

8.4 Retail & work

Key issues

- The balance of retail is under pressure with smaller independent stores, which are seen as integral to the character of the neighbourhood, being replaced by multiples.
- The high number of separate landlords in the area prevents a curatorial approach to retail in the neighbourhood. Where local people desire a mix of retail to suit different needs, owners are prone to seeking the tenant able to pay the highest rent. This can lead to homogenisation, serving commuters and tourists rather than residents or other kinds of shoppers.
- The neighbourhood lacks anchor stores which draw shoppers to the area and can complement independent shops.
- The success of retail in the area will be linked to the development of Waterloo Station and there is a need to involve Network Rail and LCR in discussion to align the long term ambitions of the station operator and the community.
- There is a shortage of office space in the area, and in particular offices that support the needs of young and small businesses i.e spaces which are affordable and flexible in their tenure and size.
- More could be done to ensure local jobseekers benefit from local job creation, unlocked through development.

Consultation and Evidence

Summary of results of consultation and evidence for Policies 10 – 13 ; Retail & work is at Appendix 4, page 48.

Policies P10, P11, P12, P13 : Retail & work

No	Policy
P10	<p>The Neighbourhood Plan supports development that provides retail units in appropriate locations with the following characteristics :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Interiors fitted out to RIBA category B standard and made available for temporary or pop-up use ii. A range of unit sizes including units with shop floors under 20 sq/ m
P11	<p>In Lower Marsh, planning applications will be required to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Retain an appropriate mix of retail units, taking particular note of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Planning applications involving the loss of an A1 unit will not be supported unless the overall percentage of A1 units remains above 50% following its loss. ii) Planning applications involving the loss of an A3 unit will not be supported unless the overall percentage of A3 units remains above 30% following its loss. b) Retain and enhance the retail use of the frontages, taking particular note of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) conversion from retail to residential on these streets will not be permitted, and ii) applications to convert ground floor residential units to A1 or A3 use will be supported* <p>*with the exception of the purpose built housing such as New Cut housing Co-op and Styles House.</p>
P12	<p>Schemes will be encouraged which provide office or workspace with the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Are able to be subdivided to encourage flexible use and co-working and/or ii. Include a range of unit sizes including offices of under 1000 sq/ m and/or iii. Are able to provide accommodation for a range of jobs which are accessible to local people and/or iv. Commit to working with third party employment support providers and local schools to provide work placements, apprenticeships and training support for unemployed people.

P13	<p>The neighbourhood will support proposals which enable physical infrastructure improvements to support the development and servicing of the street market at Lower Marsh, including :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Electricity points ii. Storage iii. Refuse storage iv. Improved lighting v. Improved seating vi. Green infrastructure
-----	---

Rationale for policies

Policy P10 – The following facilities to enable temporary or pop-up uses will be encouraged.

- Walls painted white or temporary walls installed to cover up any that are damaged
- Simple overhead lighting ideally spot lighting with different controls so tenants can adjust the lighting state as required
- As much glass frontage as possible
- Power sockets throughout
- WiFi, water and electricity connected
- Access to a toilet
- Buildings insurance

These characteristics were advised after consultation with experts We Are Pop Up, who identify temporary retail spaces for small start-ups at low cost. We Are Pop Up also advise that units should be provided which enable smaller retailers to share space – e.g. a room with a ‘shelf-share’ arrangement or a series of kiosk-style spaces with shared services. The local community would encourage such approaches.

Policy P11 – Lower Marsh – The local community, whilst recognising and welcoming a general shift towards a combination of A3 restaurant uses as well as A1 retail uses, would like to strengthen existing policy to ensure that only a minority of premises are used as services. This preserves the character of the street as a shopping street with daytime as well as evening uses.

Policy P12 – Flexibility is defined both in terms of physical adaptability and length of tenure. There is a need for office spaces which can be adapted as co-working space, shared between a number of smaller companies who are able to economise through shared services such as cleaning. There is also a shortage of large spaces for more established businesses.

Policy P13 – Lower Marsh Market is a valued community asset and a locally-owned not-for-profit company which requires particular and continued support to grow, including investment in infrastructure. It requires particular support as it is an asset in public ownership which can be developed to :

1. Create jobs
2. Drive footfall to the street to support local shops
3. Provide opportunities for training and small business incubation, including via links with schools, colleges and universities
4. Rebalance the local retail offer so as to ensure a greater mix, including provision for the local resident population on a range of incomes
5. Form greater strategic links between the market and other developing parts of Waterloo such as Leake Street, Waterloo Station and a newly developed Johanna site
6. Generate a surplus to support the growth of the market, and the wider regeneration of Waterloo

Retail & work : Other guidance

1. SoWN supports the use of CIL or S106 to subsidise affordable office space for start-ups and enterprise activity – the proximity to local universities provides an opportunity to develop local entrepreneurial talent via subsidies granted by a community body.
2. SoWN supports the use of covenants to restrict the proliferation of specific types of uses in close proximity (e.g. supermarkets, betting shops, coffee shops). Covenants must be agreed by the landowner but are an opportunity to prevent changes of use where such changes would be detrimental to the economic health of the street.
3. Consideration should be given to how changes to business rates allowing for local setting of rates levels can be managed to encourage the establishment of businesses which would serve an unmet need in the community.
4. SoWN supports the Planning Authorities' policies to strengthen protections against the loss of office space in the neighbourhood area, and encourage applications for new provision to come forward. A significant loss of office space threatens the balance of the neighbourhood, including the local retail economy. Central London exemptions to government guidance allowing for office to residential conversion without planning consent are being modified and may erode this further.

Appendix 4.

Summary of results of consultation and evidence for Policies P10, P11, P12, P13 : Retail & work

The problem of retail in the area is closely linked with the change in demographic and lifestyles. The fortunes of Lower Marsh were traditionally linked with residents' use of the market for daily grocery shopping and local office workers taking lunch in its cafes. Such habits are no longer sufficient to sustain high street operations and so local independents are adapting to thrive.

As outlined in national studies of the changing nature of high streets in recent years, the South Bank and Waterloo retail community will need to redefine the offer to move ahead. The Waterloo Retail Study¹² identifies opportunities to create a retail centre with the redevelopment of Waterloo Station and the 'triangle site' opposite. If sufficient supply of modern new units is created to enable multiples to proliferate on Waterloo Road and in the Station itself, the unique but separate shopping environments of Lower Marsh will face less pressure from high rents, which lead to the loss of independents.

Local people support the addition of a supermarket in the right location, and being able to shop locally would help to sustain low car ownership levels in the area.

Planning legislation does not permit councils to dictate the operator of a business, only the nature of the operation, as set out in a list of Use Classes. Banks and estate agents are represented by the same Use Class, as are chain supermarkets and independent clothes shops – for this reason it is not possible through planning policy to prevent a situation which occurred on Waterloo Road in which a Sainsbury's Local, Tesco Metro and M&S Simply Food are situated immediately adjacent to one another.

Additionally, a large majority of the available units are in private ownership and the landlord is the sole determinant of the tenant that leases them. In many cases the landlord will accept the operator who will pay the highest rent. It is only in cases such as Marylebone High Street, where a single landowner – the Howard de Walden Estate – is able to 'curate' the high street offer, choosing a mix of operators to suit a range of needs.

¹² Waterloo Retail Study, The Retail Group 2015

Although it is recognised that the forces of supply and demand drive retail, local people hope that the plan can help to create the conditions to encourage both young start-up businesses and which serve the needs of residents.

Approaches to solving this problem are found in the guidance and projects the neighbourhood forum has developed. The first of these is for a local consortium to purchase one or more buildings for the benefit of the community. Run as social enterprises, these operations will:

- a. Meet local need not currently met by the market (e.g. a community owned launderette)
- b. Provide jobs and volunteer opportunities for local people
- c. Provide genuinely affordable housing above retail units¹³

The second of these is to set up a local retail trust which acts as a low cost lettings agency for participating landlords, providing an agreed rental yield and resulting in a more balanced offer for the neighbourhood. A local trust could also contribute to identifying temporary lessees, pop ups and university spin off businesses in unlet new units.¹⁴

The final issue raised in the retail working group is that of the severe lack of office space.¹⁵ The group advanced policy that committed to supporting the council in its protection of any further losses, particularly of affordable or mid-range office space. In addition, opportunities to create new offices should be taken up, with units in railway arches on Wootton Street providing a good example and where potential exists for more such development.¹⁶

¹³ Paragraph 5.15 of the "London Borough of Lambeth Retail and Town Centre Needs Assessment" states that in some parts of Central London where small shops are in short supply and affordability is a key concern, a policy requiring Planning contributions to provide or support affordable shop units for small or independent retailers may be appropriate

¹⁴ Page 113 of the "London Borough of Lambeth Retail and Town Centre Needs Assessment" reports on the Portas Review, which recommended the provision of low-cost temporary space

¹⁵ Paragraph 4.5 of the "Employment Land Review 2013" states that a number of surveys found "the limited availability of employment land and premises is seen as a key constraint in stimulating new investment." Paragraph 6.38 states that "it will also be important that other parts of the Borough away from the Opportunity Areas provide accommodation that is flexible and affordable and meets the needs of SMEs" – unhelpful as the NP area is an <http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/EmploymentLandReview2013.pdf>

¹⁶ Paragraph 2.11 of the Waterloo Area SPD states that "smaller businesses and social enterprises will be encouraged. Many railway arches have already been converted to provide for small business use, and there are still many opportunities, particularly in the south of the SPD area." http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/pl-Waterloo%20Area%20SPD%20-%20Adopted%202013_0.pdf