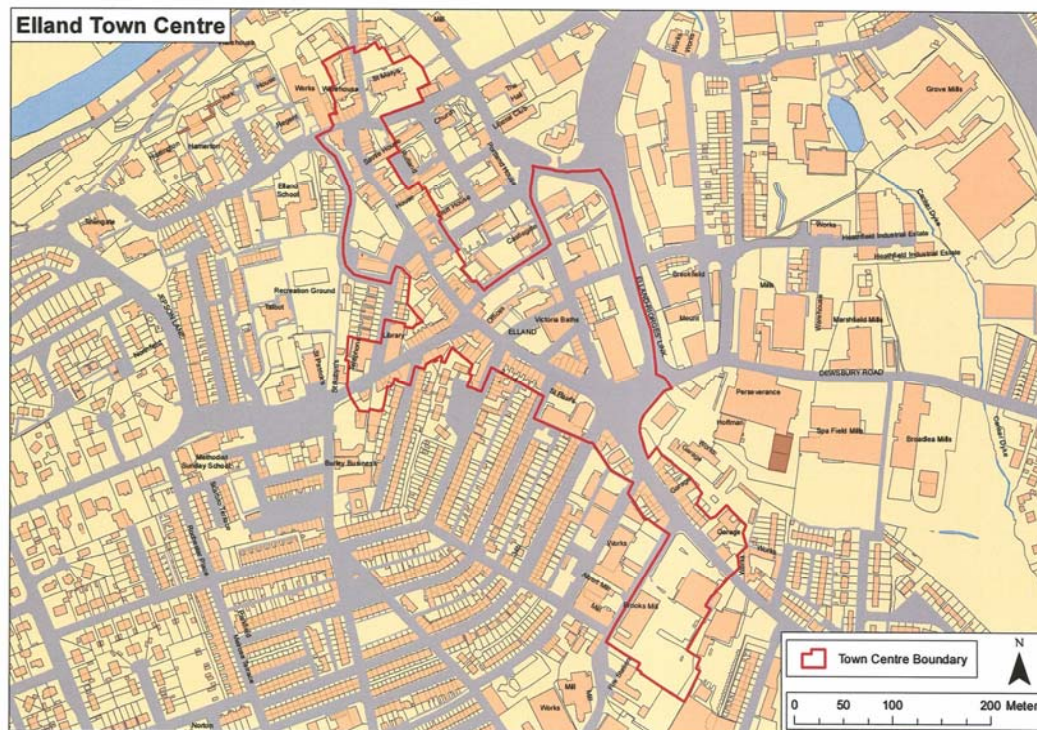


ELLAND HEALTH CHECK ASSESSMENT

Date of Site Visit: 6 August 2009

Status: Town Centre (Replacement Calderdale UDP 2006)

Figure 22: Town Centre boundary of Elland Town Centre



Source: Calderdale UDP (2006)

Photographs of Elland Town Centre



Figure 23 (top left): Attractive street furniture, Southgate
Figure 24 (top centre): Retail frontages, Southgate
Figure 25 (top right): Retail frontages, Southgate/The Cross
Figure 26 (bottom left): Car park, Timber Street
Figure 27 (bottom right): Co-op store, Huddersfield Road



Centre Overview

Elland is defined as a town centre by the Replacement Calderdale Unitary Development Plan (August 2006). It is located on the A629, just off the M62, 6 km to the south of Halifax and 7 km to the north of Huddersfield. According to the 2001 census, Elland had a population of 10,547.

The main focus of retailing within Elland is Southgate to the north and Huddersfield Road to the south. An outdoor market takes place at Town Hall Square every Friday. A land use plan of Elland Town Centre as defined by GOAD is set out overleaf.

Figure 28: Land Use map for Elland Town Centre (August 2009)



Source: GOAD base validated by WYG August 2009 site visit

Table 12: Diversity of Uses in Elland Town Centre (2009)

	Number of Outlets		
	Number	Elland (%)	UK (%)
Convenience	13	10.8	8.8
Comparison	20	16.7	34.6
Retail Service	23	19.2	13.0
Leisure Services	30	25.0	21.5
Financial and Business Services	12	10.0	11.2
Vacant	22	18.3	10.6
Total	120	100	100

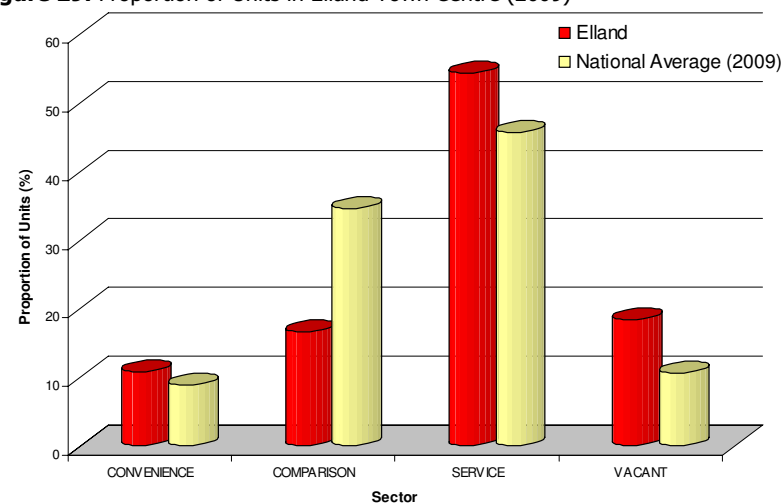
Source: GOAD Report August 2009

Table 13: Existing Floorspace in Elland Town Centre (2009)

	Existing Floorspace		
	Sq m	Elland (%)	UK (%)
Convenience	3,570	24.0	14.2
Comparison	1,760	11.8	37.8
Retail Service	1,790	12.0	7
Leisure Services	4,290	28.8	22.7
Financial and Business Services	1,850	12.4	8.7
Vacant	1,640	11.0	8.9
Total	14,900	100	100

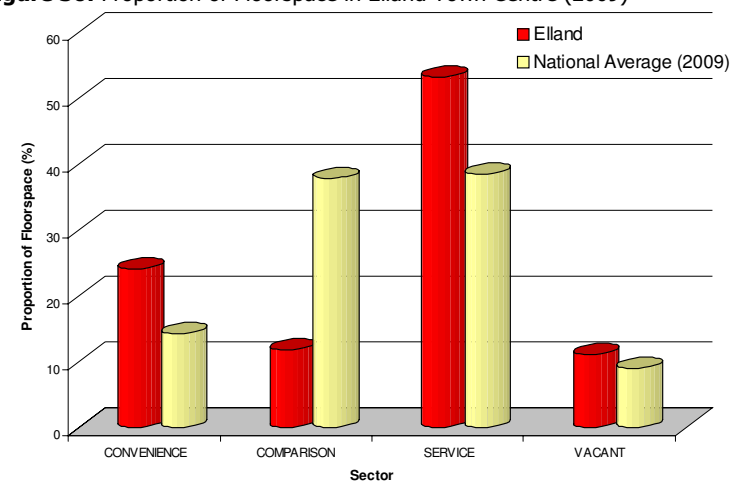
Source: GOAD Report August 2009

Figure 29: Proportion of Units in Elland Town Centre (2009)



Source: Experian GOAD (August 2009)

Figure 30: Proportion of Floorspace in Elland Town Centre (2009)



Source: Experian GOAD (August 2009)



Convenience

In August 2009, 10.8% of all units in Elland were in use for the sale of convenience goods, which compares to a national average of 8.8%. Given the role performed by Elland, it is not surprising to discover that the proportion of units used for the sale of convenience goods is above the national average. Likewise, as expected the proportion of convenience floorspace is well above the national average (24% compared to 14.2% nationally). Therefore, there are an above average number of convenience outlets which are large in size and sell a range of goods. At present, this sector is dominated by the existing Co-op store on Huddersfield Road and the Somerfield store on South Lane. Other convenience traders in the centre are: One Stop on Southgate; and a number of independents including three 'bakers', two 'butchers' and two 'grocers and delicatessens'. There is an outdoor market on Town Hall Square which operates every Friday.

Comparison

The 20 comparison traders in Elland occupy 16.7% of outlets against a national average of 34.6%. Similarly, when it comes to comparison goods floorspace, Elland is below the national average with a figure of 11.8% compared to a national average of 37.8%. The town is made up of mostly independent comparison traders.

Overall Service

In August 2009, the service sector comprised 65 units and occupied 7,930 sq m of floorspace. The proportion of service outlets (54.2%) are above the national average (45.7%) as are the proportion of service floorspace (53.2% compared to 38.4%).

Retail Service

Retail services, which comprise such uses as hairdressers, dry cleaners and petrol filling stations, account for 19.2% of outlets and 12% of floorspace in Elland, which compares to a national average of 13% and 7% respectively. 'Health and beauty' traders are particularly dominant in this sector, accounting for 13 (or 57%) of all retail service outlets. The town contains a Post Office on Southgate.

Leisure Services

Leisure services as defined by GOAD include uses such as restaurants, cafes, bookmakers and public houses. Elland is well provided for in this sector with both the proportion of outlets (25%) and the proportion of floorspace occupied (28.8%) being above the national average (21.5% and 22.7% respectively). Fast-food and takeaway units are the most prolific in this sector, occupying eleven units. Other well represented traders include public houses (five units) and restaurants (also five units).

Financial Services

In terms of the proportion of units occupied by financial and business services the figures closely reflect the national average occupying 10.0% of all outlets compared to a figure of 11.2% nationally. A number of 'high street' banks are present in the town centre, including: Barclays; Halifax; Lloyds TSB; Nat West; and Yorkshire Bank.

Non Retail

In addition to the retail services on offer, there is a public library and swimming baths within the centre. Furthermore, Elland town centre is surrounded by residential areas.



Unit Sizes

Table 14 below highlights the composition of Elland Town Centre in August 2009 in terms of the size of retail units. This is taken from an assessment of retailing facilities provided by Experian GOAD for 2009.

Table 14: Size of Units within Elland Town Centre

Size of Unit (ground floor area)	Number of units	Proportion of Total (%)	
		Elland	GB
Under 93 sq m (1,000 sq ft)	77	64.2	39.1
93-232 sq m (1,000-2,499 sq ft)	33	27.5	39.6
232-464 sq m (2,500-4,999 sq ft)	6	5.0	12.6
465-929 sq m (5,000-9,999 sq ft)	2	1.7	5.1
929-1,393 sq m (10,000-14,999 sq ft)	1	0.8	1.5
1,393-1,858 sq m (15,000-19,999 sq ft)	1	0.8	0.7
1,858-2,787 sq m (20,000-29,999 sq ft)	0	0	0.7
Above 2,787 sq m (30,000 sq ft)	0	0	0.8
Total	120	100	

Source: Experian Goad 2009

Elland has a higher proportion of small vacant units less than 93 sq m (64.2%) compared to the national average (39.1%). There are no units in the centre with a floorspace above 1,858 sq m. Retailers are increasingly looking for bigger units which can only be addressed by combining existing vacancies or through redevelopment.

Vacancies

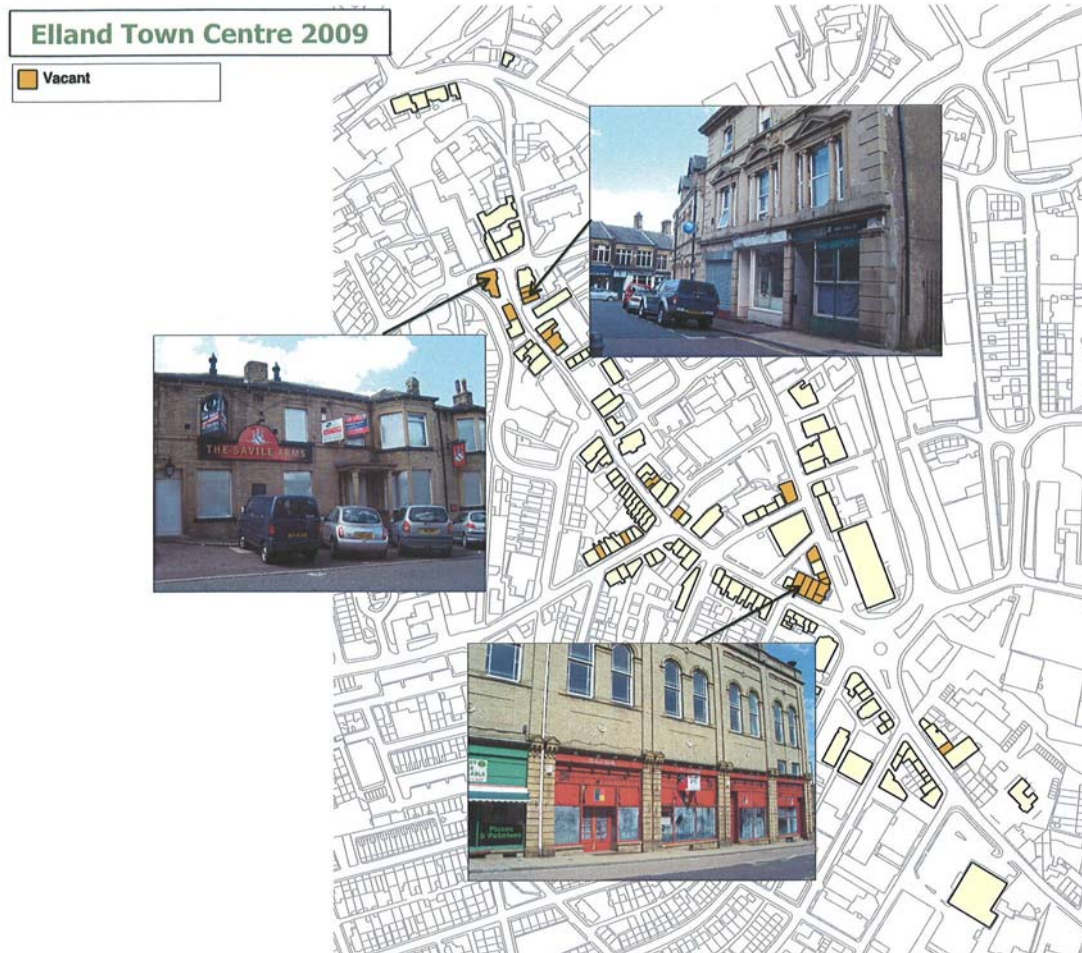
Table 15: Vacancies¹ in Elland (August, 2009)

	Vacancy		
	Total	Elland (%)	UK (%)
No. of Outlets	22	18.3	10.6
Floorspace	1,640	11.0	8.9

Source: GOAD Report August 2009

Table 15 illustrates that in August 2009 there were 22 vacant retail units in the town centre, which occupied a floorspace of 1,640 sq m. This represents 18.3% of all outlets and 11.0% of floorspace, compared to respective national averages of 10.6% and 8.9%. This indicates the presence of a high number of small vacant properties in the town centre. From examining the GOAD plan of Elland, it can be seen that Southgate (nine units) and Town Hall Buildings (eight units) have the highest number of vacant units within the town centre. There are also three vacant units on Huddersfield Road and two on Victoria Road.

Figure 31: Vacancies in Elland Town Centre (August 2009)



Source: GOAD base validated by WYG August 2009 site visit



In Street Survey Results

In respect of accessibility, the on-street visitors survey undertaken by NEMS identified the following:

- 57% of visitors to Elland had no access to a car for personal use during the daytime. The same proportion of visitors did not have access to a car during the evening/ night-time;
- 58% of visitors walked to the centre. 29% of visitors arrived by car or van, with a further 10% arriving in the centre by bus, minibus or coach;
- Of those visitors who drove, the most popular place to leave their vehicle was at Coronation Street car park, with 27% of drivers parking here. 20% of visitors parked on-street;
- 82% of drivers did not encounter any difficulty when obtaining a car parking space on the day of the survey;
- 65% of visitors travelled for 10 minutes or less to reach the centre. An additional 9% travelled for between 11 and 15 minutes, with 15% travelling for between 16 and 20 minutes and 8% for between 21 and 30 minutes. Only 2% of visitors travelled for over an hour to reach the centre;
- Visitors were asked to consider car parking provision in Elland. Of those that answered this question, 41% deemed this to be 'about the same' as that in other centres;
- In terms of car parking prices, 42% considered prices to be 'about the same' as in other centres; and
- Accessibility by public transport was stated by 63% of visitors as being 'about the same' as in other centres, although 18% felt that this was 'better' or 'much better' in Elland than in other shopping centres.

Perception of Safety and Occurrence of Crime

The on-street visitors survey asked specific questions to visitors about their perceptions of crime in Elland. During the day-time, some 74% of visitors indicated that safety in Elland was 'about the same' as that in other centres, with 10% considering it to be 'better' or 'much better' than in other centres. However, with respect to safety during the evening/ night-time, the proportion of visitors who deemed safety to be 'about the same' as in other centres fell to 56%, with some 15% considering safety to be either 'worse' or 'much worse' than that in other centres. 8% of visitors felt that evening/ night-time safety in the centre was 'better' or 'much better' than other centres, with 22% indicating that they did not know either way.

Customer Views and Behaviour

The main findings of the on-street survey undertaken by NEMS Market Research were:

- 88% of visitors to the city had travelled directly from home;
- Most of those shoppers interviewed (58%) were just visiting the centre, with 36% living in the centre and the remaining 8% working in the centre;
- The main reasons why visitors indicated that they were in the centre were: food and grocery shopping (31%); to visit the bank/ building society/ Post Office (16%), due to work/ school/ college (13%) and social/ leisure activities (7%);
- 53% of visitors planned to stay in the centre for up to half an hour, with a further 27% planning to stay in the centre for up to two hours and 15% planning to stay in the centre all day;
- The majority of visitors (63%) did not plan to undertake their main food shop on the day of the survey;



- When asked whether they were planning to buy anything other than food goods on the day of the survey, 13% of respondents stated that they planned to purchase clothing, footwear or household goods;
- 59% of visitors stated that they visited Elland 'about as frequently' today as compared with five years ago. 19% stated that they visited the centre 'less' or 'much less frequently' than five years ago; and
- 58% of visitors indicated that they did not visit the centre during the evening.

Visitors to Elland were asked to consider a number of different aspects of the centre compared to other shopping centres which they used. The majority of aspects were considered to be 'about the same' in Elland by the largest proportion of visitors. Notwithstanding this, areas of weakness were seen to be choice of shops, which 78% of visitors rated as being either 'worse' or 'much worse' than other centres, the quality of shops (61% stating this was worse than elsewhere), leisure facilities (57%) and entertainment/ events/ performances (42%).

Visitors were asked about the types of shops and services they would like to see more of in the centre. Popular responses were food stores (39%) and clothing stores (28%). Visitors were also asked about the types of leisure facilities they would like to see more of in the centre. Popular responses were a bowling alley (18%), a health and fitness centre (17%) and a swimming pool (13%).

Business Survey Results

A questionnaire was distributed to all local businesses within Elland by WYG in conjunction with Calderdale Council in order to gain an understanding of the opinions and views of retailers. A total of 127 questionnaires were distributed with 54 being returned: a response rate of 43%. The main findings of the business survey results were as follows:

- 46% of respondents had been trading in the town centre for in excess of twenty years, with some 26% having been in operation for over ten years and 4% had been trading for under six months;
- 91% of respondents were independent traders, with 9% being part of a national group or chain;
- 26% of respondents indicated that they were professional services, with 23% being retail services, 19% being food retailers, 16% being non-food retailers and 16% being leisure services;
- Most businesses (70%) employed between one and five members of staff;
- 72% of traders stated that since they had begun trading business had either 'grown significantly' or 'grown moderately', with 11% indicating that business had 'remained largely static'. 17% indicated that their business had declined to some degree since they began trading;
- 67% of respondents indicated that their business was currently performing either 'very well' or 'well', illustrating strong performance, with 26% indicating that their business was currently trading 'moderately';
- The majority of respondents (59%) leased their premises;



- The survey indicated that 51% of traders relied upon local residents primarily, although a further 30% relied primarily on residents in the wider Calderdale area and 12% on office employees. 7% relied mainly on tourists;
- When asked about measures that would improve the town centre, 73% of respondents stated that an increased choice/ range of shops would have this affect. Other important measures included improved security/ CCTV (60%), more independent/ specialist traders (55%) and greater promotion/ marketing of the centre (48%);
- 52% of respondents felt that there was a good balance between shops and other non-retail uses in the town centre, with 36% stating that there were too many non-retail uses and 11% that there were not enough non-retail uses;
- Respondents identified the main barriers to trading performance as being anti-social behaviour (37%), the poor quality of the shopping environment (35%) and inadequate customer car parking (33%);
- Over half of respondents (58%) indicated that they had no plans to alter their business in any way over the next five years, with a further 31% planning to refurbish their existing floorspace;

- 41% of respondents considered that shop front improvement grants would help their businesses;
- The greater proportion of traders (38%) considered Halifax to be their biggest competitor.

The business survey asked respondents to rate a number of different aspects of Elland in terms of whether they were 'good', 'average' or 'poor'. The majority of aspects were rated as being 'average' by the largest proportion of respondents. However, a number of aspects were rated as being 'poor' by a majority of respondents. These aspects were: the shopping environment (47%), evening security (45%), special events (45%) and public toilets (43%). Respondents were also able to add any additional comments they would like to make at the end of the survey. There was no general consensus brought about from this process, however some retailers highlighted that the town centre would be improved with free car parking in Elland. On a positive note, certain retailers felt that while the market is adequate, an improved market would attract more customers to the town.



Accessibility

Car: Elland is situated on the A629, which connects Halifax to the north and Huddersfield to the south. The M62 (junction 24) is nearby. To the south of the centre is a busy roundabout; however pedestrian crossings are provided to aid pedestrians.

Car parks: Parking is plentiful in Elland, with there being seven main car parks which are all short and long stay. These car parks include: Boxhall Road (15 spaces); Brook Street (24 spaces); Coronation Street (27 spaces); Crown Street (14 spaces); Northgate (19 spaces); Southgate (24 spaces); and Timber Street (59 spaces). There is also lots of on-street parking available.

It is free to park on Crown Street car park. For the other car parks, typical pricing is set out below (table 16).

Table 16: Car park pricing

Time (hours)	Price (£)
Up to 1	0.30
1 to 2	0.60
2 to 3	0.90
3 to 4	1.20
4 to 5	1.50
5 to 6	1.80
6 to 7	2.10
7 to 8	2.40
8 to 9	2.70
9 to 10	3.00

Source: Validated by site visit

Public transport: The town centre also benefits from adequate accessibility by public transport. Buses provide services to Brighouse, Dewsbury, Halifax and Leeds amongst others. There is also a taxi rank in the centre.

Environmental Quality

Elland is a quiet, attractive town in Calderdale and is focused on Southgate and Huddersfield Road. Whilst the centre is not pedestrianised, the centre is a safe environment for shoppers, as only slow moving traffic runs through the centre. The north of the centre is on a steep hill, making it difficult for people with walking difficulties. At the time of the survey, there was a low level of footfall in Elland. Pavements in the centre tend to be narrow, and where the centre meets busy roads, pedestrian crossings aid movement by foot. The streets are clean with no evidence of litter, whilst shop units themselves are maintained to high standards, creating an attractive shopping environment. Units are mostly old build and made of local stone. Street furniture in this area includes: lighting; benches; bins; and flowers. It should be noted that there are adequately maintained public toilets in the centre.