REVITALISING IRELAND’S TOWNS: RETAIL PLANNING AND THE SEQUENTIAL TEST

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About the Irish Planning Institute

• Founded in 1975.

• All-island (approx. 700 members) professional body representing planners engaged in physical, spatial and environmental planning in Ireland and Irish planners practising overseas.

• “The Irish Planning Institute’s mission is to advance planning in the interest of the common good by serving, improving and promoting the planning profession”

• Members work in central government, private practice, agencies, third level institutes, planning authorities in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, An Bord Pleanála and elsewhere.

• Member of European Council of Spatial Planners and Global Planners Network.
Planning Consultants

• Planning consultants provide expert advice to guide individuals, businesses, developers, communities and public and private sector bodies on commercial, residential, mixed use, retail, plan making and other projects.

• The planning system is continually changing. Qualified planners (MIPI) keep abreast of these changes and can provide up-to-date and immediate advice.

• Planning consultants also support the delivery of public sector projects alongside qualified planners in the Local Authority and the wider disciplines involved in project delivery.

• Listing at ipi.ie/consultants.
Presentation Overview

- What do we mean by retail planning?
- Retail planning policy/legislation
- The Sequential Approach
- Projecting Future Population
- Retail Strategy Formulation
- Assessing Retail Impact incl. Main Steps
- Quantifying Future Retail Need
What do we mean by retail planning?

- Supporting the vitality and viability of cities, town centres and villages
- Safeguarding healthy competition, consumer choice and affordability in the retail sector
- Having a comprehensive understanding of the current and projected future retail needs of a settlement and its area of function/influence
- Providing for efficient, equitable and sustainable retail solutions
- Ensuring that the development planning and management process is consistently applied, is informed by evidence so that decisions are data-led
- Guide local authorities in preparing development plans and assessing applications for planning permission, and also guide retailers and developers in formulating development proposals
Retail Planning Policy

Guidelines for Planning Authorities: Retail Planning (April, 2012)

- Ensuring retail development is **plan-led**
- Use of the **sequential approach** to retail development (promoting vitality)
- Securing **competitiveness** in the retailing sector (quality design & location)
- Increasing **access** to retailing opportunities through more **sustainable transport**
- Delivering **quality urban design** outcomes.

Supplemented with a **Retail Design Manual** which has a focus on the quality of building design and on the role that strong and positive retailing experiences can play in the public realm.
Retail Planning Policy: Sequential Approach

Not always mandatory: Where the location of a proposed retail development...has demonstrated to the satisfaction of the planning authority that it complies with the policies and objectives of a development plan and/or relevant retail strategy to support (the) city and town centre, additional supporting background studies such as...the sequential approach...are not required

But: Where the location of a proposed retail development submitted on a planning application is not consistent with the policies and objectives of the development plan and/or relevant retail strategy to support the city and town centre, then that development proposal, must be subject to the Sequential Approach...
Sequential Approach: Policy Principles

City / Town Centres

Critical Mass

District Centres
Sequential Approach: Order of Priority

LEGEND: — Settlement Boundary
Sequential approach

- Order of priority

City and Town Centre

Edge of Centre Sites

Out of Centre Sites

SLIDE TO BE REPLACED WITH VISUAL (WEDNESDAY)

Town Centre Retail Core

LEGEND: Setlement Boundary • Town Centre Retail Core
Sequential approach – order of priority

City and Town Centre

Edge - of - Centre Sites

Out - of - Centre Sites

Legend:  
- Settlement Boundary  
- Town Centre Retail Core  
- Vacant Sites
Sequential approach – order of priority

City and Town Centre Edge

Out of Centre Sites

SLIDE TO BE REPLACED WITH VISUAL (WEDNESDAY)

Town Centre Retail Core

LEGEND:  
- Settlement Boundary  
- Town Centre Retail Core  
- Vacant Sites  
- Opportunity Sites
Sequential approach – order of priority

City and Town Centre

Edge - of - Centre Sites

Out - of - Centre Sites

SLIDE TO BE REPLACED WITH VISUAL (WEDNESDAY)

Town Centre Retail Core

LEGEND:  
- Settlement Boundary  
- Town Centre Retail Core  
- Vacant Sites  
- Opportunity Sites  
- Priority Edge Sites

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Private Practice Branch
Sequential approach – order of priority

City and Town Centre Edge - of Centre Sites
Out - of Centre Sites

SLIDE TO BE REPLACED WITH VISUAL (WEDNESDAY)

Town Centre Retail Core

LEGEND: 
- Settlement Boundary 
- Town Centre Retail Core 
- Vacant Sites 
- Opportunity Sites 
- Priority Edge Sites 
- Bulky / Specialist Retail Zone
Sequential Approach Considerations

- Suitability
- Availability
- Viability
Retail Planning Policy

Regional Planning Guidelines (and Regional Retail Strategy)

- As part of the ongoing National Planning Framework process, the Regional Planning Guidelines will be replaced by a **Spatial and Economic Strategy**.
- The Retail Strategy provides **projected floorspace requirements** for convenience and comparison retailing and defines the **retail hierarchy**, with locations identified and recommendations made on the appropriate **type and scale of retail provision**.
- Categorises **retailing levels, type of retail format** and so on.
Retail Planning Policy/Legislation

- **Core Strategy** in Development Plan (total land, housing capacity, future population)
- Strategic Development Zones, Local Area Plans, Urban Framework Plans…
- **Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas** (2009)
- **Public Realm Strategy** or Development Plan content on **Placemaking** - define the function of urban settlements (based on hierarchical position)
- Areas of Disadvantage, **Vacant and Derelict Sites** (Urban Regeneration and Housing Act, 2015)
- **Economic** trends, **population and demographic** trends
Technical rigour is essential...
Central Statistics Office’s (CSO) demographic component method for population projection.

Key assumptions on future trends in fertility, mortality and migration.

Multiple scenarios considered by adjusting the underlying assumptions.

The preferred M2F2 scenario represents a moderate future projection where fertility is assumed to decrease from 2.1 to 1.8 to 2026; mortality rates to decrease with gains in life expectancy; and net migration to return to positive by 2016-2021 (+4.7k avg. p.a.).
Retail Strategy Formulation

1. Inception
2. Planning Policy Review
3. Economic Context and Current retail Trends
4. Retail Survey Analysis
5. Household + Shoppers Survey
6. Health Check Qualitative Assessment
7. Assess Competing Retail Centres
8. Quantitative Capacity Assessment
9. Formulation of Policies and Actions
10. Criteria for Assessing Future Retail development
11. Revised and Updated Retail Strategy
Assessing Retail Impact

- The likely effect on future investment needed to safeguard the vitality and viability of the centre and detailing the likely impacts of the proposal on trade/turnover

- Changes to the range of services provided by centres that could be affected

- Likely impact on a number of vacant properties in the primary shopping area

- Potential changes to the quality, attractiveness, physical condition and character of the centre and to its role in the economic and social life of the community, and

- The implications of proposed leisure and entertainment uses for the evening economy
‘Main’ Steps in Assessing Retail Impact

1. Identify catchment study area (fuzzy boundaries)
2. Estimate expenditure available
3. Estimate turnover of existing centres that may be affected by the proposal
4. Derive a consumer retail spending quantum that is available which will be directed from existing centres to the proposed development
5. Estimate the turnover of the proposal
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5. Derive a consumer retail spending quantum that is available which will be directed from existing centres to the proposed development

Remember: Not intended to prevent competition or prevent trade diversion, but to promote healthy urban centres in the public interest.
Quantifying Future Retail Need

• Step 1: Calculate Total Available Expenditure in the Survey Area
• Step 2: Application of “Market Shares” to Determine Amount of Retained Expenditure
• Step 3: Determine Whether the Existing Retail Economy is Trading at Equilibrium

• Step 4: Calculate Growth in Retained Expenditure through to the Forecast Years
• Step 5: Determine Level of Potential Headroom Expenditure in the Forecast Year
• Step 6: Determine Level of Residual Headroom Expenditure in the Forecast Year
• Step 7: Estimate Capacity for Additional Retail Floorspace at the Forecast Years

• Step 8: Allow for Retail Services within comparison retail projections
Thank you