

Watlington
Neighbourhood Plan



The economic and social
sustainability of our town

What did our shopkeepers have to say?

- ▶ We asked 16 shop owners or managers for their views on eight key questions to gather feedback as part of our Neighbourhood Plan community engagement programme – a few shop owners did not respond
- ▶ We will be asking our business community the same questions shortly

- ▶ We asked them to score on a points out of ten basis the importance of each question to arrive at a maximum of 160 points from the responses received

1. How do you value the town of Watlington in acting as a “service centre” to our settlements and communities in a 5 km radius?

- ▶ 156 from 160 points – 98% see the role of Watlington as a “service centre” or “hub” as vitally important

2. How do you see the effect of a “relief road” in diverting through traffic away from the town centre?

- ▶ 120 from 160 points – 78% felt that this was an important consideration but there were conflicting views of which some were extreme

3. How do you feel about the availability of visitor parking near to the town?

- ▶ 160 from 160 points – 100% were of the opinion that the availability of visitor parking is crucially important to the town with much better signage needed

4. What do you think about lunchtime closing and shop opening hours?

- ▶ 112 from 160 points – 69% said this is not a major consideration as only two shops now are shut for lunch – staff coverage was the main reason for closing at certain times

5. How do you rate the strategic value of the Post Office?

- ▶ 154 from 160 points – 96% see the role of the Post Office as a key feature of trade in Watlington as part of a “destination visit” resulting in business elsewhere in the High Street

6. What do you see as the impact of 100-500 new houses over the period of our Plan (2032)?

- 140 from 160 points – 89% said this would have a significant effect on trade but were mindful of retaining the character of the town and they also felt this character and the appearance of the town could be further enhanced

7. How do you view the impact of many more new houses at Benson and Chinnor?

- 81 from 160 points – 50% considered that the number of new houses in Chinnor and Benson might have a noticeable effect on trade

8. Would you support the opportunity to campaign for business rate relief for new businesses?

- 149 from 160 points – 93% said this issue was vitally important for the financial viability of their business and new businesses