

Bootle Town Centre

Description

Bootle town centre is dominated by The Strand Shopping Centre, a managed environment, which accommodates most of the centre's retail offer, but also results in the centre being somewhat 'inward-facing'. Bootle has a reasonable overall environmental quality. There are significant vacancies but these are concentrated in The Palatine and The Hexagon within The Strand, which are among the least prominent parts of the centre.

Status

Town Centre (as defined by the Local Plan for Sefton, adopted April 2017)

Photos



Figure 1: Bootle station is a key gateway into the town centre



Figure 2: Castle Bingo on Stanley Road



Figure 3: View towards Parkside within The Strand Shopping Centre



Figure 4: View towards The Strand Shopping Centre from retail units on Stanley Road

Table 1: Town Centre Floorspace Composition

Goad Category	Bootle Town Centre Floorspace at 2011 (%)	Bootle Town Centre Floorspace at 2015 (%)	Bootle Town Centre Floorspace at 2020 (sq.m)	Bootle Town Centre Floorspace at 2020 (%)	Floorspace UK Average at 2020 (%)
Convenience	14.3	22.9	11,800	23.5	15.4
Comparison	41.7	33.2	17,470	34.9	33.5
Retail Services	7.3	5.3	3,350	6.7	7
Leisure Services	16.2	15.8	7,400	14.8	25.6
Financial and Business Services	8.6	7.2	2,600	5.2	7.3
Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Vacant	11.9	15.6	7,490	14.9	10.6
TOTAL	100	100	50,110	100	100

Source: Composition of Bootle Town Centre based on Experian Goad definition of the centre and derived from Nexus Planning Survey of March 2020; historic data derived from Sefton Retail Strategy Review 2015 and Sefton Retail Strategy Review Update 2012; UK Average from Experian Goad Report February 2020

Table 2: Town Centre Unit Composition

Goad Category	Bootle Town Centre Units at 2011 (%)	Bootle Town Centre Units at 2015 (%)	Bootle Town Centre Number of Units 2020	Bootle Town Centre Units at 2020 (%)	Units UK Average at 2020 (%)
Convenience	10.0	9.3	20	10.5	9.2
Comparison	35.7	30.4	61	31.9	29.2
Retail Services	10.5	10.3	30	15.7	15.1
Leisure Services	13.8	15.2	31	16.2	24.5
Financial and Business Services	11.0	11.8	14	7.3	9.8
Miscellaneous	0.0	0.0	0	0.0	0
Vacant	19.0	23.0	35	18.3	11.9
TOTAL	100	100	191	100	100

Source: Composition of Bootle Town Centre based on Experian Goad definition of the centre and derived from Nexus Planning Survey of March 2020; historic data derived from Sefton Retail Strategy Review 2015 and Sefton Retail Strategy Review Update 2012; UK Average from Experian Goad Report February 2020

Table 3: Town Centre Facilities

		Total
Key Anchor Store	Asda, TJ Hughes	
Other National Retailers	O2, Aldi, Argos, B&M Bargains, Barclays, Betfred, Bodycare, Bon Marche, Boots, Brighthouse, CEX, Costa, EE, Fragrance Shop, Game, H Samuel, Halifax, Hays Travel, Heron Foods, Holland and Barrett, HSBC, Iceland, JD, Ladbrokes, Lidl, Max Spielmann, Nationwide, Natwest, New Look, Peacocks, Perfume Shop, Post Office, Poundland, Poundstretcher, Santander, Savers, Select, Specsavers, Subway, Superdrug, The Carphone Warehouse, The Works, Three, TSB, WH Smith, Warren James, William Hill	51
Community Facilities	Four civic buildings, two places of worship, two dental surgeries and a doctors' surgery.	9

Source: Composition of Bootle Town Centre derived from Nexus Planning Survey of March 2020

Table 4: Major Retailers Present

Department Stores		Clothing	
Debenhams	0	Burton	0
House of Fraser	0	Dorothy Perkins	0
John Lewis	0	H&M	0
Marks & Spencer	0	Monsoon Accessorize	0
Mixed Goods Retailers		New Look	1
Argos	1	Next	0
Boots the Chemist	1	Primark	0
TK Maxx	0	River Island	0
WH Smith	1	Topman	0
Wilko	0	Topshop	0
Supermarkets		Other Retailers	
Sainsbury's	0	Carphone Warehouse	1
Tesco	0	Clarks	0
Waitrose	0	Clintons	0
		EE	1
		HMV	0
		02	1
		Superdrug	1
		Vodafone	0
		Waterstones	0

Source: Composition of Bootle Town Centre derived from Nexus Planning Survey of December 2019; major retailers are the 30 operators identified by Experian Goad as being the most likely to improve the appeal of a centre

Overall Composition

- There are 20 convenience goods operators accounting for 11,800 sq.m of floorspace and equating to 23.5% of the total stock of commercial floorspace.
- The 61 comparison goods retailers in Bootle account for 17,470 sq.m of floorspace, which equates to 34.9% of the total stock of floorspace.
- Service operators account for 13,350 sq.m of floorspace, or 26.6% of all commercial floorspace in the centre.
- There is 7,490 sq.m of vacant floorspace in the centre, equating to 14.9% of total stock. There are 35 vacant units in the Town Centre, which account for 18.3% of all units in Bootle.
- Bootle town centre benefits from a number of civic and community uses that could increase the instances of linked trips in the centre.
- The Strand Shopping Centre 'turns its back' on the adjacent high street, Stanley Road, whilst the Asda store is separate from the heart of the town centre.

Convenience & Comparison

Convenience and comparison goods operators account for 29,270 sq.m of floorspace and equate to 58.4% of all floorspace in the centre.

Comparison goods operators are substantially concentrated in The Strand Shopping Centre. There are 61 comparison operators located within Bootle town centre, accounting for 17,470 sq.m of floorspace, or 34.9% of the total floorspace in the centre. Whilst the comparison goods offer is broadly in keeping with a centre of Bootle's size, its offer has previously been impacted by the loss of the Marks & Spencer Outlet store in 2016. This has been mitigated to some degree by TJ Hughes reopening at The Hexagon in The Strand.

There are 20 convenience operators located within Bootle town centre. These units account for 11,800 sq.m of floorspace and equate to 23.5% of all floorspace in the town centre. Operators include four bakeries, three convenience stores and three foodstores, namely Lidl, Iceland and Asda. There is also an Aldi foodstore located beyond both the Goad and town centre boundary. Additionally, there are Sefton Community Markets are held at The Strand on Fridays.

The comparison goods offer in Bootle is broadly commensurate with the national average figure (both in respect of the proportion of floorspace and number of units in this use). However, it is evident that the centre has a relatively weak clothing and footwear offer, and that shoppers instead travel to Liverpool city centre and Aintree Shopping Park to buy such goods. In this regard, Bootle town centre accommodates just one (New Look) of the major clothing retailers identified by Experian Goad.

The centre is well provided for in respect of convenience goods floorspace; this is a consequence of the Asda superstore on Strand Road (which lies within Experian Goad's definition of Bootle town centre).

Services

There are 75 service operators located in Bootle Town Centre. These are generally located adjacent to, but not inside, The Strand Shopping Centre. The 31 leisure service operators in Bootle town centre accounting for 7,400 sq.m of floorspace, equating to 14.8% of the total stock of floorspace.

Retail service operators account for 30 units in Bootle town centre. These units occupy 3,350 sq.m of floorspace, which equates to 6.7% of all commercial floorspace in the centre. There are 14 financial and business service operators which

account for 2,600 sq.m of floorspace, equating to 5.2% of total floorspace in the town centre.

Whilst there has been some change in Bootle's service offer subsequent to the previous study reporting, we believe that the centre continues to accommodate a diverse range of operators and uses. The continued presence of eight banks is important in ensuring that residents can manage their finances without the need to travel into Liverpool city centre.

Vacancies

Since the previous survey was undertaken, the proportion of floorspace that is vacant remained constant (15.6% at May 2015 to 14.9% at March 2020). Vacant units are located throughout Bootle town centre; however, there is a particular concentration of vacant units within The Strand Shopping Centre. It should be noted that a number of vacant units that surround The Hexagon are currently under alteration.

Despite little change in the proportion of vacant floorspace or units since the 2015 survey, the vacancy rate in respect of units is still significantly above the UK national average of vacant units which as of February 2020 11.9%.

Miscellaneous

Bootle town centre contains a number of community and civic facilities. Among these are four civic buildings, two places of worships, two public car parks, two dental surgeries and a doctor surgery.

Pedestrian Flows

At the time of Nexus Planning's visit, the footfall observed within The Strand Shopping Centre was reasonably healthy, principally along Medway and Parkside malls within The Strand. Shoppers principally access the centre from the entrances on Stanley Road and from the multi-storey car park. Outside of The Strand, pedestrian flows appeared to be modest and dispersed, although the bus stops adjacent to the centre on Stanley Road are a focus for pedestrian movement. Footfall along Stanley Road is concentrated on the western side of the road (the Strand side), and falls away sharply north of Vermont Way and south of Canal Street.

Footfall on Washington Parade, to the west of The Strand, was relatively limited at the time of our survey. Most customers at the Asda store at Strand Road arrived by car and we observed few linked trips arising from the Asda at the time of our visit.

Accessibility

Road Access

The majority of Bootle town centre is 'sandwiched' between Washington Parade, which lies to the west, and Stanley Road,

which lies to the east. The principal access routes into the centre are via Stanley Road (which leads to Crosby and Litherland to the north, and Liverpool to the south), and via the Merton Road (which leads towards Walton and beyond to the East Lancs Road).

Bootle is well connected and provides relatively straightforward access across much of Merseyside (accepting that routes become more congested to the south, closer to Liverpool city centre). Liverpool City Centre is around 20 minutes' drive from Bootle, with Southport around 40 minutes to the north.

Parking

There is no on street parking to the front of the Strand on Stanley Road or on Washington Parade. The principal car parking provision is The Strand multi-storey, which provides parking for 500 vehicles (£1.60 for up to two hours; £7.50 for five plus hours). Parking is also available at the Delaware Road multi-storey (432 spaces, costing £1.80 for up to two hours). Access and signage at both car parks is generally good, and both appear to be well used.

Time-limited, free parking is available at the Asda, Lidl and Aldi stores outside of the Strand Centre and all appear to be popular.

Public Transport: Rail

Bootle New Strand Station is the closest rail station to the town centre, being around a two minute walk from the Stanley Road entrance of The Strand. However, the route is not direct with pedestrians having to navigate across designated crossing points along Washington Parade. The entrance to the station could be more inviting, as it is partially hidden behind buildings of a variable state of repair. Regular services connect the station to Liverpool and Southport.

Public Transport: Buses

The town centre is well served by a number of bus routes, which can be accessed via the Bootle Strand Bus Station (six stands) or the bus stops on Stanley Road at the front of The Strand. Services are available to a number of destinations including Southport, Maghull, Crosby, Liverpool, Allerton, Walton and Liverpool John Lennon Airport.

Perception of Safety

The managed environment of The Strand provides a generally good level of personal safety. Stanley Road, with a reasonable level of pedestrian and other activity, similarly feels safe and secure, certainly during the day. However, in

less central areas, as footfall falls away, the perception of safety is likely to be lower, although this is tempered by the proximity of residential areas to the north, which provide an element of natural surveillance.

There is little natural surveillance moving southerly down Stanley Road or at Washington Parade, to the rear of The Strand. Pedestrian activity along Washington Parade is particularly limited, as there is little in the way of natural surveillance. The area appears to be relatively free of graffiti, vandalism, litter or other sign of anti-social behaviour.

According to the website UKCrimeStats the following crime rates were reported within a mile radius of Bootle Town Centre over the past three years:

- 6,825 crimes (approximately 569 per month) between August 2019 and July 2020
- 6,388 crimes (approximately 532 per month) between August 2018 and July 2019
- 6,407 crimes (approximately 534 per month) between August 2017 and July 2018

Environmental Quality

The overall environmental quality of the centre is considered to be reasonable, if essentially functional, with little in the way of interest or distinctive character.

The Strand is a well-managed and maintained facility, albeit it is inward-looking and, as a consequence, is slightly disconnected from other parts of the wider town centre. There may be opportunities, particularly along Stanley Road, to create a more outward looking frontage to the centre. Furthermore the concentration of vacant units within The Strand itself does reduce the overall attractiveness of the centre. Alternate uses should therefore be sought for vacant units, alternatively consideration be given to what intervention may be necessary to improve areas with a high concentration of vacant units. More generally, parts of The Strand look 'of their time' and would benefit from investment and updating.

The majority of traditional units on Stanley Road offer a positive frontage to the street. Relatively recent planting and public realm improvements, and a number of new developments, have added to environmental quality.

Conclusion

Overall, the managed environment of The Strand Shopping Centre ensures that the centre performs at least moderately well in respect of the centre's environmental quality, its accessibility, and the perception of safety. However, as The

Strand closes at 6pm, this likely restricts certain uses from driving further footfall through the centre, preventing it benefiting from any 'night-time' economic activity.

The range of convenience and comparison retailers is considered to be diverse, with three significant foodstores located within the centre (Aldi, Lidl and Asda). However, whilst the vacancy rate not increased any further in recent years the number of vacant units remains problematic.

As such, and although the number of vacancies in the centre appears to have reduced in recent months to March 2020, there is further work to do in order to safeguard the long term vitality and viability of the centre.



Bootle Town Centre

Survey Date
March 2020

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|---|---|
| ■ Comparison | ■ Leisure Service |
| ■ Convenience | ■ Retail Service |
| ■ Financial & Business Services | ■ Vacant |