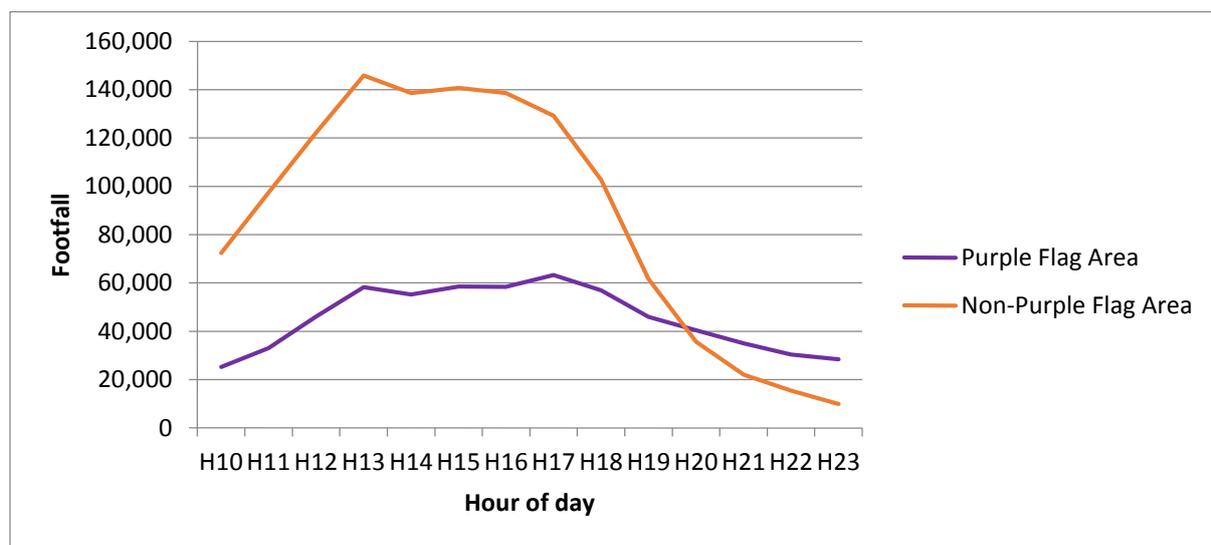


Context

There has been some discussion about the licence costs for businesses placing seating outside their premises in Dublin city centre. Simply put Dublin's costs are approximately 4 times that of Covent Garden in the West End of London and 5 times that of Edinburgh. For obvious reasons these costs are a bone of contention for evening trade practitioners.

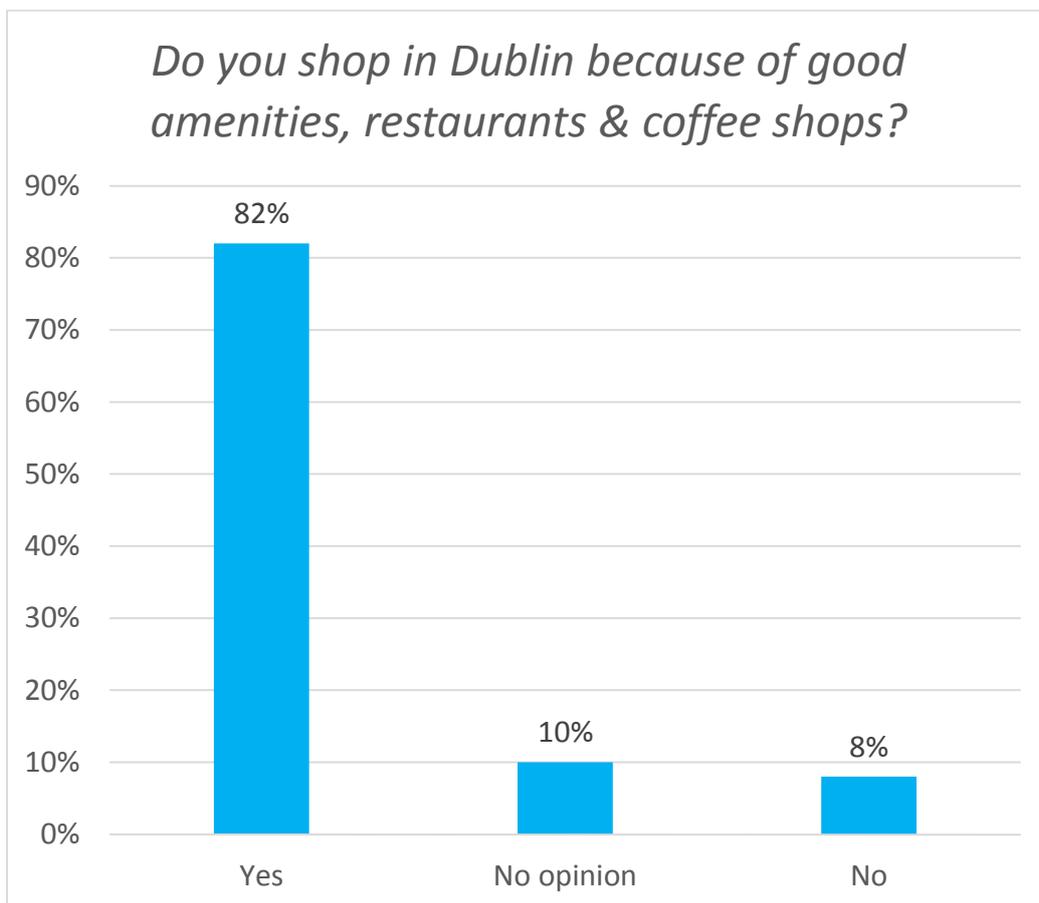
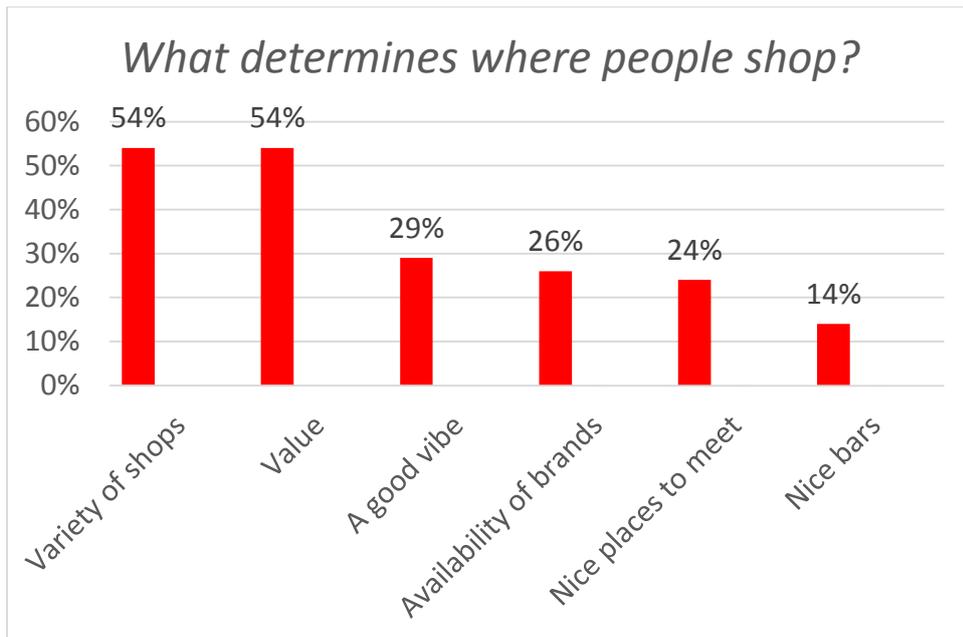
Dublin Town considers the matter within the wider economic context. Our analysis of city trends shows a definite and increasing movement towards evening time activity and use. The graph below compares footfall on Henry Street, which is a traditional retail street, with South William Street, which 5 years ago was a secondary retail street but which is now evolving as a mixed use street with both independent traders and a quality restaurant/café offering.



From this graph it is clear that Henry Street shows a pattern of activity during the day but is abandoned between 5 and 6 pm each evening. Whereas South William Street has a more level and sustained pattern of use.

International cities are reporting trends similar to that experienced on South William Street. Evening retail is becoming predominant. Shoppers are leaving their offices and staying in their city after hours. We tested the hypothesis with Dublin workers in a survey with Millward Browne and found that 65% of workers in Dublin would stay and shop in the city after hours if retailers stayed open later into the evening. Very interestingly, 80% of those said they would like to visit a restaurant or café as part of this shopping trip. Therefore, we envisage that the nature of shopping will change significantly in the coming years towards an evening economy with perhaps a slightly lesser emphasis on weekend trade. Thus we are likely to experience a greater integration of the day and evening economies. The link between shopping and socialising is becoming increasingly clear and again this trend is growing. In a further Millward Browne survey we found that 60% of young people shop where they know their friends socialise and 40% of them admitted to hoping that their shopping trip will result in a night out.

The diversity and quality of the business mix and offer within the city is a key attraction. As seen in the graphs below, we asked the public about the motivating factors that determine where they shop. While variety, value and range were important so too were ambience and good places to meet. Similarly, when it came to Dublin specifically, the quality of these attributes were found to be a key drivers into the city for retail purposes.



What is crucial about this, is the fact that the city faces competition not only from out of town shopping destinations but also from on-line and mobile commerce. It is estimated that between one-quarter and one-third of non-food retail will be conducted on line by the end of this decade. The current level is in the region of 15-17%. E-purchases conducted on mobile devices line peak each evening between 6 and 8 as commuters take to their phones on their journey home. As many of

these purchases leave the Irish economy there is a clear economic case for ensuring that Irish retailers are supported in maintaining spend within our economy. The best way of doing that is to develop a welcoming environment that encourages people to linger in their city a little longer. The creation of a vibrant and welcoming café/restaurant culture is critical in developing this welcoming environment.

Therefore, strengthening the evening economy is a key Dublin Town priority and strategy. We believe that achieving this objective will be instrumental in maintaining and growing the 50,000 jobs that the city currently provides in both the retail and hospitality sector. This is why we gained Purple Flag recognition for the Creative Quarter & Dame District on the south side of the city and why we are working towards gaining Purple Flag status for the north side. We will make a north side application in November 2016. The Purple Flag process provides a unique partnership platform for local businesses, the local authority, the Gardaí and Failte Ireland to create and realise a collective vision for a specific district. This is one that will attract and maintain vibrancy while ensuring strict adherence with specified standards.

The proposal

We would clearly welcome a reduction in the cost of outdoor seating. We further believe that it is imperative that we develop and maintain a collective vision for the future of our city. The public, private and voluntary sectors must co-operate to realise that vision for the benefit of Dublin and its citizens.

Therefore, we suggest that in addition to a reduction in the headline cost for outdoor seating that there would be a rebate in the region of 75-80%, establishing parity with competitor cities, where specific conditions are met. Where they are not met the Council could withdraw the rebate and charge the full fee.

Proposed conditions for maintaining the reductions

It is proposed that existing fee structure be maintained, however, there would be significant reductions where conditions are met by the traders.

These would include for example:

- Maintaining an appropriate cleaning regime with agreed cleaning targets. This would encompass maintaining the area clean of cigarette butts, glass etc. Traders would be required to demonstrate that they have initiated and maintained a regime appropriate to maintaining those standards.
- Measures to protect the safety and security of customers to be put in place.
- The erection of quality barriers designed to safeguard the area. As these are likely to be supported by distributors we would advocate that there would not be a prohibition against the use of branding on these barriers, however, we do believe that there is a role for Dublin City Council's planning department in specifying the nature and quality of barriers that would be considered appropriate and to create a consistent look and feel to the area. The erection of such barriers would assist the Gardaí in identifying persons who are patrons of specific establishments and those who are not.
- We would advocate that a portion of the seats be offered to members of the public who may or may not be patrons of the establishment. The allocation of this seating would be at the discretion of the management of the establishment.

We would envisage a deeper discount or a total waiving of fees in locations where there is a clear desire for enhanced activity. A case in point is the North Lotts. This district has been derelict and

prone to anti-social behaviour and in particular drug use for some time. A working group comprising local businesses, Dublin Town, Dublin City Council and the Gardaí has come together to re-establish & re-imagine the district. This initiative has a significant opportunity to transform a significantly underperforming district within the city. A number of businesses adjacent to the North Lott's are engaged in the hospitality sector and we see potential to have them utilise the lane for outdoor seating. As this lane is designated as a market area we would see enormous opportunity for creating a range of interacting activities that will bring new life to a geographically strategic but underperforming district.

Role of Dublin Town in working with traders

Dublin Town would see a role for itself in working with traders to achieve high rates of compliance. Codes of practice and behaviour have been introduced successfully in other locations such as the Dame District.

License Periods

Currently licenses are furnished for year long periods only. However, most businesses want to have outdoor seating for the summer period only, particularly when they first establish outdoor seating. We would strongly advocate that licenses be granted for periods of 3 months which would allow businesses to determine if having outdoor seating was likely to prove successful for them.