

Chapter 2- Building Survey

The central business district of Chester-le-Street offers a wide range of shops and services, however Chester-le-Street is well known for its market town status. In this chapter I am aiming to investigate:

Aims

To investigate the range and variety of shops and services available on the Front Street of Chester-le-Street.

Secondly to investigate the dominant shop or service provided in Chester-le-Street.

Thirdly, to investigate the pricing by different shops with in Chester-le-Street.

Hypotheses

I predict that:

“Within the central business district of Chester-le-Street, the most dominating type of shop or service will be Food and Convenience stores.”

I think this because Chester-le-Street is too small of a town to attract any major chain stores like Marks and Spencer. Also the majority of people that come to Chester-le-Street are there for Convenience shopping like fruit and vegetables. I think the people will travel to major cities like Newcastle and Durham for Comparison shopping like televisions and game consoles.

I also predict that:

“Within the central business district of Chester-le-Street, there will be more shops than services.”

I think this because Chester-le-Street has a famed image for being a traditional market town and this would mean the core of the shops would of being convenience stores.

I also predict that:

“Within the central business district of Chester-le-Street, it only offers a small amount and range of specialist stores.”

I think this, because once again Chester-le-Street is too small of a town to attract large chain stores. Also the majority of people that come to Chester-le-Street are there for Convenience shopping like fruit and vegetables.

I also predict that:

“The majority of people in Chester-le-Street will shop at the lowest priced store, when the item is not bearing a brand label.”

I think this because it is only human nature and instinct to buy the lowest priced item when it is not bearing a brand label.

Finally I predict that:

“The majority of people interviewed the central business of Chester-le-Street will shop and buy the specific products from the COOP superstore.”

I think this because the coop has been the central shopping centre of Chester-le-Street for well over a century and the generations of families will have stuck by this. Another benefiting factor is that the Coop is much more than a food product store.

Methodology

In order to obtain all the relevant information, I carried out my fieldwork in the central business district of Chester-le-Street on Thursday 15th May 2003. We were given partners in order to carry out the survey.

We began our building survey at point or peg one, which was outside building number one-Ropey lane. We walked down Chester-le-Street in an anti-clockwise pattern recording the types of shops as we walked round.

Being in pairs was a great advantage because we were able to spot all the little shops hidden away, shops that sometimes you may have missed if you were working by your self. Also being in a pairs, one partner could of record the name of the shop while the other could record the type of shop, this helped to ease writing and lessen confusion.

The information we were recording was from a primary source. To record the information we used building survey sheets one and two and a topological map of Chester-le-Street.

We did not record the shops on the second floor of buildings. We were also left with a few gaps in the building survey due to the fact that some premises had closed down and that other shops had being expanded into the next building. Once we had recorded this data, we divided the shops into types and groups, to make it clearer for us to see the types of services and goods that were available. The groups we organised the shops and services into were as follows:

0a: Convenience stores: Everyday use

0b: Convenience stores: Regular use

1: Shoppers goods store.

2+3: Specialist Stores

4: Auto Sales

5: Food Services

6: Legal and Financial services

7: General Services

8. Government

9. Entertainment

X: Department and Chain stores

E: extra

V: Vacant

For my fourth hypothesis I needed to conduct a different methodology for collecting all the relevant data:

In order to obtain all the relevant information, I carried out my fieldwork in the central business district of Chester-le-Street on 20th September 2003. To collect on the data I used a simple questionnaire. I interviewed the people of Chester-le-Street within the central business district on the 20th September 2003. I tried to pick a selection of different people so that I could obtain a wide range of results. Once again as in the later chapters, I was refused or simply ignored by a number of people; however this did not deter me from the 20 people needed. Once I finished interviewing, I went to the specific shops chosen to buy the items used in the questionnaire. The shops I chose were the COOP, Iceland and Tescos.

COOP: Has been the central shopping centre of Chester-le-Street for well over a century. The coop specialises in Food products, electrical products, clothing, housing items, holidays and banking. It also includes a large café and is joined to St Cuthbert's Walk.

Iceland: Is situated within St Cuthbert's Walk. It also sells a wide range of food products but specialises in Frozen food hence the name. However it also sells electrical kitchen equipment.

Tescos: The newest addition to the central business district. Tescos opened in September 2003. Tescos is a superstore and specialises in Food products, electrical products, clothing, housing items and banking. It also includes a café.

Coop

Loaf of Bread: £

Pint of Milk :£

Iceland

Loaf of Bread: £

Pint of Milk :£

Tescos

Loaf of Bread: £

Pint of Milk :£

Analysis

I had predicted that "Within the central business district of Chester-le-Street, the most dominating type of shop or service will be Food and Convenience stores."

In my first hypothesis I had been proved wrong as I predicted that the above. However to my surprise the most dominating type of shop in Chester-le-Street was legal and financial services. This was proved in my presentation of data where in the graph Legal and financial services reached up to 26 on the frequency side. Compared to 0a: Convenience stores: Everyday use which only reached

