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Improving the vitality and viability of the UK High Street by 2020: Identifying priorities and a framework for action

Introduction

UK high streets are facing a period of turbulent change. The global economic crisis of 2007-2009 along with the development of out-of-town and online retailing have directly affected the vitality and viability of high streets, leading to store closures and unemployment (Hart et al., 2013). The enormity and complexity of the problem has made it difficult for high street stakeholders to respond effectively. Therefore, this paper argues, it is necessary for academic scholarship to not only develop theory but also to demonstrate how theoretical concepts can be used to better inform practice. The goal of this paper, therefore, is to make an academic contribution that is useful to practitioners and policymakers trying to effect positive change. To meet this need, the ESRC-funded High Street 2020 UK project set out to take existing academic knowledge relating to retail centre change directly to UK High Streets, to improve local decision making and, ultimately, their vitality and viability. Ten partner locations were selected to work with a team of academics from five universities. Full details of the methodology employed can be found in another paper in this special issue HSUK2020: A model of engaged scholarship (Ntounis, Parker, Quin and Millington, 2017) but, in summary the project was carried out in three stages. First, through a systematic review of the literature and a more engaged model of scholarship, the project identified 201 factors that influence the performance of the UK high street. Second, from this longlist of 201 factors a combination of experts and the consensus-building Delphi technique distilled the top 25 priorities for action that local stakeholders should focus on. Finally, given the disparate nature of the evidence base, a framework for high street regeneration (repositioning, reinventing, rebranding and restructuring) was built by the research team and applied in the partner towns, to give a more coherent and strategic steer for action in the medium to longer term. The paper ends with a brief summary of some of the impact the project has had so far and our overall reflections on the experience.

A brief history of retail centre research

Despite the claims that high streets and towns centres have undergone dramatic changes recently (Wrigley and Lambiri, 2014), dramatic changes have been a constantly recurring theme in research into retail centres. In the 1920s and 30s early research relevant to retail centres came from economists studying agglomeration (Hotelling, 1929; Reilly, 1931) in response to increased urbanisation or geographers studying consumers and travel (Christaller, 1933), as a result of rising car ownership. The principle here being that there are benefits to both the consumer and retailer of co-location. For the consumer, collections of shops are associated with a reduction of effort (Hotelling, 1929) as people can just visit one location, rather than have to travel to many. Co-location of similar stores also allows the consumer to comparison shop (Harris & Shonkwiler 1997) and reduce uncertainties (McLafferty and Ghosh, 1986). For the retailer, agglomerations offer supply-side type benefits, though, for example, decreasing labour and other input costs (Marshall, 1890) or by the sharing of facilities and infrastructure such as car-parking (Teller and Reutterer, 2008) or transport modes (Brockman, 2008). As The Law of Retail Gravitation (Reilly, 1931) states, the bigger the centre, the more attractive it is and the more successful it will be in attracting customers from a specific catchment area (Carruthers, 1967; Dennis et al., 2002; Reilly, 1931; Teller and Schnedlitz, 2012). The study of retail centre attractiveness has since been extended to include

1 The partner towns in the project were Alsager, Altrincham, Ballymena, Barnsley, Bristol (St George), Congleton, Holmfirth, Market Rasen, Morley and Wrexham
2 The universities that took part were Manchester Metropolitan University, University of Manchester, Oxford University, University of Dundee and University of Leicester.
non-traditional centres, such as out-of-town retail parks. For example, Eppli & Shilling (1996) found that, in keeping with findings from traditional retail agglomerations, larger shopping centres attract more consumers than smaller shopping centres.

The spatial/economic models of the 1920s and 1930s that dominated retail centre research gradually began to be augmented by more information about groups of consumers. As the 1930s unfolded, initial attempts to understand footfall in a more sophisticated fashion began. Meserole (1935) took into account qualitative variability in pedestrian traffic (such as level of affluence, time of day, proportion of children). The relationships between geographical and catchment areas were further investigated in order to assist retail managers in the selection of appropriate retailing mixes and strategies based on the geography, demand, and heterogeneity of these trade areas (Rosenbloom, 1976). Segmentation and targeting are still seen as crucial when developing marketing and communications activities for retail centres wanting to improve their performance (Teller et al., 2008; Warnaby et al., 2005; Westbrook and Black, 1985).

During the 1940s, the need to identify trade drivers for store location and developments became increasingly important and quantitative methods of city classifications, based on the activity of greatest importance for each city/town (manufacturing cities, retail centres, diversified cities, wholesale centres, university towns, etc.) and relating it to the kind of business, were proposed (Harris, 1943). These classifications progressed into hierarchical classifications of shopping centers and retail outlets based on number of stores and net attraction of the centers’ locations (Carruthers, 1957; Carruthers, 1967), physical characteristics of retail locations (Brown, 1991), number of multiple, comparison goods retailers (Reynolds and Schiller, 1992), and on types of goods sold and types of shopping trips (Guy, 1998b), amongst others. These classifications can benefit centre development by understanding consumer demand, forecasting future trends and developing appropriate retail mixes, store designs and local marketing strategies (Hardill et al., 2012).

Also during the 1940s, the rise of chain stores continued rapidly at the expense of independents. Better merchandising, marketing, lower pricing and ability to operate on a lower profit margin, as well as advanced location selection, training, productivity, distribution and public relations with consumers (Beattie, 1943; Beckley, 1949; Jones, 1948; Phillips, 1941) are some of the factors that still drive chain store expansion into the current Century (Karamychev and van Reeven, 2009). In contrast, the negative impact that large-scale retailing can pose to a local economy began to be identified (Phillips, 1941). Restrictions and the first signs of local resistance started to emerge in favour of local merchants with the creation of anti-chain store movements and the rise of the ‘localist’ ideology (Schrager, 2005). Local resistance is still in evidence in some town centres (Hallsworth and Worthington, 2000) in an attempt to support local businesses as well as long-term town prosperity (Pryor and Grossbart, 2005). However, the overall impact of chain stores on local businesses is not clear as town centers can react differently (both positively or negatively) to these forces of change (Henderson, 2011; Wrigley et al., 2009).

The 1950s saw the introduction of the enclosed, climate-controlled mall (Jackson, 1996) and the scientific study of this new channel in the literature, firstly with investigating locational processes used in selecting shopping centers sites (Kelley 1956). Subsequently, with the spread of the mall during the 1960s, researchers investigated factors such as mall strategies and shopping goods (Dommermuth and Cundiff, 1967), shoppers’ movements outside their local retail areas (Herrmann and Beik, 1968), the influence of drive time in shopping center preference (Brunner & Mason 1968) and retail center patronage (Moore & Mason 1969).

In the 1970s, retail decentralization was also starting to occur in the UK and Europe; part of the retail revolution that changed retail geographies of cities mainly due to technological, organizational and
marketing changes, as well as a loosening of planning constraints (Bromley and Thomas, 1993; Collis et al., 2000) and other forms of retail deregulation, such as the outlawing of retail price maintenance. In an increasing competitive retail environment, with an growing array of stores and channels, retail researchers responded by investigating non-retail related consumer motivations to shop at these centers including physical facilities and clientele (Hansen and Deutscher, 1977), cleanliness, presence/quality of bars, restaurants, leisure/sport facilities (Gentry & Burns 1977; Shaw 1970; Moore & Lochhead 1997) and availability of child-minding centers/baby parks (MacLaurin, 1974). While non-retail related factors were increasingly hypothesized to influence store/center choice, according to Teller & Reutterer 2008 (p. 134) retail remained a key driver of center success “(f)ood and entertainment doesn't drive shoppers' evaluations of satisfaction with retail centers/streets. Shops do.” Nevertheless, parking availability and quality, convenience and functionality are still important attributes for car-borne shoppers and partially justify their preference for out-of-town shopping centres rather than town centres (Reimers, 2013).

With more out-of-town development UK researchers (such as Clarke, Hallsworth, & Jackson, 2004; Guy, 1998a; Whyssall, 1995) assessed its impact on traditional centres, mirroring previous research in the US where the ‘move-to-the-suburbs’ trend had hit major downtowns hard (Pratt & Pratt 1960). However, it is not just out-of-town developments that have impacted upon the UK High Street. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, UK, urban centres were developed to incorporate covered malls and multi-level shopping (Jones & Orr 1999). The widespread adoption of a USA out of-town format in UK many towns has been heavily criticised. “Large scale retail experience has been mistakenly applied to smaller town centres, which have totally different problems and needs” (Hobday 1982; page 14).

During the 1980s, important changes such as the rise of female employment, increasing car ownership, and suburbanisation of population led to an increasing length of major grocery shopping trips (Guy, 1985). Researchers also started to examine more thoroughly, experiential and behavioural perspectives of consumer behaviour (Gabbott and Hogg, 1994), such as unplanned impulse/compulsive buying (Weinberg & Gottwald, 1982; O’Guinn & Faber, 1989) or browsing behaviour in retail establishments (Bloch and Richins, 1983). These studies highlighted the importance of shopping centre/mall design and the role of the built environment in streets/malls in facilitating consumption (Gottdiener, 1986). Marketing innovations such as instant credit, credit cards, cash machines, and 24-hour retailing (Rook, 1987) also contributed to the rise of impulse buying and further increased consumers’ demand for convenience, which in turn fuelled the development of more out-of-town malls, supermarkets and retail parks. This eventually triggered government action against edge- and out-of-town retail development (Reynolds and Schiller, 1992).

As well as planning policy interventions to encourage development in the ‘town centre first’ came the town centre management movement (Jones, 1990). Originally financed by major retailers who saw themselves as long-term high street channel members (such as Boots and Sainsbury’s) the ‘philosophy’ of managing and marketing the high street came directly from innovations in shopping centre management (Martin, 1982; Morris, 1988) and the improvement of tenant/manger relations (Prendergast et al., 1987). The premise being cleaner and safer centres, with retailers working in partnership (Williams, 1995) would attract more visitors (Jones, 1990). Retail-led regeneration continued to be the major driver of town and city centre development in the 1990s (Findlay and Sparks, 2010). With researchers beginning to investigate stakeholder power (Pal and Sanders, 1997) and motivations.

In the new millennium, the growth of the Internet as a shopping channel has prompted an increasing focus on the ‘USP’ of the high street with researchers identifying reputation (Hart et al., 2013), place marketing (Kavaratzis, 2007), heritage (Whitehead et al., 2006) and urban design (De Nisco and
 Warnaby, 2014) as important components. Other authors have looked at the opportunities for local shopping that may come from, for example, an ageing population (De Kervenoael et al., 2006) or an increasing interest from retail into local CSR activities (Oppewal et al., 2006). Alongside this has been more interest in the models of partnership that are adopted to facilitate collaboration (Coca-Stefaniak, Parker, Quin, Rinaldi, & Byrom, 2009) and improve the centre experience such as the adoption of Business Improvement Districts (De Magalhães and De Magalhães, 2012). However, this is against a back-drop of a society that is becoming increasingly critical of neo-liberalism and distrustful of public-private partnerships (Peel, 2003). Currently, town centre research has taken somewhat of a technical turn and is focusing upon the potential for and integration of digital technologies (Fletcher, Greenhill, Griffiths and McClean, 2016) as well as the use of big data (Kitchin, 2014) and application of ‘smart’ solutions (Graham and Peleg, 2017).

The research problem

Our brief review of retail centre research demonstrates that high streets and town centres are subject to a staggering number of forces of change. The difficulties localities face in tackling decline is, in part, due to the complexity and diversity of the problem (Peel, 2010). The people who need to manage the resultant changes in spatial requirement must also understand the complexity of forces that influence change (Clarke et al., 1997; Hernandez et al., 1998; Pioch and Byrom, 2004); the multi-disciplinary nature of the evidence base (Palmer et al., 2006) and the multitude of stakeholders (Pal and Sanders, 1997) that make up the high street if they are to play a proactive role in shaping the future of it. The problem is that academic and professional knowledge is fragmented and the study of retail change in particular geographic locations is limited (Wang, 2011).

As ‘urban change is not consistently underpinned by reliable information’ (Wrigley and Lambiri, 2014) the main aim of the High Street UK 2020 project was to channel existing academic knowledge relating to retail centre change directly to decision makers in individual locations. In particular, the project partners wanted to know what factors/trends were having the most impact upon their high streets, and what they could do about these. The approach was informed by the work of Webber, who, in his seminal paper “The Myth of rationality: development planning reconsidered,” (Webber, 1983) questions the model of development planning and concludes that comprehensive development planning is blocked on all sides by insufficient knowledge. He observed that there is usually a lack of factual data on extant conditions and little explanatory (causal) theory resulting in limited instrumental knowledge (Slater et al., 2012). Previous research has also identified that many initiatives to support the high street are not nuanced enough to the needs of the locality (Byrom et al., 2000; Hudson-Davies et al., 2002; Parker et al., 2003). Therefore, the project worked directly with ten locations, facilitating the exchange of knowledge through the range of methods outlined below.

Method

To improve high street decision making through exchanging knowledge of relevance and rigour between high street stakeholders and researchers, we applied a model of engaged scholarship. Engaged scholarship is a participative form of research for obtaining the views of key stakeholders to understand a complex problem in its particular context (Van de Ven, 2007). This informed our research methods, as we engaged, communicated and exchanged knowledge and ideas with academics, practitioners, and local people. Not only did this engaged scholarship provide a useful model of high street performance that resonated with the ‘on the ground’ reality (Rescher, 2003), but it could also be easily interpreted by all high street stakeholders and inform towns’ development plans.
The aim of the research had already been agreed across the project - to understand what factors/trends impacted upon high streets and what could be done in response to these. Due to the complexity of forces that shape the high street, no one study had ever attempted to examine all these concurrently. Therefore, in order to identify the factors, a systematic literature review was undertaken. All the methodological details of the project are contained within a separate paper in this special issue ‘HSUK2020: A model of engaged scholarship (Ntounis, Parker, Quin and Millington, 2017). However, in brief, the parameters for the review included any peer-reviewed study, published in English, that investigated a factor and related this to retail centre performance, which, for the purposes of the project, we interpreted as ‘vitality and viability’ – a common interpretation of retail centre performance (Barata-Salgueiro and Erkip, 2014).

The findings from the systematic literature review were then reviewed by the partner towns, during a full day workshop, with the people present contributing 50 additional factors that they felt, from their practical experience, were missing from our literature review (Parker et al., 2014). This then resulted in a final list of 201 factors that influence the vitality and viability of retail centres. Although this list was of interest to the town stakeholders, it could not help them prioritise their actions. What the stakeholders really wanted to know was:

Research Question 1: How much impact does each factor have on vitality and viability?
Research Question 2: How much influence could the high street (local stakeholders) have over the factor?

A rank order of factors, in terms of a) their impact on vitality and viability and b) the influence the location has over the factor was established through the use of the Delphi Technique and a panel of 22 leading retail experts (academics and practitioner). As stated previously, the full methodology is written up as a separate paper in this special issue (see Ntounis, Parker, Quin and Millington, 2017) as the focus of this paper is findings and application. This ranking was used to develop a model of high street action (High Street UK 2020) for the ten locations and the first stage of the project culminated in a series of local workshops in the ten locations bringing together retailers and local actors and agencies to use the model to understand the nature of the retail challenge faced by that location and to agree some short-term priorities for action.

The second stage of the project focused upon building a framework for managing medium to longer-term change (interpreted as regeneration or development), from the range of literatures that contain empirical findings relating to interventions. Leading academic experts, visiting researchers in the project, informed the development of this framework. The research team reviewed and distilled the evidence relating to development interventions and their implications, developing the broad themes of ‘repositioning’, ‘reinventing’, ‘rebranding’ and ‘restructuring’ (The 4 Rs). National workshops on these themes were led by the academic experts and attended by stakeholders of the ten high streets. After the workshops surgery sessions with the towns and the experts were held to identify the regeneration or development strategy that was most likely to positive impact if it were to be adopted by the town. This was then followed up with more workshops is in the partner locations, and the development and implementation of town specific HSUK2020 plans.

Results
After two rounds of the Delphi process, consensus over both the impact upon and influence over rankings was reached for 191 of 201 of the factors. This 95% consensus level was deemed acceptable by the project team, when compared to similar Delphi studies, and the consensus scores were transferred to the model (a full list of factors with their Delphi scores are contained in Appendix 1). Where consensus had not been reached the mean scores for these factors were calculated using respondents’ scores from both rounds. Plotting each factor on the two axis (impact and influence) generates the scattergram in Figure 1 with 4 quadrants, that the project team along with partners labelled ‘Get on with it!’, ‘Live with it!’, ‘Ignore it!’ and ‘Forget it!’.

**Figure 1 : HSUK2020 Scattergram**

*Identifying priorities for action*

The ‘Get on with it!’ quadrant represents all the factors that the Delphi respondents identified as ones that could be influenced by local stakeholders. The factors in this quadrant are also the ones that have greater influence on high street vitality and viability. The very crowded nature of the quadrant means many of the factors identified through the systematic literature review and by our HSUK2020 partners are located here. One one hand, this is heartening – as one hopes academics will study those factors of most relevance to High Street change. On the other hand, there are still 99 factors in this area. A number our high street partners (the people that had to put these findings into practice) found this number overwhelming and off-putting.
In order to bring the number down to one perceived as more manageable – we went on to identify the 25 priority actions within this quadrant. These were identified through combining factors that grouped into meaningful categories, both statistically and in terms of face validity (see Ntounis, Parker, Quin and Millington, 2017). The Top 25 priorities for high street action are presented in Table 1. Priorities presented IN CAPITALS represent two or more of the original 201 factors. Priorities identified in lower case represent just one factor. The High Street UK2020 towns used this list to audit their performance and identify areas that they could start to work on straight away. Average feedback from the 180 delegates that attended the workshops to the question ‘it is helpful to know what factors we can influence locally’ was 4.5/5. The overall score for ‘how worthwhile was the workshop’ was 4.49/5. The score for how much the workshop would help future town centre decision-making was 4.24/5.

| PRIORITY CONSIDERATIONS |
|--------------------------|
| **1. ACTIVITY HOURS**    |
| Ensuring the centre is open when the catchment needs it. What are the shopping hours? Is there an evening economy? Do the activity hours of the centre match the needs of the catchment? |
| **2. APPEARANCE**        |
| Improving the quality of the visual appearance and aesthetics. How clean is the centre? What is the quality of the public realm? |
| **3. RETAILERS**         |
| Offering the right type and quantity of retailers. What retailers are represented (this includes retailers of products and services). |
| **4. VISION&STRATEGY**   |
| Having a common vision and some leadership. Do the High Street stakeholders collaborate? Is the vision incorporated in local plans? Is the vision adopted in stakeholders plans? |
| **5. EXPERIENCE**        |
| Considering the quality of the experience. Measuring levels of service quality and visitor satisfaction. What is the overall image or offer of the centre? |
| **6. MANAGEMENT**        |
| Building capacity to get things done. Is there effective management – of the shopping centre(s) and town centre? |
| **7. MERCHANDISE**       |
| Meeting the needs of the catchment. What is the range and quality of goods on offer? |
| **8. NECESSITIES**       |
| Ensuring basic facilities are present and maintained. Is there appropriate car-parking; amenities; general facilities, like places to sit down and toilets etc.? |
| **9. ANCHORS**           |
| The presence of an anchor which drives footfall. This could be retail (like a department store) or could be a busy transport interchange or large employer. |
| **10. NETWORKS & PARTNERSHIPS WITH COUNCIL** |
| Presence of strong networks and effective formal or informal partnerships. Do stakeholders communicate and trust each other? Can the council facilitate action (not just lead it?) |
| **11. DIVERSITY**        |
| A multi-functional centre. What attractions are there, apart from retail? What is the tenant mix and tenant variety? |
| **12. WALKING**          |
| The ‘walkability’ of the centre. Are linked trips between areas possible – or are the distances too great? Are there other obstacles that stop people walking? |
| **13. ENTERTAINMENT AND LEISURE** |
| An entertainment and leisure offer. What is it? Is it attractive to various segments of the catchment? |
### Table 1: Top 25 priorities for high street action

| Priority | Description |
|----------|-------------|
| 14. ATTRACTIVENESS | The 'pulling power' of a centre. Can it attract people from a distance? |
| 15. PLACE ASSURANCE | Getting the basics right. Does the centre offer a basic level of customer service, is this consistent? Or do some operators, or parts of the offer, let this down? |
| 16. ACCESSIBLE | Ease of reach. How convenient is the centre to access? Is it accessible by a number of different means, e.g. car, public transport, cycling. |
| 17. PLACE MARKETING | Communicating the offer. How does the centre market and promote itself? Do enough stakeholders’ communicate in a way that builds a coherent message? How well does the centre orientate visitors and encourage flow – with signage and guides etc. |
| 18. COMPARISON/CONVENIENCE | The amount of comparison shopping opportunities compared to convenience (usually in percentage terms). Is this sustainable? |
| 19. RECREATIONAL SPACE | The amount and quality of recreational areas and public space/open space. Are there places that are uncommodified? Where people can enjoy spending time without spending money? |
| 20. BARRIERS TO ENTRY | Refers to obstacles that make it difficult for interested retailers to enter the local market. What is the location doing to make it easier for new businesses to come onto the High Street? |
| 21. CHAIN VS INDEPENDENT | Number of multiples stores and independent stores in the retail mix of a centre/High Street. Is this suitably balanced? |
| 22. SAFETY/CRIME | A centre KPI measuring perceptions or actual crime including shoplifting. Perceptions of crime are usually higher than actual crime rates. Does the centre monitor these and how does it communicate results to stakeholders? |
| 23. LIVEABLE | The resident population or potential for residential in the centre. Does the centre offer the services/environment that residents need? Doctors, schools, playgrounds etc. |
| 24. ADAPTABILITY | The willingness for retailers/property owners to develop their stores. Are they willing to coordinate/cooperate in updating activities? Or do they act independently (or not at all). |
| 25. STORE DEVELOPMENT | | |

**Identifying a framework for regeneration**

Utilising the Delphi Technique and engaging experts from a range of disciplines (retail, geography, planning, urban regeneration, public administration, management, marketing etc.) fostered cross-disciplinary knowledge exchange, helping to broaden the 'real-world' understanding of a research problem in context (the changing nature of the high street). A range of other stakeholders were also involved in the identification of the 25 priorities for action (Table 1), for example, retailers, retail
property owners, consultants, town centre managers, economic development professionals, Councillors and MPs. The 25 priorities were practically orientated – and, given their ability to be controlled or influenced at a town level, were fairly internally focussed. This posed a barrier to a more strategic attempt to guide regeneration in the towns. One of the fundamental premises that drives regeneration in town centres is the competitive tension between towns and cities (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990; van den Berg and Braun, 1999), which is obviously externally focussed. Likewise, retailing is one of the many factors identified as necessary to a place’s attempt to attract capital from elsewhere (Niedomysl and Jonasson, 2012). The next stage of the project entailed taking more of a discipline-led approach to the development of a more strategic framework for regeneration, that took account of the more meso and macro factors and trends that were not the focus of the 25 priorities for action.

In addition to the core project team, four leading academics representing discipline or sub-discipline areas, were engaged as Visiting Researchers to help develop more of a strategic approach to managing change – which still complemented the 25 priorities for action. Professor Deborah Peel summarised literatures on planning and governance; Dr Jonathan Reynolds provided insight on economic geography and retailing; Dr Mihalis Kavaratzis undertook a literature review on place marketing and branding and John Pal summarised relevant developments in retailing and services marketing. Subsequent discussion between all the academics on the project led to the development of a new framework ‘The 4 R’s of Regeneration’ (Figure 2) and the R’s consisted of repositioning, reinventing, rebranding and restructuring strategies, each being the focus of an expert workshop, the content of which is summarised below. Every one of the 4Rs is important as town centres adapt to change and seek to improve their prognosis. However, support from the High Street UK 2020 project was only funded until March 2015 and therefore the project team, through reviewing all the notes from the town workshops, strategic documents and in partnership with the local project stakeholders, identified the strategy area (or R) that could add most value to the existing place management activity, in each of the ten towns. In Market Rasen and Morley this was repositioning. For Ballymena and Barnsley it was reinventing. For Alsager, Altrincham and Holmfirth it was rebranding. Finally, In Congleton, St George Bristol and Wrexham it was restructuring. The 4R’s are explored in much more detail within this special issue, as each one has an article dedicated to it.
Repositioning is a strategy focused on identifying a purpose or vision through the effective gathering and analysis of relevant data. Rapid economic, political, and social changes are most likely to lead places to repositioning strategies that will allow them to identify potential competitive advantages (Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2008) or counteract decline (Smith, 2004). Therefore, the focus of the expert workshop was on understanding the forces of change and the value of unique responses that reposition individual high streets, build on distinct capabilities (such as local identity) but are accommodative of future trends (such as an ageing population or the growth of m-commerce). Repositioning could, therefore, lead to town centres that are more resilient (Wrigley and Dolega, 2011). The expert workshop drew heavily from theory found in economic geography and principles of market research. An effective analysis of customer needs and the local economy can help high streets to recognise the failures of previous strategies, identify new ways of expanding their economic activities and find help them find opportunities for improving existing retail stores (Kures and Ryan, 2012).

A sustainable or resilient high street is one that adapts to the changing needs and expectations of customers and can identify useful metrics related to local catchment and demographic change (Wood and Reynolds, 2012). Obtaining up-to-date and relevant data enables towns to
position themselves relevant to their catchment, to other towns and to trends, such as the increase in internet shopping and the concentration of comparison retail in the major centres. However, the problem for the HSUK2020 project towns focusing upon repositioning was that the current information or data they had or, more often than not, the information or data that was collected on their behalf, was not useful for strategic repositioning. There was very little focus upon the type of information that would enable them to anticipate and adapt to change, like footfall data, for example. These metrics are important to explain the preference of the users for specific shopping streets (Ercoskun and Ozuduru, 2014) and support the development of initiatives aimed at changing the nature of, or reinventing, the high street (Carmona, 2015).

Reinventing is a strategy that refers to taking action. It is the ability of retail locations to adapt and innovate in unfavourable and uncertain contexts, e.g. the declining high street. The expert workshop drew heavily from retailing and marketing literature – as any new developments should be guided by the marketing principle of meeting the needs/wants of identified target audiences (Ashworth and Voogd, 1990). Likewise, retailing is an important element of the urban place product and “reinventing” this sector along with improvements to complimentary elements of place can contribute to a better understanding of the formation of the “holistic” place product (Warnaby et al., 2005). Retail stores have used different reinventing strategies such as extending opening hours, segmenting store offer to new market niches or reducing the size of the establishment to adapt to the physical conditions of the high street (Pal and Byrom, 2003). These strategies are just as applicable to retail locations, as they are to retail stores. The “reinventing” process of urban places should be built on activities that aim to revitalise a place’s identity and image; identity and image can be seen as both static (for communicative purposes in a fixed time) and dynamic, which recognises the uniqueness of each place and the difference in each stakeholder’s view about a place (Kalandides, 2011; Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013). It is the latter view of identities and images that can be used as a driver for reinventing places such as high streets and city centres; a framework built on these premises can unarguably assist the development of rejuvenated, competitive retailing spaces, which will merge innovation and local place identity, and will be meaningful for all stakeholders (Coca-Stefaniak et al., 2009).

After the economic collapse of 2008 most of the ten towns in the project were suffering from a lack of innovation because there was little investment, making reinventing difficult. However, by focusing upon more temporary or pop-up change, the reinventing process could begin, even with limited budgets. One of the most important discoveries of the project was the role of flexible and adaptable space in town centres, such as market places, that could be ‘reinvented’ on different days of the week, or at different types of the day – to provide a more relevant offer, to meet the needs and expectations of the catchment (Millington et al., 2015). Undoubtedly, reinventing relied upon changes on the ground but, on their own, these changes were not enough. People need to know about them and experience them.

Rebranding focused upon on the communication of image and identity as previous studies demonstrate that place consumers may find that the place experience meets or exceeds expectations whilst the image of the place is ‘problematic’ (Blichfeldt, 2005; Selby, 2004; Stachow and Hart, 2010). For the purpose of this project, rebranding tended to focus upon the application of branding, marketing communications, and public relations techniques in order to deliver an improved place image; a sum of beliefs, ideas, and impressions in the minds of potential consumers of a place (Kotler and Gertner, 2002). Overall, rebranding was considered as a communicative strategy aimed at managing the reputation of high streets and drew most inspiration from the place marketing literature.
Even though it is impossible to control all the communication media (e.g. word of mouth and direct experience of the consumer with the high street), high street stakeholders developed promotional activities such as advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations, sponsorships, direct marketing and Internet in order to deliver an attractive image (Warnaby and Yip, 2005). Place branding was also thought of as the ‘organising principle’ for integrating measures (e.g. events, media relations, residents' participation). Place branding can evoke favourable place images that transfer emotional and self-expression values, as well as utilitarian attributes to individuals (Caldwell and Freire, 2004). Successful place brand management can lead to positive word-of-mouth, and also assist in the transformation of negative images (Hanna and Rowley, 2011; Skinner, 2011). The need to identify how potential stakeholders can co-create the place brand has been the focus of recent developments in place branding (Hatch and Schultz, 2010; Warnaby, 2009) and this aspect was particularly popular amongst the partner towns. High streets, and particularly the retail sector, with the multitude of stakeholders involved in it (users, brokers, fixers) (Pal and Sanders, 1997), can highlight the desires, needs, and views of those stakeholders, which can lead to a better understanding of how place brands are created and evolve (Hanna and Rowley, 2011; Kavaratzis and Hatch, 2013). In particular, the expert workshop explored stakeholder involvement in the creation, development and ownership of place brands (Kavaratzis, 2012).

The towns that embarked upon a strategy of rebranding, in the short-term anyway, made the most progress. Unlike repositioning, which requires a certain amount of evidence and technical expertise in analysis and reinventing, which needs considerable investment (of money and/or time and effort) rebranding was seen as ‘quick fix’ – a strategy that could unite stakeholders in some focussed effort fairly quickly. Unlike planning, governance or retailing, branding was seen as ‘free space’ that didn’t need huge amounts of expert skills, knowledge or capital. Nevertheless, despite the initial success of a place branding campaign in one of the towns – it did little to solve the problems of division and the entrenched views amongst stakeholder groups. In fact, the brand became associated with the people using it – a tactic employed by the rival group – who wanted to undermine the success of the campaign. This highlights the importance of people and power in places and the need to, sometimes, restructure governance arrangements.

Restructuring, focused upon these people/power issues through examining different forms of management and governance, including formal and informal (Coca-Stefaniak et al., 2009; Peel, 2003); regulatory, functional, and contractual (Lloyd and Peel, 2008; Peel et al., 2009) and structures for communication / knowledge exchange (Peel and Lloyd, 2008). Consequently, the major point of interest was how the organisations or partnerships that manage high streets can be restructured in order to facilitate all the changes mentioned so far. Restructuring can be interpreted as a management, governance or collaborative strategy focused on understanding the specific role that many parts of the society (market, government and society) play in the configuration of the high street. The complex nature of the high street requires an effective form of management and leadership capable of creating strategic networks and encouraging the involvement of stakeholders and local community in decision-making processes (De Magalhães, 2012; Peel et al., 2009). Practices that entail both commercial and locational benefits are seen as the best way forward (Bennison et al., 2010). Therefore, restructuring was interpreted to mean the cooperation of place stakeholders and creation of strategic networks and public-private relationships that will nurture conditions for the sustainable development of a place (van den Berg and Braun, 1999; Rainisto, 2003).

Restructuring also involves large urban transformation projects such as the physical improvements of the town centre. In the case of retailing, the best spaces created from restructuring can enliven the high street and also shape a better image for the place which can enhance retail operations (Pal and Byrom, 2003). However, the drivers of these regeneration projects can often represent quite narrow interests (De Nisco et al., 2008). Therefore, the active involvement of local stakeholders in
earlier stages can contribute to their definition, acceptance and consequently, the success of a regeneration project (Coca-Stefaniak and Bagaeen, 2013). Not surprisingly, restructuring drew primarily from planning and public administration literatures.

Perhaps perceived as the most challenging strategy, the governance structure in one of the towns started to change remarkably quickly. The existing partnership was perceived as not action-orientated enough for some of the retail stakeholders. Therefore, the retailers looked at the 25 priorities for action and identified those they could ‘get on with’. Speaking at a Town Centre Forum Meeting, the Chairman Nigel Lewis said:

“This arose as a result of the work that Manchester (Metropolitan) University had done. They found there are 25 priorities and how we would tackle those. We had a meeting where the university attended, meeting in the council chambers. We broke up into small groups and started actioning things, such as street clean ups, street festivals and we influenced parking charges. We are recognising that the council have officers and members dealing with issues in the town centre, and we have many volunteers. We don’t want to duplicate things and together we want to tackle things that need it and make sure that they are prioritised”

(Wrexham.com, 2016).

This action changed the dynamic of the partnership considerably, and the town has now gone on to develop a new governance structure to manage town center activity and development (see below).

As a result of applying the framework in the ten locations it became apparent that there was some relationship between the number of stakeholders that needed to be engaged, the amount of resource that was needed to be invested and the likely success of the approach adopted. Repositioning and reinventing appeared to need less stakeholder involvement than rebranding and restructuring. On the other hand, reinventing and restructuring needed significant more resources (money for reinventing and time for restructuring) than repositioning and rebranding. This finding has been introduced into the 4R’s framework in Figure 3.

Impact

Both the 25 priorities, in the short-term, and the 4R’s, in the medium term have enabled a multitude of stakeholders in towns to get involved in making their high streets more vital and more viable. Over 180 people attended workshops in their local town centre, to contribute to the High Street UK 2020 projects. From now on, any other high street or town centre can use the list of 25 priority actions as a health-check or to focus activity and resources on interventions that will have the most impact on vitality and viability. The findings from the High Street UK 2020 project have been very popular, and the team have been invited to more than 25 conferences and events worldwide to speak to a collective audience of over 5000 people.

The ‘good news’ that has been generated from this project is also worth mentioning. Many local papers and radio stations tend to focus on ‘doom and gloom’ stories about the High Street. However the combination of the range of stakeholders involved, the kudos of quality research and the workshops held in towns made for interesting local news stories. The local media in each of the ten towns covered the High Street UK 2020 project at least once. In total the project resulted in 80 news articles, in local papers, on local radio and on websites, such as BBC Wales. Whilst getting favorable media coverage was a welcome outcome, the main purpose of the project was to improve the vitality and viability of specific high streets, through the process of knowledge exchange. Whilst the other articles in the special issue cover this process in more detail, we include a brief round up of
some of the impact the project has had ‘on the ground’, using the framework of the 4Rs (repositioning, reinventing, rebranding and restructuring).

Figure 3: 4Rs framework incorporating stakeholder and resource considerations

Morley approached repositioning in several ways. They worked closely with a wide range of stakeholders to share and analyse information and data, including the nearby out of town shopping centre. The group also looked in to how to gather missing data, which resulted in a footfall counter being installed in the main street (positioned on the local MPs office as she saw how this would benefit the centre). A better understanding of the town and how it was performing has enabled many new initiatives to be taken. Clear evidence of demand led to the introduction of some additional car parking (Morley Observer 2016a), whilst trader concerns about quieter shopping areas plus the fact that “89% of all Morley businesses are independently run, allowing the town to offer a bespoke shopping experience” led to the development of a new monthly outdoor food market (Morley Observer 2016b).

Ballymena concentrated on reinventing through strengthening its retail offer. The 25 priorities for action were used extensively to focus effort and resources on interventions that would bring more shoppers to the centre. Reinventing Ballymena as a shopping destination has been very successful as “Ballymena celebrated New Year with news that the town centre’s overall customer footfall was up 8.1% for December 2016 compared to the same period for 2015. The comprehensive Christmas
marketing campaign by Ballymena BID was to encourage shoppers, the local community and visitors to make Ballymena their destination of choice” (BallymenaMeans, 2017).

Atrincham focused upon rebranding and the ambition, contained in Altrincham Town Centre Public Realm Strategy was to make Altrincham “the Modern Market Town” an integral part of people’s everyday lives and a place people can be proud of again. Our aim is to change people’s perceptions of the town from one which is negative to overriding positive”. Unlike other locations where branding straplines remain unattainable pipe-dreams, Altrincham is delivering on the promise of a ‘modern market town’ as it has, according to the local paper, Altrincham Today (2016) developed a retailer and service mix, firmly anchored around a hugely successful food market, offering the catchment something special as well as benefiting from better access and connectivity, with improved transport links and a £19m overhaul of the Altrincham Interchange.

Finally, relevant to restructuring, a Wrexham Town Centre action plan has since been developed by the Wrexham Town Centre Partnership Steering Group in response to the High Street UK 2020 Study. This Plan has been agreed by the Town Centre Forum and although it includes actions that are delivered by the Council, its intention is as a partnership plan rather than one specifically articulating the Council’s Vision for Wrexham Town Centre. It was agreed that a single strategy was required that brings together all the Council’s strategies and action plans relating to Wrexham Town Centre, clearly setting out the Council’s priorities for making it a vibrant, safe, accessible and prosperous place for people to live, work and visit.

Conclusions and reflections

Our project was timely as it clearly supported the aim of ‘ensuring the vitality of town centres’ contained within the National Planning Policy Framework 2012, the renewed focus upon town centres found in the regeneration strategies of Scotland and Wales and Northern Ireland’s proposed PPS5, a variety of current government initiatives designed to promote innovative and multi-stakeholder approaches to town centre change, namely the High Street Innovation Fund; the Business Improvement District fund; the Portas Pilots and the Town Team Partners. By working directly with ten different locations, the project helped the local agents of change (high street stakeholders in the private, public and third sectors) identify and understand their information requirements and get access to accurate and relevant academic knowledge, to improve the quality of decision making and provide solid academic underpinning to their plans for action.

Identifying 25 generic priorities for action was a very popular approach with the stakeholders. The plethora of existing development plans, public realm strategies, action plans, visions and strategies can confuse people and even alienate them. At best each document appears to standalone – and, at worst, the documents contradict each other. Given the diversity of people that need to collaborate in the collective goal of high street success, much more thought needs to be given to how actions and strategies are communicated. The scattergram and 25 priorities developed within the project could be disseminated clearly and quickly – and we think that is why they were so widely adopted.

In a similar fashion, our 4Rs framework brought a thorough but complicated evidence base to towns in a more coherent fashion, using our academic experts. Of course, given the complex nature of high street change all these strategies overlap. The underpinning theory and principles we used in the project came from a wide range of literatures. However, our high street stakeholders were not interested in engaging in epistemological debates. They looked to us, as academics, to make some sense of this on their behalf, so they could concentrate on putting theory into action. Having a simple framework, where town stakeholders could enter at any point meant they could approach regeneration in a way that accommodated the path they had already started to take, be sensitive to
how they had started to conceptualise the problem or reflect the amount of people and resources
they had to hand. Did they feel they needed more information (repositioning), did they want to get
on with something (reinventing), did they need to communicate more effectively (rebranding) or did
they need to work out who was responsible for what (restructuring)? Given how disciplines and sub-
disciplines ‘spread’, the theory and principles to answer all these questions are not contained neatly
in any one literature stream. Therefore the chances of practitioners finding comprehensive answers
in academic literature are slim. Where do they start looking? Knowledge exchange projects, such as
High Street UK2020, have an important contribution to make. Not only has the process of engaging
more meaningfully with research users led to the development of new theory (the 4 R’s framework)
but it has also brought existing theory into practical use, through the 25 priorities. By engaging the
stakeholders in the whole project from design all the way through to dissemination there is no doubt
the quality of the research questions improved, our data collection and analysis methods benefited
and our ability to transfer this knowledge was significantly amplified. We look forward to measuring
the impact this project has had on the vitality and viability of the partner locations in 2020.

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## Appendix 1 – List of factors that influence vitality and viability

| Influence Factor                  | Definition/interpretation used in study                                                                 | Example study/studies                  | Influence | Control |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| 1. Footfall                      | Number of pedestrians counted over a specific time period, in a specific location                     | Warnaby and Yip, 2005                 | 4.67      | 3.33    |
| 2. Accessibility                 | Centre accessible by a variety of transport modes (walking, bike, car, bus etc.)                      | Brockman, 2008; Clark, 2006           | 4.57      | 2.67    |
| 3. Retailer representation       | Types of retailers in centre (goods/services, independents/multiples etc.)                           | Wrigley and Dolega, 2011              | 4.57      | 3.29    |
| 4. Construction of OOT centre    | The construction of out-of-town retail parks or malls                                                 | Guy, 1998a                            | 4.52      | 2.62    |
| 5. Convenience                   | The ability to reach, browse, and shop in a centre easily and without much effort                    | Leo and Philippe, 2010                | 4.48      | 3.02    |
| 6. Leadership                    | Refers to the provision of vision and strategy for the High Street/centre                            | Tomalin and Pal, 1994                 | 4.43      | 3.62    |
| 7. Opening hours                 | What hours does the town centre, high street, shopping centre, retail park, etc. open?              | Hart et al., 2013                     | 4.43      | 3.76    |
| 8. Shopping hours                | What hours do the shops in the centre open?                                                          | Hart et al., 2013                     | 4.40      | 3.43    |
| 9. Place attractiveness          | Links to the overall attractiveness of an urban place and its incentives for visiting it e.g. shopping| Teller and Elms, 2012                | 4.38      | 3.05    |
| 10. Retailer offer               | Retailer representation, large/small, specialist/generalist, high service/no-frills                   | Brown, 1987                           | 4.38      | 3.50    |
| 11. Supermarket impact           | The impact of supermarket development on small retailers and the High Street                         | Clulow and Reimers, 2009              | 4.38      | 2.62    |
| 12. Economy                      | Refers to the general state of production and supply and supply of money in the country             | De Magalhaes, 2012                   | 4.36      | 2.05    |
| 13. Centre size                  | Size of centre as a measure of overall drawing power                                                 | Yuo et al., 2003                      | 4.35      | 1.81    |
| 14. Area development strategies  | Ways of redeveloping existing retail centres - e.g. pedestrianisation, new shopping centre etc.    | Karrholm et al., 2014                 | 4.33      | 3.24    |
| 15. E-Retail                     | The sale of goods and services through the Internet                                                 | Weltevreden, 2007                    | 4.33      | 2.29    |
| 16. Range/quality of goods       | Range (wide vs. narrow) of retail goods on the High Street and the overall or perceived quality of them| Hart et al., 2013                     | 4.33      | 3.29    |
| 17. Collaboration                | Various stakeholders from different sectors working together for physical, commercial and general improvement of the High Street/Centre | Hardill et al., 2012                 | 4.30      | 3.48    |
| 18. Public transport             | Range of fixed route modes of public transportation to and from the High Street                     | May et al, 2012; De Nisco, 2013       | 4.30      | 2.90    |
|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 19. Attractiveness | The ability of a centre to attract customers from a catchment area. | Dennis et al, 2003 | 4.29 | 3.05 |
| 20. Centre management | Control, coordination, guidance of a centre's activities and of its tenants/retailers | Teller, 2008 | 4.29 | 3.57 |
| 21. Sales/turnover | Total amount of retail sales made in a certain period (specific store or all High Street stores, shopping centre revenue, etc.) | Tomalin and Pal, 1994 | 4.29 | 3.14 |
| 22. Connectivity | Refers to the number and quality of connection points between the built-up fabric in the High Street/Centre | Nase et al., 2013 | 4.28 | 3.10 |
| 23. Location | Spatial positioning of the centre | Coelho and Wilson, 1976 | 4.26 | 1.14 |
| 24. Walkability | Friendliness of an area to walking | Frank et al, 2006 | 4.25 | 3.43 |
| 25. Service quality | Overall impression of the level of service from centre. | DeNisco and Warnaby, 2013 | 4.24 | 3.67 |
| 26. Retail rents | The cost of renting retail space (usually by m2) | Yuo et al, 2003 | 4.24 | 2.62 |
| 27. Tenant variety | Range of goods/services and range of fascias | Teller and Elms, 2012 | 4.24 | 3.19 |
| 28. Vacancy rates | Unoccupied/non-rented rental units, expressed as a percentage of the number of shops in the town | Wrigley & Dolega, 2011 | 4.24 | 3.05 |
| 29. Transport route | All public transport routes (railway tracks, bus lanes, tram lanes, cycle routes, etc.) to the centre | Pantano et al., 2010 | 4.23 | 2.48 |
| 30. Barriers to Entry | Refers to obstacles that make it difficult for interested retailers to enter the centre | Clarke, Bennison, Guy, 1994 | 4.22 | 2.95 |
| 31. Landlords | Owners of retail, commercial, and other types of property | Roberts et al., 2010 | 4.22 | 2.95 |
| 32. Retail Planning Policy | National policy, principles and guidelines for town centres that local councils are encouraged to comply with | Cheshire, Hilber, Kaplanis, 2011 | 4.21 | 2.10 |
| 33. Business Rates | Local tax based on commercial premise's rateable value | Singleton, 2014 | 4.19 | 2.14 |
| 34. Customer/catchment views and behaviour (inc. patronage) | The perceptions of the centre held by customers/catchment and use of the centre by customers/catchment | Powe and Hart, 2008; Oppewal et al, 2007 | 4.19 | 2.95 |
| 35. Internet/Online Shopping | The ability to browse, compare and shop goods and services via the Internet rather than going to the actual store | Weltevreden, 2007 | 4.19 | 2.24 |
| 36. Non-retail offer | Total amount of units that are not considered as part of a shopping trip and usually augment it (hair salon, banking, amusements, recreational spaces, etc.) | Teller and Schnedlitz, 2012 | 4.19 | 3.29 |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|------|------|
| 37. Prosperity of town | Links to the financial flourishing of a town's citizens or the town overall. | Wrigley et al., 2009 | 4.19 | 2.14 |
| 38. Range/quality of shops | Range (wide vs. narrow) of retail shops on the High Street and the overall or perceived quality of them | Hart et al., 2013 | 4.19 | 3.29 |
| 39. Shopping centre management | How the physical space is managed in order to attract retail traffic to shopping centre tenants | Roberts et al., 2010 | 4.18 | 3.57 |
| 40. Retail flexibility | Degree of adaptation to change type or style of retailing activities | Findlay and Sparks, 2010 | 4.18 | 3.19 |
| 41. Distance to centre | Amount of linear space between the consumer and the city centre | Nase et al., 2013 | 4.17 | 1.50 |
| 42. Finance | A centre's/ High Street's funding from inward/outward investment, public or private | Peel, 2003 | 4.16 | 2.62 |
| 43. Car-parking | The number or availability of parking spaces | Borgers and Timmermans, 1998 | 4.14 | 3.71 |
| 44. Catchment size | Whether a catchment area of a centre is large or small | Hardill et al., 2012 | 4.14 | 1.76 |
| 45. Comparison/convenience | The amount of comparison shopping opportunities compared to convenience (usually in percentage terms) | Reimers and Clulow, 2004 | 4.14 | 3.00 |
| 46. Consumer trends | Habits or behaviours currently prevalent among consumers of goods or services. | Auport, 2005 | 4.14 | 2.00 |
| 47. Retail choice | Links to everyday consumer patterns and how they alternate and influence retail offer | Clarke et al., 2004 | 4.14 | 2.81 |
| 48. Retail diversity | A mix of multiples and independents, range of goods, a strong anchor. | Findlay and Sparks, 2009 | 4.14 | 3.24 |
| 49. Linked trips | Consumers' propensity to visit other stores after fulfilling their main shopping need (e.g. grocery shopping) | Thomas and Bromley, 2003 | 4.13 | 3.29 |
| 50. Anchor stores | Presence of anchor stores - which give locations their basic character and signify importance | Thorpe, 1968 | 4.10 | 3.48 |
| 51. Attractions | Anything that brings people into the centre and is not a part of its fixed retail offer (e.g. Christmas markets, events, museums, etc.) | Peel, 2003 | 4.10 | 3.76 |
| 52. Availability of alternative formats | Department stores, speciality stores, discount stores. Linked to cross-shopping and retail offer. | Morganosky, 1997 | 4.10 | 3.19 |
| 53. Catchment income | Income profile of catchment | Shields and Deller, 1998 | 4.10 | 2.29 |
|   | Term                          | Description                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Source                        | Impact Score | IF Score |
|---|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|----------|
| 54 | Catchment view/behaviour     | Shopping behaviour, preferences and intentions of catchment                                                                                                                                                | Clulow and Reimers, 2009      | 4.10         | 2.24     |
| 55 | Centre image                 | Merchandising, accessibility, service and atmospherics. Adapted from shopping centre image.                                                                                                                 | Sit, Merrilees and Birch, 2003 | 4.10         | 3.71     |
| 56 | Employment                   | The amount of people in the catchment area that have got jobs                                                                                                                                             | Biddulph, 2011                | 4.10         | 2.10     |
| 57 | Evening economy              | All economic activity taking place in the evening after many people finish daytime employment, such as eating and drinking, entertainment, and nightlife | Biddulph, 2011                | 4.10         | 3.57     |
| 58 | Monofunctional vs multifunctional | Centres used only for retail use (monofunctional) or for other uses as well, e.g. office use (multifunctional)                                                                                       | Irazabal and Chakravarty, 2007 | 4.10         | 3.19     |
| 59 | Pedestrianisation (flow, routes, access) | The provision and type of pedestrian space (streets, open malls, 'skywalks' etc.)                                                                                                                        | Cui, Allan and Lin, 2013       | 4.10         | 3.38     |
| 60 | Place management             | A philosophy of how to improve towns and cities through more flexible and inclusive management                                                                                                          | Coca-Stefaniak et al., 2009   | 4.10         | 3.43     |
| 61 | Planning                     | The strategic management of land and buildings for economic and social benefits                                                                                                                           | Guy, 1998                      | 4.10         | 2.43     |
| 62 | Planning Blight              | Reduction of economic activity or property values in a particular area resulting from expected development or restriction of development                                                                   | Imrie and Thomas, 1997        | 4.10         | 2.81     |
| 63 | Retail innovation            | Representation of new forms of retailing (e.g. click and collect)                                                                                                                                           | Gibbs, 1987                    | 4.10         | 2.71     |
| 64 | Retail spend                 | The amount of money spent during a shopping trip                                                                                                                                                         | Dennis et al., 2002           | 4.10         | 3.10     |
| 65 | Tenant mix                   | Range of goods/services and range of fascias                                                                                                                                                             | Teller and Elms, 2012         | 4.10         | 3.33     |
| 66 | Town Centre Management       | Decision of town to use town centre management to coordinate resources and activity                                                                                                                     | Pal and Sanders, 1997         | 4.10         | 3.62     |
| 67 | Visitor satisfaction         | Global attitude gained by visiting the high street, a mental process                                                                                                                                      | Leo and Philippe, 2010        | 4.10         | 3.62     |
| 68 | Visual appearance            | Includes building appearance, lightning, cleanliness, is the centre appealing to people?                                                                                                                  | Hart et al, 2013              | 4.10         | 3.81     |
| 69 | Location of employment       | Refers to whether employers operate in, nearby, or out of the High Street/City Centre                                                                                                                     | Powe and Hart, 2008           | 4.09         | 2.62     |
| 70 | Cross-shopping               | Visiting more than one store when visiting a retail centre                                                                                                                                                 | Bodkin and Lord, 1997         | 4.05         | 3.38     |
| 71 | Population                   | All the inhabitants at a particular place                                                                                                                                                                | Hall, 2011                    | 4.05         | 1.69     |
| 72. Partnerships | Integration between public and private high street stakeholders amongst a variety of public, private and community interests | Williams, 1999; Peel, 2003 | 4.02 | 3.48 |
| 73. Property ownership | Type of ownership of retail properties in the high street (sole owner, tenant, landlord, etc.) | De Magalhaes, 2012 | 4.00 | 2.86 |
| 74. Recession | The overall impact of the economic downturn on the high street | De Magalhaes, 2012 | 4.00 | 2.19 |
| 75. Safety/crime | A centre KPI measuring perceptions or actual crime including shoplifting | Jones, 1990; Hogg et al, 2004 | 4.00 | 3.14 |
| 76. Size/Type of town | Small Town, Market Town, Rural Town, Metropolitan, etc. | Carruthers, 1967 | 4.00 | 1.43 |
| 77. Household expenditures | The sum of household consumption expenditure and non-consumption expenditures | Thorpe, 1968 | 3.95 | 2.19 |
| 78. Regeneration | Strengthening economic linkages, development attracting commercial investment and consumers | Smith, 2004 | 3.95 | 2.90 |
| 79. Cleanliness | Look of centre, tidiness | Bennison and Davies, 1980 | 3.90 | 3.86 |
| 80. Consumer Choice | Consumer consumption expenditure preferences | Clarke et al., 2004 | 3.90 | 2.48 |
| 81. Familiarity | How comfortable people feel in the city centre/High Street | Leo and Philippe, 2010 | 3.90 | 3.48 |
| 82. Leisure offer | Facilities that offer activities which are associated with pleasure, enjoyment, and free time in a centre | Howard, 2007 | 3.90 | 3.40 |
| 83. Stakeholder power | Links to the degree of influence on decision-making by various High Street stakeholder groups | Pal and Sanders, 1997 | 3.90 | 3.05 |
| 84. Top 25 retailers | Links to the volatility of the covenant strength risk ratings of the top 25 retailers | Hutchison et al., 2008 | 3.90 | 2.48 |
| 85. Assortments | The breadth and depth of merchandise | Teller, 2008 | 3.88 | 3.71 |
| 86. Flexibility | The degree of change and adaptability of a centre's built environment and services in order to meet local conditions, trends, and consumer needs | Roberts et al., 2010 | 3.86 | 3.14 |
| 87. Population density | Measurement of population in a catchment area | Hall, 2011 | 3.85 | 1.74 |
| 88. Catchment age | Age profile of catchment | Shields and Deller, 1998 | 3.81 | 2.19 |
| 89. Amenities | Facilities such as toilets, places to sit and rest etc. | Sit et al, 2003 | 3.81 | 3.76 |
| 90. Liveability | Centres are accessible without a car and consumers can fulfil needs without travelling to another centre | Rotem-Mindali, 2012 | 3.81 | 2.86 |
|   |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| 91. Mobility | How freely and easily can people move to, from and in the high street/shopping centre | Rotem-Mindali, 2012 |
| 92. Mode of transport | How do customers come to the High Street (bus, car, foot, tram, metro, bicycle, etc.) | Timmermans et al., 1992 |
| 93. Structure | Physical layout of centre, store location, external appearance (fascias, etc.) | Dawson, 1988 |
| 94. Community leadership | Used here to describe Local Authorities leadership role with communities | Kures and Ryan, 2012 |
| 95. Chain vs independent | Number of multiples stores and independent stores in the retail mix of a centre/High Street | Borgers and Vosters, 2011 |
| 96. Construction of new shopping centre (in town) | Refers to the construction of new shopping centres and their effects in inner city areas | Timmermans et al., 1992 |
| 97. Economic base | Total number of businesses that generate employment in a community or a geographical area. | Shields and Deller, 1998 |
| 98. General facilities | Facilities that contribute to a retail centre's/High Street's convenience | Teller, 2008 |
| 99. Lease lengths | Average time of lease agreements between retailers and landlords for use of retail property | Nase et al., 2013 |
| 100. Mixed-Use | Developments that include not only retail activities, but also offices and even housing ones | Balsas, 2008 |
| 101. Recreational areas/facilities/activities | Areas to relax or simply spend time in and, therefore, satisfy social needs | Teller and Reutterer, 2008 |
| 102. Retail centre preference | Type of centre that consumers are choosing based on attitudinal criteria | Clulow and Reimers, 2009 |
| 103. Tourist/visitor attractions | All place attractions that are associated with spending free time, sightseeing, relaxation, leisure, etc. | De Nisco and Napolitano, 2006 |
| 104. Entertainment | All activities that can provide enjoyment and amusement to consumers | Teller et al., 2008 |
| 105. Networking | Interaction between High Street stakeholders for assistance and support | De Magalhaes, 2012 |
| 106. Retail change | Any change in regulations, infrastructure, technology, consumer behaviour, etc. that influences and alternates the retail offer on the High Street and beyond | Clarke, Bennison and Guy, 1994; Pioch and Byrom, 2004 |
| 107. Competition | Refers to the activities of retailers to gain more profit/sales than others in a particular area | Clarke, Bennison, Guy, 1994 |
| 108. Rents Turnover | Financial incentive given to tenants in which the rent is calculated by reference to the turnover generated by the tenant | Kirkup and Rafiq, 1994 | 3.72 | 3.10 |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|-------|------|
| 109. Atmosphere     | A global assessment of a retail centre, made up of a number of factors such as manoeuvrability, orientation and sales personnel | Teller and Elms, 2012 | 3.71 | 3.76 |
| 110. Secondary shopping/edge-of-centre shopping | Any type of shopping/retail activity in secondary locations out of High Street, e.g. Edge of City Centre locations | NRPF, 2004, Bennison et al, 2010 | 3.71 | 2.67 |
| 111. Spatial structure | Links to city centre/high street structures, nodal, bi-nodal, multi-nodal and polycentric regions and how they influence hierarchy of centres within metropolitan areas. | Bennison and Davies, 1980; Williams, 1999 | 3.71 | 1.24 |
| 112. Fragmentation | The degree of detachment in the High Street (political, retail, ownership, etc.) | Williams, 1999 | 3.67 | 2.81 |
| 113. Commercial yields | Level of return on commercial property investment | Hutchinson et al, 2008 | 3.67 | 2.88 |
| 114. Consumer culture | The current state that encourages consumption of goods/services | Clarke et al., 2004 | 3.67 | 2.10 |
| 115. Floorspace | Total amount of floor area that is used for retail, leisure and other town centre uses | Gibbs, 1987; Kavaratzis and Ashworth, 2008 | 3.67 | 3.05 |
| 116. Marketing | Town centre effort in marketing | | 3.67 | 3.57 |
| 117. Store characteristics | Perceptions on characteristics like store location, environment, staff, etc. | Pantano et al., 2010 | 3.67 | 3.52 |
| 118. Street characteristics | Physical characteristics of the street/route that leads to or contains shopping/retail areas | Borgers and Timmermans, 1986 | 3.67 | 3.05 |
| 119. Technology | As an environmental factor that affects retailers, e.g. RFID | Coca-Stefaniak et al, 2005 | 3.67 | 2.19 |
| 120. Travel time | Links to length of trip to the shopping centre, high street, etc. | Rotem-Mindali, 2012 | 3.67 | 1.67 |
| 121. Type of centre (mall vs street) | Retail Parks, Shopping Centres, Malls, Out-of-town, etc. | Hart et al, 2013 | 3.67 | 2.95 |
| 122. BID's | Establishment of a Business Improvement District enabling local businesses, services and council to collaborate | De Magalhaes, 2012 | 3.62 | 3.71 |
| 123. Drive time | Total number of minutes travelling by car to a desired location | Lowe, 2000 | 3.62 | 1.43 |
| 124. Number of landlords | Refers to the number of property owners that are renting out High Street premises | Whysall, 2011 | 3.62 | 2.90 |
| 125. Place hierarchy | Hierarchy of places based on their centrality and size (national, metropolitan, major | Reynolds and Schiller, 1992; 3.62 | 1.38 |
| 126. Real estate ownership | Links to type real estate ownership (single or multiple ownership, commercial company) | Teller, 2008 | 3.62 | 2.90 |
| 127. Store development | The process of building, upgrading, remodelling or renovating retail stores | Clarke, 2000 | 3.62 | 3.33 |
| 128. Engagement | Formal arrangement between High Street stakeholders (e.g. BIDs and council, community) | De Magalhaes, 2012 | 3.60 | 3.24 |
| 129. Retail fragmentation | Dividing up areas of high retail activity with areas of low activity | Hart et al, 2013 | 3.60 | 3.43 |
| 130. Catchment commuting | Amount of catchment that works in another centre | Shields and Deller, 1998 | 3.57 | 2.95 |
| 131. Environmental quality | Varied characteristics that refer to the natural fabric and built environment of the High Street/centre | Thomas and Bromley, 2003 | 3.57 | 2.69 |
| 132. Inertia (behavioural) | Tendency of consumers to repeat the same shopping trip in a centre as part of daily routines | Clarke et al., 2004 | 3.57 | 3.00 |
| 133. Local economic integration | Coordination of economic activities and reduction of barriers with an aim to reduce costs to both local consumers and retailers | Findlay and Sparks, 2010 | 3.57 | 3.00 |
| 134. Supply of retail units | Number of units/properties that are available for retail use only | Jones and Orr, 1999 | 3.57 | 3.00 |
| 135. Functionality | The degree to which a centre fulfils a role - e.g. service centre, employment centre, residential centre, tourist centre. | Powe and Hart, 2008 | 3.52 | 3.33 |
| 136. Heritage | All parts of city centre/High Street 'offer' that are part of a place's history (landmarks, old buildings, etc.) | Whitehead et al., 2006 | 3.52 | 3.12 |
| 137. Merchandise value | Links to the overall value of retail goods and the amount of pricing, discounts, samples, and other retail-related factors that customers can benefit from | Teller, 2008 | 3.52 | 2.86 |
| 138. Multiple land ownership | Pieces of land/buildings/stores on the High Street/Town Centre that are owned by more than one owner | Robertson, 1997; Henderson, 2011 | 3.52 | 2.81 |
| 139. Open space | Amount of space that is not in private ownership, that citizens can freely use | Cohen, 1996 | 3.52 | 3.38 |
| 140. Planning application | Permission in order to be allowed to build on land, or change the use of existing land or buildings | Dabinett et al., 1999 | 3.52 | 2.43 |
| 141. Public space | Amount of space that is not in private ownership, that citizens can freely use | Cohen, 1996 | 3.52 | 3.55 |
| 142. Retail-led Regeneration | The impact that retail has had on the regeneration (in its widest sense – social, economic, etc.) | Findlay and Sparks, 2009 | 3.52 | 2.81 |
economic and physical) of town centres and local high streets

| Code | Term                          | Definition                                                                                                                                  | Authors             | C1 | C2 |
|------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|----|----|
| 143. | Urban Design                  | Process of designing and shaping cities, towns and villages.                                                                                | De Nisco and Warnaby, 2014 | 3.52 | 3.05 |
| 144. | Use of technology             | Use of technology by retailers, to control costs, develop new markets, and new strategies                                                | Kures and Ryan, 2012 | 3.52 | 2.43 |
| 145. | Governance                    | Refers to the manner of governing the area affiliated with a centre (local, regional, metropolitan, community)                           | Henderson, 2011     | 3.48 | 2.95 |
| 146. | Retail/tenant Trust           | Links to the relationships between retail tenants and shopping centre managers or town centre managers, see tenant/managers relationship | Roberts et al., 2010 | 3.45 | 3.52 |
| 147. | Reputation                    | Links to the town’s/city’s ‘presence’ as a heuristic for visiting a retail centre/High Street                                             | Hart et al, 2013    | 3.43 | 3.19 |
| 148. | Store/centre design           | Process of designing shopping centres, stores, malls, etc.                                                                                    | Reimers and Clulow, 2004 | 3.43 | 3.31 |
| 149. | Catchment psychographics      | Classification of people in the catchment area according to their attitudes, aspirations, and other psychological criteria               | Sullivan & Savitt, 1997 | 3.38 | 2.24 |
| 150. | Orientation/flow (inc. signage) | A system of signs that provides information about the High Street’s offering and helps customers to orientate when on shopping trips, visits, etc. | Leo and Philippe, 2010 | 3.38 | 3.71 |
| 151. | Retail unit sizes             | Size of a retail unit on the High Street                                                                                                | Yuo et al., 2003; Guy, 1998 | 3.38 | 3.21 |
| 152. | Unfair competition            | Competitive advantages of e.g. multiples vs independents and conventional shops that create disparities                                      | Gibbs, 1987         | 3.38 | 2.38 |
| 153. | Ageing population             | People are living longer                                                                                                                    | Bookman, 2008       | 3.33 | 2.10 |
| 154. | Business ownership            | Refers to the type of ownership (sole trader, limited company, partnership, etc.)                                                           | Henderson, 2011     | 3.33 | 2.76 |
| 155. | Media Coverage                | A means of communicating about High Street – usually about events and festivities                                                             | Warnaby and Yip, 2005 | 3.33 | 3.17 |
| 156. | Tenant/manager relationships  | Links to the relationships between tenants and shopping centre managers (trust, warmthness, friendliness)                                      | Prendergast et al., 1987 | 3.33 | 3.76 |
| 157. | Centre empowerment            | The degree to which centre managers provide support and treat tenants as an important element of centre                                       | Roberts et al., 2010 | 3.32 | 3.76 |
| 158. | Crowds                        | Total number of people gathered in the centre/High Street                                                                                   | Gautschi, 1981      | 3.31 | 3.48 |
| 159. | Branding                      | Collective centre identity communicated about centre                                                                                        | Roberts et al, 2010 | 3.29 | 3.33 |
| 160. Centre marketing | The centre’s promotional strategies and activities in order to attract visitors/shoppers | Teller, 2008 | 3.29 | 3.76 |
| 161. Protection from weather | Store or High Street developments that can provide weather protection | Bennison and Davies, 1980 | 3.29 | 3.52 |
| 162. Tourism | All tourism attractions, number of tourists visiting, tourism expenditure, etc. | Hernandez and Jones, 2005 | 3.29 | 2.57 |
| 163. Regional rental level | The total rent per annum or rent per square foot/metre of a region | Yuo et al, 2003 | 3.26 | 2.63 |
| 164. Car ownership | Households with cars | Kervenoael et al, 2006 | 3.24 | 2.14 |
| 165. Social identity | A consumer’s self-concept derived from perceived membership in a relevant social group, in our case from local shopping and a sense of attachment to the community | Miller, 2001 | 3.24 | 2.81 |
| 166. Street trading | The retail or wholesale trading of goods and services in streets and other related public areas such as alleyways, avenues and boulevards | Jones et al., 2003 | 3.24 | 3.67 |
| 167. Low prices | Refers to the ability of some retailers (usually multiples, outlets, pound-shops) to offer permanently low prices | Alport, 2005 | 3.20 | 2.71 |
| 168. Integration | Unification of spaces in the city centre for the benefit of the public | Karrholm et al., 2014 | 3.19 | 3.52 |
| 169. Merchandising | The activity of promoting the sale of goods at retail centres/shopping centres/High Street | De Nisco and Napolitano, 2006 | 3.19 | 3.81 |
| 170. Open/closed centre | Links to whether the centre is enclosed or open-air (exit one store before entering another or internal access to all shops) | Bennison and Davies, 1980 | 3.19 | 3.48 |
| 171. Opportunities to experiment | Links to opportunities for innovativeness and new ideas that can improve the High Street offer | Neal, 2013 | 3.19 | 3.52 |
| 172. Organic development | Any store/high street/town centre development that stems from existing operations on the High Street/Town Centre | Bennison and Davies, 1980 | 3.19 | 3.48 |
| 173. Entry points | The number of routes that people choose to access the city centre | Borgers and Timmermans, 1986 | 3.10 | 2.71 |
| 174. Information (availability) | The type of information towns access and how this information is used | Larkham and Poper, 1989 | 3.10 | 3.57 |
| 175. Land ownership | Retail or other property, or land that is owned by an individual | Henderson, 2011 | 3.10 | 2.95 |
| 176. Culture | The ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society | Robertson, 1997 | 3.05 | 2.19 |
| 177. Personal services | Commercial services such as catering and cleaning that supply the personal needs of | Kures and Ryan, 2012 | 3.05 | 3.81 |
|   | 178. Community benefits | Gestures from commercial developers to the community in exchange for planning permissions and agreements | Howard, 2007 | 2.95 | 3.29 |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|-------|-------|
|   | 179. Community engagement | The process whereby public bodies reach out to communities to create empowerment opportunities | Depriest-Hricko and Prytherch, 2013 | 2.95 | 3.52 |
|   | 180. Community power | Refers to how much power the community has in decision-making for High Street change | Scottish Government, 2007 | 2.95 | 3.24 |
|   | 181. CPOs | Compulsory Purchase Order: Obtaining Land for retail and other purposes without owner's consent | Imrie and Thomas, 1997 | 2.95 | 2.90 |
|   | 182. Social cohesion | Tendency for a group to be in unity towards a common goal | Williams, 1999 | 2.95 | 2.86 |
|   | 183. Special offers | Degree of availability of special offers/discounts on the High Street, shopping centre, retail park, etc. | Marjanen, 2000 | 2.95 | 3.62 |
|   | 184. Centre support for the local community and environment | Retailers' CSR actions that benefit the centre's environment and the community overall | Oppewal et al., 2006 | 2.95 | 3.80 |
|   | 185. Information (seeking) | Recollection of product/service-related information, or general information for a centre, either internal or external | Brown, 1987 | 2.90 | 3.24 |
|   | 186. Social enterprise | Organisations (or even BIDs) that apply commercial strategies to maximize improvements in human and environmental well-being | De Magalhaes, 2012 | 2.90 | 3.10 |
|   | 187. Communication practices (development) | Refers to the number of channels and information that is provided to an area's stakeholders for future land/building developments | Henderson, 2011 | 2.86 | 2.95 |
|   | 188. Credit | Ability to purchase goods/services by credit cards, etc. | Sullivan & Savitt, 1997 | 2.86 | 2.52 |
|   | 189. Local resistance | Degree of support to a local market when "threatened" by large retailers | Hallsworth and Worthington, 2000 | 2.81 | 3.52 |
|   | 190. Methods of classification | Classification of High Streets/Town Centres/Shopping Centres by type of goods, shopping trip purpose, size, ownership | Guy, 1998 | 2.81 | 1.81 |
|   | 191. Political climate | Current mood and opinions of political issues that affect decision-making | Brown, 1987 | 2.81 | 2.00 |
|   | 192. Property age | Age of commercial/retail properties on the High Street | Wolverton and Carr, 2002 | 2.81 | 3.14 |
| Performance Indicators (KPIs) | Type of performance measurements that are related to the High Street | Hogg, Medway, Warnaby, 2004 | 2.76 | 3.24 |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------|------|
| 194. Ethnic retailers         | The act of retailing by members of minority ethnic groups/immigrants on the High Street | Coca-Stefaniak et al., 2010 | 2.71 | 3.48 |
| 195. Upper floor usage        | What upper-floor developments are needed and how they can assist in the viability of the High Street | Scottish Government, 2007 | 2.71 | 3.62 |
| 196. Baby-Change Facilities/Toilets | Hygiene factors of a centre including public toilets, baby rooms, diaper changing rooms | Reimers and Clulow, 2000 | 2.55 | 3.95 |
| 197. Deliveries               | The process of delivering goods to shops/centres                   | Pickering, 1981              | 2.52 | 3.36 |
| 198. Cycling                  | Refers to all infrastructure and routes available for cyclists      | Biddulph, 2011               | 2.43 | 3.14 |
| 199. Land contamination       | Pollution caused by past uses of a site, such as former factories, mines, steelworks, refineries and landfills. | Dabinett et al, 1999         | 2.43 | 2.62 |
| 200. Child-minding centre     | A daycare centre for children which is part of the shopping area    | Johnston and Rimmer, 1967    | 2.29 | 3.95 |
| 201. Healthcare               | Organized provision of medical care to individuals or a community  | May et al., 2012             | 2.2381 | 2.5238 |
| PRIORITY                                      | FACTORS                                                                 |
|----------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. ACTIVITY HOURS                            | Opening hours; shopping hours; evening economy                           |
| 2. APPEARANCE                                | Visual appearance; cleanliness                                             |
| 3. RETAILERS                                 | Retailer offer; retailer representation                                    |
| 4. VISION & STRATEGY                        | Leadership; collaboration; area development strategies                    |
| 5. EXPERIENCE                                | Service quality; visitor satisfaction; centre image; familiarity           |
| 6. MANAGEMENT                                | Centre management; shopping centre management; Town Centre Management; place management |
| 7. MERCHANDISE                               | Range/quality of goods; assortments                                       |
| 8. NECESSITIES                               | Car-parking; amenities; general facilities                                |
| 9. Anchor stores                             | Presence of anchor stores - which give locations their basic character and signify importance |
| 10. NETWORKS & PARTNERSHIPS WITH COUNCIL     | Networking; partnerships; community leadership                            |
| 11. DIVERSITY                                | Attractions; range/quality of shops; non-retail offer; tenant mix; tenant variety; retail diversity; availability of alternative formats |
| 12. WALKING                                  | Walkability; pedestrianisation/flow; cross-shopping; linked trips         |
| 13. ENTERTAINMENT AND LEISURE                | Entertainment; leisure offer                                               |
| 14. ATTRACTIVENESS                           | Place attractiveness; attractiveness (refers to the ability of the centre to ‘attract’) |
| 15. PLACE ASSURANCE                          | Atmosphere; BIDs; retail/tenant trust; store characteristics.             |
| 16. ACCESSIBLE                               | Convenience; accessibility; public transport                              |
| 17. PLACE MARKETING                          | Centre marketing; marketing; tenant/manager relations; orientation/flow; merchandising; special offers |
| 18. Comparison/convenience                   | The amount of comparison shopping opportunities compared to convenience (usually in percentage terms) |
| 19. RECREATIONAL SPACE                      | Recreational areas; public space; open space                              |
| 20. Barriers to Entry                        | Refers to obstacles that make it difficult for interested businesses to trade in the centre |
| 21. Chain vs independent                     | Number of multiples stores and independent stores in the retail mix of a centre/High Street |
| 22. Safety/crime                             | A centre KPI measuring perceptions or actual crime including shoplifting |
| 23. LIVEABLE                                 | Multi/mono-functional; connectivity; liveability                          |
| 24. ADAPTABILITY                             | Retail flexibility; flexibility; mixed-use; engagement; functionality; store/centre design; retail unit size |
| 25. Store development                        | The process of building, upgrading, remodelling or renovating retail stores |

Table 1: 25 priorities for increasing vitality and viability
Do decision makers have up-to-date information on activity? 
Do retailers know who uses the centre and when? 
Are developments and trends tracked and modelled?

Does the centre meet the needs of the catchment? 
Do local people have to go elsewhere to meet important everyday requirements?

What is the reputation of the town? 
Are current perceptions held realistic or out of date? 
How well do stakeholders communicate a positive image of the town?

Are the governance structures in place actively managing change? 
How well are stakeholders engaged in decision making and action? 
Is the town in need of large-scale physical restructuring?

The 4Rs of High Street Regeneration

Figure 2
Figure 1: 201 Factors that influence vitality and viability
Figure 3: 4Rs framework incorporating stakeholder and resource considerations

- **Reinventing**
  - Does the centre meet the needs of the catchment?
  - Do local people have to go elsewhere to meet important everyday requirements?

- **Restructuring**
  - Are the governance structures in place actually managing change?
  - How are stakeholders engaged in decision making and action?
  - Is the town in need of large-scale physical restructuring?

- **Repositioning**
  - Do decision makers have up to date information on activity?
  - Do retailers know who uses the centre and when?
  - Are developments and trends tracked and modelled?

- **Rebranding**
  - What is the reputation of the town?
  - Are current perceptions held realistic or out of date?
  - How well do stakeholders communicate a positive image of the town?