

# **Thurrock Town and Local Centres Health Check Assessment 2023**

Thurrock Council



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# 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Thurrock is currently preparing a new Local Plan for the Borough. This means that policies within the currently adopted Core Strategy Development Plan Document (Core Strategy) will need to be reviewed and updated, where necessary, along with the evidence that is there to support it.
- 1.2 In terms of Retail and Town Centres, Thurrock's adopted policies from the Core Strategy are CSTP7 – Network of Centre and CSTP8 – Vitality and Viability of Existing Centres. Policy CSTP7 sets out designations for the centres within the Borough, including; Lakeside Regional Centre, Grays Town Centre, Local Centres and Neighbourhood Centres, consisting of large and small neighbourhood parades. The evidence behind these designations comprises of the Thurrock Retail Study (September 2007), the Thurrock Retail Study (February 2012) and the Lakeside Basin Single Issue Review Agreed Final Report (March 2009). CSTP8 sets out measures for maintaining and promoting the retail function of existing centres and for improving their vitality and viability.
- 1.3 Since the publication of the Thurrock Retail Studies, new national policy and guidance has been published. It is therefore necessary to update the retail and town centres evidence base, in order to inform the retail and town centres policies of the new Local Plan. This will involve assessing the health of existing local centres. Health check assessments are important for appraising and monitoring changes in the vitality and viability of centres and can be used for plan-making and decision taking.
- 1.4 This document reports on the findings of the health check assessments carried out during September 2022 and October 2023 for Grays Town Centre and the Local Centres of Corringham, Stanford-le-Hope, South Ockendon, Tilbury, Aveley and Socketts Heath.

## 2 Policy Context

### National Planning Policy Framework

- 2.1 The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2023) sets out the Government’s planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. The NPPF must be taken into account when preparing Local Plans and Neighbourhood Plans.
- 2.2 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to achieving sustainable development, which can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 2.3 There are three overarching objectives to sustainable development within the planning system, all three of which are interdependent, and which should be pursued in mutually supportive ways.

**Economic objective:** to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure.

**Social objective:** to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural well-being.

**Environmental objective:** to contribute to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, helping to improve biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.

- 2.4 To ensure that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, paragraph 11 identifies that at the heart of the Framework is a “*presumption in favour of sustainable development*,” which should be applied for both plan-making and decision-taking.
- 2.5 With regard to ensuring the vitality of town centres, paragraph 90 of the NPPF states that “Planning Policies and decisions should support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaption.”

- 2.6 It specifies that planning policies should define a network and hierarchy of town centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability; define the extent of town centres and primary shopping areas, making clear the range of uses permitted in such locations; retain and enhance existing markets and where appropriate, re-introduce or create new ones; allocate a range of suitable sites in town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed in at least ten years ahead; allocate appropriate edge of centre sites that are well connected to the town centre, where suitable and viable town centre sites are not available for main town centre uses and; recognise that residential development can play an important role in ensuring the vitality of centres, encouraging residential development on appropriate sites.

## **National Planning Practice Guidance**

- 2.7 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) was published in 2014 and has been continuously revised up to the present day. It brings together in one place, planning guidance on various topics.
- 2.8 The most recent guidance on Town Centres and Retail was published in 2020. It recommends that town centre strategies should be based on evidence of the current state of town centres, as well as identify opportunities that exist to accommodate a range of suitable development and support their viability and vitality.
- 2.9 The NPPG also highlights the following indicators as being relevant in determining the health of town centres:
- diversity of uses
  - proportion of vacant street level property
  - commercial yields on non-domestic property
  - customers' views and behaviour
  - retailer representation and intentions to change representation
  - commercial rents
  - pedestrian flows
  - accessibility
  - perception of safety and occurrence of crime
  - state of town centre environmental quality

- balance between independent and multiple stores
- extent to which there is evidence of barriers to new businesses opening and existing businesses expanding
- opening hours/availability/extent to which there is an evening and night time economy offer

## Local Policy Context

2.10 Until the new Local Plan is adopted, the Council's Core Strategy will continue to form part of the policy context for decision making in Thurrock. The Core Strategy was originally adopted in December 2011 and was subsequently updated in January 2015, following the publication of the NPPF.

2.11 With regards to retail, the relevant policies from the Core Strategy include:

### **CSTP7 – Network of Centres**

2.12 CSTP7 designates centres within Thurrock and sets out development expectations within them during the plan period (up to 2026). Designated centres include: Lakeside Regional Centre; Grays Town Centre; Existing Local Centres; New Centres; and Existing Neighbourhood Centres.

2.13 For Grays, the Council supports the regeneration of the town centre and for it to become the focus for cultural, administrative and educational functions, whilst providing retail development that is complementary to the Lakeside Basin. Development in Grays town centre will include the following:

- (i) Up to 5,500-6,500 sqm of net comparison floorspace by 2026;
- (ii) Up to 4,000-5,000 sqm of net bulky durable floorspace by 2026;
- (iii) Between 1,500-2,000 sqm of net convenience floorspace by 2026;
- (iv) Other cultural, administrative and education developments consistent with the spatial vision for Grays.

2.14 For Existing Local Centres, the Council encourages the following development for local centres:

- (i) Renewal, upgrading or remodelling of existing floorspace;
- (ii) Additional small scale retail floorspace in suitable locations that will strengthen the centres' retail offer;



- (iii) Investigation into the potential of a new supermarket on an appropriate site in Stanford-le-Hope to reduce convenience expenditure leakage from the east of the Borough.

## **CSTP8 – Vitality and Viability of Existing Centres**

2.15 CSTP8 sets out measures for maintaining and promoting the retail function of existing centres and for improving the vitality and viability of the network of centres in order to meet the needs of the Borough's residents and to act as a focus for retail, leisure, cultural, business and residential uses. The Council will do this in the following ways:

- (i) Permitting applications for main town centre uses on suitable sites of an appropriate scale to the role and function of the centres, with Town Centres being the preferred locations, followed by edge of Town Centre locations;
- (ii) Resist proposals for main town centre uses in out of centre locations if town centre or edge of town centre locations are available, and also at edge of town centre locations if town centre locations are available;
- (iii) Encouraging diversifications and improvement of the range and quality of facilities including retail, employment, leisure and entertainment, community, culture and education;
- (iv) Retaining and, subject to other Core Strategy policies, permitting additional residential development in appropriate locations and in particular on sites identified for mixed development;
- (v) Improving access for public transport, pedestrians, cyclists and those with special needs, whilst managing road traffic and improving road safety;
- (vi) Improving the wider environment by ensuring new development protects and/or enhances the designated centres including historic character, townscape and biodiversity;
- (vii) Where appropriate seeking to improve personal safety and contribute to crime reduction by design and other measures.

2.16 Appendix 7 of the Core Strategy lists saved Local Plan (adopted 1997) policies and identifies how they will be replaced. With regards to town and local centres, the following saved policies are relevant to this assessment.

## **SH3 – Grays Shopping Centre – Additional Retail Floorspace**

2.17 Policy SH3 has the aim of increasing the provision of retail floorspace and improving the quality of shopping facilities in Grays Shopping Centre, as defined on the Local Plan Proposals Map (1997). The boundary shown on Maps 1, 2, 3 and 4 of 'Grays Shopping Centre' is saved from policy SH3.

### **SH10 – Non-Retail Uses in District and Local Shopping Centres**

2.18 Policy SH10 seeks to restrict the change of use from Class A1 (Shops) at ground floor level in district and local centres. It identifies what, if any, change of use will be permitted for each of the identified areas. The areas identified include:

- Core Areas
- Central Areas
- Peripheral Areas

2.19 It states that district and local centres in the Plan area; Grays, Tilbury, Corringham, Stanford-le-Hope, South Ockendon, Aveley and Socketts Heath perform a convenience and in many cases a comparison shopping function. The policy aims to safeguard their shopping function while being sufficiently flexible to allow a range of uses, appropriate in town centres to fill in any lower demand for shops. The policy identifies primary shopping frontages, where non-retail uses will be restricted in order to maintain a good number of shops and secondary frontages where there will be no restrictions to changes of use to certain defined use classes providing development control standards are met.

2.20 Maps 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 and 11 show the boundaries for 'Shopping Areas' and 'Shopping Centres and Parades' from policy SH10 .

### 3 Methodology

- 3.1 This Health Check Assessment assesses the Borough’s adopted Town and Local Centres set out within Policy CSTP7 – Network of Centres of the Core Strategy. It does not assess Lakeside Regional Centre.
- 3.2 The assessment was undertaken during September 2022 and October 2023, and involved visiting and assessing all of the designated centres listed in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Assessed Centres**

TOWN CENTRES	LOCAL CENTRES
Grays Town Centre	Aveley Corringham Socketts Heath South Ockendon Stanford-le-Hope Tilbury

- 3.3 At each of the Town and Local Centre, information was recorded firstly on the centre as a whole and secondly, on each individual unit. Table 2 shows the methodology of the assessment, including the criteria used and how each centre/individual unit was scored.
- 3.4 When the centres were previously assessed in 2016, 2017 and 2018, assessments were also undertaken for Thurrock’s designated Neighbourhood Centres, which includes small and large neighbourhood parades. These were not assessed as part of this assessment.

**Table 2 – Methodology of Health Check Assessment**

<b>A. DESIGNATED CENTRE</b>		
<b>Criteria Assessed</b>		<b>Methodology/Assessment Criteria</b>
<b>Environment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Street furniture (quantity and quality)</li> </ul>	<p>Is the centre equipped with a mix of essential street furniture (benches, bins, planters, lighting and bollards)? (yes +1, no -1)</p> <p>Is there sufficient street furniture in the centre? (yes +1, no -1)</p> <p>Is the positioning of the furniture ideal for the users? (yes +1, no -1)</p> <p>Does the appearance of the furniture add positively to the character of the centre? (yes +1, no -1)</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>General condition (cleanliness, maintenance and utility condition)</li> </ul>	<p>Is there litter around? (yes -1, no +1)</p> <p>Is there any graffiti present (not including on units being assessed)? (yes -1, no +1)</p> <p>Is the street furniture in good condition? (yes +1, no -1)</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safety and security</li> </ul>	<p>Are the pavements wide and evenly paved? (yes +1, no -1)</p> <p>Is there enough policing and surveillance? (yes +1, no -1)</p>
<b>Accessibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rail</li> <li>• Bus</li> <li>• Car</li> <li>• Cycle</li> </ul>	<p>Is the nearest railway station within 5 minutes walk from the centre? (yes +1, no -1)</p> <p>How many bus routes serve the centre?</p> <p>Is the centre accessible by car and is there parking available? (yes +1, no -1)</p> <p>Is the centre easily accessible by bicycle? (yes +1, no -1)</p> <p>Are cycle racks available at the centre? (yes +1, no -1)</p>

## B. INDIVIDUAL UNITS

Criteria Assessed	Methodology/Assessment Criteria
<b>Shop/business name</b>	Name of the retail unit/organisation
<b>Function</b>	What is the use-class of the unit or is the unit vacant?
<b>Unit exterior</b>	Is the unit's exterior inviting? (yes +1, no -1) Are windows cluttered with leaflets? (yes -1, no +1) Can you see into the shop premises in the day time? (yes +1, no -1) Are shop signs in good condition and well maintained? (yes +1, no -1) Is there graffiti on the exterior of the premises? (yes -1, no +1)
<b>Night-time Economy (what effect do the premises have on the night-time economy of the overall centre?)</b>	Is it open into the evening? (after 7pm) (yes +1, no -1)

## Limitations

- 3.5 The assessments were undertaken by one officer and therefore, centres have been fairly assessed, as far as possible. It should however be acknowledged that some of the assessment is down to the opinion of the officer and is subjective, for example the rating of the street furniture, the window displays and shop signs/shutters. When assessments are undertaken in the future, it is advised that one officer undertakes the whole assessment in order to get a fair result across all centres.

## **4 Use Classes**

- 4.1 The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended), put the uses of land and buildings into categories known as 'Use Classes'. In September 2020, the Government introduced a significant change to the land use class order. Table 3 below sets out the changes that were made.



**Table 3 - Use Classes**

New Land Use Class	Previous Land Use Class
<p><b>B2 General Industrial</b> – Use for industrial process other than one falling within class E(g) (<i>previously class B1</i>) (excluding incineration purposes, chemical treatment or landfill or hazardous waste).</p> <p><b>B8 Storage or distribution</b> – This class includes open air storage.</p>	<p><b>B2 General industrial</b> – Use for industrial process other than that falling within B1 use.</p> <p><b>B8 Storage and distribution</b> – Includes open air storage.</p>
<p><b>C1 Hotels</b> – Hotels, boarding and guest houses where no significant element of care is provided (excludes hostels)</p> <p><b>C2 Residential Institutions</b> – Residential care homes, hospitals, nursing homes, boarding schools, residential colleges and training centres.</p> <p><b>C2A Secure Residential Institution</b> – Use for a provision of secure residential accommodation, including use as a prison, young offenders institution, detention centre, secure training centre, custody centre, short term holding centre, secure hospital, secure local authority accommodation or use as a military barracks.</p> <p><b>C3 Dwelling houses</b>            C3(a) covers use by a single person or a family (a couple whether married or not, a person related to one another with members of the family of one of the couple to be treated as members of the family of the other), an employer and certain domestic employees (such as an au pair, nanny, nurse, governess, servant, chauffeur, gardener,</p>	<p><b>C1 Hotels</b> – Hotels, boarding and guest houses (excluding hostels).</p> <p><b>C2 Residential institutions</b> – Residential care homes, hospitals, nursing homes, boarding schools, residential colleges and training centres.</p> <p><b>C3 Dwelling houses</b></p>

[13]

New Land Use Class	Previous Land Use Class
<p>secretary and personal assistant), a carer and the person receiving the care and a foster parent and foster child.</p> <p>C3(B) covers up to six people living together as a single household and receiving care e.g. supported housing schemes such as those for people with learning disabilities or mental health problems.</p> <p>C3(c) allows for groups of people (up to six) living together as a single household. This allows for those groupings that do not fall within the C4 HMO definition, but which fell within the previous C3 use class, to be provided for i.e. a small religious community may fall into this section as could a homeowner who is living with a lodger.</p> <p><b>C4 Houses in multiple occupation</b> – Small shared houses occupied by between three and six unrelated individuals, as their only or main residence, who share basic amenities such as a kitchen or bathroom.</p>	
<p><b>E(a)</b> Display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food.</p> <p><b>E(b)</b> Sale of food and drink for consumption (mostly) on the premises.</p> <p><b>E(C)</b> Provision of:</p> <p><b>E(C)(i)</b> Financial services</p> <p><b>E(C)(ii)</b> Professional services (other than health or medical services), or</p> <p><b>E(C)(iii)</b> Other appropriate services in a commercial, business or service locality</p> <p><b>E(d)</b> Indoor sport, recreation or fitness (not involving motorised vehicles or firearms or use as a swimming pool or skating rink,)</p> <p><b>E(e)</b> Provision of medical or health services (except the use of premises attached to the residence of the consultant or practitioner)</p> <p><b>E(f)</b> Creche, day nursery or day centre (not including a residential use)</p>	<p>Classes <b>A1, A2, A3, B1, D1 (a-b)</b> and 'indoor sport' from <b>D2(e)</b>.</p>

New Land Use Class	Previous Land Use Class
<p><b>E(g)</b> Uses which can be carried out in a residential area without detriment to its amenity:</p> <p><b>E(g)(i)</b> Offices to carry out any operational or administrative functions</p> <p><b>E(g)(ii)</b> Research and development of products or processes</p> <p><b>E(g)(iii)</b> Industrial processes</p>	
<p><b>F1 Learning and non-residential institutions</b> – use (not including residential use):</p> <p><b>F1(a)</b> Provision of education</p> <p><b>F1(b)</b> Display of works of art (otherwise than for sale or hire)</p> <p><b>F1(c)</b> Museums</p> <p><b>F1(d)</b> Public libraries or public reading rooms</p> <p><b>F1(e)</b> Public halls or exhibition halls</p> <p><b>F1(f)</b> Public worship or religious instruction (or in connection with such use)</p> <p><b>F1(g)</b> Law courts</p> <p><b>F2 Local community</b></p> <p><b>F2(a)</b> Shops (mostly) selling essential goods, including food, where the shop's premises do not exceed 280sqm and there is no other such facility within 1000m</p> <p><b>F2(b)</b> Halls or meeting places for the principal use of the local community</p> <p><b>F2(c)</b> Areas or places for outdoor sport or recreation (not involving motorised vehicles or firearms)</p> <p><b>F2(d)</b> Indoor or outdoor swimming pools or skating rinks</p>	<p>Classes <b>D1</b>, parts of <b>D2(e)</b> (outdoor sport, swimming pools and skating rinks).</p>

New Land Use Class	Previous Land Use Class
<p><b>Sui Generis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• theatres</li> <li>• amusement arcades/centres or funfairs</li> <li>• launderettes</li> <li>• fuel stations</li> <li>• hiring, selling and/or displaying motor vehicles</li> <li>• taxi businesses</li> <li>• scrap yards, or a yard for the storage/distribution of minerals and/or the breaking of motor vehicles</li> <li>• 'Alkali work' (any work registerable under the Alkali, etc. Works Regulation Act 1906 (as amended))</li> <li>• hostels (providing no significant element of care)</li> <li>• waste disposal installations for the incineration, chemical treatment or landfill of hazardous waste</li> <li>• retail warehouse clubs</li> <li>• nightclubs</li> <li>• casinos</li> <li>• betting offices/shops</li> <li>• pay day loan shops</li> <li>• public houses, wine bars, or drinking establishments</li> <li>• drinking establishments with expanded food provision</li> </ul>	<p><b>A4</b></p> <p><b>A4</b></p>




New Land Use Class	Previous Land Use Class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• hot food takeaways (for the sale of hot food where consumption of that food is mostly undertaken off the premises)</li> <li>• venues for live music performance – <i>newly defined as 'Sui Generis' use</i></li> <li>• cinemas</li> <li>• concert halls</li> <li>• bingo halls</li> <li>• dance halls</li> </ul>	<p><b>A5</b></p> <p><b>D2(a)</b></p> <p><b>D2(b)</b></p> <p><b>D2(c)</b></p> <p><b>D2(d)</b></p>

# 5 Grays

5.1 Grays is the largest town within Thurrock and lies on the River Thames, centrally within the Borough. Historically, it was the dominant centre for retail in the Borough, but it has been greatly affected by the opening of Lakeside Regional Shopping Centre, in 1990.

Map 1 – Grays Town Centre Boundary



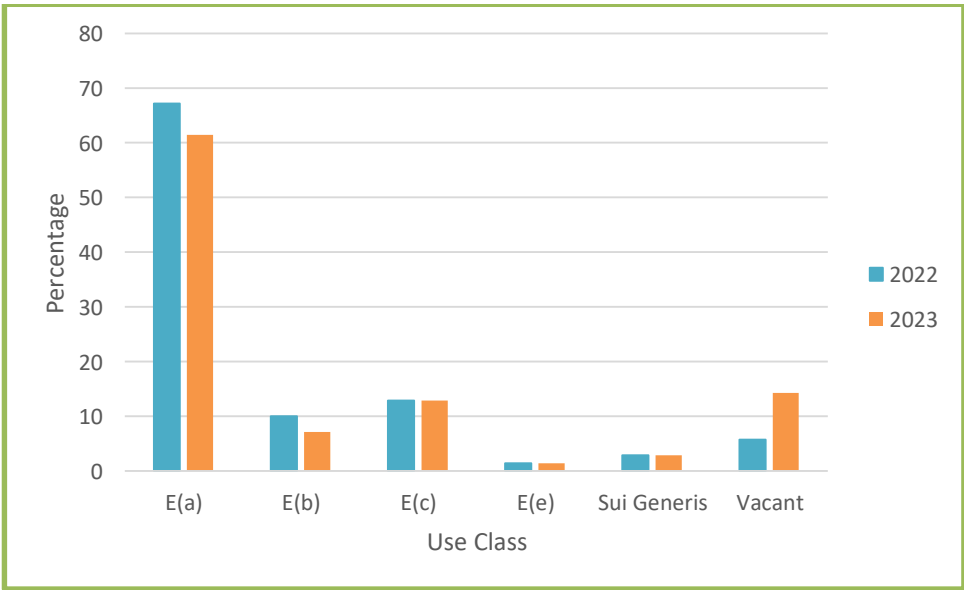
-  Grays Town Centre
-  Grays Shopping Centre (saved Policy SH3)
-  Shopping Centres and Parades

5.2 As shown on Map 1, the Grays Town Centre boundary extends from the River Thames, northwards past Orsett Road. The Town Centre boundary includes the smaller Grays Shopping Centre boundary, where the ‘Shopping Centres and Parades’ for Grays are. These are identified as the ‘Core Area’ and the ‘Central Area’ within saved Policy SH10 of the Local Plan, 1997. This assessment has also assessed any additional ‘other’ units which are within the Grays Shopping Centre boundary, which are previously referred to as ‘Peripheral Areas’ within saved policy SH10 of the Thurrock Local Plan (1997).

# Grays Core Area

- 5.3 Grays Core Area comprises of the area around the eastern side of the High Street (north of the railway line), and the indoor shopping centre.
- 5.4 The High Street is a pedestrianised area with ample street furniture including bins, benches, phone boxes, a post box, a few trees, attractively designed lighting, informative signs and public art.
- 5.5 The High Street comprises mainly of comparison retail units, which are a mixture of national retailers, such as Boots and Costa and local retailers, along with financial services. The shop fronts are generally well maintained, with most having signs in good condition and uncluttered window displays, making the stores inviting.
- 5.6 The indoor shopping centre offers a pleasant shopping experience, well-lit by natural light, with a tidy, modern looking environment and well-maintained shop fronts. The majority of tenants are national chains, including Savers, Poundland, Card Factory, Shoe Zone, Specsavers, Holland and Barratt, Iceland, Peacocks and Wimpy.
- 5.7 The High Street and the indoor shopping centre both have CCTV present, whilst the shopping centre also has security officers, which increases perception of safety for visitors. This can have a positive effect on the number of people visiting the Core Shopping Area.
- 5.8 The Core Area includes 70 individual units, comprising of the following use classes:

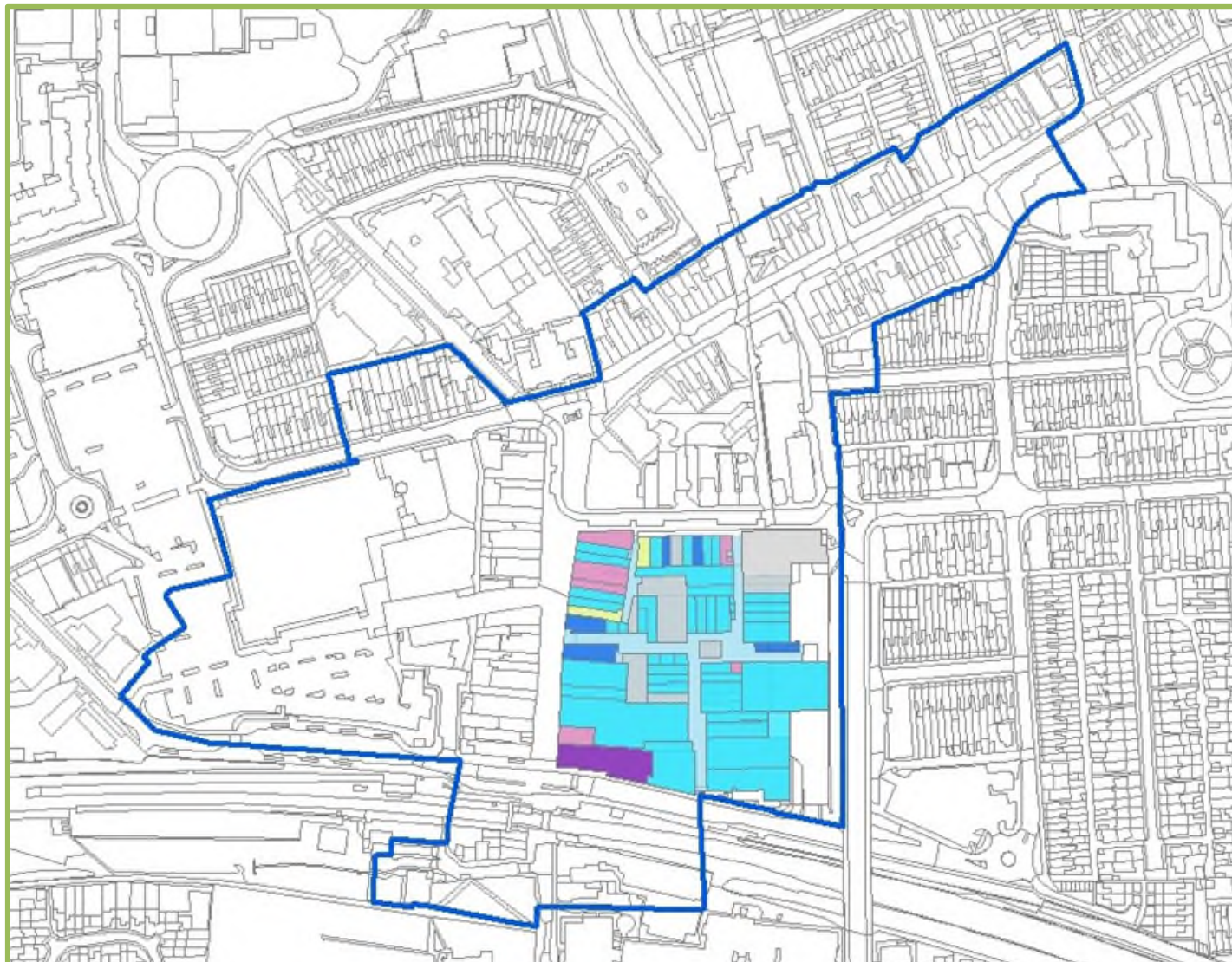
**Chart 1 – Use Classes of Units in Grays Core Area**



5.9 As Chart 1 shows, a large majority of units in Grays Core Shopping Area are E(a) the display or retail sales of goods, other than hot food (61.4%). This has decreased slightly since 2022 when it was 67.1% and 2018, when 69% of units in Grays Core Shopping Area were Retail. Vacancy levels in the Core Shopping Area is 14.3%, which is a considerable increase since 2022 and 2018 when the vacancy level was 5.7% and 8.5% respectively. Of the open units, 57.4% are local businesses/shops, whilst 42.6% are national chains.



Map 2 - Distribution of uses in Grays Core Area



**Use Class**

- E(a)
- E(b)
- E(c)
- E(e)
- Sui Generis
- Vacant
- Grays Shopping Centre (saved policy SH3)
- Shopping Centres and Parades

## Grays Central Area

- 5.10 The Central Area of Grays comprises of the west and north eastern end of the High Street and George Street.
- 5.11 Like the High Street, George Street is also pedestrianised. It is situated about half way up the High Street and leads to a large Morrisons supermarket and car park. George Street is also home to the former State Cinema.
- 5.12 The High Street consists of national retail chains, such as Greggs, Subway and Choice discount store, along with local retail units and financial services including Lloyds bank. Shops fronts are fairly well maintained, with just over 65% having signs in good condition and the majority having inviting window displays, with uncluttered windows.



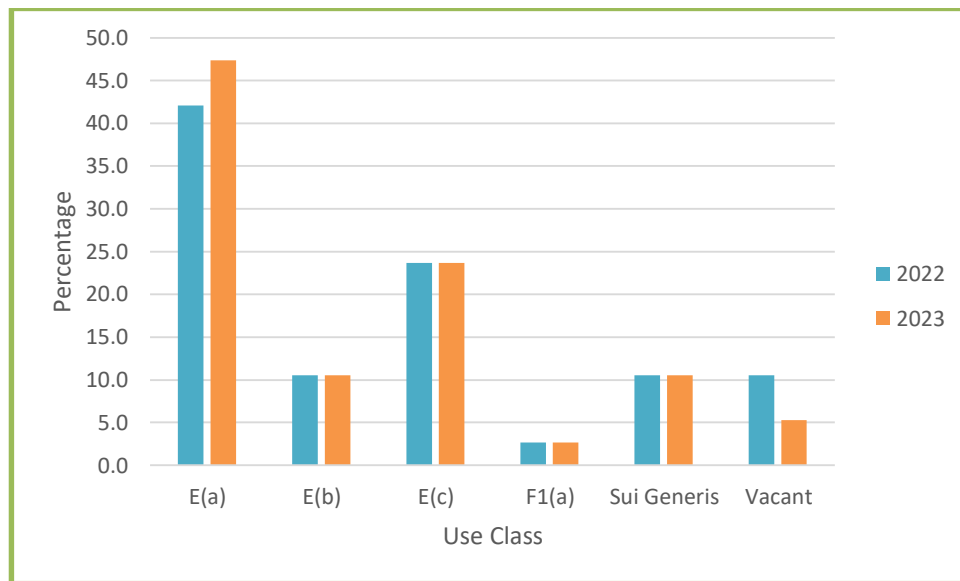
Northern end of High Street, Grays



George Street, Grays

- 5.13 At the northern end of the High Street, the street scene is classed as average, with numerous bins, trees and public art. The street in this area is wide, with ample space, but which is poorly used. The war memorial, at the end of the High Street, provides a focus point and a sense of place, however, it seems rather isolated from the rest of the High Street by the numerous bollards and the barrier cluttering up the paving, which are there to stop motor vehicles accessing the pedestrianised area.
- 5.14 There are 38 individual units assessed within the Primary Shopping Area of Grays. These include the following:

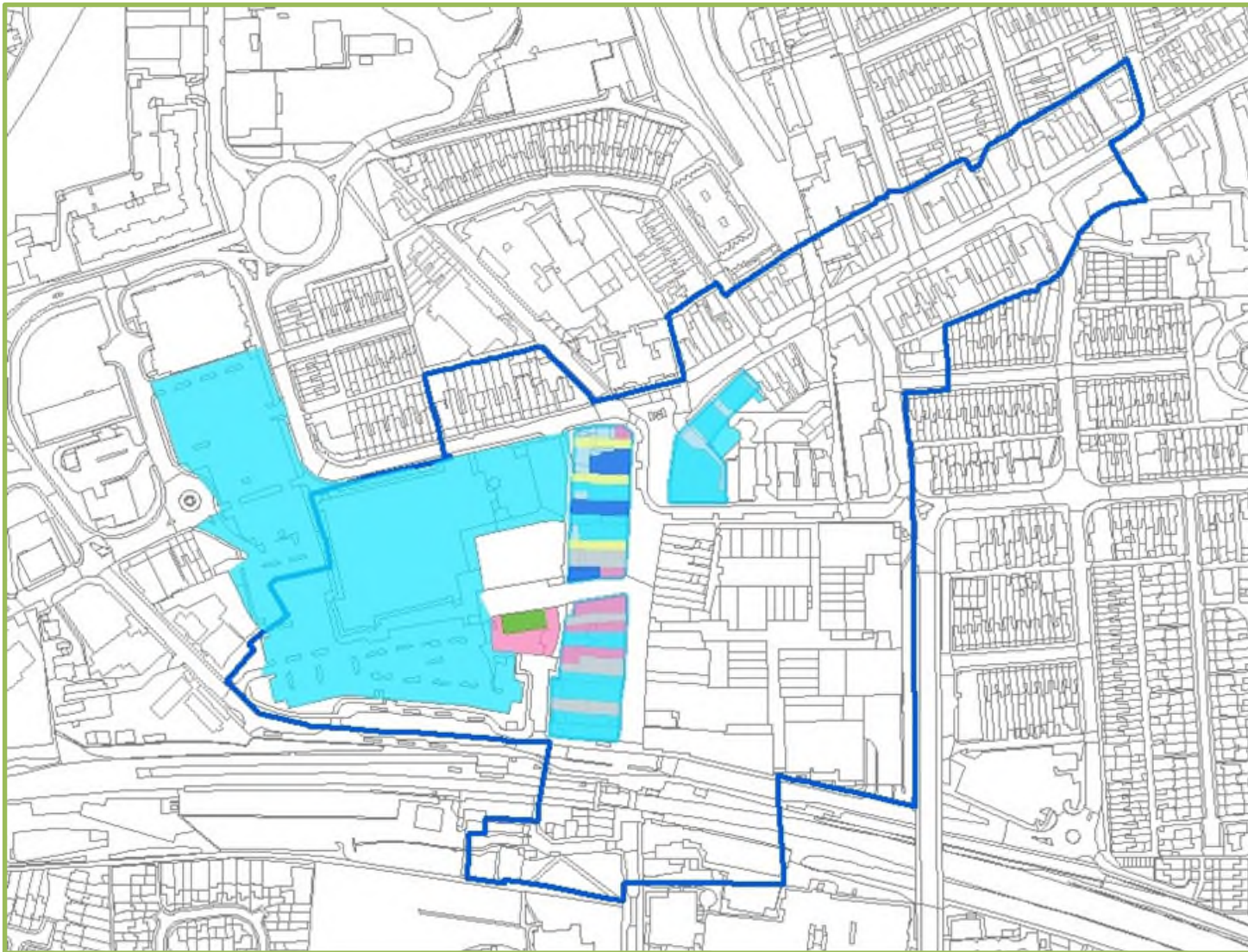
**Chart 2 - Units in Grays Central Area**



- 5.15 As Chart 2 shows, the majority of units in Grays Central Area are E(a) – the display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food (42.1%). This is a slight decrease from 2022 (47.4%). In 2018 51.3% of units were retail (use class A1). The vacancy rate in the Central Area is 10.5%, which is a large increase since 2022 and 2018 when the vacancy rate was 5.3% and 5.1% respectively. Of the occupied units, 73.5% are local businesses, whilst 26.5% are national chains.
- 5.16 Map 3 shows the spatial distribution of units within Grays Central Area. As can be seen, the E(a) retail unit in the far west of the designated centre, which is the Morrisons supermarket, falls partly outside the Grays Shopping Centre boundary. It is recommended that going forward, the centre boundary is amended to include the whole of this site.
- 5.17 As previously mentioned, CCTV is present at various locations on the High Street. This can increase the feeling of safety amongst people visiting the centre and reduce the perception and fear of crime.



Map 3 - Distribution of uses in Grays Central Area



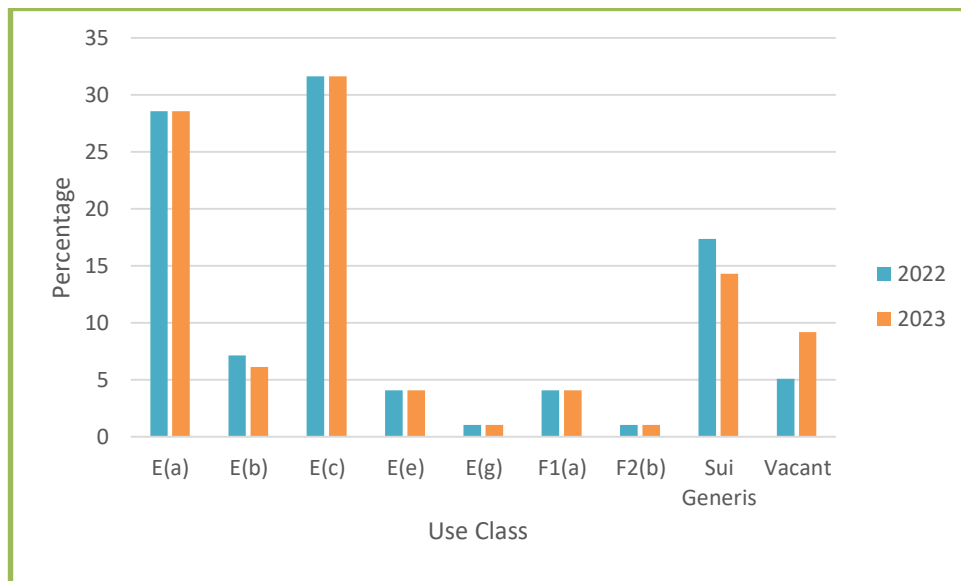
**Use Class**

- E(a)
- E(b)
- E(c)
- F1(a)
- Sui Generis
- Vacant
- Grays Shopping Centre (saved policy SH3)
- Shopping Centres and Parades

## Other Shopping Areas in Grays

- 5.18 Other areas within Grays Shopping Centre boundary, includes the area listed as the 'Peripheral Area' within saved Policy SH10 of the Local Plan (1997). It includes London Road/Orsett Road, which is directly north of the High Street and Clarence Road, which is to the east of the High Street. All three roads have units on both sides. It also includes the Queensgate Centre, which can be accessed from Clarence Road and Orsett Road, as well as a few units on Station Approach.
- 5.19 London Road/Orsett Road is largely occupied by retail and financial/professional services, specifically estate agents and solicitors. It is a busy main road leading in and out of Grays Town Centre and has numerous traffic lights and pedestrian crossings. Pavements vary in width along the road and street furniture is limited. Pavements are instead overwhelmed with concrete bollards and metal railings, to separate the road from the pavement.
- 5.20 On the whole, shop fronts, including their signs and shutters are classed as fair, with just over 80% of units having signs in good to fair condition, with some being better well maintained than others. Shop window displays for most units are inviting, which improves the attractiveness of the units, as well as the area as a whole.
- 5.21 CCTV is present at numerous locations on London Road/Clarence Road. This helps to reduce crime and increases the feeling of safety for people visiting the area.
- 5.22 There are 16 units on Clarence Road, which are mainly small, independent shops. Shop fronts, including their signs and shutters are on the whole good, whilst their window displays are on the whole uncluttered and are inviting. The street scene of Clarence Road is poor, with limited street furniture, apart from a few bins and sign posts at the western end. At the eastern end, which is partly residential, only parking metres are present. Of these 16 units, 10 of them fall outside of the Grays Shopping Centre boundary.
- 5.23 Map 4 shows numerous units which lie outside of the designated Grays Shopping Centre boundary. Going forward, it will need to be decided whether Grays Shopping Centre boundary needs to be amended to include these units, due to their close proximity and feeling that they are part of it.
- 5.24 There are 107 individual units that make up the Other Shopping Areas of Grays, which includes the following use classes:

**Chart 3 - Units in Other Shopping Areas of Grays**

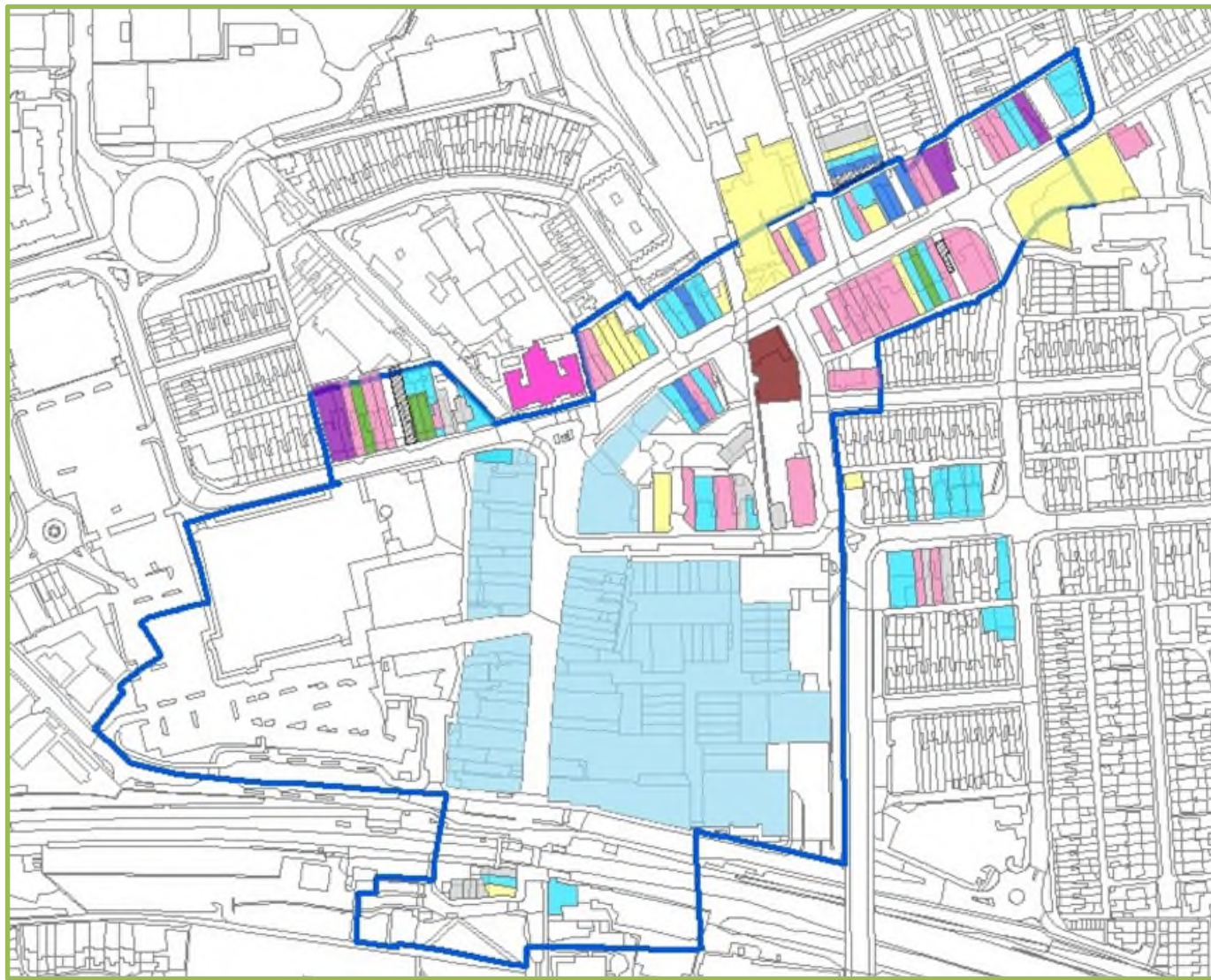


5.25 As Chart 3 shows, the majority of units in the Other Shopping Areas are occupied by E(c) - the provision of services (financial, professional or other (31.6%), followed by E(a) the display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food the provision of services (28.8%). The vacancy rate of the Secondary Shopping Area is 9.2%, which is an increase from 5.1% in 2022 and 7.6% in 2018. Of the occupied units, 83.4% are local businesses, whilst 7.1% are national chains.



Map 4 - Distribution of uses in Other Shopping Areas in Grays

[27]



**Use Class**

- E(a)
- E(b)
- E(c)
- E(e)
- E(g)
- F1(a)
- F2(b)
- N/A
- Sui Generis
- Unknown
- Vacant
- Grays Shopping Centre (saved policy SH3)
- Shopping Centres and Parades

5.26 Whilst assessing Grays, a few premises were identified, which are not currently included in the designated Grays Shopping Centre boundary. This includes units on Clarence Road, Cromwell Road, Orsett Road and Derby Road, as listed in Table 3 below. These are adjacent to units within Grays Shopping Centre and naturally form an extension to the designated centre boundary. Going forward it will need to be decided whether the designated centre boundary of Grays Shopping Centre needs to be amended to include any of these units.

**Table 4 - Additional Units in Grays**

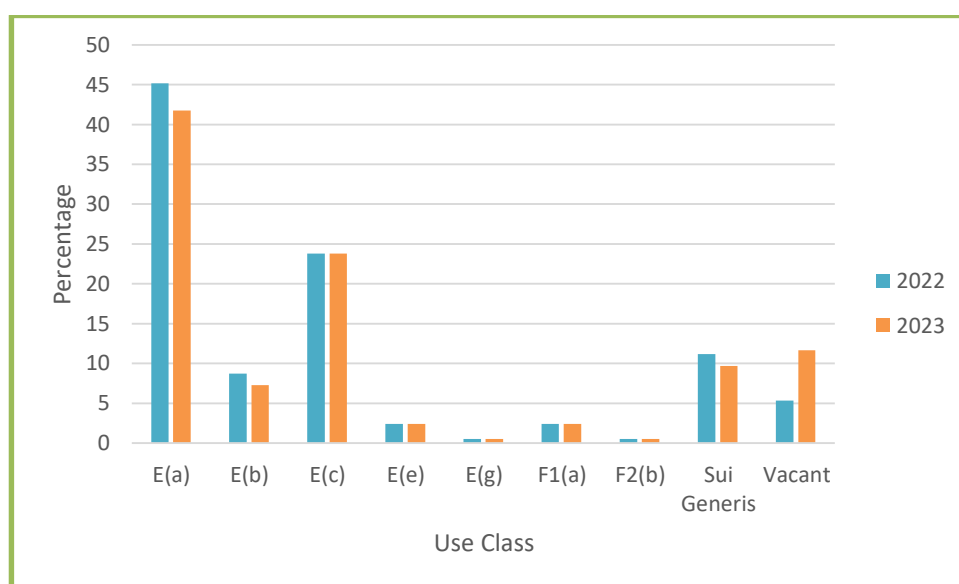
<b>Address</b>	<b>Unit Name/Organisation</b>	<b>Use Class</b>
2 Cromwell Road, Grays	Unknown	Unknown
4 Cromwell Road, Grays	Memel Eastern European	E(b)
6 Cromwell Road, Grays	YAS Food	E(a)
8 Cromwell Road, Grays	Gopiz	Sui Generis
10-12 Cromwell Road, Grays	Vacant	Vacant
90 Orsett Road, Grays	Hattens	E(c)
92 Orsett Road, Grays	La Belle Skin Studio	E(c)
20-24 Clarence Road, Grays	Kiyo Beauty	E(a)
26 Clarence Road, Grays	Head Rulers	E(c)
28 Clarence Road, Grays	Vacant	Vacant
30 Clarence Road, Grays	Royal Image	E(c)
32 Clarence Road, Grays	Vacant	Vacant
43 Clarence Road, Grays	Hamro Gurkha Shop	E(a)
44 Clarence Road, Grays	F G Langs	E(a)
49-51 Clarence Road, Grays	Grays Convenience	E(a)
53-55 Clarence Road, Grays	Unwins Car Spares	E(a)
57-59 Clarence Road, Grays	Pound Star & Post Office	E(a)
7 Derby Road	Farm Pizza	Sui Generis

## **Grays Town Centre as a Whole**

5.27 Combining the assessments for Grays Core Area, Central Area and Other Areas gives an overall picture of Grays Shopping Centre as a whole.



**Chart 4 - Units within the Grays Shopping Centre boundary**



5.28 As Chart 4 above shows, the majority of units within the Grays Shopping Centre boundary are E(a) the display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food (45.1% in 2022 and 41.7% in 2023), followed by E(c) the provision of services (financial, professional or other) (23.8% in 2022 and 2023). The vacancy rate increased to 11.7% in 2023 from 5.3% in 2022.

5.29 Table 4 below shows a breakdown of the uses within the Grays Shopping Centre boundary and their percentage change over the year.

**Table 5 - Grays Town Centre Use Classes**

Use Class	No. Units Sept. 2022		No. Units Oct. 2023		Percentage Change 2022 to 2023
<b>E(a)</b>	93	45.1%	86	41.7%	-3.4%
<b>E(b)</b>	18	8.7%	15	7.3%	-1.4%
<b>E(c)</b>	49	23.8%	49	23.8%	0.0%
<b>E(e)</b>	5	2.4%	5	2.4%	0.0%
<b>E(g)</b>	1	0.5%	1	0.5%	0.0%
<b>F1(a)</b>	5	2.4%	5	2.4%	0.0%
<b>F2(b)</b>	1	0.5%	1	0.5%	0.0%
<b>Sui Generis</b>	23	11.2%	20	9.7%	-1.5%
<b>Vacant</b>	11	5.3%	24	11.7%	+6.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>206</b>		<b>206</b>		

5.30 As can be seen in Table 4 above, the largest change to unit use within the Grays Shopping Centre boundary between September 2022 and October 2023 was the increase in vacant units (an increase of 6.4%).

## Accessibility

**Table 6 – Accessibility within the Grays Shopping Centre boundary**

<b>Car</b>	Grays is easily accessible by car, with numerous routes in and out of the town centre. There is a good amount of both on and off-street parking.		
	<b>Council-owned off-street parking:</b>		
	<b>Name</b>	<b>No. Spaces</b>	<b>Charges</b>
	Argent Street	42	up to 1 hour = £1.30
	Cromwell Road	60	up to 2 hours = £1.80
	Crown Road	96	up to 4 hours = £3.10
	Darnley Road	30	up to 6 hours = £5.00
	Grays Beach, Thames Road	182	Over 6 hours = £7.50
	Station House	10	
	<b>Private off-street parking:</b>		
<b>Name</b>	<b>No. Spaces</b>	<b>Charges</b>	
Grays Shopping Centre		0-3 hours = £1.00 3-5 hours = £3.00 5-12 hours = £6.00	
Morrisons Supermarket			
Grays Railway Station	168	Per hour = £1.00 Per day = £8.40 Saturday = £3.20 Sunday = £3.20	
<b>Bus</b>	Bus station on Crown Road, serving many areas within the Borough and beyond.		

<b>Train</b>	Grays Railway Station at the southern end of the High Street on the Southend to London Fenchurch Street line.
<b>Cycling</b>	Numerous cycle routes with cycle racks on Crown Road, opposite the railway station and at the northern end of the High Street.

5.31 Grays has a market selling food, clothing, accessories and other general goods, which attracts people into the town. The market operates every Friday and Saturday from 9am until 5pm and is spread along the High Street and George Street.

5.32 The night time economy in Grays is poor, with approximately 19% of premises open after 7pm. The majority of these (13%) are located outside of the Core and Central areas and consist of a few shops, restaurants and the Thameside Theatre on Orsett Road.

## Summary

### Grays Shopping Centre as a whole (Core, Central and Other areas combined)

- Predominantly occupied by E(a) retail units, followed by E(c) financial/professional services, especially in the Other areas.
- Overall vacancy rate is 11.6%.
- Average street scene in Core and Central areas. Poor street scene in the Other areas.
- Poor night-time economy in the town.
- Good access to the town by car, bus and train.
- CCTV presence increases feeling of safety.
- Boundary to be amended to include the whole of Morrisons store on George Street.
- Consider amending the designated Grays Shopping Centre boundary to include the additional units on Orsett Road, Clarence Road, Cromwell Road and Derby Road.

## 6 Aveley

- 6.1 Aveley is a small town located in the west of the Borough, just inside the M25. Its boundary to the south borders the A13. Its current designated Local Centre is on the High Street.

### Aveley Local Centre

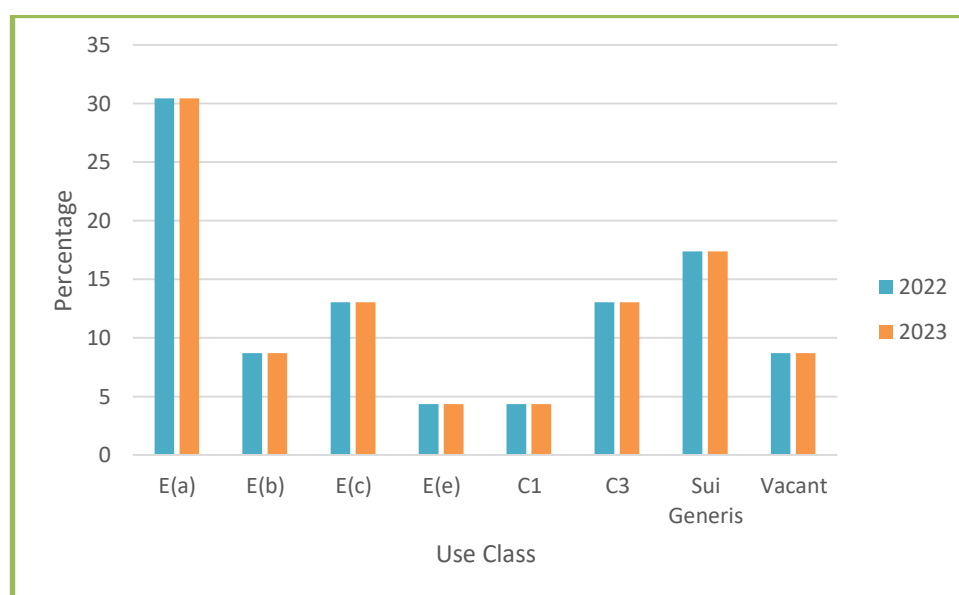
- 6.2 The Local Centre in Aveley is one of the smallest centres in the Borough, comprising of 19 units and runs in linear form along the High Street. Retail units are situated on both sides of the road and although observations have found the road to be busy at peak times, two zebra crossings do offer pedestrians easy access to both sides of the road.
- 6.3 The overall street scene of the High Street has been classed as average, with very little street furniture, apart from a few benches, bins and flowerbeds, some of which are cluttered together and look unattractive. Shop fronts and signs are classed as fair and the majority of units are inviting, with uncluttered windows.
- 6.4 CCTV is present at numerous locations on the High Street, which increases the feeling of safety amongst people visiting the local centre and reduces the fear of crime. However, the pavements are very narrow in certain places, which could have a negative impact on the perception of safety for pedestrians, being so close to the roadside, especially during busy times.



Unattractive street furniture, High Street, Aveley

- 6.5 Chart 5 below shows the use classes of the units assessed during 2022 and 2023.

**Chart 5 - Units at Aveley Local Centre**



6.6 As Chart 5 shows, there has been no change to the use class of units between September 2022 and October 2023. The majority of units are E(a) for the display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food (30.4%). These are made up in the majority by independent retailers, with only one national retailer present (a small Co-Op supermarket). The vacancy rate is fairly high at 8.7%, but this equates to just two units. This is a slight decrease since 2018, when the vacancy rate was 10.5%.

6.7 The night-time economy of Aveley is fair considering its size, with ten units (43.5%) open after 7pm, including three restaurants, three shops and one hot food takeaway.

6.8 Map 5 shows six additional units on the High Street which have been identified, which currently do not fall within the designated ‘Shopping Area’ boundary. These are identified in Table 7 below.

**Table 7 - Additional Units in Aveley**

Address	Unit Name/Organisation	Use Class
28 High Street	West & Coe Funeral Directors	E(a)
30 High Street	Hair by Wilson’s	E(a)
32 High Street	OHMS Pharmacy	E(a)
34 High Street	Essex Chef	Sui Generis
45 High Street	Happy Garden	Sui Generis
47 High Street	The Razor	E(a)

6.9 Going forward, it will need to be decided whether the boundary of Aveley’s Shopping Area needs to be amended to include these additional units.

Map 5 – Distribution of uses in Aveley Local Centre



**Use Class**

- C1
- C3
- E(a)
- E(b)
- E(c)
- E(e)
- F2(b)
- Sui Generis
- Vacant
- Shopping Area
- Shopping Centres and Parades

[34]

# Accessibility

**Table 8 - Accessibility of Aveley**

<b>Car</b>	Easily accessible by car from A13, B1335 Aveley by-pass and Romford Road. Free car park located south of High Street, as well as free on-street parking.
<b>Bus</b>	Bus routes to/from Lakeside, West Thurrock, Grays South Ockendon and Upminster.
<b>Train</b>	Nearest railway station is at Ockendon, which is 3 miles away.
<b>Cycling</b>	Numerous cycle routes, but no cycle racks visible.

## Summary

### Aveley Local Centre

- Predominantly occupied by E(a) units (30.4%).
- Vacancy rate is 8.7%.
- Average street scene with little street furniture.
- Additional 6 units on the High Street need to be assessed for future designation as part of the Shopping Area boundary.
- Easily accessible by car and bus, but no facilities for bike storage.
- Presence of CCTV reduces the fear of crime.



# 7 South Ockendon

7.1 South Ockendon is a small town located in the north west of the Borough, just outside the M25 and just to the north of the A13. Its currently designated centres include the Local Centre around Derwent Parade, Daiglen Drive and Derry Avenue, as well as the five Small Neighbourhood Parades at Aire Drive, Broxburn Parade, Canterbury Parade, South Parade and Garron Lane.

## South Ockendon Local Centre

7.2 The local centre at South Ockendon is one of the larger local centres within the Borough and consists of 48 units. It includes the central, pedestrianised area of Derwent Parade, surrounded by Daiglen Drive to the east and Derry Avenue to the west. Due to the centre being largely pedestrianised, traffic has no real impact upon it.



Derwent Parade, South Ockendon



Daiglen Drive, South Ockendon

7.3 The street scene of the centre has been classed as poor, with very little street furniture, apart from a few benches and some bins. Derwent Parade in particular, looks very dated, untidy and has no real character or sense of place, despite it being a large, spacious area.

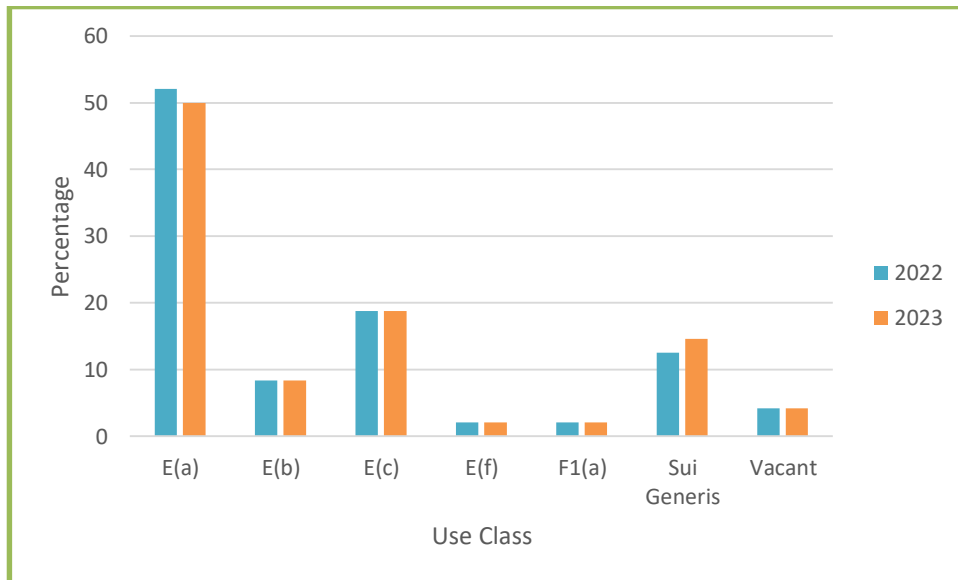
7.4 The individual units are on the whole inviting, with uncluttered window displays and their signs/shutters in the majority classed as good/fair. They seem fairly well maintained, but this is largely hidden by the poor looking centre as a whole. The centre has numerous CCTV cameras, which can reduce the fear of crime for people visiting, as well as acting as a deterrent for anyone intending to commit crimes.



7.5 The night-time economy of the local centre is average, with approximately 29% of units open after 7pm. Of these, one is a restaurant, five are hot food takeaways, and five are convenience stores.

7.6 The use classes of the units assessed can be seen in Chart 6 below.

**Chart 6 - Use Class of Units at South Ockendon Local Centre**



7.7 The majority of units are E(a) the display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food (52.1% in 2022 and 50% in 2023). The majority of these are local independent retailers (66.7%). The centre does have a few national retailers, including Tesco Express, Boots, Greggs, Savers and Lidl. There are a few vacant units in the centre (4.2% in both 2022 and 2023), which is a significant decrease from 2018, when the vacancy level was 18.8%.

Map 6 – Distribution of uses in South Ockendon Local Centre

[38]



**Use Class**

- E(a)
- E(b)
- E(c)
- E(f)
- F1(a)
- Sui Generis
- Vacant
- Shopping Area
- Shopping Centres and Parades

## Accessibility

**Table 9 - Accessibility of South Ockendon**

<b>Car</b>	Easily accessible from Aveley on B1335 and North Stifford and North Ockendon by the B186. Good amount of on-street parking and designated parking on Daiglen Drive.
<b>Bus</b>	Bus routes to/from Grays, Aveley, West Thurrock, Chadwell St Mary, Tilbury, North Stifford, Upminster and Brentwood.
<b>Train</b>	Nearest railway station is Ockendon, 1.3 miles away.
<b>Cycling</b>	Numerous cycle routes, but no cycle racks visible.

## Summary

### South Ockendon Local Centre

- Predominantly occupied by E(a) units (50%).
- Vacancy rate is currently 4.2%.
- Poor street scene with very little street furniture.
- Local centre looks dated, lacks character and is in need of updating.
- Average evening economy, consisting mainly of hot food takeaways and convenience stores.
- Good access by car and bus, but there is no cycle parking facilities.
- CCTV present which can reduce crime and the fear of crime.

## 8 Corringham

- 8.1 Corringham is one of the Borough's larger towns, located in the east of the Borough. It lies just to the south of the A13 and is separated from Stanford-le-Hope by the A1014, running along its southern boundary.
- 8.2 Corringham's designated Local Centre includes the areas at Grover Walk and St John's Way.

### Corringham Local Centre

- 8.3 The local centre of Corringham is one of the largest local centres in the Borough and appears to be one of the busiest and liveliest, comprising of 62 units. It consists of St John's Way and the pedestrianised area of Grover Walk. St John's Way is a fairly busy thoroughfare for traffic, however, there is a pedestrian crossing which directly links it to Grover Walk.



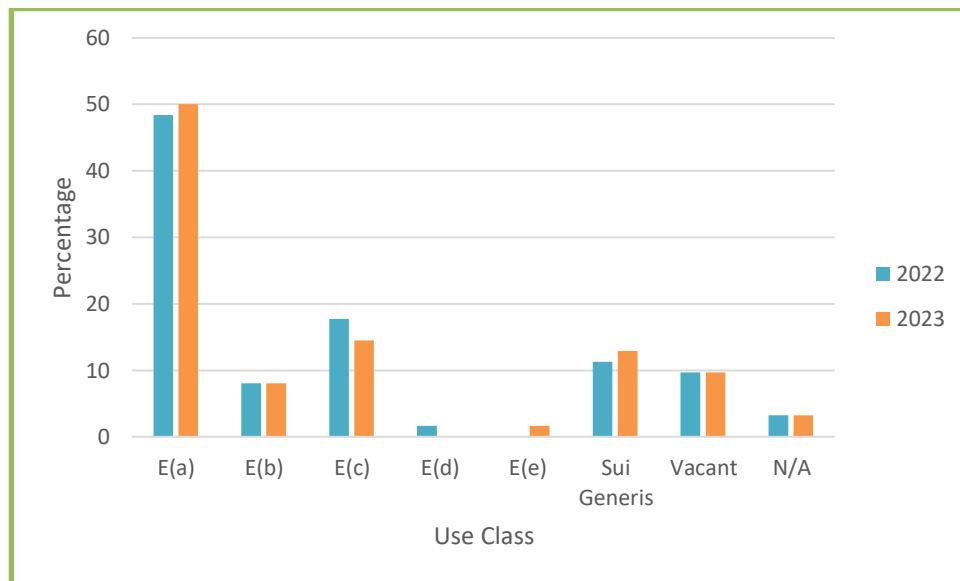
St John's Way, Corringham



Grover Walk, Corringham

- 8.4 The street scene of the centre has been classed as average, with numerous street furniture present, including bins, benches, a post box, good lighting, flower boxes, cycle racks and public art.
- 8.5 The local centre has numerous CCTV cameras around, which can increase the feeling of safety for people using the local centre and can also help to reduce crime and the fear of crime. Furthermore, many of the units are overlooked by residential units on the first and second floors, providing natural surveillance to the centre.
- 8.6 The units assessed comprise of the following uses:

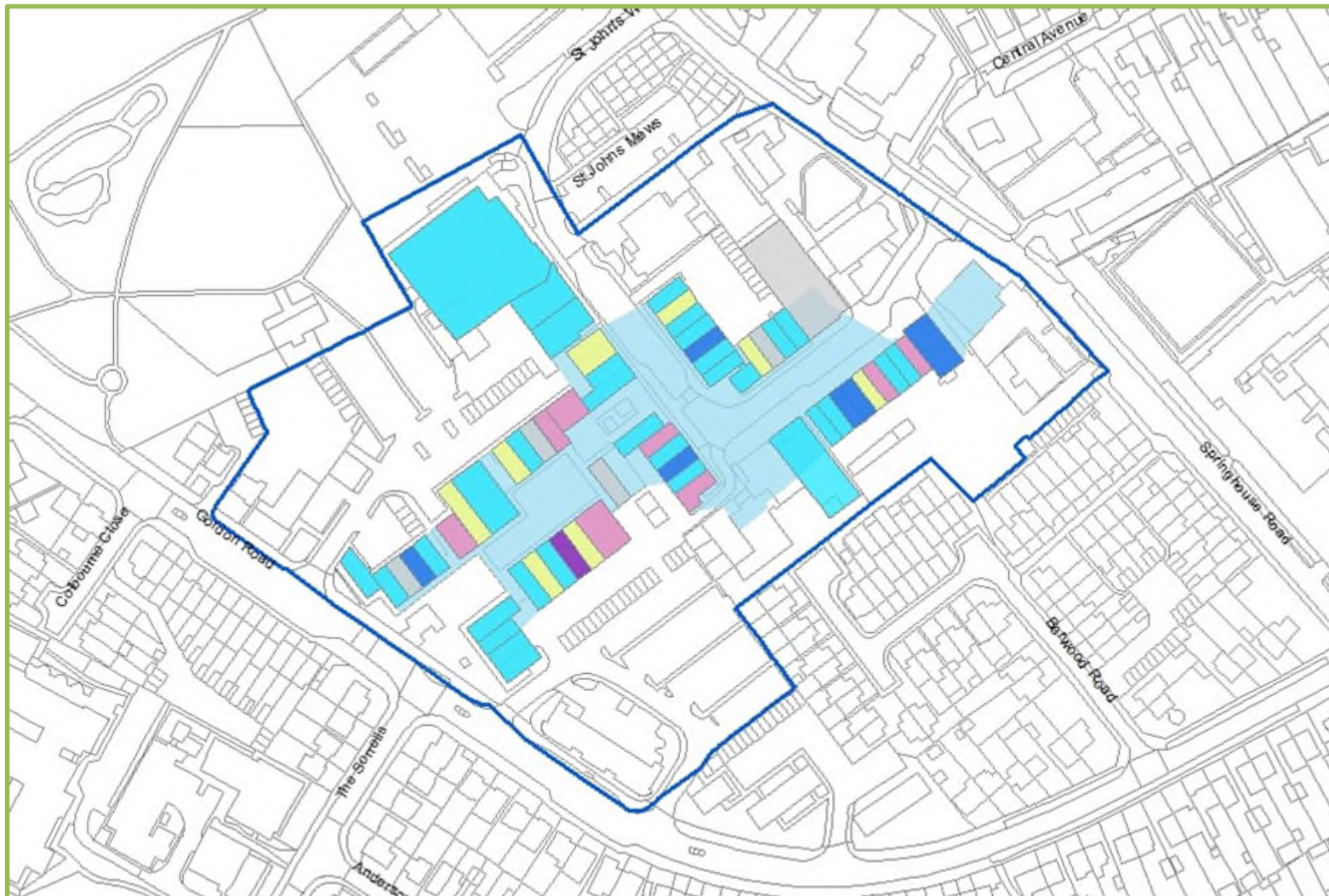
**Chart 7 - Units at Corringham Local Centre**



- 8.7 The majority of units within the centre are E(a) - the display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food (50% in 2023 and 48.4% in 2022), with a good range of shops, including Morrisons and Iceland supermarkets. It also has numerous other national comparison retailers, such as Boots and Card Factory. Of the retail units, 11 (35.5%) are national chains, with the remaining 64.5% being local independent stores.
- 8.8 The vacancy rate in the centre did not change between 2022 and 2023 with 9.7% of units vacant in these years. This is an increase from 2018 when the vacancy level was 6.6%.



Map 7 – Distribution of uses in Corringham Local Centre



**Use Class**

- E(a)
- E(b)
- E(c)
- E(e)
- Sui Generis
- Vacant
- Shopping Area
- Shopping Centres and Parades

[42]

8.9 The majority of retail units that were assessed were classed as having inviting shop fronts and window displays, with the majority of signs/shutters considered to be good.

8.10 The night-time economy is fair in the centre, with seventeen units (27.4%) open after 7pm. Of these, five are hot food takeaways, six are retail shops and two are restaurants. There are no leisure/entertainment facilities, apart from the Leisure Centre on Springhouse Road, a local library and Corringham Town Park.

## Accessibility

**Table 10 - Accessibility of Corringham**

<b>Car</b>	Easily accessible by car from the A13, A1014 Manor Way, High Road and Southend Road. Good amount of free on-street parking around St John's Way and free public car parks at Gordon Road.
<b>Bus</b>	Bus routes to/from Stanford-le-Hope, Grays, Lakeside, Chadwell St Mary, Tilbury, Basildon and Pitsea.
<b>Train</b>	Nearest railway station is at Stanford-le-Hope, 1.7 miles away.
<b>Cycling</b>	Numerous cycle routes, with cycle racks present within the town.

## Summary

### Local Centre (as of October 2023)

- 62 units, of which 31 are E(a) (50%).
- Vacancy rate is currently 9.7%.
- Street scene is average, with a good amount of street furniture, but which needs updating.
- Good accessibility by car and bus, and parking facilities for bikes present.
- Local library and leisure centre present in the town.
- Poor/fair evening economy – 27.4% units open after 7pm.
- CCTV present which can increase the perception of safety.

## 9 Socketts Heath

- 9.1 Socketts Heath is a small area north of Grays and Little Thurrock. Its Local Centre lies on the A1013 – Lodge Lane, directly to the west of the Daneholes Roundabout.

### Socketts Heath Local Centre

- 9.2 The Local Centre of Socketts Heath consists of 39 individual units, which run in linear form along the southern side of Lodge Lane.

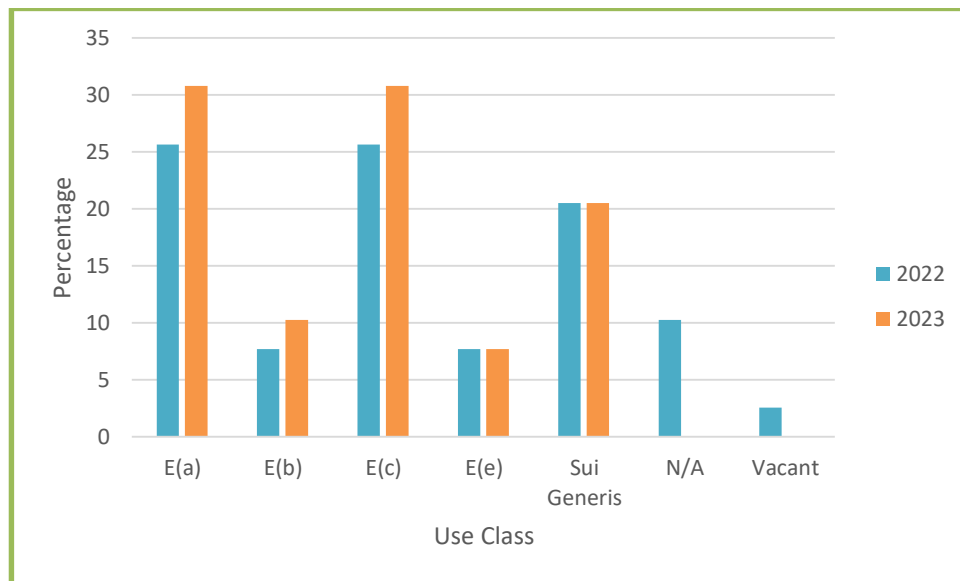


Lodge Lane, Socketts Heath

- 9.3 The street scene of the centre is classed as poor to average, with little street furniture present, apart from a post box, a bench and bins. It has little character or sense of place. Shop fronts are well maintained however and on the whole, window displays and signs are good. The presence of CCTV within the Local Centre helps create a feeling of safety.
- 9.4 The Local Centre is situated on a very busy road, though there is little impact from traffic, as the retail units are all on one side of the road and they are separated from the road by parking bays. There is a pedestrian crossing for those people who need to cross the road.
- 9.5 The units that were assessed consist of the following uses:



**Chart 8 - Units at Socketts Heath Local Centre**



- 9.6 The majority of units are E(a) - the display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food and E(c) - the provision of services (financial, professional or other), which both account for 30.8% of units in 2023, and 25.6% of units in 2022. The vacancy rate in 2023 was 0%, a decrease from 2.6% in 2022 and 5.6% in 2018.
- 9.7 The evening economy is fair for the size of the centre, with 35.9% of units open after 7pm. These consist of two restaurants, one public house and a few hot food takeaways.

**Map 8 – Distribution of uses at Socketts Heath Local Centre**

[46]



**Use Class**

- E(a)
- E(b)
- E(c)
- E(e)
- Sui Generis
- Socketts Heath Shopping Centres and Parades
- Socketts Heath Shopping Area

# Accessibility

**Table 11 - Accessibility of Socketts Heath**

<b>Car</b>	Easily accessible by car from A1013, the A1089 and the A13. Free on-street parking available directly in front of the retail units on Lodge Lane and there is also a free car park off Rectory Road.
<b>Bus</b>	Bus routes to/from West Thurrock, Grays, South Ockendon, Aveley, Tilbury, Chadwell St Mary, Stanford-le-Hope, Corringham, Brentwood and Pitsea.
<b>Train</b>	Nearest railway station Grays, 1.6 miles away.
<b>Cycling</b>	Numerous cycle routes, with cycle racks available.

## Summary

### Socketts Heath Local Centre

- Local Centre comprises of 39 units.
- Predominantly occupied by E(a) and E(c) – both 30.8%.
- Vacancy rate is 0%.
- Poor to average street scene, with little street furniture
- Lacks character and a sense of place.
- Well maintained shop fronts, with good window displays and signs.
- Presence of CCTV increases feeling of safety.
- Easily accessible by car and bus. Cycle racks are also present.

# 10 Stanford-le-Hope

- 10.1 Stanford-le-Hope is situated in the east of the Borough, south of the A13 and The Manorway (A1014).
- 10.2 Stanford-le-Hope's designated Local Centre comprises of King Street, High Street and Corringham Road (and premises at The Green and Wharf Road).

## Stanford-le-Hope Local Centre

- 10.3 The Local Centre of Stanford-le-Hope is the largest Local Centre in the Borough, comprising of 94 individual units. The street scene of King Street and Corringham Road are classed as average with bins, benches, flowerbeds and street lighting present. Shop signs and window displays are of noticeably higher quality than in other areas of the town. However, the area at High Street, including The Precinct is noticeably less attractive and looks a lot less well maintained, with little to no street furniture present.
- 10.4 A war memorial located at The Green, outside the Inn on The Green, along with St Margaret's Parish Church opposite, provides a focal point for the town, giving it a sense of place.
- 10.5 CCTV is present at various locations within the local centre, which increases the perception of safety for people visiting the centre and reduces the fear of crime.



The Green,, Stanford-le-Hope



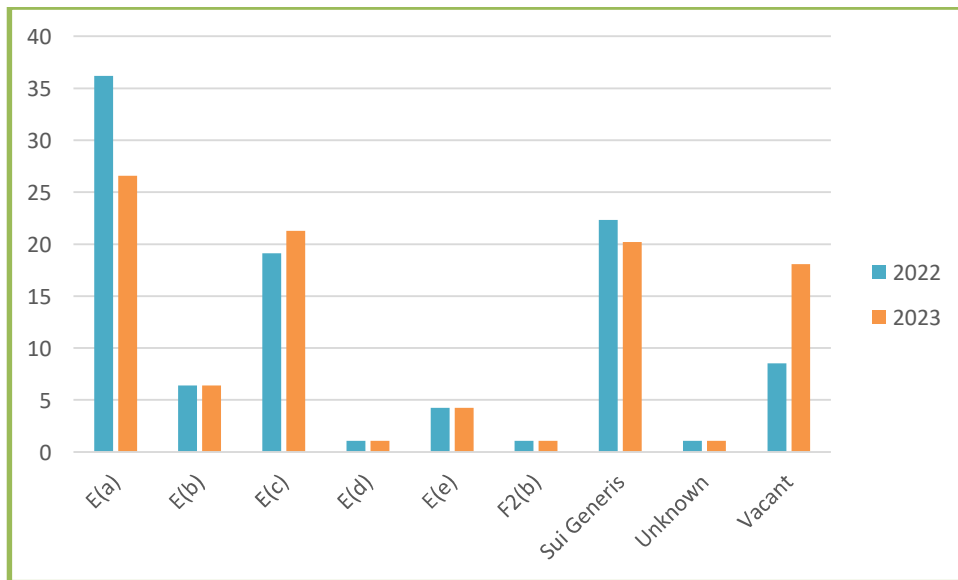
The Green, Stanford-le-Hope



Corringham Road, Stanford-le-Hope

10.6 The units assessed comprise of the following:

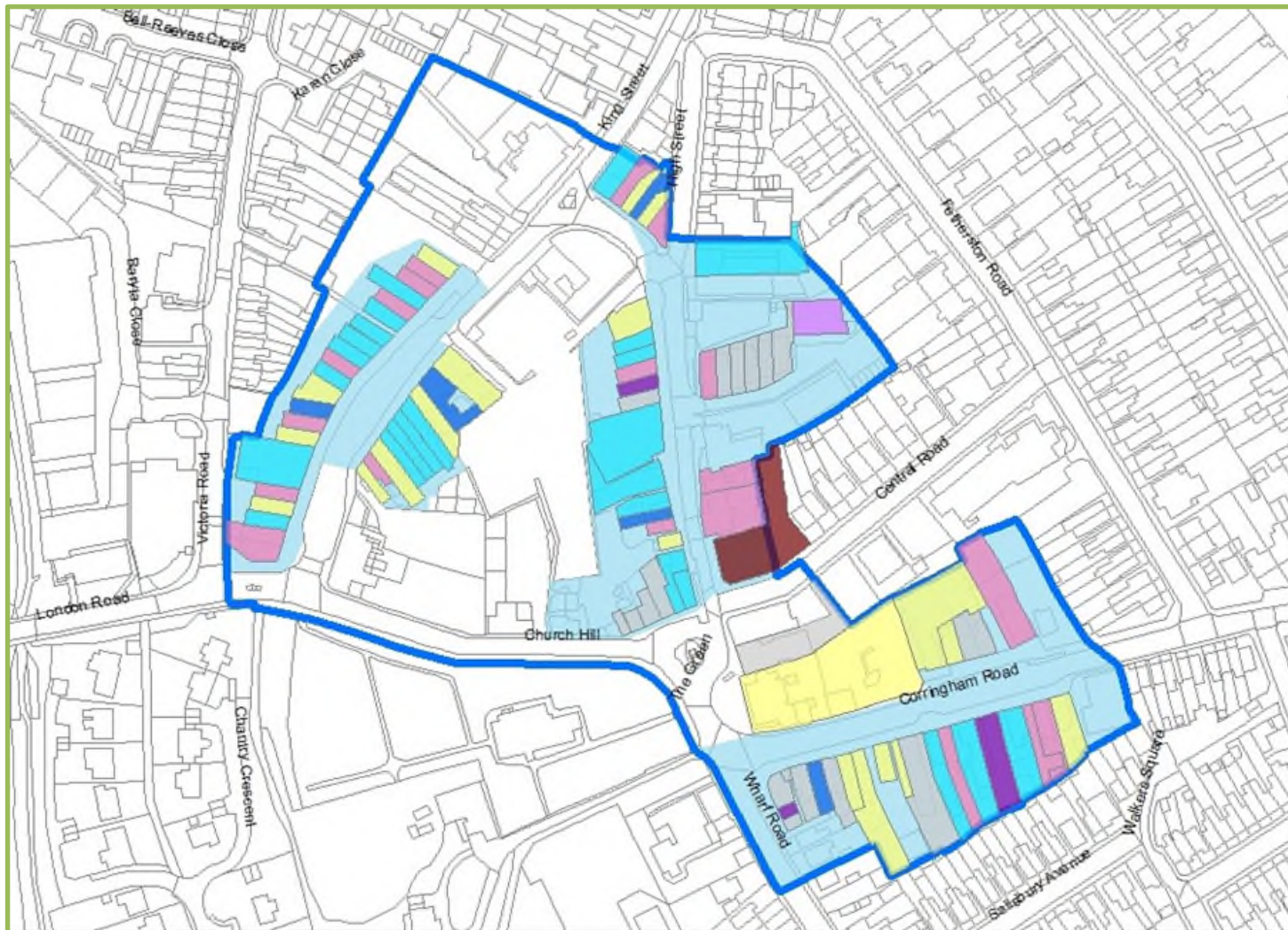
**Chart 9- Units at Stanford-le-Hope Local Centre**



10.7 The majority of units are E(a) - the display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food (26.6% in 2023 and 36.2% in 2022). These are mostly (92%) independent retailers, with the only national retailers being the Tesco Express on King Street and the small Co-Op on High Street. There are a number of units which are for the provision of services (financial, professional or other), including numerous estate agents. The vacancy rate in 2023 was very high at 18.1%, which is an increase from 8.5% in 2022. The majority of vacant units were on Corringham Road, The Precinct and at The Green.



Map 9 – Distribution of uses in Stanford-le-Hope Local Centre



**Use Class**

- E(a)
- E(b)
- E(c)
- E(d)
- E(e)
- F2(b)
- Sui Generis
- Vacant
- Shopping Area
- SLH Shopping Centres and Parades

[50]

## Accessibility

Table 12 - Accessibility of Stanford-le-Hope

<b>Car</b>	Easily accessible by car from A13 and The Manorway (A1014). Free on and off-street car parking is available at King Street.
<b>Bus</b>	Bus routes to/from Grays, West Thurrock, Lakeside, Orsett, Corringham, Basildon and Pitsea.
<b>Train</b>	Nearest railway station is Stanford-le-Hope Station, running from Southend to London Fenchurch Street.
<b>Cycling</b>	Numerous cycle routes, with cycle racks at the Station and at The Green, outside the Inn on the Green public house.

## Summary

### Stanford-le-Hope Local Centre

- Comprises of 94 units, which are predominantly (26.6%) retail use and are local retailers.
- Vacancy rate is 18.1%, with majority of vacant units on Corringham Road, The Precinct and The Green.
- King Street and Corringham Road have average street scenes, with well-maintained shop fronts.
- High Street, including, the Precinct have little street furniture and look in more need of updating.
- War memorial and St Margaret's Parish Church provide a focal point and gives the area a sense of place.
- Easily accessible by car, bus and train. Cycle racks are also available in the town.

# 11 Tilbury

11.1 Tilbury is located in the south of the Borough, immediately north of the River Thames, east of Grays and just south of Chadwell St Mary. The designated centre includes the Central Shopping Area around the Civic Square, Calcutta Road and Montreal Road, and the other peripheral shopping area around Dock Road and Tilbury Town Railway Station

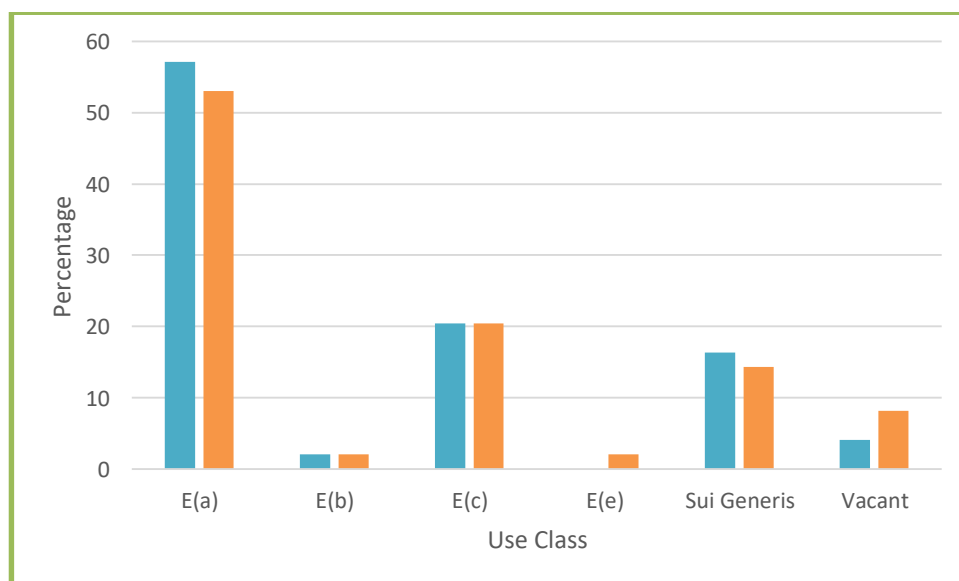
## Central Shopping Area

11.2 The area at Civic Square, Calcutta Road and Montreal Road form Tilbury's Central Shopping Area, comprising of 49 units. The assessment found the street scene in this area to be poor/average, with little street furniture, apart from bins, a post box and some benches at Montreal Road. Shop signs/shutters and window displays are also average. The war memorial at Civic Square outside the library and the local area office provide a sense of place and local identity, whilst benches and flower boxes, also provide an attractive setting and a better quality environment than in other parts of Tilbury that were assessed.

11.3 The Central Shopping Area has various CCTV cameras around, which can reduce the fear of crime for people visiting the centre, as well as acting as a deterrent for anyone intending to commit crimes.

11.4 The Central Shopping Area of Tilbury comprises of the following uses:

**Chart 10 - Units at Tilbury Central Shopping Area**

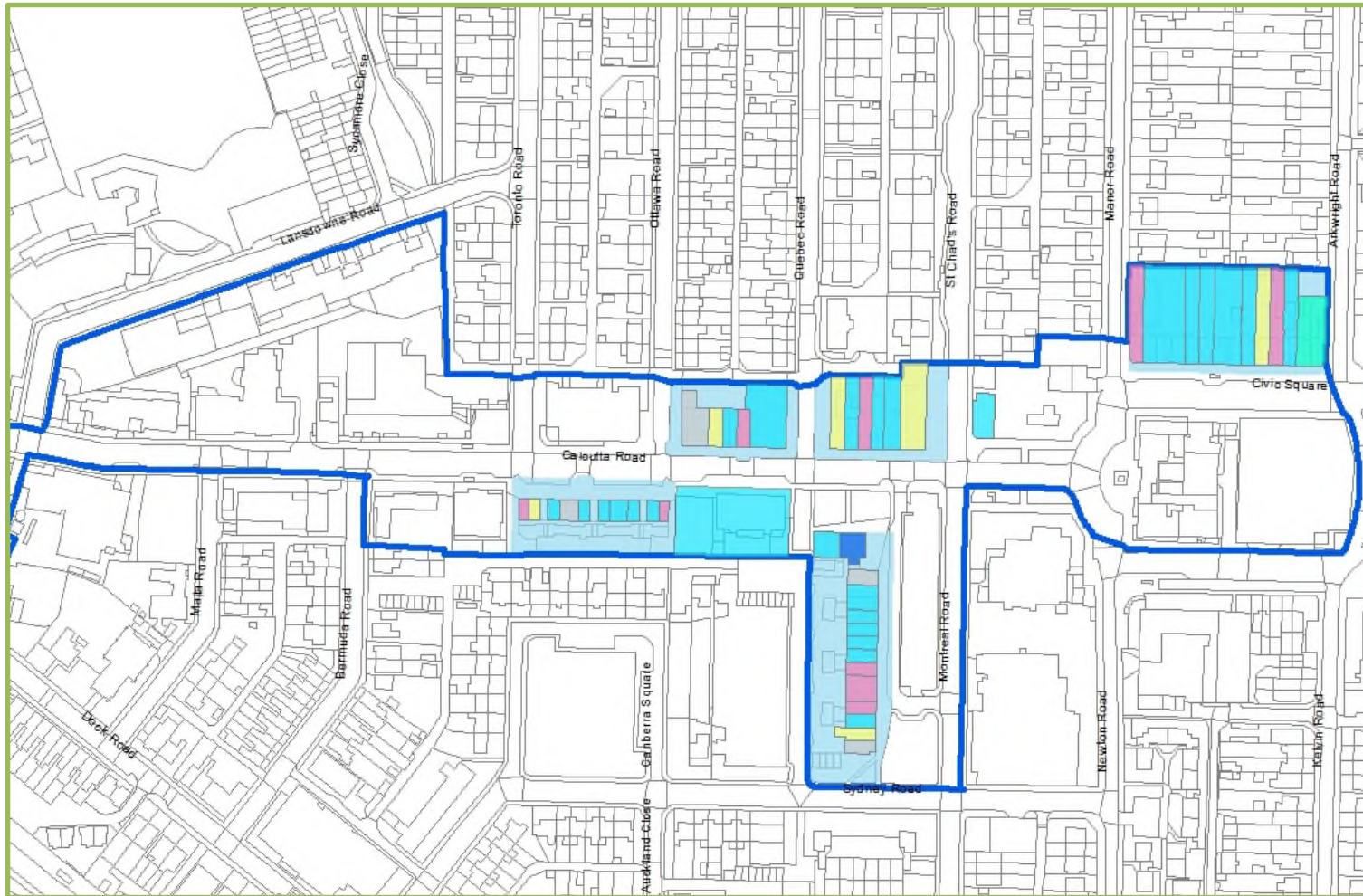


11.5 The majority of units are E(a) - the display or retail sale of goods, other than hot food (53.1% in 2023 and 57.1% in 2022), which are mostly (80.8%)



independent shops, but includes a Tesco Express and a Co-Op convenience store. Vacancy levels in the centre was 8.2% in 2023, which was an increase from 4.1% in 2022, but a large decrease from 2018 when 17.6% of units were vacant.

Map 10 – Distribution of uses in Tilbury Central Shopping Area



**Use Class**

- D1
- E(a)
- E(b)
- E(c)
- Sui Generis
- Vacant
- Shopping Area
- Shopping Centres and Parades

# Accessibility

**Table 13 - Accessibility of Tilbury’s Central Shopping Area**

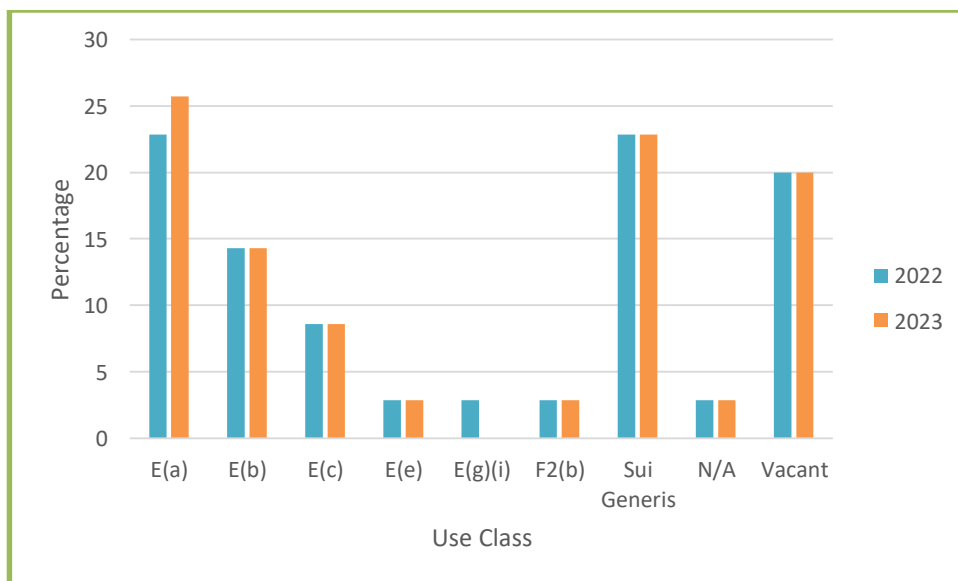
<b>Car</b>	Easily accessible by car from A13 via A1089. Free on-street parking is available at Civic Square and Montreal Road.
<b>Bus</b>	Bus routes to/from Grays, West Thurrock, South Ockendon, Aveley, Chadwell St Mary, Stanford-le-Hope, Corringham, Brentwood and Pitsea.
<b>Train</b>	Nearest railway station is Tilbury Town Station (approx..400m away)
<b>Cycling</b>	Numerous cycle routes, but no cycle racks visible.

## Other Shopping Area

11.6 Tilbury has other peripheral retail units at Dock Road, located adjacent to Tilbury Town Railway Station. This area comprises of 35 units. The area has very little sense of place or local character, with the street scene classed as poor. The area looks fairly run down, with little street furniture, apart from bins, a bench, a post box and an old phone box. The centre is set on a busy through-road, with retail units on both sides. A pedestrian crossing is present directly in front of the entrance to the Railway Station however, providing a safe crossing point for pedestrians. CCTV is also present, which can increase the perception of safety in the area.

11.7 The units assessed comprise of the following:

**Chart 11 - Units at Other Shopping Area in Tilbury**



- 11.8 The other shopping area of Tilbury has a high vacancy rate of 20% in 2023 and 2022, which is the highest vacancy rate of all the local centres assessed in the Borough. This needs to be monitored closely.
- 11.9 Of the units that are occupied, the majority are for retail (E(a), 25.7% in 2023 and 22.9% in 2022). 14.3% of units were hot-food takeaways.
- 11.10 Whilst assessing Tilbury’s other shopping area, a few premises were identified, which are not currently included within the designated Shopping Area boundary. These are identified in Table 14.

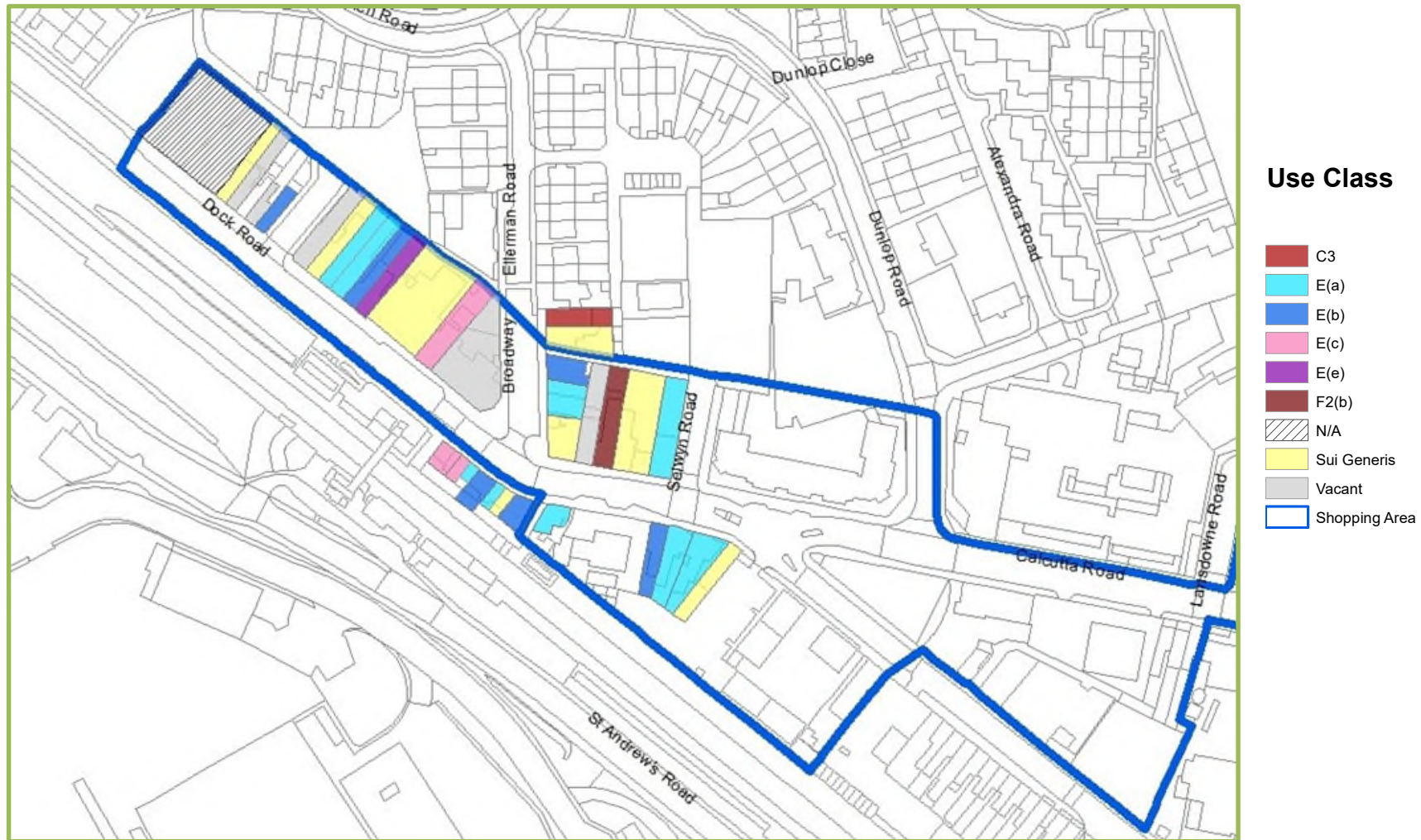
**Table 14 - Additional Units in Other Shopping Areas in Tilbury**

Address	Unit Name/Organisation	Use Class
233 Dock Road	The Dock Café and Restaurant	A3
235 Dock Road	Tilbury Wines	A1
237 Dock Road	Right Time Restaurant	A3
239 Dock Road	Mister Scissors Gents Salon	A1
239A Dock Road	Xem Teck	A1
9 Broadway	Coral	Sui Generis

- 11.11 It will need to be decided whether the designated Shopping Area boundary should be amended in the future to include these additional units.

Map 11 – Distribution of uses in Other Shopping Areas in Tilbury

[57]



## Accessibility

**Table 15 - Accessibility of Tilbury's Other Shopping Area**

<b>Car</b>	Easily accessible by car from A1089. Free on-street parking on Calcutta Road.
<b>Bus</b>	Bus routes to/from Grays, West Thurrock, South Ockendon, Aveley, Chadwell St Mary, Stanford-le-Hope, Corringham, Brentwood and Pitsea.
<b>Train</b>	Nearest railway station is Tilbury Town Station.
<b>Cycling</b>	Numerous cycle routes, with racks present outside the railway station.

## Tilbury Combined

- 11.12 Tilbury local centre as a whole is largely occupied by retail stores, with 41.7% of units classed as E(a). Of these retail units, 85.7% are local retailers. The vacancy rate within Tilbury is high, with 15 vacant units in 2023 equating to 13.1%. This is a decrease from 18.3% in 2018. In contrast to other local centres within the Borough, Tilbury has no banks or estate agents present.

## Summary

### Tilbury Central Shopping Area

- Comprises of 49 units.
- Predominantly E(a) retail units (53.1%).
- Predominantly local retailers (80.8%).
- Vacancy rate is 8.2%
- Average/poor street scene, with little street furniture.
- War memorial outside local library provides a sense of place and local identity.
- CCTV helps increase the perception of safety.
- Easily accessible by car, bus and train, but no cycle racks present.

### Other Shopping Area

- Comprises of 35 units.



- 41.7% are E(a) retail.
- 100% retail units are local retailers.
- Vacancy rate is 20%
- Poor street scene, with limited street furniture.
- Area lacks character.
- Tilbury Town Railway Station increases pedestrian flow through the centre.
- CCTV helps reduce the fear of crime.
-

## 12 Recommendations/ Next Steps

- 12.1 Going forward, it will be necessary to undertake further health check assessments of Thurrock's designated centres, on a regular basis, to understand any patterns of change occurring and to try and mitigate any negative changes to prevent the deterioration of the centres and to improve their vitality and viability.
- 12.2 The health check assessments undertaken so far have identified areas and individual units which are not included within the boundary of any existing designated Shopping Areas , although in many cases they are in very close proximity. These need to be looked at further and a decision made as to whether in the future, the current shopping centre boundaries are amended within the new Local Plan, to include some or all of these additional units.



