fort Kinnaird offers full range of uses across three parks, while mid-range parks such as Hermiston Gait and Craighleith contain food & beverage alongside shopping. Straiton, although in Midlothian rather than Edinburgh, is a major edge-city shopping destination including a retail park, IKEA, ASDA, Sainsbury's and food & beverage outlets. The costs and planning policy barriers to creating new retail parks suggest that the reconfiguration and diversification of these existing retail parks is likely to continue.
- 4.19 As a consequence of the wider market challenges, new retail development generally is at a very low ebb. The only recent, major new development in Scotland is Edinburgh's 158,000 sq.m. (1.7 million sq.ft.) St James Quarter which opened in 2021 with John Lewis, Next, H & M, Zara, & Other Stories, Reiss, Miele and Kiehl's and 50% leisure including a W Hotel, Everyman cinema, food & beverage court, event space, bowling, darts, and residential on the upper floors. The most recent lettings in the centre are Polo Ralph Lauren, Moss, Ryman Design Store and New Balance.

CONVENIENCE RETAIL

- 4.20 Convenience retailing provides consumers with staple goods - principally groceries and non-durable products. The convenience sector is not as affected by concentration into prime locations as it is more local, nor by online shopping although most operators do offer delivery and click-and-collect options. Consequently, investment and development has tended to be incremental, driven by brand and price competition rather than by particularly high growth:
- Until the early-2010s, brand-led growth was driven by large new superstores for Tesco, ASDA, Sainsbury's and Morrisons. Some of that growth was not grocery-led but was due to expansion into comparison goods such as clothing and electronics (for example Tesco Corstorphine's mezzanine floor). The development wave halted around a decade ago, although Sainsbury's did diversify its offer by buying Argos and integrating it into stores and deliveries. Sainsbury's was also developing in Edinburgh late in the cycle, at Longstone / Inglis Green in 2013. Waitrose bought over existing supermarkets in Comely Bank and Morningside in 2006 but otherwise has not established a strong presence in Scotland and is emerging more so as an in-store franchise. Tesco, Sainsbury's and Wm Morrison are known to be more actively seeking sites again however formal plans are quite limited.
 - As the superstore wave crested, urban convenience store chains were launched by the likes of Sainsbury's Local and Tesco Express, aimed at both easily accessible high footfall city locations and suburban areas offering local catchments and visibility, often with short term roadside car parking. Edinburgh now has a well-established portfolio of these chain stores as well as many local operators.
 - The current convenience retail phase, driven by price inflation and cost-of-living pressures, is delivering new discount Aldi and Lidl stores either stand-alone or as part of new-build neighbourhood centres. Aldi's share of the grocery market has now overtaken Morrison's. More affluent areas are being targeted by M&S Food. Developments with a mixed tenant line-up tend to prioritise accessible sites with both walk-in and car-borne catchments. For example, both Aldi and M&S Food opened at the Edinburgh West Retail Park on Chesser Avenue in 2016, while Lidl recently opened in Meadowbank and Seafield Road (in a former B&M).
 - Mixed-use development across Edinburgh regularly attracts new local convenience stores, for example Tesco at the remodelled Ocean Terminal and at Haymarket Square, and local operator Margiotta in a new housing block on Colinton Road. In the city centre, Sainsbury's propose to open a supermarket at 18/19 Princes Street following the closure of its St Andrew Square/ Rose Street outlet.

LEISURE

- 4.21 Leisure uses can be an important part of retail locations, boosting customer spend and dwell-time, whether casually through a coffee while shopping, or via a visit to the gym or dinner and a movie. Edinburgh city centre – particularly its newest developments and conversions - contains a high proportion of leisure uses while the city's commercial and town centres are also diversified into suitable local uses. By sub-sector:
- 4.21.1 Cafes, bars and restaurants can fit well into standard shop units. The casual dining market had retrenched following over-expansion, although new formats are beginning to emerge again. Coffee chains have continued

to expand but can prefer drive-thru formats to shop units, although that is being curbed by planning policy. Independent food & beverage outlets are widespread across the city.

4.21.2 Larger leisure uses that do not fit into standard shops units such as cinemas and health clubs may be purpose-built or adaptations of existing buildings. The multiplex-anchored leisure model which emerged in the 1990s delivered Fountain Park and the Omni Centre, and also invested in Westside Plaza, Ocean Terminal and at Fort Kinnaird, however that development phase ended. Similarly, the health club sector went through a parallel growth phase which has now eased, although budget gyms continue to expand.

4.21.3 The most recent trend is for social leisure/ gaming such as bowling (re-emerging), bingo (also re-emerging), pool, go-karting and darts in units within shopping and leisure centres – although some of that investment is in response to structural retail vacancies rather than leisure competing with retail demand for premises.

The leisure sector is reviewed in a separate report within this Edinburgh Economic Needs suite.

RETAIL RANKINGS

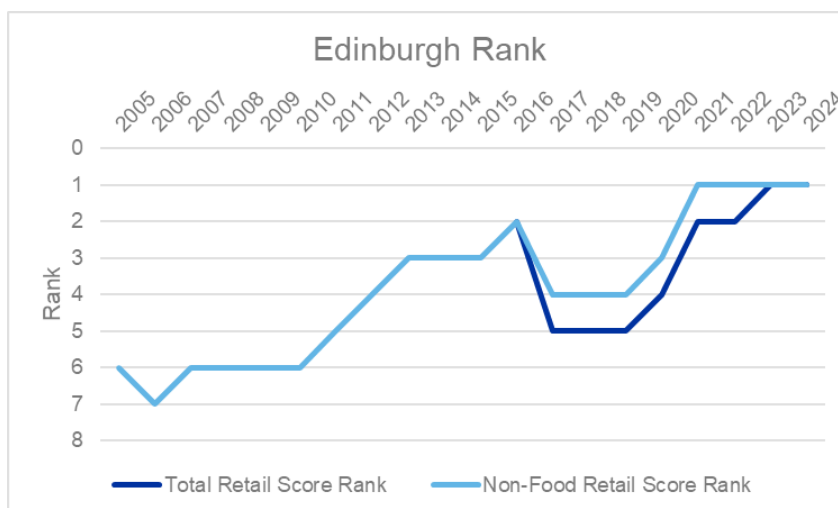
4.22 The study brief required consideration of Edinburgh’s ranking as retail centre. A range of organisations has in the past assessed Edinburgh’s retail market, whether in connection with brand representation, turnover, vacancies, footfall or other measures, however many of these are short term or discontinued.

4.23 The preferred retail ranking data for this report is published by property market analysts Property Market Analysis in their bi-annual PROMIS report (available to subscribers only). The series benchmarks Edinburgh against other UK centres outside of Central London and provides consistent, explicit analysis over the long term. It covers a broad range of indicators such as overall catchment population and available expenditure, down to numbers of different types of retail and leisure outlets. In the Q4 2024 report, Edinburgh:

- Has the 13th largest stock of retail floorspace in a UK centre outside of London.
- Ranks 6th for the size of its population catchment, but 1st for its estimated market penetration.
- Rises up to 4th place for available expenditure.
- The city centre ranks 4th for anchor stores and 2nd for non-food multiples.

Bringing the indices together, Edinburgh ranks in first place overall among 200 UK centres outside of London across fashion, non-food retailing and overall town centre retailing. Figure 4.1 tracks the non-food and overall scores since 2005, with the latter showing a steady rise from 7th place in 2006 up to 1st place from 2021 onwards.

FIGURE 4.1: EDINBURGH RETAIL RANKING



Source: Property Market Analysis / Ryden

- 4.24 Edinburgh's comparatively strong retail performance can also be seen in PMA's analysis of prime rents. Since 2017, retail sector challenges have led to a 35% fall in prime rents across the top 200 UK centres, Edinburgh by contrast has delivered 9.8% retail rental growth to £280 per sq.ft. Zone A⁵ as the prime pitch moved from Princes Street to St James Quarter then Multrees Walk. These are absolute peak rents and rents Princes Street and George Street can be (very approximately) around half of these levels, with side and connecting streets on lower rents again.
- 4.25 The underlying driver of these high prime retail rents is the strong sales performance delivered in Edinburgh. Knight Frank reports in May 2025 that Edinburgh has the most productive retail floorspace of any major UK city outside of London. Average retail sales of £6,025 per sq.m. are ahead of other regional cities and 30% higher than Knight Frank's UK average. Analysis later in this report will show however that this prime retailing performance does not apply to all retail locations across Edinburgh.
- 4.26 PMA notes that Edinburgh city centre faces below average competition – and thus benefits from some protection - from other major retail centres. It does however experience relatively strong local competition from nearby commercial centres such as The Gyle, Fort Kinnaird and at Straiton in Midlothian.

CONSULTATIONS

- 4.27 As described above, the retail sector is undergoing a period of significant transformation, driven by evolving consumer behaviour, the growth of e-commerce, and within the city itself, strategic development initiatives and local market change.
- 4.28 To inform this, consultations with key stakeholders including retailers, centre managers, retail agents and representative organisations were undertaken. This included representatives from the following organisations:
- City of Edinburgh Council
 - Scottish Enterprise
 - Scottish Futures Trust
 - Essential Edinburgh
 - Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce
 - Federation of Small Businesses
 - St James Quarter
 - John Lewis
 - Ryden Retail Agents
- 4.29 Consultations have revealed several key themes that are shaping the demand and supply of retail floorspace in the city.
- 4.30 Consultees view that Edinburgh's city centre is experiencing a **resurgence**, with strategic developments playing a pivotal role. According to consultees, the opening of St. James Quarter has been a “*game-changer*”, attracting new brands to the city and boosting footfall. It has also helped to develop a “*lifestyle destination*” which fully integrates retail, food and beverage and leisure. Many considered that it has exceeded expectations to become the number one purpose-built retail destination in Scotland.
- 4.31 This success is felt to have complemented nearby retail areas like Multrees Walk, allowing it to become more premium, and enhancing the overall appeal of the city centre. Consultees noted further areas of the city centre which potentially require more focus including Rose Street and were aware of the significant plans in place for George Street which will help to create a more pedestrian friendly environment.
- 4.32 The city centre Business Improvement District (Essential Edinburgh) was also seen as enabling positive representation of the sector and better collaboration and communication amongst businesses and the Council.
- 4.33 **Princes Street**, traditionally Edinburgh's main retail hub, is adapting to changing circumstances. The relaxation of planning policies to allow Princes Street to diversify its offer was viewed positively by consultees. While some major retailers like Uniqlo, Primark and M&S remain, there is a trend towards alternative uses, particularly hotels (most of which reuse the ground floor for retail and convert the upper stories to hotel). A number of hotel planning consents are now in development on Princes Street as well as visitor/leisure experiences such as the Johnnie Walker whisky experience. The relaxation of use classes has also allowed the expansion of the food & beverage offer along Prince

⁵ Zone A in Scotland is the first 30 feet of floorspace moving back from the shopfront.

Street. There is also evolution within retail itself with potential convenience retail opening on the street (Sainsbury's, 18-19 Princes Street).

- 4.34 Consultees note that **out of town retail** still has an important role to play particularly in terms of servicing local populations. Commercial centres such as Fort Kinnaird continues to perform relatively well with its location off the A1 making it ideally placed to service the affluent south Edinburgh market. Hermiston Gait is fully let having sub-divided the former Mothercare for Aldi and Home Bargains and introduced a Costa Coffee drive-thru. The Gyle benefits from its strong anchor tenants M&S and Morrisons however the remainder of the centre was described as “*struggling*”. Plans for new residential development in West Edinburgh could help bolster these locations. Fort Kinnaird and others such as Cameron Toll have sought to diversify their offering by bring in more leisure and food and beverage uses. Consultees note the well-publicised plans for Ocean Terminal where the demolition of the former Debenhams store and car park is underway to make way for new homes.
- 4.35 One consultee noted that out of town has largely retained its popularity in Edinburgh because these commercial developments have been at a suitable scale for their population catchments. In contrast to some other major cities Edinburgh does not have an out of town “mega mall” with large scale vacancies to contend with.
- 4.36 The rise of **e-commerce** in the form of online shopping continues to influence retail, with some retailers reporting a shift from 40% online sales pre-pandemic to as high as 60% post-pandemic. Retailers are adapting by focusing on the in-store experience, with an emphasis on “*look and touch*” products and creating a more experiential environment. Retailers are also looking to technology to optimise operations, personalise customer experiences and enhance efficiencies. For example, consultees reported that many retailers have implemented staff headsets which go beyond simple communication and often integrate with software systems, allowing for real-time information sharing, task management and instant assistance. Automated checkout systems and self-service kiosks were also reported to be streamlining the purchasing process.
- 4.37 **Consumer behaviour** is also changing, with consultees reporting that consumers are increasingly prioritising value for money by seeking out deals and discounts, a trend heightened by the economic uncertainties and cost of living crisis. However, consultees also reported consumers still willing to spend on meaningful experiences including dining and entertainment. Platforms such as Deliveroo mean that consumers are increasingly accustomed to having a growing range of goods delivered quickly, blurring the lines between traditional retail and delivery services.
- 4.38 Consultees noted that Edinburgh's retail sector continues to face **challenges**, including rising operating costs (staffing, energy), labour shortages, and antisocial behaviour/shop lifting. Labour shortages were a particular concern for many retailers although initiatives such as Edinburgh FUSE were noted very positively.
- 4.39 However, there were also **significant opportunities** noted. Edinburgh benefits from strong tourism, which drives spending in shops and restaurants. The city's walkability and public transport infrastructure are seen as advantages, and there is a focus on creating a vibrant city centre with a mix of retail, leisure, and cultural offerings.
- 4.40 Consultees were conscious that Edinburgh should not take its success for granted and that there is still a need to protect the **look and feel** of Edinburgh. This included issues around street cleanliness, bin emptying etc. which can have an impact on not only the City's appearance but it can also affect people's feelings around the safety of the city centre.
- 4.41 Consultees consider **strategic planning and investment** is crucial for the future of Edinburgh's retail sector. There's a need for ongoing investment in the public realm, including George Street and Rose Street, to enhance the city centre experience. Collaboration between the Council, businesses, and other stakeholders is also considered essential to address challenges and capitalise on opportunities. Greater clarity was also requested around the use of visitor levy funds and whether this is ring-fenced for some of these purposes.

SUMMARY

- 4.42 The retail sector has undergone major change in response to market concentration and online shopping. This has been accelerated over the past five years by the pandemic then an inflation-and-interest rate cycle, adversely affecting consumers, shop-based retailers and landlords/developers. Market competition is however evident again at prime destinations and convenience shopping remains resilient. Food & beverage and leisure continue to be important complementary uses and to diversify more challenged locations.
- 4.43 Edinburgh city centre is a prime destination and is considered by many commentators and in by independent rankings to be Scotland's premier shopping location. While the city centre has not been immune to major store closures, the market impacts of these have been more than offset by the new Edinburgh St James and comparatively strong alternative use demand for vacant shops, including large prominent buildings currently being repurposed.
- 4.44 Outside of the city centre, Edinburgh's town centres are responsive to local demand and are well-occupied (see Section 5). Among the commercial centres, retail parks are in-demand and (perhaps paradoxically) supported by restrictive planning policies, while existing shopping malls are diversifying or remodelling to meet their retail, leisure and alternative use potential. The most destructive impacts of the recent market cycle upon retail locations have been felt more so elsewhere, in regional towns with fewer alternative use options for vacant malls and stores.

05 EDINBURGH RETAIL

INTRODUCTION

5.1 This section develops the commentary in Section 4 by providing formal analysis of Edinburgh's retail markets. It considers the city centre, town centres, commercial centres, local centres and supermarkets, and concludes by considering market demand for floorspace.

EDINBURGH CITY CENTRE

5.2 Prime retail activity is concentrated in Edinburgh city centre. As shown in the rankings data in Section 4, the city centre retailer base is very large. It includes continuing anchor department store John Lewis and Harvey Nichols plus large variety store Marks & Spencer and anchor clothing retailers Primark and Uniqlo. The retail core has shifted eastwards from its historic position along the full length of Princes Street. This has been catalysed by the new St James Quarter in the east and the losses of House of Fraser and Debenhams plus relocations to the new centre (e.g. Next) from the west, although Jenners (latterly a House of Fraser store) was lost from the east end. George Street now has more than twenty upmarket retailers and leads via St Andrew Square and Multrees Walk into the St James Centre. Waverley Mall provides covered shopping on the south side of Princes Street, while north-south pitches Hanover Street and Frederick Street also have good retail mixes.

5.3 The **Core** city centre is as defined in the Edinburgh City Plan 2030⁶. The purple shading on Figure 5.1 defines the city core (City Plan 2030 Proposals Map, North East). In 2015 there were 567 retail units in the Core city centre and this has risen by 30 units (5.3%) to 597 units in 2024. Likewise, retail floorspace in the Core city centre has risen from 263,285 sq.m.⁷ in 2015 to 266,284 sq.m. in 2024, which is a smaller increase of 1.1%.

5.4 Of the 597 Core city centre retail units⁸:

- 44 are convenience retailers (7% of units) and total 16,116 sq.m. (6% of all floorspace);
- 250 are comparison retailers (42% of units) and total 144,274 sq.m. (54% of floorspace);
- 238 are non-retail units (40% of units) and total 71,834 sq.m. (27% of floorspace); of these:
 - 63 non-retail units totalling 26,043 sq.m. of floorspace accommodate services uses such as financial services, hair and beauty, fitness, travel agents, professional and business services, estate agents, medical, dry cleaners etc.
 - 175 non-retail units accommodate food & drink uses⁹ totalling 45,791, of which 129 are served food (Class 3 cafes/ restaurants, coffee shops, hot food take-away etc.) totalling 45,791 sq.m., while 46 are public houses, bars etc. totalling 12,118 sq.m.

5.5 In 2024 there were 65 vacant units which is an 11% unit vacancy rate. The total vacant floorspace of 34,060 sq.m. represented a 13% floorspace vacancy rate.

5.6 The average (mean) size of retail unit (convenience and comparison goods only) in the Core city centre is 545 sq.m.

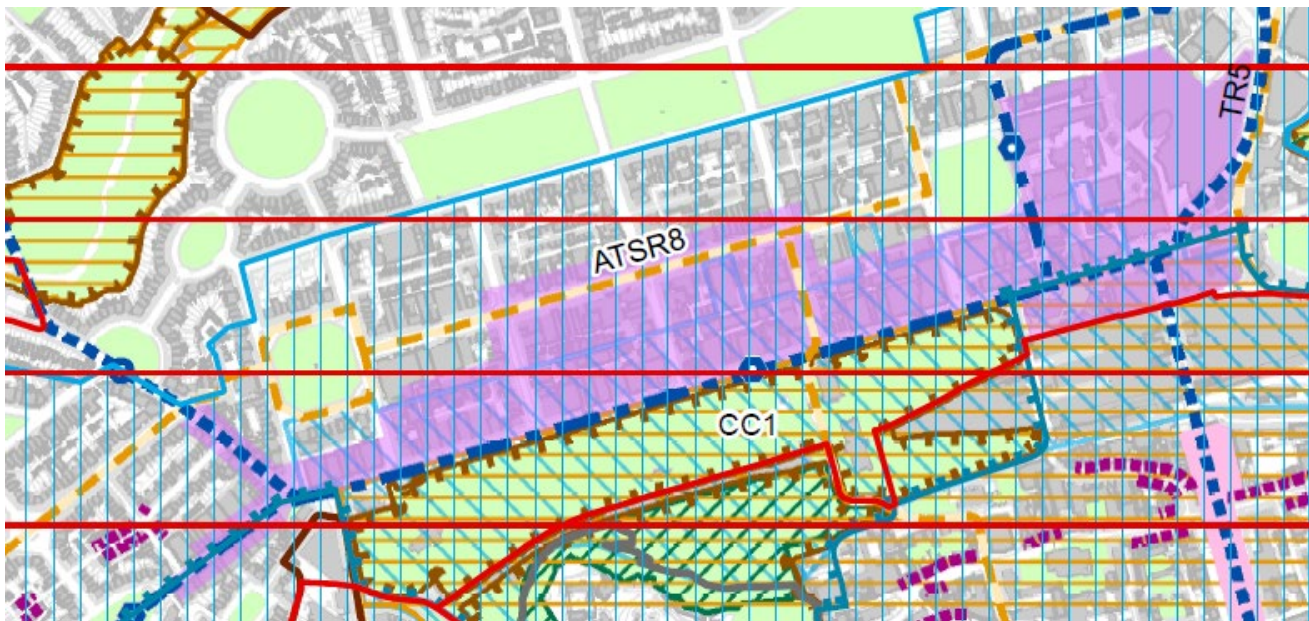
⁶ Zone 1 used elsewhere in this report for analysis includes the core city centre as defined here and also a wider area including other defined centres such as Tollcross, Broughton Road, Easter Road, Forrest Road and West Maitland Street.

⁷ Table 2 in Edinburgh's retail survey 2015 by City of Edinburgh Council.

⁸ Retail units in this survey include all convenience, comparison and non-retail units in the defined locations. This is a wider definition than the convenience and comparison floorspace in Sections 6 to 9.

⁹ Class 3 and Sui Generis uses

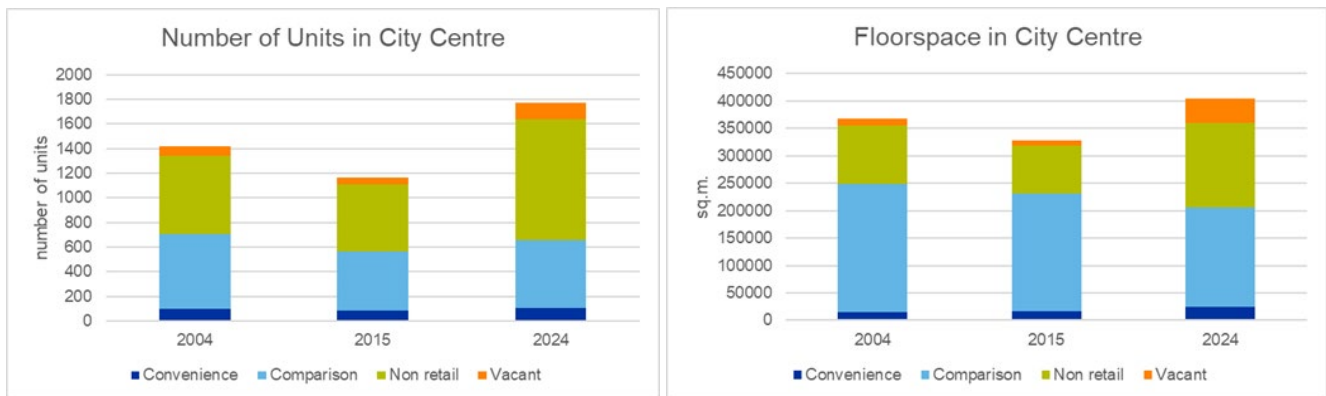
FIGURE 5.1: CITY CORE FROM CITY PLAN 2030 PROPOSALS MAP



Source: City of Edinburgh Council, City Plan 2030 Proposals Map, North East

5.7 The **wider city centre** includes the Core, the West End, High Street and Bridges, Old Town and New Town¹⁰. This wider city centre area recorded 1,771 retail units in 2024, which is higher than the 1,166 retail units in 2015 and the 1,418 units in 2004. Measured by floorspace, the 404,369 sq.m. in 2024 is higher than 328,228 sq.m. in 2015 and 367,779 sq.m. in 2004. Figure 5.2 illustrates these long run increases in city centre retail floorspace and units.

FIGURE 5.2: CITY CENTRE – 20 YEAR COMPARISONS



Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Ryden

5.8 Of the 1,771 units in the wider city centre:

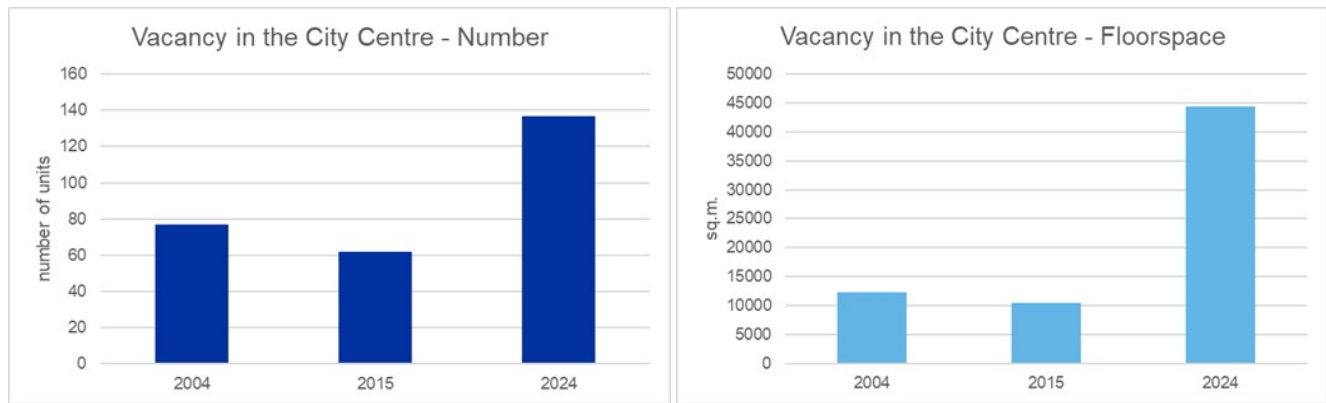
- 108 are convenience retail units (6% of all wider city centre units) totalling 24,019 sq.m. (6% of all wider city centre floorspace);
- 549 are comparison retail units (31% of units) totalling 181,946 sq.m. (45% of floorspace);
- 977 are non-retail units (55% of units) totalling 154,080 sq.m. (38% of floorspace); of these:

¹⁰ The rest of Zone 1/ Ward 11 but not including the Town Centres of Nicolson Street/Clerk Street and Tollcross, or Local Centres of Broughton Street, Easter Road (part), Forrest Road and West Maitland Street. See Appendix A for Zone 1 boundary.

- 187 totalling 39,756 sq.m. are service uses (see 5.4 for some examples).
- 790 totalling 114,324 sq.m. are food & drink uses; 593 are served food (see 5.4 for types of use) while 197 are public houses etc.

5.9 The 137 vacant retail units in the wider city centre represent a significant increase from 62 in 2015 and 77 in 2004. Measured by floorspace, the wider city centre vacancy dips from 12,365 sq.m. in 2004 to 10,438 sq.m. in 2015 then jumps again to 44,324 sq.m., likely due to the larger variety and department stores which have closed (Figure 5.3).

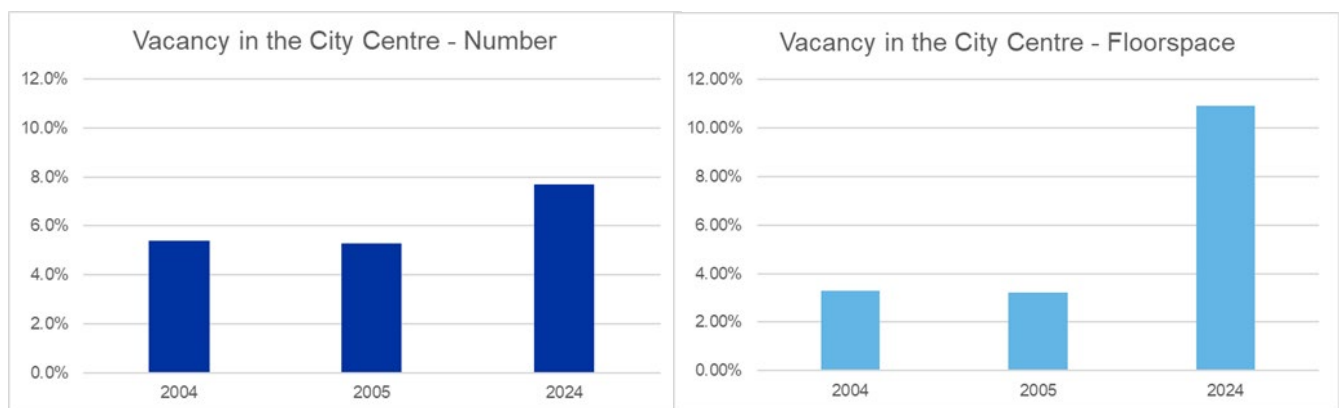
FIGURE 5.3: CITY CENTRE VACANT UNITS – 20 YEAR COMPARISONS



Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Ryden

5.10 Similarly, the vacancy percentage rate for the wider city centre by number has risen from 3% in both 2004 and 2015 up to 8% in 2024. By floorspace the vacancy rate has risen from 5% in both 2004 and 2015 up to 11% in 2024 (Figure 5.4).

FIGURE 5.4: CITY CENTRE VACANCY RATES – 20 YEAR COMPARISONS



Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Ryden

5.11 The average (mean) unit size in the wider city centre is 313 sq.m.

5.12 Table 5.1 identifies notable changes in city centre retailing, including shop closures, new store openings and developments. In addition to the major closures listed in 4.20, the opening of St James Quarter and associated relocations such as Next have shifted the retail pitch to the east of the city centre.

TABLE 5.1: NOTABLE RETAIL CHANGES IN EDINBURGH CITY CENTRE

AREA	MAJOR OPENINGS AND DEVELOPMENTS	MAJOR CLOSURES
City centre	<p>Uniqlo, Miniso, Holland & Barrett (relocation), Sainsbury's, Phase Eight, White Stuff (relocation), Jigsaw (relocation), Monica Vinader, The Works (relocation), Screwfix, Skechers (relocation)</p> <p>F&B: Black Sheep Coffee, The Alchemist, Knoop's, Starbucks, Willow Tea Rooms, Popeyes, Blank Street Coffee, Rio Brazilian Steakhouse, Ben & Jerry's, Pizza Pilgrims</p> <p>Former Top Shop plans for retail on ground floor with hotel above.</p> <p>Former Jenners, undergoing redevelopment will include 10,000 sq.m. of retail space with hotel on the upper floors Former Debenhams, plans for a 328 room and 345 'pod' room hotel by Zedwell.</p> <p>Former Next/Russell & Bromley/Zara, plans for a 300 room hotel by Ruby Hotels.</p> <p>Former House of Fraser, converted to the Johnnie Walker Whisky visitor experience.</p>	<p>Department stores Jenners (House of Fraser), Debenhams</p> <p>Top Shop, Ernest Jones, Thomas Sabo, Poundland, Paperchase, Greggs, River Island, Cruise</p> <p>Relocations to St James Quarter: Next, Zara, Russell & Bromley (from Princes Street); Hollister and Molton Brown (from George Street); L'Occitane (from Frederick Street), Schuh (from Frederick Street)</p>
St James Quarter	<p>Opened in 2021. Comprises a c. 158,000 sq.m. mixed-use development. With 81,230 sq.m. of retail space (of which 54,815 sq.m. is new), food & beverage and leisure space.</p> <p>Includes retailers: H & M, Pull & Bear, Bershka, Boots, Coach, Goldsmiths, Dune, H Beauty, Lego, Hotel Chocolat, JD Sports, Mango, Schuh, Ryman and New Balance.</p> <p>Includes F&B operators: Bonnie & Wild, Duck & Waffle, Five Guys, Haute Dolci, Ka Pao, The Alchemist, Pret A Manger, Oakberry Acai, Nespresso and Salerno Pizza.</p> <p>Leisure uses: Lane 7 bowling and entertainment centre, Everyman Cinema and Flight Club darts.</p>	<p>Hamleys, Castore, Crew Clothing Company, The Kooples, Scamp & Dude and Bross Bagels</p>
Waverley Market	<p>Sostrene Grene with F&B, Mor Bakehouse, Tinderbox, Fat Jackets and Cheery Churro</p> <p>Plans for a ten-pin bowling and entertainment centre.</p>	<p>Relocations to St James Quarter: Body Shop and Superdry</p>
Multrees Walk	<p>Gucci, Tag Heuer, Mappin & Webb and Omega</p>	<p>Caffé Nero, Oliami, Coach and Bravissimo (relocation)</p>

Source: Ryden

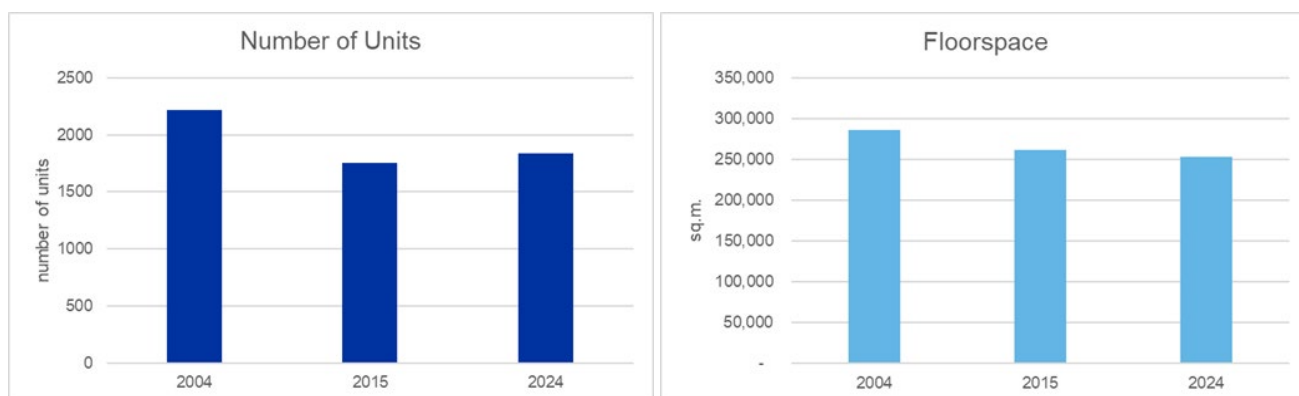
EDINBURGH'S TOWN CENTRES, COMMERCIAL CENTRES AND LOCAL CENTRES

5.13 In addition to the city centre, Edinburgh has eight town centres, seven commercial centres, sixty-three local centres, and neighbourhood and isolated stores. The centres were listed in Table 3.1 on page 9 of this report. This sub-section analyses trends for those centres and stores.

Town Centres

- 5.14 Figure 5.5 indicates the total number of units in the town centres¹¹. There are 1,834 units, compared with the 1,755 units recorded in 2015, and 2,221 units in 2004. Retail floorspace in town centres is 253,414 sq.m. which is down from 261,883 sq.m. in 2015 and 286,117 sq.m. in 2004. Over the 20-year period 2004-24 Edinburgh's town centres have lost 17% of units from retail use and 11% of floorspace.
- 5.15 The numbers of convenience retail units (Figure 5.6) have fallen from 274 to 226 while the numbers of comparison retail units have declined more sharply from 694 to 457. This signals the declining importance of retail uses and increased diversification in Edinburgh's town centres.
- 5.16 In contrast to these declining numbers of convenience and comparison shops, non-retail uses in town centre have risen marginally by 1% from 1,015 in 2004 to 1,027 in 2024, although this dipped to 915 in 2015. Of the non-retail uses, 470 are services uses in 52,403 sq.m. of floorspace while 488 are food & drink (419 served food, 69 public houses etc.) in 44,810 sq.m.¹² of floorspace (see 5.4 for examples of these uses).
- 5.17 Town centre vacancies have fallen by 48% from 238 units in 2004 to 124 in 2024, giving a current unit vacancy rate of 7%. By floorspace vacancies have fallen by 29% from 20,952 sq.m. in 2004 to 14,964 sq.m. in 2024, giving a current floorspace vacancy rate of 6%.
- 5.18 The unit vacancy rate for town centres ranges from 4% in Corstorphine and Portobello, 5% in Morningside/ Bruntsfield, Nicolson Street/ Clerk Street and Stockbridge, 6% in Tollcross, up to 10% in Gorgie/ Dalry and Leith/ Leith Walk. The overall unit vacancy rate for all town centres is 7%.

FIGURE 5.5: TOWN CENTRES – 20 YEAR COMPARISONS



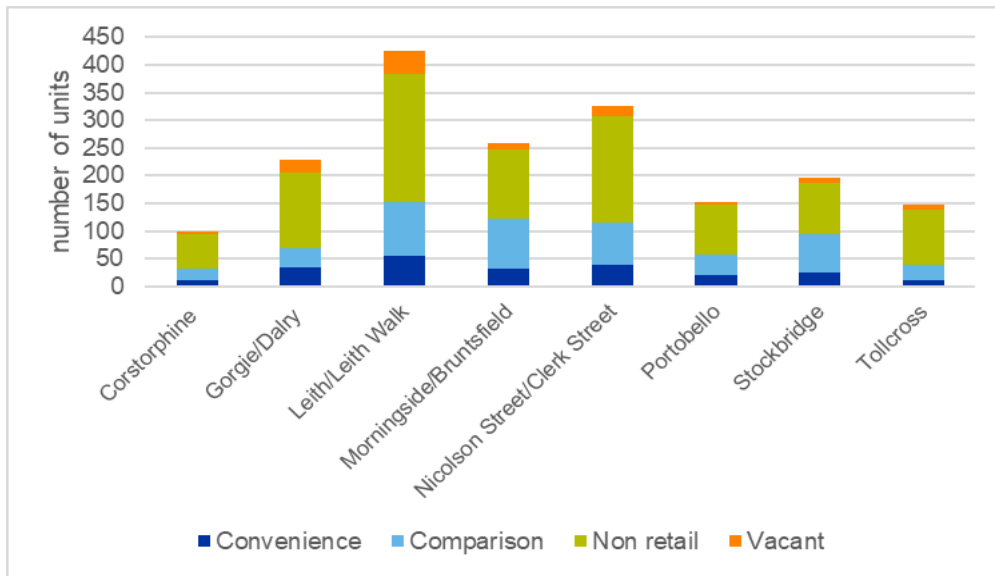
Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Ryden

- 5.19 The largest town centre is Leith/Leith Walk which has 425 units (23% of the town centres' total units) and runs from York Place to Newkirkgate in Leith. The other town centres typically have around 100-300 retail units each. The smallest is Corstorphine with 99 units (5% of the town centres' total). In 2015 the smallest centre was Portobello but that town centre has expanded its retail activity in the interim period.
- 5.20 Figure 5.6 shows the total units and mix of uses for each town centre. Overall, non-retail services make up 56%, followed by comparison with 25% and convenience with 12%. All have a broad mix of retail and service uses which will change over time to reflect the local catchment and trends. Gorgie/ Dalry has the highest proportion of convenience units (15%) while Tollcross in the city centre has the lowest (7%). Stockbridge which has a destination quality to its shopping has the highest percentage of comparison units (36%), closely followed by Morningside/Bruntsfield (34%) which has a similar market role.

¹¹ Corstorphine, Gorgie/ Dalry, Leith/Leith Walk, Morningside/Bruntsfield, Nicolson Street/ Clerk Street, Portobello, Stockbridge and Tollcross

¹² None of the public houses, bars etc has a size

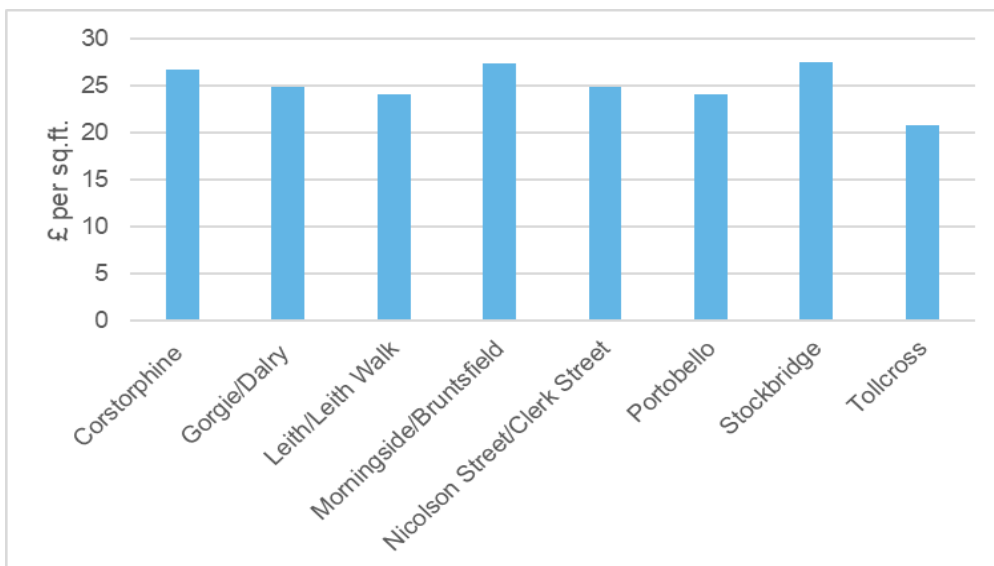
FIGURE 5.6: RETAIL UNITS MIX BY TOWN CENTRES



Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Ryden

5.21 Figure 5.7 indicates average rents by town centre. While the lowest at Tollcross are c. £21 per sq.ft. and the highest c. £27 per sq.ft. for Morningside/ Bruntsfield and Stockbridge, these are not dissimilar overall. The higher figure is only around one-tenth of the peak prime city centre Zone A rents reported in Section 4. At these levels of rents, occupiers in better locations and/or larger units will pay non-domestic rates, however smaller and more peripheral retail units may qualify for small business bonus relief either in full or part.

FIGURE 5.7: TOWN CENTRE RETAIL RENTS

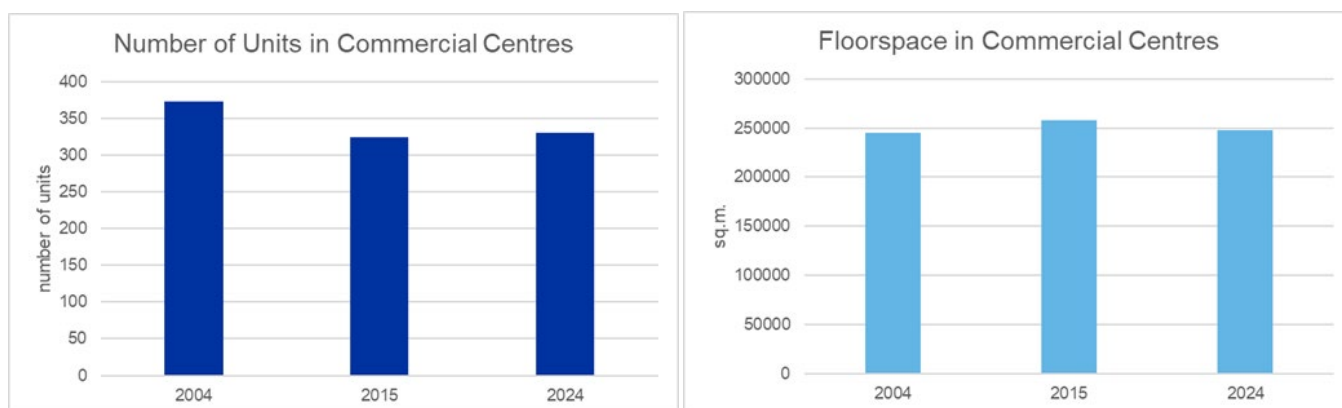


Source: Ryden/ CoStar

Commercial Centre

5.22 Changes to the retail property stock of Edinburgh's commercial centres¹³ are shown on Figure 5.8. Total unit numbers have fallen from 373 in 2004, to 324 units in 2015 and increased slightly again to the current total of 330 units. Total commercial centre floorspace has changed by only 1% over 20 years, rising from 245,289 sq.m. in 2004 to 257,851 sq.m. in 2015 then decreasing again to 248,059 sq.m. in 2024. As with the town centres analysed above, the number of units in commercial centres has fallen notably by 11%, but in this case the change in floorspace is only marginal which indicates that commercial unit sizes have increased.

FIGURE 5.8: COMMERCIAL CENTRES – 20 YEAR COMPARISONS

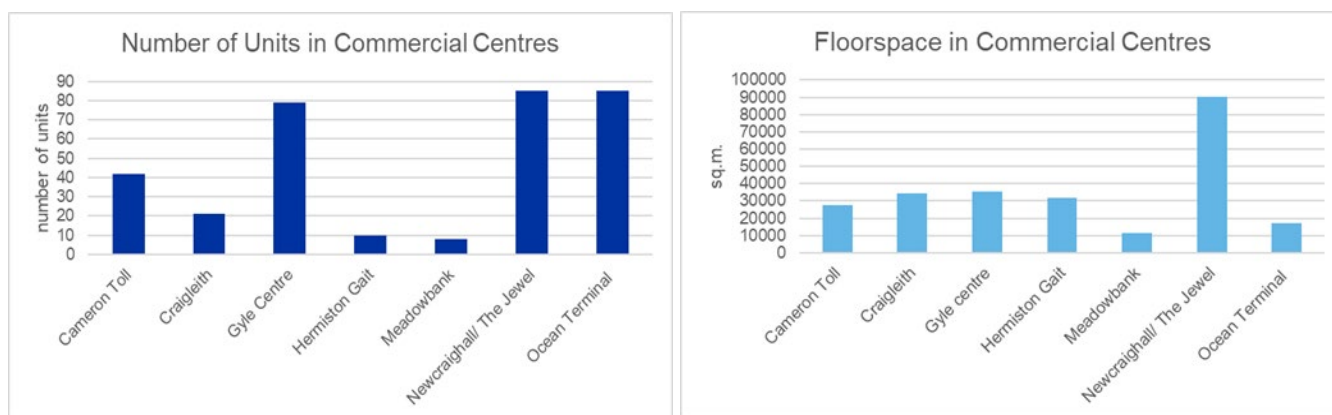


Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Ryden

- 5.23 In 2024 convenience retail units make up 7% of units by number in commercial centres, with comparison units having almost half of all units (49%), while 23% are non-retail services units and 21% are vacant (see 5.28 for an explanation of this comparatively high vacancy rate).
- 5.24 Since 2004 the numbers of convenience retail units in commercial centres have fallen by 11%, comparison retail unit numbers have fallen by 26%, non-retail services have fallen by 12% and vacancies have risen by 62% (see 5.26).
- 5.25 Total retail floorspace in Edinburgh's commercial centres (248,059 sq.m.) is comparable to the total retail floorspace in its town centres (253,414 sq.m.). However, the commercial centres' purpose-built shopping malls and retail parks accommodate mainly multiples and have much larger retail units on average (1,183 sq.m.) than the town centres (207 sq.m.) which accommodate mainly independents and local multiples.
- 5.26 Newcraighall/ The Jewel (including ASDA and Edinburgh Fort) and Ocean Terminal have the most units at 85 (26% of the total each), closely followed by The Gyle with 79 units (24%). Cameron Toll has 42 units (13%) and Craighleith 21 units (6%). Hermiston Gait and Meadowbank are the smallest centres with 10 units (3%) and 8 units (2%) respectively. The large warehouse and superstore units and overall development scale at Newcraighall/ The Jewel mean that it has the most floorspace (90,419 sq.m., or 36%) by a significant margin (Figure 5.9).

¹³ Cameron Toll, Craighleith, Hermiston Gait, Meadowbank, Newcraighall/The Jewel, Ocean Terminal, The Gyle

FIGURE 5.9: COMMERCIAL CENTRES – UNITS AND FLOORSPACE



Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Ryden

- 5.27 The unit vacancy rate for commercial centres ranges from zero at Cameron Toll, Craigleith Retail Park and Hermiston Gait Retail Park, rising to 8% for Newcraighall/ The Jewel, 13% at Meadowbank Retail Park and 19% at The Gyle. Ocean Terminal is an outlier with a 55% vacancy rate having lost a number of retailers, however that centre is currently being remodelled which will reduce its commercial floorspace. The overall commercial centres' unit vacancy rate of 21% is distorted by Ocean Terminal and if that is set aside then the average of 9% is similar to town centre vacancy reported above and below the commercial centres' 12% vacancy rate in 2004 and 11% in 2015.
- 5.28 Table 5.1 earlier showed major retail changes in Edinburgh city centre. Table 5.2 complements this with notable changes within the city's town centres and commercial centres. New development has been very limited while the only losses to redevelopment have been part of Ocean Terminal and in Niddrie. The major focus of activity therefore has been changing occupancy within the existing retail stock. In terms of use types, there may be a slight shift away from comparison retailing towards convenience and food & beverage uses, but it is certainly not a widespread trend and there is investment and disinvestment by all sectors due largely to brand activity.

TABLE 5.2: RETAIL CHANGES TO TOWN CENTRES AND COMMERCIAL CENTRES

ZONE	MAJOR OPENINGS AND DEVELOPMENTS	MAJOR CLOSURES
Zone 1 (City Centre)	Tollcross: Hendersons, Umbrella Vinyl, Not Just Coffee, Nixos, Greens on the Go	Tollcross: Superstore, Biketrax, Pulp N Grind, Therapie
Zone 2 (North)	TC: Leith/ Leith Walk: Tesco Express, Pret a Manger, CUUP Bubble Tea, Cake Box, Sloe Lane Bakery, Toast Red Sandstone Building: redevelopment by Drum Property, includes retail and F&B units	Costa Coffee, Greggs, Cornelius Beer & Wine, Hobz Bakery
	TC: Stockbridge: Paper Tiger, M & S Food, Islander, Bruntsfield Sports, The Aesthetics Club, The Little Parlour	Scotmid, Dobbies, Bross Bagels, Grounds of Stockbridge
	Craigleith Retail Park: The Range, Burger King, Nandos and Bensons for Beds	Homebase, Pagazzi Lighting, Nike factory store, KFC, Lidl
	Ocean Terminal: undergoing partial demolition and re-development, new development will include residential and retail with a Tesco Express and Bingo 3000 open.	Ocean Terminal: Debenhams, M&S Simply Food, Greggs, H Samuel, Poundworld, Regatta, Wagamamma, Transgression skatepark Demolition of part of the centre including the former Debenhams store and car park.

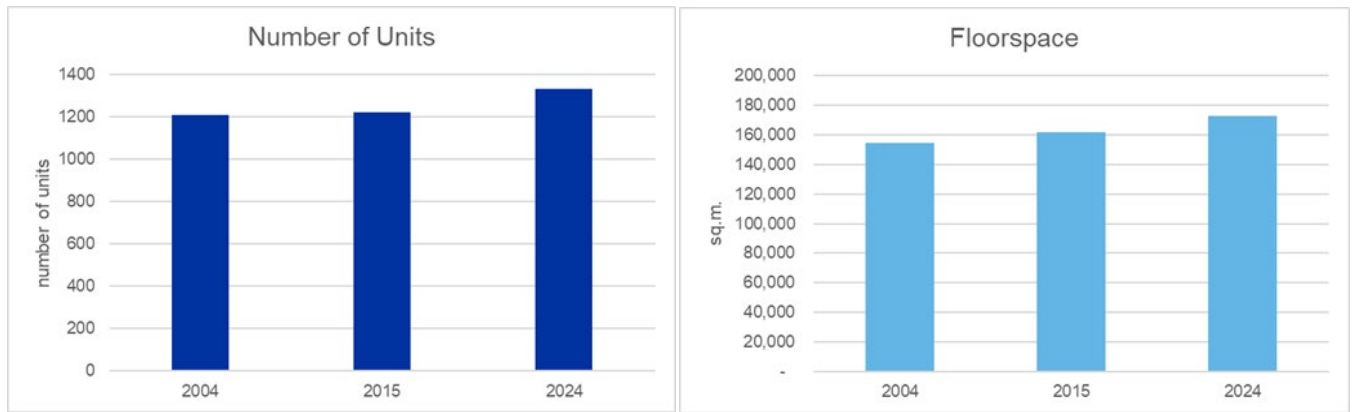
Zone 3 (East)	TC: Portobello: Traade, Mamacita, Babyfaced Baker, Dofos	Butternut Squash, Porty Vaults Tap Room, Bross Bagels, Beer Zoo
	Meadowbank: Meadowbank Retail Park: Lidl, Home Bargains and Gym Group.	TK Maxx, Poundstretcher, M&S Outlet, Poundland
	Newcraighall/ The Jewel: Fort Kinnaird: Adidas, Home Bargains, Mango, B & M, The Works, Chaiwala, Fragrance Shop, Popeyes, NCF Living	TGI Fridays, Wilko, Tessuti, Swarovski, TGI Fridays
	Proposals to demolish a shopping arcade on Niddrie Mains Road to develop 125 flats with retail uses on the ground floor	
Zone 4 (South)	TC: Morningside/ Bruntsfield: Specsavers, Paper Tiger, Garvald Makers, British Heart Foundation, Holland & Barrett, Toscano, Pret a Manger, Lily's Gift Shop, La Matinee, OG Spuds	Wilkie's, Kilted Donut, Paper Kisses, Honeycomb & Co, Chop House, Artizan Cheesecakes, Costa Coffee, Hestie
	TC: Nicolson Street/ Clerk Street: Burger Drop, Yang Guo Fu, Screwfix	Black Rooster Piri-Piri, Newington Stationers, Poundsavers, Coffee Angel
	Cameron Toll: British Heart Foundation Redevelopment proposals includes a hotel on the car park	M & Co, The Entertainer
	Edinburgh West Retail Park opened 2016, c. 5,500 sq.m.: includes Home Bargains, M&S Foodhall, Aldi, Poundland, Greggs, The Food Warehouse	
Zone 5 (West)	TC : Corstorphine: Shakedown, One Stop Store, Sweet Bellas,	Iceland, The Refillery
	Corstorphine Retail Park: Lidl, The Gym Group	PC World/Currys
	TC : Gorgie/ Dalry: Cake Box, A&A Afro Caribbean, Chix, Roasters	Candy Land, Lovacore
	Hermiston Gate: Aldi, Home Bargains and Jolleys	Poundworld
	The Gyle Shopping Centre: Greggs, Bodycare, Blue Inc, Costa Coffee, Lovisa, Waterstones, Nando's	Monsoon Accessorize, Body Shop

Source: Ryden/CoStar, internet searches

Local Centres

- 5.29 Edinburgh's local centres provide important day-to-day neighbourhood shopping for the city's residents. Changes to the retail property stock of Edinburgh's 63 local centres are shown on Figure 5.10. Total unit numbers increased from 1,210 in 2004 to 1,224 in 2015 and again to 1,333 in 2024. Floorspace increased from 154,557 sq.m. in 2004 to 161,855 sq.m. in 2015 and again to 172,556 sq.m. in 2024. The average retail unit size has increased from 191 sq.m. to 226 sq.m. which signals the development of some larger local centre units in the interim period. In total the 63 local centres have 27% fewer units and also 32% less floorspace than the 8 town centres.
- 5.30 Over the 20-year period 2002-24 retail unit numbers in local centres increased by 10%, while floorspace in local centres increased by 12%.

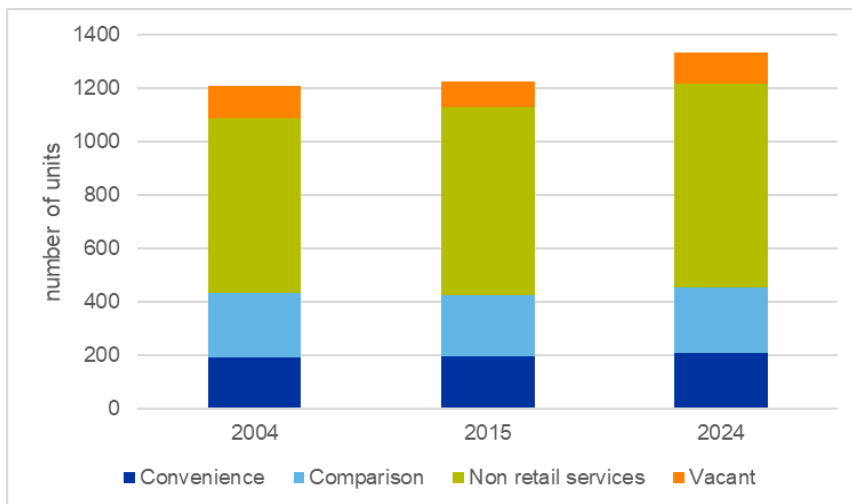
FIGURE 5.10: RETAIL UNITS IN LOCAL CENTRES – 20 YEAR COMPARISONS



Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Ryden

5.31 The numbers of convenience retail units (Figure 5.11) have risen from 190 to 209 while the numbers of comparison retail units have declined marginally from 244 to 243. Non-retail uses have risen by 17% from 655 units in 2004 to 766 in 2024; 451 units are services uses (see 5.4 for examples) totalling 34,428 sq.m. of floorspace and 315 units are food & drink totalling 23,150 sq.m.¹⁴ of floorspace. This indicates increased diversification in Edinburgh’s local centres.

FIGURE 5.11: RETAIL UNIT MIX IN LOCAL CENTRES – 20 YEAR COMPARISONS – NUMBER OF UNITS



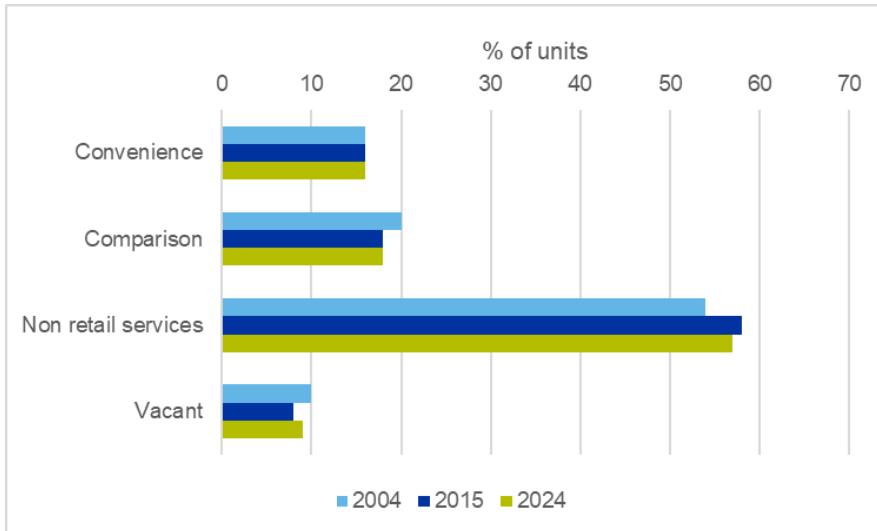
Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Ryden

5.32 Vacancies in local centres fell from 121 in 2004 to 95 in 2015, but have risen again to 115 in 2024. This gives a current unit vacancy rate of 9%. In terms of floorspace in local centres, vacancies rose from 9,821 sq.m. in 2004, to 10,407 sq.m. in 2015, and again to 12,855 sq.m. in 2024, giving a current floorspace vacancy rate of 7%.

5.33 Changes to the local centre mix over time are shown in Figure 5.12. Convenience goods have remained the same at 16% of units, while comparison goods’ share has fallen from 20% to 18% of units. Non-retail uses rose from 54% in 2004 to 58% in 2015 before a marginal fall to 57% in 2024. Vacant units fell from 10% in 2004 to 8% in 2015 before a marginal increase again to 9%. Overall, the share of convenience and comparison retail units among the city’s local centres has decreased slightly over the past 20 years.

¹⁴ Only a few of the public houses, bars etc have a size

FIGURE 5.12: RETAIL USES IN LOCAL CENTRES – 20 YEAR COMPARISONS

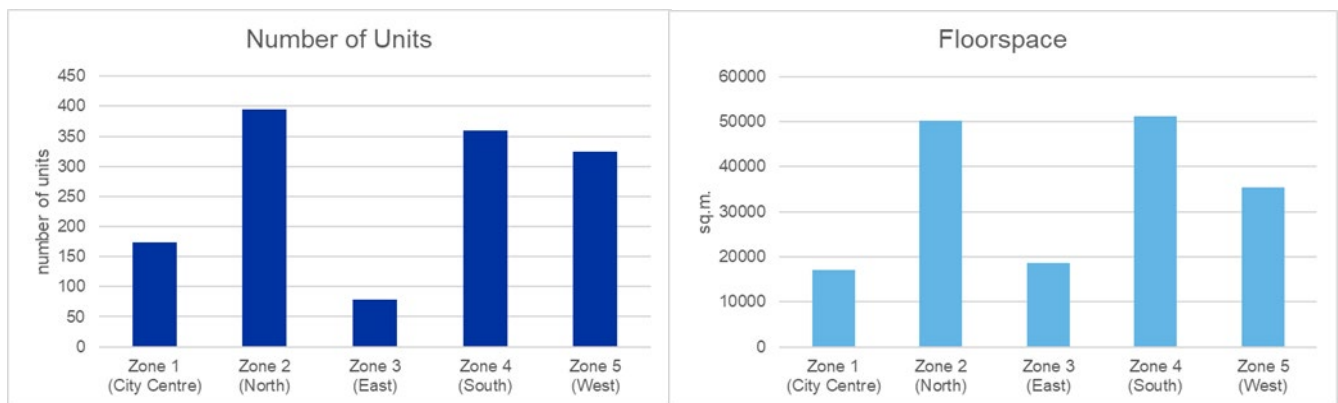


Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Ryden

5.34 The local centre retail stock is shown by Zone (see Section 2) in Figure 5.13. Zone 2 (North) has the most local centre units with 395 units, or 30%, followed by Zone 4 (South) with 360 units (27%). Zone 3 (East) has the fewest units in Local centres with 79 (6%). This pattern is broadly replicated by local centre floorspace, although the city centre has less and Zone 3 (East) has more. The spread of the 63 local centres by number and some examples are¹⁵:

- Zone 1: 4 local centres, for example Broughton Street and West Maitland Street
- Zone 2: 15 local centres, for example Blackhall, West Granton Road, Muirhouse, Dundas Street and Drylaw
- Zone 3: 4 local centres, for example Piershill, Craigmillar and Jock’s Lodge
- Zone 4: 21 local centres, for example Colinton, Craiglockhart, Viewforth, Chesser and Polwarth Gardens
- Zone 5: 22 local centres, for example Davidsons Mains, Drumbrae, Wester Hailes, Main Street Balerno and South Queensferry (centre).

FIGURE 5.13: LOCAL CENTRES - UNITS AND FLOORSPACE



Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Ryden

5.35 The unit vacancy rate in 2024 for Local centres ranges from 6% in Zone 3 (East) to 7% in Zone 1 (City Centre), 8% in Zone 4 (South), 9% in Zone 5 (West) and 10% in Zone 2 (North). By floorspace Zone 4 (South) has 4% of its local centres’ retail units vacant, Zone 3 (East) has 5%, Zone 2 (North) has 9%, while Zone 1 (City Centre) and Zone 5 (West) both have 10% vacant.

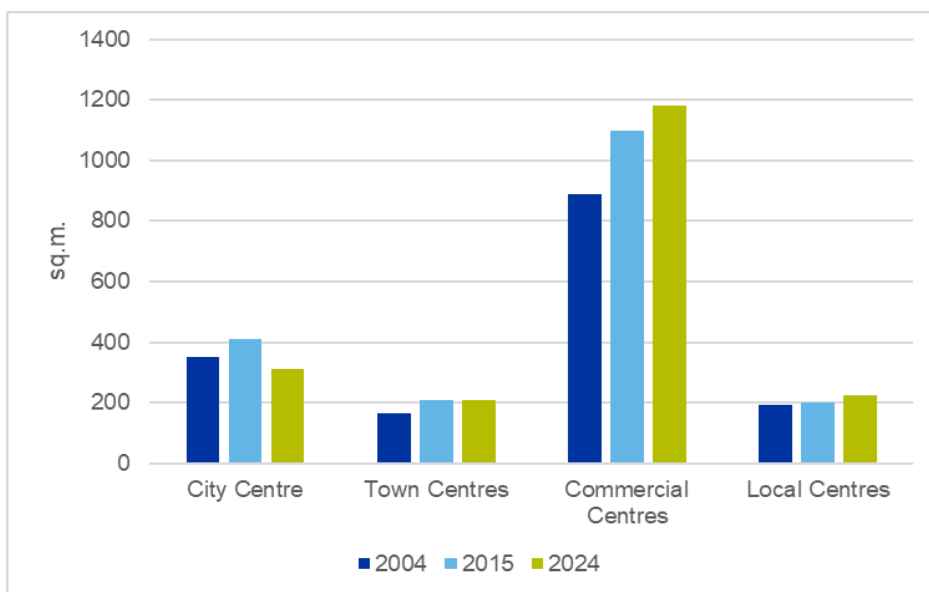
¹⁵ The Local Centres in each Zone add to more than 63 as some centre names (eg. Easter Road) are located over two zones but the analysis refers to the actual Zone.

Average Unit Size – All Types of Retail Centres

5.36 Figure 5.14 shows the change in average retail unit¹⁶ size over the last 20 years by type of defined centre. The average retail unit size has increased in most locations except for the city centre:

- in the City Centre from 352 sq.m. in 2004 to 313 sq.m. in 2024, an 11% decrease;
- in Town Centres from 164 sq.m. in 2004 to 207 sq.m. in 2024, a 26% increase;
- in Commercial Centres from 890 sq.m. in 2004 to 1,183 sq.m. in 2024, a 33% increase; and
- in Local Centres from 191 sq.m. in 2004 to 226 sq.m. in 2025, an 18% increase.

FIGURE 5.14: AVERAGE RETAIL UNIT SIZE – 20 YEAR COMPARISONS



Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Ryden

Neighbourhood Centres and Isolated Shops

5.37 To complete the analysis for Edinburgh, there are 1,905¹⁷ neighbourhood and isolated shops which total 369,399 sq.m. of floorspace. These are not located in defined centres however in total they account for more units and floorspace than either commercial centres or local centres. While some of this will be large supermarkets (see next sub-section), the large number of retail units and mean size of 278 sq.m. (similar to local or town centres) confirms that many are simply local 'corner' shops or small parades scattered across the city.

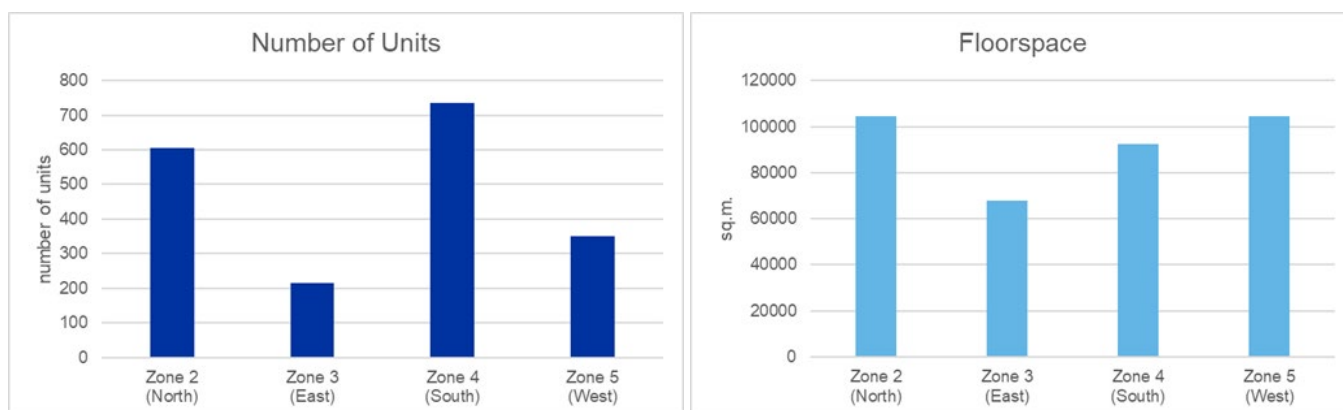
5.38 By Zone, the numbers and floorspace of neighbourhood and isolated shops are (Figure 5.15):

- Zone 2 (North) with 604 units (32%) and 29% of floorspace
- Zone 3 (East) with 216 units (11%) and 18% of floorspace
- Zone 4 (South) with 735 units (39%) and 25% of floorspace
- Zone 5 (West) with 350 units (18%) and 28% of floorspace

¹⁶ Refers to average retail unit size for convenience and comparison units only.

¹⁷ Excluding units in Zone 1 which were included earlier here within the wider city centre.

FIGURE 5.15: NEIGHBOURHOOD AND ISOLATED SHOPS



Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Ryden

5.39 The unit vacancy rate for all neighbourhood and isolated shops by number is 11%. This ranges from 9% in Zone 5 (West), to c. 11% for Zones 3 (East) and Zone 4 (South) and 14% for Zone 2 (North). These are a little above the vacancy rates in the city’s defined centres as reviewed above.

SUPERMARKETS

5.40 The study brief requested separate identification and mapping of Edinburgh’s supermarkets. These are already included in the centres and stores analyses presented above. Table 5.3 provides a list by Zone and Figure 5.16 show the location of the city’s 47 supermarkets. Aside from Zone 1 (city centre) which has only one supermarket, each of the zones has a broad mix of supermarket brands and formats.

TABLE 5.3: SUPERMARKETS

ZONE	SUPERMARKETS
Zone 1	Marks and Spencer (foodhall), Princes Street
Zone 2	Aldi, Dock Street/ Commercial Street Asda, Sandpiper Drive Lidl, West Granton Road Lidl, Easter Road Lidl, South Groathill Avenue, Craighleith Retail Park Lidl, Newkirkgate Marks & Spencer (foodhall), South Groathill Avenue, Craighleith Retail Park Morrisons, Waterfront Broadway Morrisons, Pilton Drive Sainsbury’s, Craighleith Road, Craighleith Retail Park Tesco, Broughton Road Tesco, Easter Road Waitrose, Comely Bank
Zone 3	Aldi, Portobello High Street Asda, The Jewel Lidl, Niddrie Mains Road Lidl, Moray Park, Meadowbank Shopping Park Marks and Spencer (foodhall), Fort Kinnaird Retail Park Morrisons, Piersfield Terrace Sainsbury’s, Moray Park, Meadowbank Shopping Park

<p>Zone 4</p>	<p>Aldi, Gilmerton Road Aldi, Lady Road, Aldi, Oxfangs Broadway Aldi, Slateford, Fruitmarket Place, Edinburgh West Retail Park Asda, New Mart Road, Chesser Lidl, Gilmerton, Drum Street Lidl, Nicolson Street M&S Food, Slateford, Fruitmarket Place, Edinburgh West Retail Park Morrisons, Gilmerton Road, Moredun Morrisons, New Swanston, Hunters Tryst Sainsbury's, Lady Road, Cameron Toll Tesco, Colinton Mains Drive Waitrose, Morningside Road</p>
<p>Zone 5</p>	<p>Aldi, Cultins Road , Hermiston Gait Retail Park Aldi, Gorgie Road Lidl, Wester Hailes Centre Lidl, Dalry Road Lidl, Glasgow Road, Corstorphine Marks & Spencer (food hall), The Gyle Morrisons, Gyle Avenue, The Gyle Sainsbury's, Westfield Road Sainsbury's, Inglis Green Road Tesco, Cramond Road South, Davidson's Mains Tesco, Ferrymuir, South Queensferry Tesco, Cultins Road, Hermiston Gait Retail Park Tesco Extra, Meadow Place Road, Corstorphine</p>

Note: this excludes Express or Local stores; Farmfoods, Iceland, Costcutter or Premier Stores; and Cash and carry shops for example Makro or Bestway etc.

FIGURE 5.16: LOCATION OF SUPERMARKETS

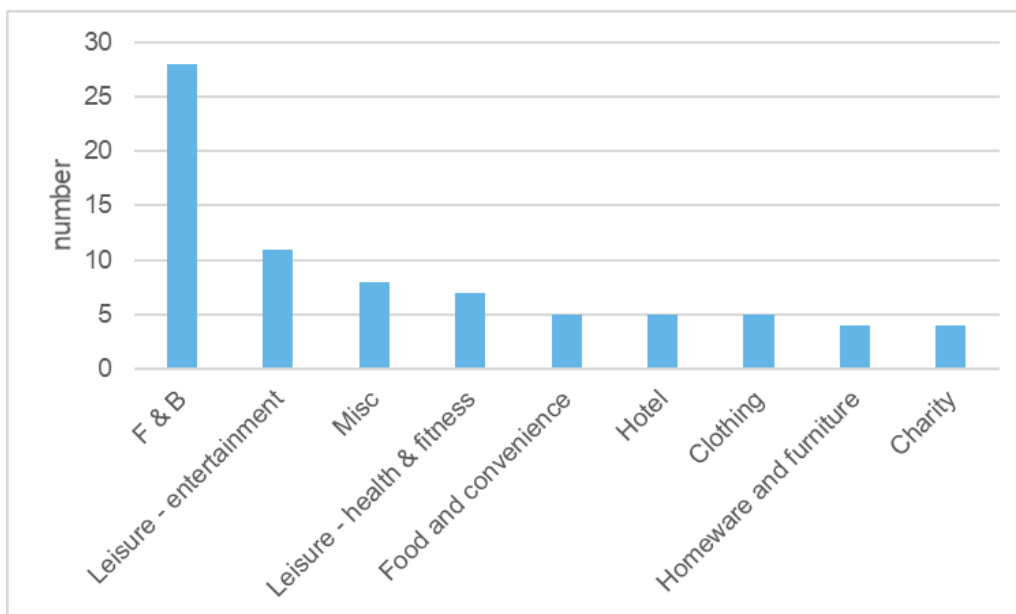


Source: Google Maps/ Ryden

MARKET DEMAND

- 5.41 Market demand is assessed here in two ways: requirements from retailers to be represented in Edinburgh; and planning and development activity (which may be developer-led and/or retailer-led).
- 5.42 Seventy-seven operators¹⁸ have added or updated a **requirement** for Edinburgh in the 12 months since April 2024. The total floorspace sought is between 38,000 and 67,000 sq.m. (some requirements indicate a range rather than a fixed unit size). In the current retail market that is a high volume of requirements.
- 5.43 Food & beverage operators (Figure 5.17) have the most requirements with 28, followed by leisure and entertainment with 11 including immersive bingo, indoor golf, bowling, shuffleboard and food and drink elements. Leisure, health & fitness have 7 requirements which tend to seek larger units, including for padel, boxing and gyms. Food retailers and convenience stores have 5 requirements, as do hotels and clothing retailers. Homeware and furniture retailers, and charities, have 4 requirements each. Miscellaneous retailers – which includes art, jewellery, toys and currency exchange - have 8 requirements. Overall the majority of demand is not for traditional comparison shopping but is for a wide range of leisure and food & beverage activities – with the caveat that the majority still seek to open in the city centre, where the prime shopping as well as leisure and visitor attractions are located. Some of the convenience, service and charity requirements are targeting suburban locations and one hotel would consider Leith.

FIGURE 5.17: KNOWN REQUIREMENTS

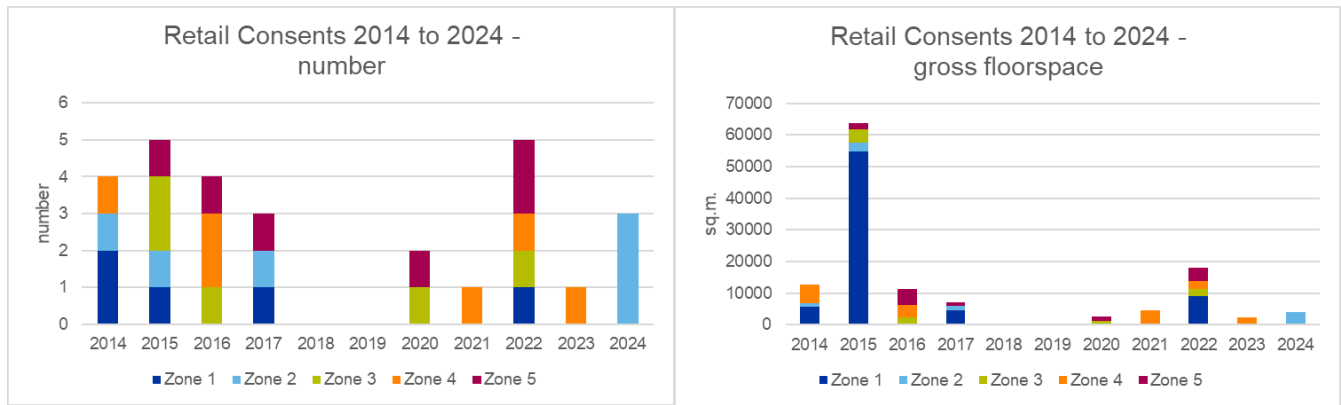


Source: The Requirement List/ Ryden

- 5.44 Sections 7 and 9 review current planning consents to understand potential future development. Historic **planning and development** trends can provide another indicator of market appetite from developers and retailers. From 2014 to 2024 there were 28 retail planning consents issued in Edinburgh for units larger than 1,000 sq.m., totalling 126,161 sq.m. Zone 1, which includes the city centre had the most by floorspace due to St James Quarter. All 5 zones had either 5 or 6 consents which shows some distribution of market interest around the city (Figure 5.18). By year, 2015 had by far the most consented retail floorspace with 63,786 sq.m., again the majority at St James Quarter. By number 2015 and 2022 had the highest with 5 consents. There were no consents in 2018 or 2019.

¹⁸ Sourced from The Requirement List

FIGURE 5.18: RETAIL CONSENTS 2014 TO 2024

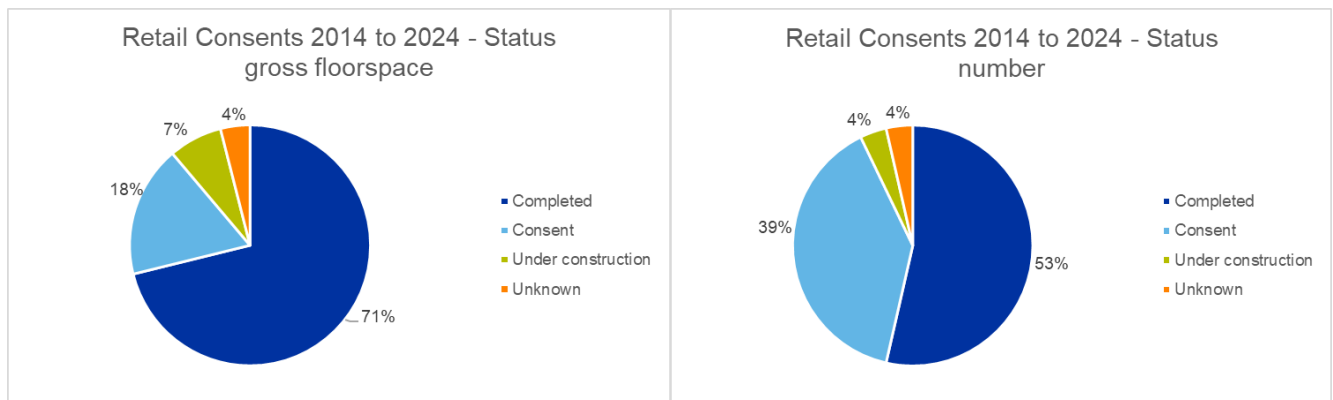


Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Roderick MacLean Associates/ Ryden

5.45 A total of 53% (15) of these retail consents have been built (Figure 5.19). The proportion of consented floorspace built is higher at 71% again due to St James Quarter. Conversion of the former Jenners department store on Princes Street currently under construction represents 7% (9,094 sq.m.) of the floorspace consented 2014-24. Completed developments include:

- Zone 1 at Edinburgh St James (54,815 sq.m.); 64 Princes Street, the former BHS (4,535 sq.m.)
- Zone 2 on Easter Road for Lidl (2,811 sq.m.) and on Dock Street for Aldi (1,508 sq.m.); and a 1,235 sq.m. unit on Haddington Place
- Zone 3 on Portobello High Street for Aldi (1,674 sq.m.), and two consents on Niddrie Mains Road for Lidl, Greggs and Home Bargains (4,808 sq.m.)
- Zone 4 on St John Street, now known as Edinburgh West Retail Park (5,822 sq.m.); on Oxfgangs Road North for Aldi (1,056 sq.m.) and on Slateford Road for Lidl (2,821 sq.m.)
- Zone 5 for a 2,000 sq.m. unit on Gorgie Road and 1,062 sq.m. on Pennywell Road.

FIGURE 5.19: RETAIL CONSENTS 2014 TO 2024 BY YEAR BY STATUS



Source: City of Edinburgh Council/ Roderick MacLean Associates/ Ryden

5.46 By use type, non-retail service uses make up the majority of consents with 78% of floorspace and 61% by number. Zone 1 (which included the city centre) has the most by floorspace with 59%. Again the major influence is St James Quarter.

SUMMARY

- 5.47 Prime retail activity is concentrated in Edinburgh city centre, which has a very large retailer base including major brands and is out-competing comparable UK cities. St James Quarter has catalysed an eastwards shift of prime retailing which, allied to the loss of department and variety stores from Princes Street, has encouraged a diversification of uses which is still underway. Recent activity confirms a dynamic city centre occupational market however there is a notable shift towards leisure uses and food & beverage rather than comparison shopping.
- 5.48 The average size of a retail unit has risen across all locations except in the City centre. Town centres have diversified, while the performance of commercial centres has ranged from zero vacancies through to repositioning or redevelopment. Town and commercial centres also show a continual evolution around active brands. Edinburgh has a large complement of local centres and retail units outside of defined centres serving its local neighbourhoods. The city is served by a broad mix of supermarket brands and formats.
- 5.49 St James Quarter aside, development activity is weak by historic standards (discount retailers are an exception) and the large majority of market activity is the continuing reuse of the city's existing retail stock. Latent demand in the form of requirements confirms that the majority is for non-retail uses.

06 CONVENIENCE EXPENDITURE AND TURNOVER

INTRODUCTION

- 6.1 This section examines the relationships between convenience expenditure and turnover for each of the five zones in Edinburgh, and for the City as a whole. It incorporates the shopping patterns of residents from the NEMS household survey underpinning the 2018 Retail Study (see Appendix B), together with estimates of convenience expenditure inflows to the City by shoppers from beyond the Council area.
- 6.2 The total turnover in each zone derives from the residents' expenditure potential, plus inflows, less outflows. The distribution of the turnover among the various centres and supermarkets is then controlled to the total deduced turnover for each zone from the shopping patterns from the household survey.

CONVENIENCE GOODS - DEFINITION

- 6.3 Convenience goods include:
- Food and non- alcoholic drinks
 - Alcoholic drinks
 - Tobacco
 - Newspapers and magazines.
 - Household cleaning materials and miscellaneous items
- 6.4 This definition is derived from Experian in their Retail Planner Briefing Note 22 (published March 2025), based on ONS classifications.
- 6.5 The relationship between expenditure and turnover in any study area can be expressed simply as: residents' expenditure potential plus inflows, minus outflows = total turnover. The estimated distribution of turnover by floorspace within a study area must sum to the expenditure-based total for that area.

FORECAST CONVENIENCE EXPENDITURE POTENTIAL

- 6.6 Table 6.1 shows the forecast convenience expenditure per capita data for the City of Edinburgh Council area, based on data commissioned from Experian for this study. There is minimal change forecast for the ten year period from 2025-35 (-0.26% per annum).
- 6.7 Special forms of trading (SFT) include internet shopping, mail order and other forms of retailing which are not wholly dependent on retail floorspace. In fact, internet based shopping comprises almost all SFT. For retail planning purposes, it is removed from the expenditure per capita data, so that the expenditure relates to conventional store floorspace, as shown in Table 6.1.
- 6.8 The proportion of SFT, or non-store sales, is forecast to increase up to 2035. It should be noted that the proportions of SFT shown in this table are mostly non-store sales and the proportions are low (5.2% currently). Not included are internet related SFT sales with home delivery or click and collect for example, because the goods mainly come off existing supermarket shelves and that proportion is much larger but excluded here. The national proportions are applied in Table 6.1, based on data from Experian.

Table 6.1			
Edinburgh convenience expenditure per capita per annum (in 2024 prices)			
* Excluding SFT (special forms of trading- mainly internet)			
2022	2025	2030	2035
£	£	£	£
3,402	3,201	3,147	3,117
*	3,034	2,959	2,911

Note

The figure for 2022 is from the Experian *Area Comparison Report* for the Edinburgh City Council area, commissioned for this study (£2,925 in 2022 prices), converted to 2024 prices from *Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 22 (Appendix 4b)*, March 2025

Figures for 2025, 2030 and 2035 derive from the UK growth rate in convenience expenditure per capita applied to the 2022 figure for the City Council area. UK expenditure per capita figures are shown in *Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 22 (Appendix 4a)*

*The proportion of convenience goods expenditure relating to Special Forms of Trading (SFT- mainly internet spend)- is small when store-based internet spending is removed, such as items picked off supermarket shelves by staff for delivery or click and collect. Experian publish their estimates of mainly non-store based internet spending on convenience goods for the UK in their *Retail Planner Briefing Note 22 (Appendix 3)*

	-5.2%	-6.0%	-6.6%
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- 6.9 Forecasts of the total convenience expenditure potential of the residents of each zone are shown in Table 6.2, excluding SFT. The expenditure growth is driven by the forecast of population increase to 2035, as the expenditure per capita declines slightly.

Table 6.2					
Edinburgh residents' convenience expenditure potential (in 2024 prices)					
* Excluding SFT (special forms of trading- mainly internet)					
	2025	growth	2030	growth	2035
	£ million	2025-30	£ million	2030-35	£ million
		£ million		£ million	
Zone 1 City Centre	100.5	0.2	100.7	0.7	101.4
Zone 2 North	396.8	0.7	397.5	2.7	400.2
Zone 3 East	200.5	0.4	200.9	1.3	202.2
Zone 4 South	480.0	0.9	480.9	3.2	484.1
Zone 5 West	471.1	0.9	472.0	3.2	475.1
Total- City of Edinburgh	1,648.9	3.1	1,651.9	11.1	1,663.0

Note

From Tables 2.1 and 6.1. Figures are rounded.

CONVENIENCE SHOPPING PATTERNS – MARKET SHARES

- 6.10 The convenience shopping patterns among Edinburgh residents are shown in Table 6.3. These are based on the household shopping interview survey by NEMS Market Research in support of the 2018 Retail Study, incorporating some amendments by us for 2025. There is no updated household shopping survey for this report. However, the convenience shopping patterns themselves are unlikely to have changed much, so the 2018 NEMS surveys remain valid for the current study. The respondents were asked where they last visited for their main food shopping (Q1), and the time before that (Q2). They were also asked where they last visited for their top-up shopping (Q3). The findings were weighted and combined to provide estimates of shopping patterns for all convenience goods relating to each of the zones, as shown in Table 6.3. The five zones were indicated on Figure 2.1, reproduced on page 4 of this report. Full details of the analysis are contained in the 2018 Retail Study.

Table 6.3
Shopping patterns for all convenience goods by Council area residents 2025
 (Based on Edinburgh Commercial Needs Retail Study- Retail 2018)

	Origin of shoppers					
	Zone 1 City Centre	Zone 2 North	Zone 3 East	Zone 4 South	Zone 5 West	Total
Destination						
Zone 1- City Centre	34%	4%	3%	2%	4%	5%
Zone 2- North	27%	74%	9%	4%	13%	26%
Zone 3- East	2%	9%	76%	2%	1%	11%
Zone 4- South	24%	6%	2%	78%	3%	27%
Zone 5- West	11%	6%	2%	10%	75%	27%
Outside Council area	2%	1%	8%	4%	4%	4%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note

The proportions are based on the NEMS household shopping survey 2018. See 2018 Retail Study for full detail. We have incorporated some amendments for 2025, affecting Zones 4 and 5 relating to the current distribution of floorspace

- 6.11 Market shares refer to the proportions of expenditure from residents of a defined area which are spent in that area and in other areas. Table 6.3 shows the convenience market shares for each zone.
- 6.12 Among the City Centre residents of Zone 1, only about a third of convenience shopping is done in the City Centre, with 27% going to stores in Zone 2 (North) and 24% to Zone 4 (South). This reflects the limited supermarket provision in the City Centre (as was shown in Table 5.3). In Zone 2 (North), 74% of convenience spending is retained, with limited proportions going to other zones. The pattern is similar for residents of Zone 3 (East) with 76% retention and Zone 4 (South) with 78% retention. In Zone 5 (West), there is a similar level of retention at 75%. Convenience expenditure leakage to stores outside Edinburgh is low, with 96% retention within the City as a whole.

CONVENIENCE EXPENDITURE FLOWS INTO EDINBURGH

- 6.13 Again, estimates draw on the proportions in the 2018 Retail Study with updated expenditure data for 2025. The estimates of convenience expenditure made in Edinburgh by residents of surrounding areas are from interview survey-based retail capacity studies held by those local authorities. These include East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian, Fife, Perth & Kinross and Scottish Borders. There have been no more recent household interview surveys in these areas, apart from in Perth and Kinross, where Edinburgh barely featured as a destination for convenience shopping. For the City Centre, the analysis draws on the results of the NEMS street interview surveys in 2018, which includes both locals and visitors. No more recent data on visitor convenience shopping in Edinburgh from VisitScotland or from other sources has been found. The percentage inflows by zone are shown in Tables 6.4 to 6.9, including for Edinburgh as a whole.

CONVENIENCE EXPENDITURE AND TURNOVER IN EDINBURGH

- 6.14 Tables 6.4 to 6.9 show the survey-based convenience expenditure and turnover relationships for each zone for 2025, 2029 and 2035. The information derives from the 2025 expenditure potential in Table 6.2, the shopping patterns in Table 6.3 and the expenditure inflows, as explained.

Table 6.4
Zone 1 City Centre- convenience expenditure and turnover (in 2024 prices)

	%	2025 £million	2030 £million	2035 £million
Zone 1 residents' expenditure potential		100.5	100.7	101.4
Add: inflows from rest of Edinburgh	47%	47.3	47.3	47.7
inflows from outside Edinburgh	116%	116.7	116.9	117.7
Less: outflows from Zone 1	-66%	-66.5	-66.6	-67.1
Retained expenditure (turnover)		198.0	198.3	199.7

Table 6.5
Zone 2 North- convenience expenditure and turnover (in 2024 prices)

	%	2025 £million	2030 £million	2035 £million
Zone 2 residents' expenditure potential		396.8	397.5	400.2
Add: inflows from rest of Edinburgh	32%	125.0	125.2	126.0
inflows from outside Edinburgh	2%	7.2	7.2	7.3
Less: outflows from Zone 2	-26%	-103.1	-103.3	-103.9
Retained expenditure (turnover)		425.9	426.6	429.5

Table 6.6
Zone 3 East- convenience expenditure and turnover (in 2024 prices)

	%	2025 £million	2030 £million	2035 £million
Zone 3 residents' expenditure potential		200.5	200.9	202.2
Add: inflows from rest of Edinburgh	26%	51.7	51.8	52.2
inflows from outside Edinburgh	37%	73.8	74.0	74.5
Less: outflows from Zone 3	-24%	-49.0	-49.1	-49.5
Retained expenditure (turnover)		277.0	277.5	279.4

Table 6.7
Zone 4 South- convenience expenditure and turnover (in 2024 prices)

	%	2025 £million	2030 £million	2035 £million
Zone 4 residents' expenditure potential		480.0	480.9	484.1
Add: inflows from rest of Edinburgh	14%	64.9	65.0	65.5
inflows from outside Edinburgh	5%	23.9	23.9	24.1
Less: outflows from Zone 4	-22%	-104.4	-104.6	-105.3
Retained expenditure (turnover)		464.3	465.1	468.2

Table 6.8
Zone 5 West- convenience expenditure and turnover (in 2024 prices)

	%	2025 £million	2030 £million	2035 £million
Zone 5 residents' expenditure potential		471.1	472.0	475.1
Add: inflows from rest of Edinburgh	19%	90.5	90.7	91.3
inflows from outside Edinburgh	10%	49.4	49.5	49.9
Less: outflows from Zone 5	-25%	-117.8	-118.0	-118.8
Retained expenditure (turnover)		493.3	494.2	497.5

Table 6.9
City of Edinburgh- convenience expenditure and turnover (in 2024 prices)

	%	2025 £million	2030 £million	2035 £million
Residents' expenditure potential		1,648.9	1,651.9	1,663.0
Add: inflows from outside Edinburgh	16%	271.0	271.5	273.3
Less: outflows from Edinburgh	-4%	-60.5	-60.6	-61.0
Retained expenditure (turnover)		1,859.4	1,862.9	1,875.3

- 6.15 In Zone 1 (City Centre), the high proportion of convenience expenditure inflows from outside Edinburgh is based on the NEMS street interview survey, where the proportion of visitors, plus those from the rest of the Lothians and Fife, was much higher than the proportion of Edinburgh residents. The City Centre is not a main destination for convenience shopping but is ancillary to other reasons for being in the City Centre. The average spend from the survey findings was quite low, indicating that much of the spend is probably on the purchase of snacks, drinks, sandwiches, confectionary etc. from shops, by both visitors and those working there.
- 6.16 In Zone 2 (North), the attraction of customers from outside Edinburgh appears low, despite the presence of superstores. The proportion could well be higher, but there is no survey-based evidence.
- 6.17 Zone 3 (East) attracts substantial convenience expenditure from East Lothian, based on the survey-based East Lothian Commercial Needs Study (Retail) 2020. Much of this is associated with ASDA at the Jewel. Zone 3 also attracts significant convenience expenditure from Midlothian, based on the Midlothian Retail Study.
- 6.18 Zone 4 (South) Convenience expenditure inflows from outside Edinburgh is low and mostly from Midlothian.
- 6.19 Zone 5 (West) is estimated to attract expenditure from West Lothian equating to about 10% of the Zone 5 residents' expenditure total.
- 6.20 Table 6.9 for the whole city indicates that estimated convenience expenditure inflows to Edinburgh in total equate to 16% of the residents' expenditure potential, and outflows only 4%.

CONVENIENCE FLOORSPACE AND TURNOVER 2025

- 6.21 The current distribution of convenience floorspace in the five zones is shown in Table 6.10, based on the comprehensively updated retail floorspace data provided by the Council from their surveys in 2024 and also used in Section 5 above. An important addition here was to assign the split of convenience and comparison floorspace in the larger superstores to the two sectors respectively. While some smaller supermarkets will also have an element of comparison floorspace, such detail is not essential for the retail capacity study.

- 6.22 In Table 6.10, average company turnover/ floorspace ratios from the Retail Rankings 2023 (in 2024 prices) are applied to the main supermarkets and discount foodstores, with adjustments to include VAT and remove petrol/ non-retail sales. These ratios also embrace recent research published by Mintel on the split of convenience and comparison floorspace among the various operators and the associated division of turnover. Estimated average ratios are applied to the smaller stores in all centres and other shops.
- 6.23 The total turnover at average levels in each zone is controlled to the expenditure based survey totals in Tables 6.4 to 6.8. Any differences reflect under or over-trading in each zone. The exception is Zone 1, because the City Centre cannot readily be compared to other, smaller centres, as its role for convenience shopping is largely subsidiary to its role as a destination comparison shopping centre. Household-based surveys generally can provide fairly representative turnover estimates at the study area level (zones in this case), but not for individual centres, supermarkets and stores – hence the approach adopted.
- 6.24 Household surveys tend to overstate the turnover of the most popular stores and understate the rest, if used alone for this purpose. Where more detail is required, such as for a retail impact assessment, it is appropriate to reference any estimate of turnover for individual stores (based on the household survey-say) against the zone total, taking account of any over or under-trading at the zone level. The concept of over/ under-trading against average company levels is valid in the convenience sector, where relatively few operators dominate.
- 6.25 There have been some changes in the levels of gross convenience retail floorspace among the zones since the 2018 Study. The gross floorspace has hardly changed since 2018 in Zones 1 and 3. There is 19% more gross floorspace in Zone 2, mostly among neighbourhood centres/ isolated stores and in the local centres to some extent. In Zone 4, the convenience floorspace has reduced by 9% since 2018, but that is partly the consequence of Sainsbury's at Inglis Green Road having been incorrectly allocated there, when it is actually in Zone 5 and the border between the zones touches the site. The convenience floorspace in Zone 5 has increased by 24% since 2018, because of the re-allocation of Sainsbury's from Zone 4, a larger M&S foodstore and various other increases.

Table 6.10
Edinburgh convenience floorspace and turnover, 2025 (in 2024 prices)

	Floorspace sq m		Av. turnover ratio £/sq m	Turnover £million
	gross	net		
Zone 1 City Centre				
City Centre				
Sainsbury's Local St Andrew Square	1,504	1,053	20,718	21.8
Sainsbury's Local, Shandwick PI	1,267	887	20,718	18.4
M&S-Foodhall	2,800	1,820	14,151	25.8
Other City Centre shops- <i>ward 11</i>	10,545	6,854	8,000	54.8
Town Centres				
Tollcross Town Centre (<i>Tollcross-ward 11</i>)	2,985	1,940	3,650	7.1
Commercial Centres- none				
Local Centres	2,984	1,940	3,500	6.8
Neighbourhood & isolated stores	7,903	5,137	3,000	15.4
Total turnover at average levels				150.1
Total Zone 1 (actual levels- see text in section 6.7)	29,988	19,631		198.0
Zone 2 North				
Town Centres				
<i>Leith/ Leith Walk-wards 12&13</i>				
Lidl, Newkirkgate, Leith TC	1,737	1,303	10,404	13.6
Tesco Superstore, Duke Street, Leith TC	4,295	2,577	17,344	44.7
Leith/ Leith Walk TC-Other shops	11,265	7,322	3,500	25.6
<i>Stockbridge-ward 5</i>	3,235	2,103	4,000	8.4
Commercial Centres				
<i>Craigleith-ward 5</i>				
Sainsbury's, Craigleith (total 10,402 sq m gross -70%conv)	7,281	3,641	17,929	65.3
Add: M&S, Craigleith RP-(total 4,881 sq m gross-50% conv)	2,441	1,586	14,151	22.4
Lidl, Craigleith RP	1,372	1,029	10,404	10.7
<i>Ocean Terminal-ward 13</i>				
Ocean Terminal-Other shops	186	121	4,000	0.5
Local Centres				
Morrisons, Waterfront Granton (7,914 sq m gross), 80% conv- <i>wd 4</i>	6,331	3,166	11,420	36.2
Local Centres- Other shops	11,872	7,717	3,000	23.2
Neighbourhood & isolated stores				
Asda, Sandpiper Drive (total 7,431 sq m gross-70%conv) <i>wd13</i>	5,202	3,121	16,477	51.4
Morrisons, Pilton Drive, Ferry Road- <i>ward 4</i>	5,475	2,738	11,420	31.3
Tesco, Broughton Road- <i>ward 12</i>	4,074	2,444	17,344	42.4
Waitrose, Comely Bank Road- <i>ward 5</i>	3,924	2,354	16,551	39.0
Lidl, West Granton Rd- <i>ward 4</i>	2,171	1,628	10,404	16.9
Other neighbourhood & isolated stores	27,003	17,552	3,000	52.7
Total turnover at average levels				484.2
<i>Under- trading below average levels</i>	-12%			-58.3
Total Zone 2	97,864	60,402		425.9

Table 6.10 -continued
Edinburgh convenience floorspace and turnover, 2025 (in 2024 prices)

	Floorspace sq m		Av. turnover ratio £/sq m	Turnover £million
	gross	net		
Zone 3 East				
Town Centres				
<i>Portobello-ward 17</i>				
Scotmid	1,630	1,060	12,700	17.5
Aldi	1,697	1,273	16,477	21.0
Other Portobello TC shops	1,767	1,149	3,500	4.0
Commercial Centres				
<i>Meadowbank - ward 14</i>				
Sainsbury's, Meadowbank	4,269	2,561	17,929	45.9
Lidl, Meadowbank	2,063	1,547	10,404	16.1
<i>Fort Kinnaird - ward 17</i>				
Asda, The Jewel (total 14,889 sq m gross- 60% conv)	8,933	4,467	16,477	73.6
part M&S Fort Kinnaird (total 5,911 sq m gross -25% conv)	1,478	961	10,145	9.7
Other Fort Kinnaird shops	850	680	5,000	3.4
Local Centres				
Morrisons, Piershill (total 5,844 sq m gross- 80% conv) <i>wd14</i>	4,675	2,338	11,420	26.7
Lidl, Niddrie-ward 17	2,520	1,890	10,404	19.7
Local Centres- Other shops	2,947	1,916	3,000	5.7
Neighbourhood & isolated stores				
Other neighbourhood & isolated stores	4,502	2,926	3,000	8.8
Total turnover at average levels				252.1
<i>Over- trading above average levels</i>	10%			24.9
Total Zone 3	37,331	22,766		277.0

Zone 4 South				
Town Centres				
<i>Nicholston St/ Clerk St-ward 15</i>				
Tesco Metro, Nicolson Street-TC	1,637	1,146	17,344	19.9
Other Nicholston St/ Clerk St TC shops	7,752	5,039	3,500	17.6
<i>Morningside/ Bruntsfield-ward 10</i>				
Waitrose, Morningside Road-TC	3,140	1,884	16,551	31.2
Tesco Metro, Colinton Road-TC	1,306	914	17,344	15.9
Other Morningside/ Bruntsfield TC shops	3,715	2,415	4,000	9.7
Commercial Centres				
<i>Cameron Toll -ward15</i>				
Sainsbury's (total 14,880 sq m gross-60% conv)	8,928	4,464	17,929	80.0
Aldi, Cameron Toll	2,264	1,698	16,477	28.0
Other Cameron Toll shops	437	284	5,000	1.4
Local Centres				
Asda, Chesser (total 8,897 sq m gross-70 conv)- <i>ward 9</i>	6,228	3,114	16,477	51.3
M&S Food, Slateford- <i>ward 9</i>	1,469	955	14,151	13.5
Local Centres- Other shops	15,763	10,246	3,000	30.7
Neighbourhood & isolated stores				
Morrisons, Gilmerton Road, Moredun- <i>ward 16</i>	4,959	2,480	11,420	28.3
Morrisons, Hunters' Tryst, New Swanston- <i>ward 8</i>	4,317	2,159	11,420	24.7
Tesco Superstore, Colinton Mains Drive	4,558	2,735	17,344	47.4
Aldi, Gilmerton Rd	1,422	1,067	16,477	17.6
Aldi, Fruitmarket Place, Edinburgh	1,579	1,184	16,477	19.5
Aldi, Oxgangs Road North, Edinburgh	1,452	1,184	16,477	19.5
Other neighbourhood & isolated stores	3,654	2,375	3,000	7.1
Total turnover at average levels				463.3
<i>Over- trading above average levels</i>	0%			0.9
Total Zone 4	74,580	45,341		464.3

Table 6.10 -continued
Edinburgh convenience floorspace and turnover, 2025 (in 2024 prices)

	Floorspace sq m		Av. turnover ratio £/sq m	Turnover £million
	gross	net		
Zone 5 West				
Town Centres				
<i>Corstorphine -ward 6</i>				
Tesco Extra, Meadow Place Rd (total 11,858-70% conv)	8,301	4,980	17,344	86.4
Lidl, Glasgow Rd	1,958	1,469	10,404	15.3
Other Corstorphine TC shops	1,202	781	4,000	3.1
<i>Gorgie/ Dalry-ward 7</i>				
Sainsbury's, Westfield Rd (total 8,531 sq m gross-80% conv)	6,825	4,095	17,929	73.4
Co-op, Dalry Road-TC	1,893	1,230	8,426	10.4
Aldi, Gorgie Park Road-TC	1,665	1,249	16,477	20.6
Other Gorgie/Dalry TC shops	4,465	2,902	3,500	10.2
Commercial Centres				
<i>Hermiston Gait-ward 7</i>				
Tesco Superstore, Cultins Road (total 7,877 sq m-75% conv)	5,908	3,545	17,344	61.5
Aldi, Cultins Rd	1,774	1,331	16,477	21.9
<i>The Gyle- ward 3</i>				
Morrisons, S Gyle Broadway (total 8,117 sq m gross-80%conv)	6,494	3,247	11,420	37.1
M&S Foodhall, The Gyle	3,025	1,966	14,151	27.8
Other Gyle Centre shops	56	36	5,000	0.2
Local Centres				
Tesco, Davidsons Mains-ward 1	1,439	863	17,344	15.0
Lidl, Wester Hailes-ward 2	1,252	939	10,404	9.8
Local Centres- Other shops	9,032	5,871	3,000	17.6
Neighbourhood & isolated stores				
Tesco, Ferrymuir	4,668	2,801	17,344	48.6
Lidl, Dalry Road	1,457	1,093	10,404	11.4
Sainsbury's, Ingles Green Rd (total 8,906 sq m gross-75% conv) wd 7	6,680	4,008	17,929	71.9
Other neighbourhood & isolated stores	13,872	9,017	3,000	27.1
Total turnover at average levels				569.0
<i>Under- trading below average levels</i>	-13%			-75.7
Total Zone 5	81,965	51,423		493.3

CONVENIENCE TURNOVER BY NETWORK OF CENTRES

6.26 Table 6.11 shows the distribution of convenience turnover in the network of centres in Edinburgh. It reveals the contribution of each category of centre to the total for the City. The proportions have not changed greatly since 2018.

Table 6.11		
Distribution of convenience turnover among the Network of Centres in Edinburgh, 2025 (in 2024 prices)		
<i>Summary from Table 6.10</i>		
Network of Centres	Convenience Turnover	
	%	£million
City Centre	6%	120.8
Town Centres (8)	24%	455.3
Commercial Centres (7)	26%	505.6
Local Centres	13%	256.1
Neighbourhood & isolated stores	30%	580.8
Edinburgh total at average levels	100%	1,918.6
Overall under-trading	-6%	-108.1
Edinburgh total at actual levels (Table 6.9)	100%	1,858.4
Note		
The proportions allow for the split of convenience and comparison floorspace among the largest stores, as shown in Table 6.10		
The collective under/ over trading cannot readily be assigned to specific centres in the network- just to the zones.		

CONVENIENCE PLANNING CONSENTS AND PROPOSALS

6.27 Table 6.12 is a list of the current outstanding major convenience retail planning consents in Edinburgh. There are not many, and they are mainly supermarket development applications including a proposed mixed retail development. One of the proposals has recently been completed and has opened (Lidl). By convention, the estimated turnover of the planning consents requires to be deducted from forecasts of spare capacity, as will be shown in Section 7.

Table 6.12					
Existing convenience retail planning consents and estimated turnover in 2025 (in 2024 prices)					
<i>(Includes some proposals without consent- as identified)</i>					
		Floorspace sq m		Turnover ratio £/sq m	Turnover £million
		gross	net		
Planning consents included in the capacity study					
21/04016/PPP	Builyeon Road, South Queensferry	1,786	1,161	7,134	8.3
Zone 5 Ward 1	Foodstore- CALA consent in 2022 - Expired Feb 2022 , but might be renewed. No named operator				
21/06144/FUL	Seafield Road 64 - 66 Consent 2022- expired Feb 2025	2,182	1,637	10,404	17.0
Zone 3 Ward 14	Lidl. Alter unit. 2nd applic. 24/01746/FULL-u/c March 2025				
22/06390/FUL	Gilmerton Station Road, 1&4	2,280	1,710	10,404	17.8
Zone 4 Ward 16	Bernard Hunter. Consent 2023. New build. Expires March 2026. No named operator.Possible discount foodstore operator				
Total convenience retail consents		6,248	4,507		43.1
Retail applications awaiting determination- since 2024 (convenience and comparison mixed)					
24/04946/AMC	Builyeon Road, 10	2,096	1,572	10,404	16.4
Zone 5 Ward 1	Chargemaster Ltd T/A BP Pulse. Foodstore- new build. No named operator.Possible discount foodstore operator				
24/00132/PPP	Eastfield Rd. Proposed new town centre	20,100	13,065		
Zone 5 Ward 1	West Town Edinburgh Ltd. Mixed convenience and comparison floorspace. No details on split yet.Likely to include non-retail services				
24/00523/PPP	Meadowfield Farm Turnhouse Rd	5,300	3,975		
Zone 5 Ward 1	Crosswind Developments Ltd.- new build. Foodstore/ othe retail. No details yet on split				
24/02610/FUL	West Shore Road, 11	2,249	1,687	10,404	17.5
Zone 5 Ward 1	Cruden Homes Ltd- new build. No named operator.Possible discount foodstore operator				
Total -see note *		29,745	20,299		33.9
Note					
Gross floorspace from the Council. Turnover of the consents are estimates relating to existing turnover ratios. Where the retailer is a named supermarket the turnover ratio is based on the UK Retail Rankings. Includes consents over £1,000 sq m gross only.					
* The total turnover of £33.9 million excludes the turnover of the proposed new town centre at Eastfield Road for the reason given in this table.					

07 CONVENIENCE EXPENDITURE CAPACITY

INTRODUCTION

7.1 This section provides estimates of the spare convenience retail expenditure capacity that could service new retail floorspace in Edinburgh as a whole. The forecasts of spare capacity are for the periods 2025-30, 2030-35 and for the total ten-year period 2025-35, after deducting the existing planning commitments noted in Table 6.12.

DEFINITION

7.2 The planning context for defining spare capacity is the level of new retail development that can be accommodated without threatening the vitality and viability of established town centres. Spare retail capacity can exist in the following forms:

- Any current over-trading
- Growth in retained expenditure (turnover) in Edinburgh
- Potential to claw back expenditure leakage
- Potential to attract new trade into Edinburgh
- 'Acceptable' levels of impact

7.3 A range of spare capacity can be prepared from these components, showing a low and high estimate. The **low estimate** includes any over-trading and the forecast growth in turnover in the City over the target periods. The **high estimate** also includes the potential to claw back leakage and attract new trade into the City. Provision of a range of spare capacity normally reduces the need for sensitivity tests.

7.4 'Acceptable' levels of retail impact refer to the situation where new developments would not threaten the vitality and viability of established centres. By convention, this aspect is not usually embraced into capacity studies, because it is normally addressed by retail impact assessments in support of specific retail planning applications. The Council would then assess whether the retail impacts are 'acceptable' in terms of their effects on the vitality and viability of town centres.

7.5 In practice, new convenience store developments are largely serviced by trade diversion from existing stores and by additional residents in expanding housing areas, especially with the trend towards new smaller and discount stores rather than new superstores.

SPARE CONVENIENCE EXPENDITURE CAPACITY

7.6 Table 7.1 shows the forecast spare convenience expenditure for the City of Edinburgh as a whole. Under the **low** forecast, there would be no spare convenience expenditure over the next ten years. The main reason relates to the level of current under-trading below average levels in Zone 2 (North) and in Zone 5 (West). Forecast convenience expenditure growth is quite low, with additional expenditure not materialising until after 2030. The low forecast is our 'base' scenario which is what is expected if there are no other changes.

7.7 Under the **high** forecast, it is estimated that there is potential to claw back convenience expenditure leakage from Edinburgh and attract some new inflows to Edinburgh, but at modest levels as shown in Table 7.1. The proportion of convenience expenditure leakage from Edinburgh is low, so there are limits to the scope for claw back of leakage to new store developments. The potential to claw back leakage is nominally estimated at up to 30%, but in quantitative terms, that it is not much for a city the size of Edinburgh. Also, the potential to attract new convenience expenditure into Edinburgh will be limited, especially as the market for large supermarkets and superstores (which draw trade from wide areas) is no longer active. The potential to increase inflow nominally by up to 20% is reasonable to consider, but

not really more than this proportion in our opinion. Therefore, under the high forecast there would be a small amount of spare convenience expenditure capacity over the next ten years.

7.8 It is important to recognise that forecasts beyond five years will carry more uncertainty.

Table 7.1			
Edinburgh: forecast spare convenience expenditure capacity- range (in 2024 prices)			
	2025-30 £million	2030-35 £million	2025-35 £million
(a) Current under-trading (Table 6.11)	-108.1		-108.1
(b) Growth in retained expenditure (turnover)- Table 6.9	3.4	12.5	15.9
(c) Less planning commitments: (selected consents- Table 6.12)	43.1		43.1
Low estimate (a+b-c)	-61.6	12.5	-49.1
(d) Add: potential to reduce outflow	2030	2035	
Outflow from Edinburgh £million- Table 6.9	-60.6	-61.0	
Potential to claw back up to 30% of leakage-estimate	18.2	0.1	18.3
(e) Add:potential to increase inflow- Table 6.9	271.5	273.3	
Potential to increase inflow to Edinburgh by 20%- estimate	54.3	0.4	54.7
High estimate (a+b-c+d+e)	10.9	13.0	23.9
Equivalent convenience floorspace	£ per sq m	£ per sq m	
* Turnover/ floorspace ratio	15,036	15,137	
	sq m net	sq m net	sq m net
Low	-4,100	800	-3,300
High	700	900	1,600
Note			
Gross equivalent floorspace estimates have not been shown, as net /gross formats vary widely. <i>Figures are rounded.</i>			
* The turnover ratio derives from the 2023 Retail Rankings in 2024 prices for the average of Sainsbury's, Tesco, Morrisons, ASDA, Aldi and Lidl, at £15,009 per sq m for their convenience floorspace. The ratio is adjusted to relate to 2030 and 2035, based on % turnover growth in Edinburgh shown in Table 6.9			

08 COMPARISON EXPENDITURE AND TURNOVER

INTRODUCTION

8.1 This section examines the relationships between comparison expenditure and turnover for each of the five zones in Edinburgh (as shown on Map 2.1 on page 4), and for the City as a whole. It incorporates the shopping patterns of residents from the NEMS household survey (see Appendix B), together with estimates of comparison expenditure inflows to the City by shoppers from beyond the Council area. We have included some adjustments for the update to 2025. As explained in section 6, the total turnover in each zone derives from the residents' expenditure potential, plus inflows, less outflows. The distribution of the turnover among the various centres, retail parks and stores is then controlled to the total deduced turnover for each zone from the shopping patterns.

COMPARISON GOODS – DEFINITION

8.2 Comparison goods include:

- Books
- Clothing and footwear
- Furniture, floorcoverings & household textiles
- Audio visual equipment and other durable goods (domestic appliances and phones)
- Hardware and DIY supplies (repair and maintenance materials)
- Tools
- Chemists' goods
- Jewellery, watches and clocks
- Bicycles
- Recreational and other miscellaneous goods

8.3 This definition is derived from Experian in their Retail Planner Briefing Note 22 (published March 2025), based on ONS classifications.

8.4 '*Bulky goods*' is a collective sub-category of comparison goods. These include at least furniture/ floorcoverings and household textiles, large domestic appliances and some audio visuals and DIY/hardware. Definitions vary and there is no precise way of comprehensively identifying all bulky goods retail floorspace. While bulky goods are normally found in retail parks, they are also still important to many town centres. The main benefit of the category is to assist planning authority development management to identify any restrictions on the range of goods to be sold on retail parks.

COMPARISON EXPENDITURE POTENTIAL AND ONLINE SHOPPING

8.5 Table 8.1 shows the forecast comparison expenditure per capita data for the City of Edinburgh Council area, based on data commissioned from Experian. The overall forecast growth rate from 2025-35 is 2.4% per annum, which is substantially higher than the forecast growth rate for convenience expenditure.

8.6 As explained in section 6, special forms of trading (SFT), which is almost entirely internet shopping, is removed from the expenditure per capita data, so that it relates to conventional shop floorspace. The proportion of SFT, or mainly non-store sales, is forecast to increase up to 2035. While Experian publish their own forecasts of the proportions of SFT (Table 8.1 footnote), experience suggests that the proportions are likely to be much higher for application in this type of study for local authorities. The 2018 Retail Study forecast that 33% of comparison expenditure would relate to online spending by 2028. The consequence of not applying higher proportions of internet spending is that the resulting comparison turnover/ floorspace ratios would be unrealistically high.

8.7 In Table 8.1, it is estimated that the proportions of internet spending are 35% in 2025, rising to 50% in 2035. The second forecast has internet expenditure rising to 45% by 2035. The range is discussed and presented in the next section. The proportions of SFT are not surprising, as internet retail spending is now high compared to the past.

Table 8.1			
Edinburgh comparison expenditure per capita per annum (in 2024 prices)			
* Excluding SFT (special forms of trading- mainly internet)			
2022	2025	2030	2035
£	£	£	£
4,773	4,579	5,111	5,814
*Excluding SFT			
Low end of forecast range to 2025 and 2035	2,977	2,913	2,907
High end of forecast range to 2025 and 2035	2,977	3,067	3,198
Note			
The figure for 2022 is from the Experian <i>Area Comparison Report</i> for the Edinburgh City Council area, commissioned for this study (£4,465 in 2022 prices), converted to 2024 prices from <i>Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 22 (Appendix 4b)</i> , March 2025			
Figures for 2025, 2030 and 2035 derive from the UK growth rate in comparison expenditure per capita applied to the 2022 figure for the City Council area. UK expenditure per capita figures are shown in <i>Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 22 (Appendix 4a)</i>			
*Deductions require to be made to allow for special forms of trading (SFT- internet expenditure,mail order etc), which do not relate to in-store retail floorspace			
The proportions deducted derive from <i>Experian Retail Planner Briefing Note 22- Appendix 3-(adjusted SFT)</i>			
	2025	2030	2035
	-24.1%	-25.9%	-27.6%
Market demand for comparison retail floorspace indicates that the proportion of internet expenditure in the City Council area is higher than the Experian proportions.			
Therefore the following proportions are applied:			
Low forecast	-35%	-43%	-50%
High forecast	-35%	-40%	-45%

8.8 Forecasts of the total comparison expenditure potential of the residents of each zone are shown in Tables 8.2A and 8.2B, excluding SFT, under the low and high forecasts. The growth rate to 2035 is the result of combining projected population growth with the forecast growth in expenditure per capita.

Table 8.2 A					
Edinburgh residents' comparison expenditure potential- low forecast (in 2024 prices)					
* Excluding SFT (special forms of trading- mainly internet)					
	2025	<i>growth</i>	2030	<i>growth</i>	2035
	£ million	<i>2025-30</i>	£ million	<i>2030-35</i>	£ million
		£ million		£ million	
Zone 1 City Centre	98.6	0.6	99.2	2.1	101.3
Zone 2 North	389.2	2.2	391.4	8.2	399.6
Zone 3 East	196.7	1.1	197.8	4.1	201.9
Zone 4 South	470.9	2.6	473.5	9.9	483.4
Zone 5 West	462.2	2.6	464.7	9.7	474.5
Total- City of Edinburgh	1,617.6	9.1	1,626.6	34.0	1,660.6
Note					
From Tables 2.1 and 8.1. Figures are rounded.					

Table 8.2 B
Edinburgh residents' comparison expenditure potential- high forecast (in 2024 prices)

* Excluding SFT (special forms of trading- mainly internet)

	2025 £ million	growth 2025-30 £ million	2030 £ million	growth 2030-35 £ million	2035 £ million
Zone 1 City Centre	98.6	5.8	104.4	7.0	111.4
Zone 2 North	389.2	22.8	412.0	27.5	439.5
Zone 3 East	196.7	11.5	208.2	13.9	222.1
Zone 4 South	470.9	27.6	498.4	33.3	531.7
Zone 5 West	462.2	27.0	489.2	32.7	521.9
Total- City of Edinburgh	1,617.6	94.7	1,712.2	114.5	1,826.7

Note
 From Tables 2.1 and 8.1. Figures are rounded.

COMPARISON SHOPPING PATTERNS - MARKET SHARES

- 8.9 Information on comparison shopping patterns by residents of the five zones was collected by the NEMS household survey for the 2018 Retail Study. The method is the same as for convenience shopping. There has been no updated household survey for 2025. Market shares refer to the proportions of expenditure from residents of a defined area which are spent in that area and in other areas. Table 8.3 shows the goods market shares for each zone, based on the shopping patterns identified from the household survey, including visits to centres outside Edinburgh. The distribution of comparison expenditure from the 2018 surveys to shopping centres (after removing internet expenditure) remains the latest evidence, which is reasonable to draw upon for this study.
- 8.10 The list of questions is provided in Appendix B. For each of the five categories of comparison goods in the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to identify where *they visited most often* to buy these goods (Q7-Q11). Respondents could identify up to two destinations (or internet) for each category. The results were weighted and combined to reveal the shopping patterns for all comparison goods by Edinburgh residents. Full details of the analysis is provided in the 2018 Retail Study.
- 8.11 The proportions in Table 8.3 exclude SFT (mainly internet but also mail order), to show physical shopping destinations only and to achieve compatibility with the expenditure per capita data, which also excludes SFT.

Table 8.3
Shopping patterns for all comparison goods by Council area residents 2025
 (Based on Edinburgh Commercial Needs Retail Study- Retail 2018)

	Origin of shoppers					
	Zone 1 City Centre	Zone 2 North	Zone 3 East	Zone 4 South	Zone 5 West	Total
Destination						
Zone 1- City Centre	72%	44%	34%	43%	34%	41%
Zone 2- North	9%	29%	4%	3%	8%	11%
Zone 3- East	5%	13%	54%	14%	5%	15%
Zone 4- South	5%	1%	1%	12%	0%	5%
Zone 5- West	5%	4%	1%	14%	39%	17%
Outside Council area	4%	8%	6%	15%	14%	11%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Note
 The above data relates to the weighted survey data and filtered to remove don't knows, varies, internet and mail order- see 2018 Retail Study

- 8.12 Among the City Centre residents, 72% of comparison shopping is done in the City Centre, with 9% going to stores in Zone 2 and small proportions elsewhere. Apart from Zones 2 and 4, the proportions of comparison spend retained in the other zones are higher than the proportions made in the City Centre by residents of each zone.
- 8.13 In Zone 2, 29% of comparison spending is retained, with 44% going to the City Centre and limited proportions going to other zones. In Zone 3, 54% of comparison shopping is done there, and 34% in the City Centre. In Zone 4, the pattern of destinations is more widespread, with 12% of comparison spend retained, 43% going to the City Centre, 15% to stores outside Edinburgh, 14% to Zone 3 and 14% to Zone 5. Among shoppers from Zone 5, 39% of comparison shopping is done there, and 34% in the City Centre. Comparison expenditure leakage to stores outside Edinburgh is mostly low, apart from among residents of Zones 4 and 5. For Edinburgh as a whole, retention of comparison expenditure is high at 89%.
- 8.14 In Zone 2 (North), Ocean Terminal did not feature at all as a popular destination among the range of comparison goods in 2018 and it is now hollowed-out. Fort Kinnaird is the dominant attraction in Zone 3 (East) across the categories of goods. In Zone 4 (South), the City Centre features as a major destination for clothing, fashion, shoes, furniture, large domestic appliances and items of a personal nature. In Zone 5 (West), the City Centre is the main destination for clothing, fashion and shoes, followed by The Gyle. It is not a key destination for furniture, domestic appliances and DIY and well behind the internet as a destination for purchasing items of a personal nature.

COMPARISON EXPENDITURE INFLOWS TO EDINBURGH

- 8.15 In the absence of recent information, estimates of comparison expenditure inflows from the surrounding Council areas partly draw on the proportions in the 2018 Retail Study with updated expenditure data for 2025. These include East Lothian, Midlothian, West Lothian, Fife, Perth & Kinross and Scottish Borders. There have been no more recent household interview surveys in these areas, apart from in Perth and Kinross which indicated that comparison shopping expenditure made in Edinburgh from that Council area may be less now, but not easy to define. The proportion of comparison expenditure inflow to Zone 5 (West) is likely to be lower than in 2018. For example, the Gyle appears quieter than it used to be. An adjustment to the estimated inflows in 2025 is required to accommodate that, otherwise the turnover/floorspace ratios there would unrealistically high. Full details of the original estimated patterns of comparison expenditure inflows to Edinburgh are contained in the 2018 Retail Study.
- 8.16 No recent data on visitor comparison shopping expenditure in Edinburgh from Visit Scotland or from other sources has been found. The main focus for visitor spending is the City Centre. There is no recent STEAM report held by the Council. However, VisitScotland have estimates of total visitor spending in Edinburgh. In 2023 it was £2.24 billion, up from £1.5 billion in 2018. While the trend is upwards, this is an inadequate guide to assess visitor spending on comparison goods only. Under the circumstances, the same proportion of estimated comparison expenditure inflow to Edinburgh as in the 2018 Study is applied here (spending by visitors and from surrounding Council areas combined).

COMPARISON EXPENDITURE AND TURNOVER IN EDINBURGH

- 8.17 Tables 8.4 to 8.8 show the survey-based comparison expenditure and turnover relationships for each zone in 2025. Table 8.9 shows the total for the whole city. The information derives from the residents' expenditure potential in Table 8.2, the shopping patterns in Table 8.3 and the estimated proportions of comparison expenditure inflows from the 2018 Retail Study (with reduced inflows to Zone 5).

Table 8.4
Zone 1 City Centre- comparison expenditure and turnover (in 2024 prices)

	%		2025 £million
Zone 1 residents' expenditure potential			98.6
Add: inflows from rest of Edinburgh	607%		598.6
inflows from outside Edinburgh	681%		671.9
Less: outflows from Zone 1	-28%		-28.1
Retained expenditure (turnover)			1,341.1

Table 8.5
Zone 2 North- comparison expenditure and turnover (in 2024 prices)

	%		2025 £million
Zone 2 residents' expenditure potential			389.2
Add: inflows from rest of Edinburgh	17%		67.9
inflows from outside Edinburgh	5%		18.7
Less: outflows from Zone 2	-71%		-274.7
Retained expenditure (turnover)			201.1

Table 8.6
Zone 3 East- comparison expenditure and turnover (in 2024 prices)

	%		2025 £million
Zone 3 residents' expenditure potential			196.7
Add: inflows from rest of Edinburgh	72%		141.3
inflows from outside Edinburgh	159%		312.1
Less: outflows from Zone 3	-46%		-89.8
Retained expenditure (turnover)			560.2

Table 8.7
Zone 4 South- comparison expenditure and turnover (in 2024 prices)

	%		2025 £million
Zone 4 residents' expenditure potential			470.9
Add: inflows from rest of Edinburgh	2%		11.8
inflows from outside Edinburgh	5%		24.3
Less: outflows from Zone 4	-88%		-415.1
Retained expenditure (turnover)			91.8

Table 8.8
Zone 5 West- comparison expenditure and turnover (in 2024 prices)

	%		2025 £million
Zone 5 residents' expenditure potential			462.2
Add: inflows from rest of Edinburgh	19%		88.2
inflows from outside Edinburgh	10%		46.2
Less: outflows from Zone 5	-61%		-282.0
Retained expenditure (turnover)			314.6

Table 8.9
City of Edinburgh- comparison expenditure and turnover (in 2024 prices)

	%		2025 £million
Residents' expenditure potential			1,617.6
Add: inflows from outside Edinburgh	66%		1,073.1
Less: outflows from Edinburgh	-11%		-181.9
Retained expenditure (turnover)			2,508.8

- 8.18 In Zone 1 (City Centre), the high proportion of comparison expenditure inflows from outside Edinburgh is based on mainly survey- based information on comparison spending from the surrounding/ near local authority areas and the NEMS street interview survey, where the proportion of visitors was much higher than locals. The City Centre is a major destination for comparison shopping in Scotland. In Zone 2 (North), the attraction of customers from outside Edinburgh is low. The proportion could well be higher, but there is no survey- based evidence. Outflows from the zone are high.
- 8.19 Zone 3 (East) attracts very substantial comparison expenditure from East Lothian and Midlothian, based on the East Lothian and Midlothian Retail Capacity Studies. Comparison expenditure inflows from within and outside Edinburgh to Zone 4 (South) were very low, but the outflows are very large. Zone 5 (West) is estimated to attract expenditure from West Lothian, and from Fife. Table 8.9 reveals the powerful attraction to Edinburgh from a wide area, including visitors, for comparison shopping. Estimated inflows equate to nearly two-thirds of residents' expenditure potential, and outflows only 11%.

COMPARISON FLOORSPACE AND TURNOVER 2025

- 8.20 The current distribution of comparison floorspace in the five zones is shown in Table 8.10, based on the latest retail floorspace data provided by the Council (mostly 2024-based). The comparison element of major superstores is included.
- 8.21 Unlike convenience retailing, there is no prevailing dominance by a few major operators, so the concept of over/ under-trading is less valid and not applied here. Otherwise, a similar approach to estimating the turnover of centres is applied as explained in section 6. In this case the turnover ratios of the smaller centres in each zone (town centres/local centres) are estimated proportions of the centre with the highest turnover ratio in each zone in which they are located. For Zone 1, it is the City Centre. In the other zones, it is the commercial centres which have the highest turnover ratios. This approach is essential to overcome the drawback to any household survey-based estimates of turnover alone, which would otherwise exaggerate the turnover of the largest, most popular, centres and under-state the contribution of smaller centres in a study area.

Table 8.10
Edinburgh comparison floorspace and turnover, 2025 (in 2024 prices)

	Floorspace sq m		Av. turnover ratio £/sq m	Turnover £million
	gross	net		
Zone 1 City Centre				
City Centre	144,274	93,778	13,406	1,257.2
Tollcross Town Centre (<i>Tollcross-ward 11</i>)	5,097	3,313	4,022	13.3
Commercial Centres- none				
Local Centres	3,097	2,013	2,681	5.4
Neighbourhood & isolated stores	37,380	24,297	2,681	65.1
Total	189,848	123,401	10,868	1,341.1
Zone 2 North				
Town Centres				
<i>Leith/ Leith Walk-wards 12&13</i>	17,483	11,364	3,000	34.1
<i>Stockbridge-ward 5</i>	6,241	4,057	4,286	17.4
Commercial Centres				
<i>Craigleith-ward 5</i>				
Sainsbury's, Craigleith (total 10,402 sq m gross -30%comp)	3,121	1,560	6,373	9.9
Add: M&S, Craigleith RP-(total 4,881 sq m gross-50% comp)	2,441	1,586	3,579	5.7
Other Craigleith Commercial Centre stores	18,096	14,476	4,286	62.1
<i>Ocean Terminal-ward 13</i>	4,388	2,852	4,286	12.2
Local Centres				
Morrisons, Waterfront Granton (7,914 sq m gross), 20% comp-wd 4	1,583	791	5,266	4.2
Local Centres- Other shops	9,959	6,473	2,143	13.9
Neighbourhood & isolated stores				
Asda, Sandpiper Drive (total 7,431 sq m gross-30%comp) wd13	2,229	1,338	5,903	7.9
Other neighbourhood & isolated stores	24,277	15,780	2,143	33.8
Total	89,817	60,278		201.1
Zone 3 East				
Town Centres				
<i>Portobello-ward 17</i>	3,275	2,129	3,728	7.9
Commercial Centres				
<i>Meadowbank - ward 14</i>	4,111	3,289	3,728	12.3
<i>Fort Kinnaird - ward 17</i>				
Add: Asda, The Jewel (total 14,889 sq m gross- 40% comp)	5,956	2,978	5,903	17.6
part M&S Fort Kinnaird (total 5,911 sq m gross -75% comp)	4,433	2,882	3,579	10.3
Other Fort Kinnaird stores	63,134	50,507	9,319	470.7
Local Centres				
Add:Morrisons, Piershill (total 5,844 sq m gross- 20% comp) wd14	1,169	584	5,266	3.1
Local Centres- Other shops	4,082	2,653	1,864	4.9
Neighbourhood & isolated stores	27,579	17,926	1,864	33.4
Total	113,739	82,948		560.2

Table 8.10- continued
Edinburgh comparison floorspace and turnover, 2025 (in 2024 prices)

	Floorspace sq m		Av. turnover ratio £/sq m	Turnover £million
	gross	net		
Zone 4 South				
Town Centres				
<i>Nicholston St/ Clerk St-ward 15</i>	14,907	9,690	2,120	20.5
<i>Morningside/ Bruntsfield-ward 10</i>	8,738	5,680	2,423	13.8
Commercial Centres				
<i>Cameron Toll - ward 15</i>				
Add: Sainsbury's (total 14,880 sq m gross-40% comp)	5,952	2,976	6,373	19.0
Other Cameron Toll stores	6,873	4,467	3,029	13.5
Local Centres				
Add: Asda, Chesser (total 8,897 sq m gross-30% comp)-ward 9	2,669	1,335	5,903	7.9
Local Centres- Other shops	8,993	5,845	1,211	7.1
Neighbourhood & isolated stores				
Other neighbourhood & isolated stores	12,699	8,254	1,211	10.0
Total	60,831	38,247		91.8
Zone 5 West				
Town Centres				
<i>Corstorphine -ward 6</i>				
Tesco Extra, Meadow Place Rd (total 11,858-30% comp)	3,557	2,134	8,169	17.4
Other Corstorphine TC shops	4,367	2,839	4,330	12.3
<i>Gorgie/ Dalry-ward 7</i>				
Sainsbury's, Westfield Rd (total 8,531 sq m gross-20% comp)	1,706	1,024	6,373	6.5
Other Gorgie/ Dalry TC shops	5,528	3,593	3,247	11.7
Commercial Centres				
<i>Hermiston Gait-ward 7</i>				
Add: Tesco Superstore, Cultins Road (total 7,877 sq m-25% comp)	1,969	1,182	8,169	9.7
Other Hermiston Gait stores	21,141	16,913	5,412	91.5
<i>The Gyle- ward 3</i>				
Add: Morrisons, S Gyle Broadway (total 8,117 sq m gross-20% comp)	1,623	812	5,266	4.3
M&S The Gyle	10,084	6,555	3,579	23.5
Other Gyle Centre stores	10,862	7,060	10,824	76.4
Local Centres	5,386	4,309	2,165	9.3
Neighbourhood & isolated stores	25,110	20,088	2,165	43.5
Add: Sainsbury's, Ingl Green Rd (total 8,906 sq m gross-25% comp) wd 7	2,227	1,336	6,373	8.5
Total	93,561	67,844		314.6

COMPARISON TURNOVER BY NETWORK OF CENTRES

8.22 Table 8.11 shows the distribution of comparison turnover in the network of centres in Edinburgh. The proportions have not changed much since 2018. It shows the major contribution of the City Centre at 50% of the total comparison turnover of Edinburgh (down from 52% in 2018). The commercial centres also account for a high proportion of turnover (33%). At 6%, the proportion of turnover relating to the town centres is low. The main strength of the town centres is their other uses, including convenience (where there are supermarkets in the town centres), plus non-retail services including leisure.

Table 8.11
Distribution of comparison turnover among the Network of Centres in Edinburgh, 2025 (in 2024 prices)

Summary from Table 8.10

Network of Centres	Comparison Turnover	
	%	£million
City Centre	50%	1,257.2
Town Centres (8)	6%	155.0
Commercial Centres (7)	33%	838.6
Local Centres	2%	55.7
Neighbourhood & isolated stores	8%	202.3
Edinburgh total at actual levels (Table 8.9)	100%	2,508.8

COMPARISON RETAIL PLANNING CONSENTS AND PROPOSALS 2025

8.23 Table 8.12 is a list of the current outstanding major comparison retail planning consents in Edinburgh. As explained in section 6, planning consents require to be deducted from forecasts spare capacity. In addition, there are several recent mixed use development applications awaiting determination, notably the proposed new town centre by West Town Edinburgh Ltd, as shown in Table 6.12 (20,100 sq.m. of retail floorspace). At this stage, it is not possible to indicate the split between convenience, comparison and non-retail floorspace with any accuracy in the absence of further detail. Therefore, no estimated turnover figures have been ascribed, nor for the Meadowfield Farm site shown on the same table.

Table 8.12
Existing comparison retail planning consents and estimated turnover in 2025 (in 2024 prices)
(Includes some proposals without consent- as identified in Table 6.12)

	Floorspace sq m		Turnover ratio £/sq m	Turnover £million
	gross	net		
Planning consents included in the capacity study				
15/04405/FUL Lonehead Drive , Newbridge Zone 5 Ward 1 Retail Warehouse- new build	4,998	3,998	3,000	12.0
20/02068/FUL Lochside Way Zone 5 Ward 3 Parabola Edinburgh Ltd. Consent in 2022 - Expired Feb 2025 , but might be renewed	2,286	1,829	7,200	13.2
22/05886/FUL Dundas Street, Zone 2 Ward 5 MMMARS Dundas Limited- Redevt..Consent 2024- Expires Feb 2027	1,436	933	2,200	2.1
18/02831/VARY St John's Road, 181 Zone 5 Ward 6 Mactaggart And Mickel - Redevt. Consent 2020- Expires June 2027	1,286	836	4,500	3.8
22/00326/FUL Princes, 47-52 (Jenners Building) Zone 5 Ward 1 AAA United A/S- refurb. Consent 2022. U/C	9,094	5,911	13,406	79.2
22/05599/FUL Ocean Drive, 95 (Ocean Terminal) Zone 2 Ward 13 Ocean Terminal Limited. New build, Consent 2024-Expires June 2027	1,084	705	4,456	3.1
21/01163/PPP Salamander Street / Bath Road Zone 2 Ward 13 John G Russell (Transport) Ltd. Newbuild. Consent 2024. Expires Jan 2027	1,465	952	2,200	2.1
Total comparison retail consents	21,649	15,164		115.5
Retail applications awaiting determination- since 2024 See Table 6.12				

09 COMPARISON EXPENDITURE CAPACITY

INTRODUCTION

- 9.1 This section contains an assessment of the spare comparison expenditure capacity to support additional retail floorspace in the City up to 2035. The conventional approach is to apply projected UK expenditure growth rates by Experian (or by other agencies) to the baseline expenditure and turnover in 2025 to estimate the levels in 2030 and 2035. The spare capacity is mostly represented by the forecast growth in turnover to the end date. Existing retail planning commitments require to be subtracted to indicate the net spare expenditure capacity to support additional floorspace under this method.
- 9.2 A limitation of the method in general is that it commonly exaggerates forecast spare capacity against the market, where achieved retail development is often far lower. Also, the high proportion of online shopping compared to past decades means that the relationship between expenditure and retail shop floorspace is much less well defined than in the past. Therefore, the forecasts take account of past retail market trends in Edinburgh up to 2025 to assist interpretation.
- 9.3 In Table 8.10, the total comparison retail floorspace in the five zones is 547,795 sq.m. gross for Edinburgh in 2025. The equivalent table in the 2018 Retail Study totalled 622,855 sq.m. gross. The difference of 75,060 sq.m. gross is a decline of 12%. In Table 8.11, the total estimated turnover of comparison floorspace in Edinburgh is nearly £2,600 million in 2025 in 2024 prices. In the 2018 Retail Study, it was £2,346 million in 2017 prices, or £2,843 million in 2024 prices. In other words, the current value is 8% lower in real terms.
- 9.4 The main reason is the rise in proportion of internet retail spending where SFT was around 25% in 2018 compared to the estimated 35% proportion in 2025. The upward trend seems likely to continue because it is driven by customer attraction to online shopping i.e. it is market-led. Looking at the position in Scotland, there has been no development of major new centres since the St James Quarter, completed in 2021. Nor have any major new retail parks been created, aside from a few small ones, which are commonly a mix of budget comparison goods stores (such as B&M and Home Bargains) and food discounters (Aldi and Lidl). Town centre and shopping mall redevelopment proposals now often incorporate diminution of comparison retail floorspace and replacement with other uses.

FORECAST COMPARISON EXPENDITURE AND TURNOVER TO 2035

- 9.5 Drawing on the retail market analysis in this report and on the comments in the previous paragraphs, it is estimated that the proportions of SFT (mainly internet) spending per capita could rise substantially by 2035. Future retail floorspace requirements are very sensitive to variations in the proportion of internet expenditure. It is unlikely that this sensitivity will diminish because of the large scale of retail expenditure involved. Retailers seem unlikely to switch back to major in-store sales floorspace under existing trends. Therefore, an illustrative range is presented in this report. At the **low** end of the range of forecast spare capacity, 50% of comparison retail spending is assumed to be mainly internet based by 2035. The **high** end assumes 45% internet-based spending by 2035. The range in terms of expenditure per capita is shown in Table 8.1. Forecasts incorporating proportions of internet spending lower than 45% would lead to increasingly unrealistic forecasts of high levels of new retail floorspace against a long-term market view. While all centres in Edinburgh will be affected by the trends in internet spending, it is likely that prime parts of the City Centre will prove more resilient to the changes because of the scale and range of offer.
- 9.6 Table 9.1 shows the projected comparison expenditure and turnover growth in Edinburgh up to 2030 and 2035, assuming the same proportions of inflows and outflows as in 2025.

Table 9.1				
Edinburgh: low and high forecasts of comparison expenditure and turnover (in 2024 prices)				
Excluding special forms of trading (mainly internet)				
		2025 £ million	2030 £ million	2035 £ million
Low end of forecast range				
Residents' expenditure potential		1,617.6	1,626.6	1,660.6
Add: inflows	66%	1,073.1	1,079.1	1,101.7
Less: outflows	-11%	-181.9	-182.9	-186.7
Turnover		2,508.8	2,522.8	2,575.6
High end of forecast range				
Residents' expenditure potential		1,617.6	1,712.2	1,826.7
Add: inflows	66%	1073.1	1135.9	1211.9
Less: outflows	-11%	-181.9	-192.5	-205.4
Turnover		2,508.8	2,655.6	2,833.1
Note				
Expenditure potential is from Tables 2.1 and Table 8.1				
Percentage inflows and outflows are from Table 8.9				

SPARE COMPARISON EXPENDITURE CAPACITY 2025 TO 2035

9.7 The definition of spare retail capacity is provided in section 7. However, in presenting a range of spare comparison expenditure capacity forecasts, the key variable for testing is the estimated proportion of internet expenditure because of the sensitivity of the outcomes to small variations in the proportions.

Table 9.2			
Edinburgh: spare comparison expenditure capacity - low forecast (in 2024 prices)			
	2025-30 £million	2030-35 £million	2025-35 £million
Low end of forecast range (assuming 50% of comparison spending online by 2035)			
Growth in retained expenditure (turnover)- Table 9.1	14.1	52.8	66.8
% growth	1%	2%	
Less planning consents- (Table 8.12)	-115.5		
Estimate	-101.4	52.8	-48.6
Note			
Equivalent retail floorspace estimates are not shown in this table because the forecasts are for negative expenditure capacity			

9.8 Table 9.2 shows the forecast spare capacity at the low end of the range. There is no forecast spare capacity for 2025-30 and for the ten-year period 2025-35.

9.9 Table 9.3 shows the forecast spare capacity at the high end of the range at nearly £209 million in Edinburgh by 2035. It is a small amount compared to the current comparison turnover in Edinburgh in Table 9.1. The equivalent average net retail floorspace would be about 19,000 sq.m. net by 2035, assuming a turnover/ floorspace ratio of some £10,000 per sq.m. net in 2025. Explanation for this figure is provided in the footnote to the table. It is a compromise to allow for opportunities primarily in the City Centre (turnover ratio nearly £13,400 per sq.m.), and other centres in Edinburgh with much lower turnover ratios. Note that the Commercial Centres at the Gyle and Fort Kinnaird also have high turnover/floorspace ratios.

Table 9.3 Edinburgh: spare comparison expenditure capacity- high forecast (in 2024 prices)			
	2025-30 £million	2030-35 £million	2025-35 £million
Low end of forecast range (assuming 45% of comparison spending online by 2035)			
Growth in retained expenditure (turnover)- Table 9.1	146.8	177.5	324.4
% growth	6%	7%	
Less planning consents- (Table 8.12)	-115.5		
Estimate	31.4	177.6	209.0
Equivalent comparison floorspace (average)			
* Turnover/ floorspace ratio	£ per sq m 10,585 sq m net	£ per sq m 11,293 sq m net	sq m net
Equivalent floorspace	3,000	15,700	18,700
Note			
Gross equivalent floorspace estimates have not been shown, as net /gross formats vary widely.			
* The applied turnover ratio (£10,000 per sq m net in 2025) allows for a range between the City Centre (high) and other centres with lower turnovers.			
The ratio has been increased to relate to forecast total turnover in the City of Edinburgh 2025-30 and 2030-35 in Table 9.1			

- 9.10 The share of internet spend is the key variable. Market evidence including multiples closing or moving to omni-channel sales and a lack of new requirements or development are consistent with the shrinking floorspace/ high internet growth scenario. While the low forecast appears to more closely match market trends at present, this is inherently uncertain over the medium-to-long term. Therefore, it is reasonable to consider the *low-to-high range* as also being broadly consistent with the market because it is a relatively small amount. It should be monitored again, in say 5 years' time.

SPARE CAPACITY AND PLANNING COMMITMENTS

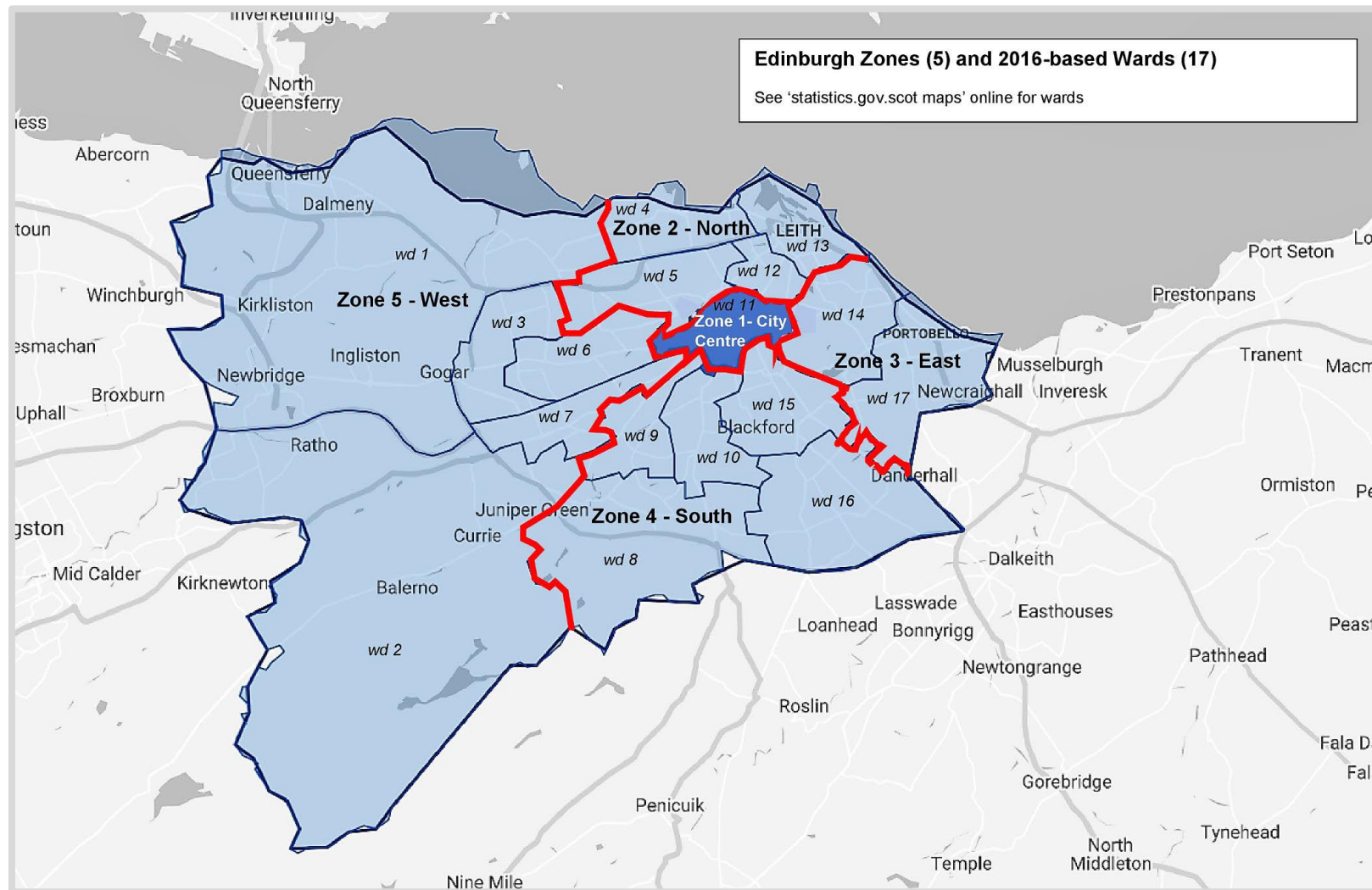
- 9.11 In section 8, the estimated total turnover of selected comparison retail planning commitments is some £116 million (Table 9.3) in 2025, compared to the forecast spare capacity up to £209 million at the high end of the range by 2035. Given that the largest project is the Jenners refurbishment, it is fair to consider that it may attract some expenditure which would otherwise be spent online. Within the range described, there would be some potential capacity towards servicing new comparison floorspace including the undetermined development applications, notably the proposed new town centre on the western edge of the City.
- 9.12 However, the market is more likely to support comparison retail floorspace in the City Centre emerging from reconfigured and redeveloped properties in the first instance. Such schemes will mostly be mixed use developments with comparison retail floorspace forming part of any project. These would take the lion's share before opportunities outside the City Centre. The potentially higher returns on investment and probably lower risk will be the drivers behind this assumption favouring the City Centre.
- 9.13 The best-performing commercial centres are also likely to attract re-investment in improvements. Should proposals emerge in the future to significantly expand the commercial centres, as opposed to just invest in quality improvements, there would be an increased risk of deflecting trade away from the City Centre.
- 9.14 None of this implies much support for increasing the levels of comparison floorspace in the existing town centres generally, beyond improvements in quality. Efforts to improve the quality of the eight town centres through the planning process are therefore of fundamental importance.

10 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 10.1 City of Edinburgh Council commissioned Ryden to deliver the Edinburgh Economic Needs Study to support the implementation of City Plan 2030 and the Evidence Report for the forthcoming City Plan 2040. This retail study includes expenditure and floorspace modelling by analysts Roderick MacLean Associates Ltd.
- 10.2 The retail sector is responding to market concentration and online shopping. Edinburgh city centre has emerged as Scotland's prime shopping destination, catalysed by the new St James Quarter, however market activity is now more focused on alternative uses such as leisure. Edinburgh's town centres adapt to local demand, while its commercial centres mostly perform well although some have had to adapt their mix of uses. Edinburgh also has a broad mix of supermarkets and a large complement of local centres and stores serving its neighbourhoods. St James Quarter aside, new development activity is weak and the market is focused on the continuing reuse of the city's existing retail stock.
- 10.3 Projected population growth for the City is low at 5.1% for the ten-year period 2025-35.
- 10.4 Forecast convenience expenditure growth among Edinburgh's residents is very low. The total expenditure potential is £1,649 million currently, rising to £1,663 million by 2035 (+0.8%). The study divided Edinburgh into five zones. Analysis of the convenience shopping patterns indicates roughly 75% of expenditure is retained in each zone, apart from the City Centre where there is much less convenience floorspace compared to the other zones. The convenience shopping expenditure patterns indicate that inflows to Edinburgh equate to about 16% of total residents' expenditure and outflows are 4%.
- 10.5 Edinburgh is well-served with supermarkets and discount foodstores. The relationship between current convenience expenditure, floorspace and turnover in each zone indicates that there is little in the way of over-trading above average levels except East Edinburgh, with below average turnover levels in North and West Edinburgh. Broadly speaking, it means limited current requirements for more convenience floorspace. The distribution of convenience turnover within the network of centres has changed little since 2018.
- 10.6 There are few convenience retail planning consents in Edinburgh at present, totalling about 6,200 sq.m. gross. There are however mixed convenience and comparison consents awaiting planning determination, notably including the proposed new town on the western edge of the city. The study presents both a low and a high forecast of spare convenience expenditure capacity to support additional floorspace up to 2035. There is no material capacity under the low forecast and a small amount under the high forecast.
- 10.7 In the comparison retail sector, a substantial proportion of expenditure is made on-line. In this study, it is estimated at 35% currently, rising up to 50% by 2035 under a low forecast and up to 45% under a high forecast. The effect is to reduce the amount of additional comparison shop floorspace required in the future.
- 10.8 The total comparison expenditure potential is £1,618 million at present, rising to £1,661 million by 2035 under the low forecast (+2.7%) or £1,827 million under the high forecast (+12.9%). Analysis of the comparison shopping patterns indicates very high inflows of expenditure to the City Centre. For Edinburgh as whole, inflows equate to 66% of total residents' expenditure and outflows are 11%.
- 10.9 The distribution of comparison turnover in the network of centres in Edinburgh reveals that the City Centre accounts for 50% of the total and the Commercial Centres 33%. Existing comparison retail planning consents amount to some 21,600 sq.m. gross floorspace. Forecast spare comparison retail expenditure capacity will support existing retail planning consents plus some additional comparison floorspace over the next ten years, especially in the City Centre. Part of the forecast spare capacity could potentially support comparison floorspace in a new town centre in the longer term, but not on a major scale unless market conditions change significantly. Forecasts of spare comparison expenditure capacity should be treated as indicative because the growth in internet expenditure has made the link with retail floorspace requirements much less clear than in the past.

APPENDIX A

RETAIL ZONES AND WARD BOUNDARIES



Zones	Ward No.
City Centre- Zone 1	11
North- Zone 2	
Forth	4
Leith	13
Leith Walk	12
Inverleith	5
East- Zone 3	
Craigentinny / Duddingston	14
Portobello / Craigmillar	17
South- Zone 4	
Southside / Newington	15
Meadows / Morningside	10
Fountainbridge / Craiglockhart	9
Liberton / Gilmerton	16
Colinton / Fairmilehead	8
West- Zone 5	
Corstorphine / Murrayfield	6
Sighthill / Gorgie	7
Almond	1
Pentland Hills	2
Drum Brae / Gyle	3

Source: City of Edinburgh Council

APPENDIX B

NEMS EDINBURGH HOUSEHOLD INTERVIEW SURVEY – LIST OF QUESTIONS

- Q01 Where did you last do your MAIN FOOD shopping for the household?
- Q01A Which internet retailer did you use for your main food shopping (Q01)?
- Q02 Where did you last go the time before that to do your MAIN FOOD shopping?
- Q02A Which internet retailer did you use for your main food shopping, the time before last (Q02)?
- Q03 Where did you last go to do small, day-to-day TOP-UP food shopping?
- Q03A Which internet retailer did you use for your top- up shopping (Q03)?
- Q04 On average, how often do you do your MAIN food shopping?
- Q05 On average, how often do you do your TOP UP food shopping?
- Q06 Could you tell me what other things you usually combine with doing your MAIN food shopping? [MR]
- Q07 Moving on to NON-FOOD shopping, where do you most often buy clothes, shoes and other fashion items? You can mention up to two answers. [MR]
- Q08 Where do you most often buy furniture, floor coverings and soft furnishings? You can mention up to two answers. [MR]
- Q09 Where do you most often buy large domestic electrical appliances (such as fridges, washing machines, vacuum cleaners etc.)? You can mention up to two answers. [MR]
- Q10 Where do you most often buy DIY and hardware goods? You can mention up to two answers. [MR]
- Q11 Where do you most often buy other items of a mainly personal nature, such as sports goods, jewellery, books, toys, computers, mobiles, cameras, electronic games etc.? You can mention up to two answers. [MR]
- Q12 How often do you use the Internet for buying non-food goods such as personal itmes and household goods?
- Q13 Thinking about Internet shopping for non-food items such as personal items and household goods, what do you like most about shopping on the Internet? [MR] *Those who use the Internet for non-food shopping in Q12*
- Q14 What is the main reason why do you don't use the internet to buy non-food goods ? [MR]
Those who never use the Internet for non-food shopping at Q12:
- Q15 Looking to the future, how frequently do you intend to use the Internet for non-food shopping? [PR]
- Q16A How often, on average, do you visit Edinburgh City Centre for non-food shopping?
- Q16B How often, on average, do you visit Edinburgh City Centre for leisure, such as visiting cafes, bars, restaurants, cinemas etc ?
- Q16C How often, on average, do you visit Edinburgh City Centre for combined shopping and leisure trips?
- Q17 Thinking about shopping for clothing and fashion in the City Centre, do you: [PR]
Visit stores selling designer clothing, shoes and accessories, whether buying or just browsing?
Visit stores selling mid-range fashion items, typically found in some department stores and less expensive chains, whether buying / browsing
Visit stores selling clothing, shoes and accessories for special occasions, such as a party or celebration?
Typically use the Internet as well as the City Centre shops for buying clothing and shoes?

Q18	Thinking about shopping for beauty products for women and grooming products for men in the City Centre, do you normally: [PR] Include the City Centre shops in your search, whether buying or just browsing? Typically use the Internet in combination with visiting the City Centre shops in your search? Include visiting other centres in combination with the City Centre in your search?
Q19	Thinking about shopping for gifts and presents, including for Christmans, birthdays and weddings for example, do you normally: [PR] Include the City Centre shops in your search, whether buying or just browsing? Typically use the Internet in combination with visiting the City Centre shops in your search? Include visiting other centres in combination with the City Centre in your search?
Q20	Overall, how do you rate the range and quality of the shops in the City Centre generally? [PR] <i>Very good</i> <i>Good</i> <i>Average</i> <i>Poor</i> <i>Very poor</i> <i>(Don't know)</i>
Q21	Do you undertake any of the following leisure- related activities when you visit the City Centre in the evenings (after 6pm)? [MR/PR] Visit restaurants or cafés Visit pubs / wine bars Buy take-aways Visit cinema or theatre Visit clubs Walking about / strolling Indoor bowling Use sports halls or gyms Swimming Community hall activities / meetings Late shopping Attending events, including live music Attending exhibitions Other Never visit in the evenings
Q22	Do you work in, or commute through Edinburgh City Centre?
Q23	How often, do you go shopping or eat out / visit bars etc, in Edinburgh City Centre as part of you being there for work or commuting ?
Q24	Have you participated in any organised nights out / parties in the City Centre over the last 12 months, whether related to work/social groups?
Q25	What improvements to Edinburgh City Centre would make you visit there more often? [MR]
	The respondents were asked about the town centre in the zone in which they live : (names of town centres below) <i>Tollcross, Leith/Leith Walk, Stockbridg, Portobello, Nicholson St/Clerk St, Morningside/ Bruntsfield, Corstorphine and Gorgie/ Dalry TCs</i>
Q26	Thinking aboutTown Centre, how often do you visit it, on average?
Q27	What typically, are your main reasons for visitingTown Centre - i.e. what range of things do you do when you get there? [MR]
Q28	Overall, how do you rate the range and quality of shops in Town Centre? [PR] <i>Very good</i> <i>Good</i> <i>Average</i> <i>Poor</i> <i>Very poor</i> <i>(Don't know)</i>
Q29	What improvements toTown Centre would make you visit there more often? [MR]
<i>Note: MR means multiple responses allowed. PR means prepared response (choice form specified options)</i>	

Q18	Thinking about shopping for beauty products for women and grooming products for men in the City Centre, do you normally: [PR] Include the City Centre shops in your search, whether buying or just browsing? Typically use the Internet in combination with visiting the City Centre shops in your search? Include visiting other centres in combination with the City Centre in your search?
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Q20	Overall, how do you rate the range and quality of the shops in the City Centre generally? [PR] <i>Very good</i> <i>Good</i> <i>Average</i> <i>Poor</i> <i>Very poor</i> <i>(Don't know)</i>
Q21	Do you undertake any of the following leisure- related activities when you visit the City Centre in the evenings (after 6pm)? [MR/PR] Visit restaurants or cafés Visit pubs / wine bars Buy take-aways Visit cinema or theatre Visit clubs Walking about / strolling Indoor bowling Use sports halls or gyms Swimming Community hall activities / meetings Late shopping Attending events, including live music Attending exhibitions Other Never visit in the evenings
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Q28	Overall, how do you rate the range and quality of shops in Town Centre? [PR] <i>Very good</i> <i>Good</i> <i>Average</i> <i>Poor</i> <i>Very poor</i> <i>(Don't know)</i>
Q29	What improvements toTown Centre would make you visit there more often? [MR]
<i>Note: MR means multiple responses allowed. PR means prepared response (choice form specified options)</i>	

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