Master Thesis

Final Version

Retail areas; faded glory or the beating hearts of the city?

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07-03-2018

Abstract

This research focuses on retail areas; retail areas are confronted with societal changes like increasing online shopping and economic recessions. These societal changes are in this research mentioned as *exogenous factors.* These changes have impact on the viability and vitality of retail areas. Retail vacancy is rising and less visitors are coming to retail areas. However, several retail areas are able to remain successful and attractive. These retail areas are described as *resilient* and *adaptive* retail areas. The aim of this study is to find out possibilities for adaptive and resilient retail areas which can cope with changing contexts. The primary question of this research is: “*What are the determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas which can cope with changing contexts?”.* To get insight in the resilience and adaptiveness of retail areas, firstly observations are done in 9 selected cases; these 9 cases are retail areas in the relatively north of the Netherlands. This research is done by both quantitative as qualitative methods. In most retail areas it comes forward that the most important actors of the retail area, ar: *entrepreneurs*, *real-estate owners* and the *municipality*. In both the literature, as the interviews, 4 factors which are determining retail resilience and adaptiveness, come forward. These factors are; *reorganizing and responding to exogenous factors, policy and stakeholders, identity and place-based approaches* and *diversity.* It comes forward that stakeholders in most retail areas are aware of these factors and are putting emphasis on ways to improve these factors. However, different ways are found to implement these factors. It could be stated that the determining factors for resilient and adaptive retail areas exist of several *subfactors.*

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1. Retail areas; faded glory or the beating hearts of the city?

Retail vacancy and '*lifeless streets'* are a serious concern in several retail areas in Dutch cities. However, at the same time there are successful retail areas where the streets are crowded. In the Dutch financial newspaper '*Financieel Dagblad'* (2017) an article was published about the fact that the reorganization of the Dutch retail chain 'Blokker' would result in an increase of 40000 m² in vacancy of which 80 per cent outside the Randstad. In the article it is stated that real estate parties and municipalities should cooperate more what should result in creative solutions and new concepts. Another article, written by *NOS* (2016) has the title; "*Are you going to shop today? Well, you are not the only one.*" In this article the popularity and crowdedness of retail areas, like the Kalverstraat in Amsterdam is described around the Christmas holidays. In this article it is stated that the strength of these retail areas is the 'offer'. These retail areas offer 'things' which you cannot buy on the internet.

The experience of the retail area is considered as important according to the article; people need to have the feeling they are a day out. An example of a retail area which attempts to offer this experience is the 'medieval looking' Bataviastad, on the edge the Dutch town Lelystad. Bataviastad is a '*Factory Outlet Center'* which is described in an article of RTL (2016) as a cluster of factory stores what sell mainly brand clothing, together with catering and entertainment. People are not going to Bataviastad for only shopping. The way these outlet centers are managed is different comparing to normal retail areas. It is focused on the experiences of people and people are having 'a day out' when they are going to an outlet center. These outlet centers experience boosts; Dutch consumers spent in 2015, 54 per cent more in these outlet centers than in 2010.

The rest of this chapter exists of a problem statement; in the following paragraph the relevance of this research is explained and some findings in the literature are shortly mentioned. Based on this, the objectives and research questions of this research are composed. After this, a short description of the research method is given. The last paragraph of this chapter exists of a description of the content of this research.

1.1. Problem Statement

Despite of some successful stories of retail areas, as Bataviastad, there has been an increase of retail vacancy in Dutch cities. In 2016 the average vacancy in retail areas in the Netherlands was more than 10 per cent (CLO, 2016). Relatively much of the retail vacancy is in inner cities (Evers et al. 2014). Evers et al. did a research to the livability of Dutch inner cities in service of the Dutch ministry of Infrastructure and Environment. Groen (2015) mentions that the number of retail vacancy increased from circa 10.000 in 2008 to 16.754 in 2015. The development of the retail vacancy in the Netherlands between 2004 and 2016 is shown in figure 1.

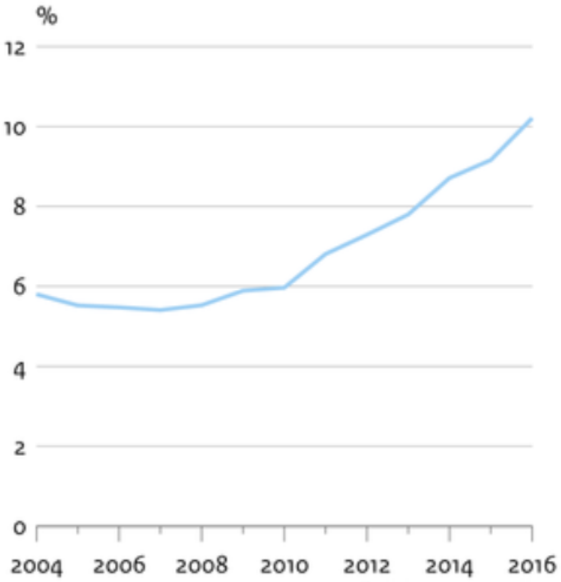


Figure 1. The share of retail vacancy in the Netherlands in percentages between 2004 and 2016 (Compendium voor de Leefomgeving, 2016).

However, there are some differences between and within different Dutch cities and regions. The largest share of retail vacancy is outside the Randstad. In the more peripheral areas of the Netherlands there is relatively much retail vacancy. The Compendium voor de Leefomgeving (CLO) (2016) mentions that the share of retail vacancy in parts of Groningen, Friesland, Overijssel, Limburg and Noord-Brabant is higher than the average of the Netherlands. In figure 2 a map is shown with the relative retail vacancy per municipality in the Netherlands. Another point of attention is the difference between inner cities and other parts of the city. In the Netherlands there are cities with relatively more retail vacancy in the inner cities, in some cities the shop vacancy between inner cities and other parts of the city is equal, while in other cities there is less retail vacancy in the inner city than other parts of the city (Evers et al. 2014).

Developments like this raise questions as; what factors are influencing vacancy? Why are there differences in retail vacancy between different retail areas? What are the consequences of retail vacancy? And what measures could be taken to limit retail vacancy?

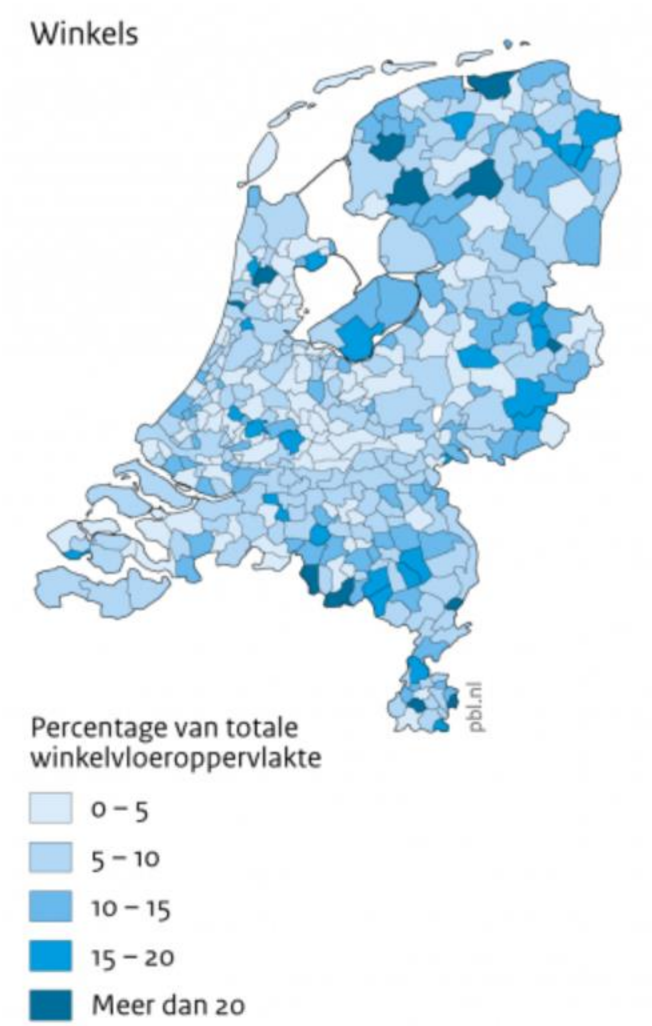


Figure 2. The share of retail vacancy of the total retail space per municipality in percentages in 2014 (Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving, 2014).

In retail areas with a high retail vacancy rate, there is existing a mismatch in the amount and location of retail space demand and supply, according to Benjamin et al. (1998). The vacancy rate in retail areas has a major impact on the vitality and viability of these areas what could result in a downward spiral (Baker and Wood, 2009). Retail areas with a high retail vacancy rate lose their attractivity. Retail vacancy can have an overwhelming effect on the vitality of small cities (Robertson, 2000). The loss of attractivity of retail areas results in less visitors, what results in loss of revenues what could result in increasing retail vacancy. Van Zweeden (2009) puts emphasis on the role of local authorities to invest in the attractivity of retail areas to limit the negative impacts of retail vacancy in retail areas. Balsas (2004) mentions that local authorities have to look for ways to bring the people 'back' to the retail areas. He wrote a chapter in the journal '*Planning Practice and Research'* (2004) where he discusses several ways the livability of a city center can be measured.

Moreover, there are several areas which have the capacity to remain successful. Examples of these successful retail areas which are already mentioned are Bataviastad in Lelystad and the Kalverstraat in Amsterdam. In the theoretical framework are several features discussed which are determining successful or less successful retail areas. An important feature which comes forward is the *shopping experience*, experienced by consumers. For example, Murugananthami & Shankar Bhakati (2013) mention that people are seeking for a more 'emotional value' from shopping than a 'functional value'. It comes forward that retail areas should not only be approached in a functional way but that the way people 'experience' these areas is also of importance.

Another important feature of retail areas is, the confrontation with exogenous factors. The retail sector is influenced by these exogenous factors. Some examples of exogenous factors are described by Findlay and Sparks who composed a briefing paper to summarize the important literature in the field of 'town centers and main streets'. Examples of these exogenous factors they mention are; economic changes, globalization, digitalization and changing consumer behavior. Developments like this have impact on the vacancy rate of a retail area (Balsas, 2004; Baker and Wood, 2009). It could be stated that 'contexts' are changing which have influence on retail areas on the local scale. However the effects of these changing contexts development are differently on different local retail areas. General trends work out differently in different places (Findlay and Sparks, 2014). It comes forwards that this is the case in the Netherlands where differences exist in the retail vacation rate between and within cities and regions. There is no unambiguous link between general trends and the effect of it on the local scale. There are retail areas which are well capable to deal with these changing contexts while it has disastrous effects on other retail areas.

1.2. Objectives and research questions

The challenge is to find out what the differences are between retail areas which are well capable to cope with these changing contexts and retail areas which are less well capable to cope with changing contexts and to find out what factors are influencing these differences. Continuing from this, a challenge is to find out what the chances and possibilities are for retail areas which are less well capable to deal with changing contexts and what the role of local policy makers could be in this challenge. The aim of this study is to find out possibilities for adaptive and resilient retail areas which can cope with changing contexts. The primary question of this research is:

What are the determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas which can cope with changing contexts?

To answer this primary research question accurately as possible, three related secondary research questions are researched. These secondary research questions are:

- *Which factors have impact on the performance of retail areas?*
- *Which factors are determining for the difference between successful and less successful retail areas?*
- *What role does local policy have in creating resilient and adaptive retail areas?*

1.3. Research Method

This thesis uses a multiple case study to get understanding of the (exogenous) factors which have impact on the retail areas and it is done to find out which possibilities exist to remain or create vitality and viability in cities by upgrading the attractiveness of retail areas.

This research consists partly of a literature study to describe and discuss several articles which are related to the vitality and viability of cities and the influence of retail areas on it, the several exogenous factors which have influence on retail areas and the role policy could have in revitalizing retail areas.

Beside to the literature study, this research consists mainly of multiple case studies. There is focused on 9 retail areas. Some existing data about the retail areas are used to describe their strength (data about number of visitors, revenues, retail vacancy). This is done in collaboration with Locatus. This numerical data could be considered as the 'hard data'.

Besides to this hard data, research is done to get insight in the 'soft data'. Soft data could be considered as the factors and explanations which determine the numerical hard data in order to find out the factors of adaptive and resilient retail areas which can cope with changing contexts. Semi-structured interviews are taken with local policy makers and centre managers about their role in revitalizing the retail areas. This 'soft' data are linked to the 'hard' numerical data and the findings in the literature. The data of the different retail areas are compared and analyzed. The data connected to the literature are discussed and there are drawn conclusions from this.

1.4. Content

Chapter two describes and discusses the relevant literature in relation to the topic of this research. This theoretical framework forms the pillar of this research. In chapter 3 the research methods are explained. The research design, the units of analysis, the data collection frameworks, techniques and data analysis are discussed. In chapter 4 the findings of the research are highlighted. Chapter 5 consists of a discussion and conclusion. In chapter 6 there is reflected on the outcomes and process of the research.

2. Theoretical Framework

In this chapter relevant articles related to the topics of this thesis are explained and discussed. This chapter is the theoretical background of this thesis.

2.1. Retail sector and retail vacancy in retail areas

In this paragraph the retail sector is described and some developments which have influence on the retail sector are mentioned. In relation to this the concept of 'retail vacancy' is explained.

2.1.1. What is the retail sector?

The retail sector is considered as an important sector of the economy. It is a sector which is directly oriented on the consumer (Lakshmanan & Hansen, 2011). The retail sector involves spending by consumers in shops and online (Rhodes, 2014). Hortaçsu and Syverson (2015) wrote a chapter in the '*Journal of Economic Perspectives'.* In this chapter they discuss several definitions of the 'retail sector'. One of the definitions they mention is the definition used by 'The International Standard Industrial Classification' (ISIC) which is the following:

*"Re-sale (sale without transformation) of new and used goods to the general public, for personal or household consumption or utilization" (*Hortaçsu and Syverson, 2015).

Another definition they mention is the definition of 'retail trade' as used by the 'The North American Industry Classification System' (NAICS);

*"Entities engaged in retailing merchandise, generally without transformation, and rendering services incidental to the sale of merchandise" (*Hortaçsu and Syverson,2015).

They found some important commonalities in the different definitions they describe. The first commonality is that retail sells 'merchandise' or 'goods'. Secondly they notice that these merchandises and goods are sold without transformation. These definitions rule out bars, restaurants and personal services. The establishments which are included by using these definitions, are stores that sell untransformed goods, as well as nonstore retailers. Nonstore retailers are described by Hortaçsu and Syverson as retailers *"organized to serve the general public, but their retailing methods differ."* Ways for nonstore retailers to reach the customers are for example; broadcasting and publishing of advertisements, distribution through vending machines and selling from 'portable stalls', like street vendors. A further distinction of different submarkets within the retail sector is made by De Ceuster and Van Straelen (2014). They wrote a chapter in the book "*European Metropolitan Commercial Real Estate Market*" (2014). This book elaborates on the dynamics in the commercial real-estate market in different European contexts. De Ceuster and Van Straelen elaborate on the retail real-estate market in Belgium.

The retail markets could be segmented into several submarkets. De Ceuster and Van Straelen (2014) segment the retail market into the following submarkets; 'high streets', 'retail warehousing' and 'shopping centers'. They state that it is important to make this distinction because rents, yields and prices vary considerably between these categories. The authors did their study in Belgium and describe that in Belgium there exist a limited number of high streets; most big cities in Belgium have only one high street. These high streets are characterised by being completely pedestrianized. They describe that international and national retail groups are displacing the smaller retailers who then move to the secondary neighbouring streets. As a consequence of this, main streets in different cities are acquiring the same profile. Retail warehousing is described as all the retail activity that occurs on the periphery of urban centres with the exclusion of the shopping centres. At this point one can think of hypermarkets, supermarkets and shops around main roads. Retail premises are grouped together to boost commercial attractiveness. De Ceuster and Van Straelen state that every important city has its own concentration of retail warehouses. The last submarket which is mentioned is the 'shopping centre'. In their study they do not give a clear definition of a 'shopping centre'. A definition of a shopping centre is given by Dawson and Lord (1985); *"A coherent and controlled group of establishments".* A shopping centre implies management and control of competition. Dawson and Lord also use the term 'shopping district' which they describe as; *"A concentration of shops and other commercial establishments each in individual ownership and on individual site".* They state that one or more shopping centres could be embedded in a shopping district or the shopping centre may be freestanding. The difference between a shopping district and a shopping centre depends on the degree in which different shops are cooperating and controlling competition.

Another distinction which can be made, is a distinction between the different kinds of purchasing motives. Evers et al. (2014) make a distinction within the retail sector between three different kinds of purchasing motives. The three kinds of purchase motives they describe, are; '*runshopping'* which is described as shopping as quickly and efficiently as possible (Gorter et al. 2003). Besides, another kind of purchasing motive is '*funshopping'*, is described by Gorter et al. as activities where the visit to a retail area is not directly oriented on necessary purchases but aimed at having free entertainment in a relaxed consumption environment. The third kind of purchasing motive is '*goal oriented shopping*' which is described as doing large purchases as cars and furniture.

The retail sector is subject to retail changes. A number of developments like economic recessions, changing consumer behaviour and online shopping have consequences for the retail sector (Rhodes, 2014). Some examples of 'retail change' in locations, like high streets and shopping centres are mentioned by Findlay and Sparks (2012). They state 'retail change' means that less shops are located in the traditional high streets and more retail activities occur in decentralized locations of the region like superstores and shopping centres. However, their state about the idea, that retail locations are 'replacing each other' is too simplistic. They argue that 'secondary centres', as smaller town centres, are often overlooked in studies and could be considered as place which have an important influence on the retail sector. According to them, too little is known about these locations. They mention that these places have a local function and do not necessarily follow the wider trends. They argue that these places are especially important for communities with lower spending power and limited mobility. However the existence of these 'secondary centres' may differ across places. Findlay and Sparks did their study in Shettleton, that is part of the urban area of Glasgow, Scotland. In more rural contexts with less large towns, the existence of these 'secondary centres' might be more limited.

2.2. Institutional aspects and various actors of the retail sector

The retail sector is influenced and constructed by a broad range of actors and institutions. Barata-Salgueiro and Erkip (2014) wrote a chapter in the journal '*Cities',* where they discuss and outline several articles about urban resilience and urban planning. They state that the evolution of urban retail systems could be seen as the interaction between actors' agency and place, mediated by regulation policies. They argue that strengthen networks and gaining social support are important to build strategies to minimize the vulnerabilities of retail areas. As addition to this, they mention that the character of entrepreneurs, their investments and capacity to innovate and their relational networks are important features for designing and applying successful strategies of adaptation of retail areas which has consequences for the decline or liveability of the retail areas.

First important actors which are mentioned, are the national and local policy makers. Barata-Salgueiro and Erkip (2014) indicates that these policies are connected with the licensing of retail establishment, public support given to retailers and their associations, city structure and the importance of regeneration policies which provide the frameworks for investment decisions. These policies have different impacts on the successfulness of retail areas.

Another important actor that is mentioned, is a retail organization which is existing of different retailers in a particular retail area to come up for the priorities and wishes of the retail area. A strong and efficient retail organization plays an important role in the performance of the retail area and the pedestrian zone (Karrholm et al. 2014 in Barata-Salgueiro and Erkip , 2014).

Large retail chains could also be considered as an important actor in the retail sector with a lot of influence. Sadun (2011) describes that planning regulations by local authorities are often used to restrain the large, out of town, retail stores, to prevent the local community from negative externalities as congestion and environmental damage. Besides, supporting the survival of local retailers and the amenities they provide, is a reason to restrain these stores. There is criticism about these regulations because of their possible negative impacts on the efficiency of the retail sector. The regulation could reduce economies of scale and it limits the introduction of innovative IT-developments. Moreover, entry regulations could hinder the reallocation of resources and employment between and within firms, which is considered as the main driver of productivity growth in the retail sector (Sadun, 2011). Regulations are used to restrain large retail stores and to protect smaller local retail stores. Khalan and Franz (2009) describe that the current retail sector is dominated by these large retail firms. Some examples of these large retail firms are MediaMarkt, V&D, C&A and Primark. The authors are writing about a transformation of the retail market which is associated with economies of scale in the retail market. A couple of large firms as Aldi, Wal-Mart and Metro are leading this market. Khalan and Franz put emphasis on the monopoly power of these firms and the role of government and policy to limit the cooperate power of these firms by a couple of regulatory mechanisms. It seems that large firms could also be considered as a dominant factor in the retail sector. Government and policy could be used as an important instrument to restrain the powerful position of these large firms. About this statement one can be critical, because this kind of policy can also inhibit large retail firms to start a new store in a particular retail area, while these firms may attract people to the retail area. However, it should be realized that these firms are important actors in retail areas with a lot of influence.

Other actors influencing retail areas one can think of, are ‘real estate owners’ and ‘investors’. The municipality of Amsterdam, wrote in 2017 a document with their vision about retail in the city of Amsterdam. In this document a distinction is made between different kinds of ‘property owners’ and ‘shareholders’. On the one hand these actors exist of private real estate owners which are individuals who own and rent out this real estate. On the other hand these actors exist of institutional real estate investors who mainly invest the property of participating parties as insurance companies and pension funds. This actor has several aims; maintaining or improving the attractivity of the retail areas where these actors have their possessions. This has influence on the continuity of the rent price of real estate and the development of the value of real estate. This is important for minimalizing the financial risks and optimising the efficiency and profit.

In contrast to the actors mentioned above, the actor which determines the ultimate success and appearance of a retail area is the ‘consumer’. Cachinho (2014) cited by Barata-Salgueiro and Erkip (2014) states that consumers’ satisfaction should be taken into account by local authorities and other stakeholders. This consideration is contributing to the liveability of these areas and it gives the ability to the retail sector to respond to its demand. It is important to listen to the wishes, needs and desires of the consumers. Consumers are namely constantly renewing their wishes, needs and desires, according to Cachinho (2014). As a matter of fact, they are changing their behaviour and lifestyles which has direct consequences on shopping activities. In addition to this, Cachinho claims that value creation and making sense is an important feature for consumers. Thus, to remain competitive the retail sector needs to renew its strategies; introducing new retail concepts and innovating shopping environments and different types of goods and services. The author states that retail strategies should take a new direction; retailers should realise that the key in the success lies in the consumers. The values, desires and values of consumers are important to take into account with respect to the retail sector. Consumers should be seen as an important actor who has a determining influence on the retail sector.

It turns out that the retail sector is a sector that is influenced by a diverse range of actors. Actors which come forward are policy makers, large firms, consumers, retail organizations, real-estate owners and investors. Taking all these actors into account results in the concepts of 'institutional context' and 'governance'. The 'institutional context' is a broad concept and could be described as a set of rules and relations between actors on different scales . Related to the institutional context of retail areas is the concept of 'governance'. Governance pertains to 'public shares, community development, partnerships and other kinds of cooperation, mainly having to do with projects providing support to retail business and/or community organizations, town centre management and other similar initiatives' (Barata-Salgueiro, 2011 in Barata-Salgueiro and Erkip, 2014). Proper governance and the relationship between several actors with the ability to anticipate and to make plans, is described as a means to make some cities more resilient than other cities.

The described actors interact with each other and these interactions have an important impact on the outcome of the retail space. These interactions between different actors could be considered as a 'game theory'. Game theory, as described by Camerer et al. (2010) is about what happens when people, or other entities, interact. The different 'players' in a game theory have their own belongings and priorities and do not act rationally. The fates of players in a game theory are intertwined. The outcome of the interaction is marked as the 'equilibrium'. The equilibrium is described as the end of the story of how strategic thinking, optimization and equilibration work (Camerer et al. 2010). In relation to the actors of the retail sector, the outcome of the 'game' could be described as the appearance of a retail area.

2.2.1. Retail vacancy

'Retail vacancy' could be described as the amount of empty units available for occupation. The retail vacancy rate, which determines the percentage of retail vacancy, could be considered as the amount of empty units available for occupation divided by the amount of occupied units (Wrigley and Dolega, 2011). As a consequence, retail vacancy arises when the supply of store space does not meet the demand (van Zweeden, 2009). In retail areas with a high retail vacancy rate, there is existing a mismatch in the amount and location of retail space demand and supply according to Benjamin et al. (1998).

A distinction between different kinds of retail vacancy could be made. As described in paragraph 2.1.1. a distinction is made between three kinds of retail vacancy based on the purchase motive. In Dutch inner cities vacancy is mainly caused by vacancy of shops with a 'funshopping'-motive while in the rest of the Netherlands vacancy is caused by vacancy of shops with a 'runshopping'-motive (Evers et al. 2014). Another distinction they make between vacancy is the difference between 'friction vacancy' and 'structural vacancy'. Friction vacancy is considered as temporary vacancy which is necessary to make the market functioning well. It gives the possibility that people and firms which are looking for retail space, can directly find the retail space they need. Structural vacancy, in contrast, exists when retail space is vacant for three years or longer and is eligible for demolition or transformation. This long-term structural vacancy might be the result of local factors, such as the low quality of physical fabric or poor location in terms of visibility for pedestrians, according to Dolega and Celinska-Janowicz (2015). These authors wrote an article about the concept resilience and the applicability of this concept to the retail sector; in this article they created a theoretical framework to get understanding of these phenomena. The authors state that long-term structural retail vacancy is therefore considered as problematic retail vacancy. However, one can be critical about this statement: the extent to which long-term structural retail vacancy is problematic depends for example on the location of the retail vacancy within a retail area, when there are vacant buildings in the most central part of the retail area, this might be more problematic than vacant buildings at less visited parts of the retail area. Besides, vacant buildings may have a temporary non-retail function in the case of structural retail vacancy. Nevertheless, it could be stated that structural retail vacancy is in the long term more problematic than friction vacancy.

2.3. Effects of societal change on the retail sector

Effects of societal changes have an important influence on retail areas. Societal changes could be described as changes which are not inherent to a particular place and come from 'outside'. These societal changes could be described as 'exogenous factors'. Everett and Watson (1998) wrote a chapter in the journal "*Small Business Economies*" (1998) about macro-economic factors on small business mortality. They describe exogenous factors as factors which are external to the firm and which are beyond the control of the firm. In contrast to exogenous factors, endogenous factors are described as factors which are internal to the firm and which are presumably within control of the firm (Everett and Watson, 1998). The importance of exogenous factors is apparent from the given that 43 per cent of the variation in business net income is explained by exogenous factors, according to Foster (1986) in Everett and Watson (1998). However it should be mentioned this relationship varies across different places and industry sectors. Some exogenous changes which come forward are; economic recessions, consumer behaviour and the way people use places generally, decentralization of activities and the technological advances of the internet (Findlay and Sparks, 2014). Exogenous factors have impact on retail areas, which have influence on the vitality and viability of these areas (Balsas, 2004). A 'wider 'study, where the changing context is included, of retail change is necessary according to Findlay and Sparks. They mention that general trends work out differently in different places. The retail real-estate market could be considered as complex with different factors influencing it.

In the following paragraphs several of these exogenous factors are discussed. The appearance of these factors is described and discussed. Besides, their influence on the retail sector is discussed.

2.3.1. Economy Based Risks

Marco-economic factors have an important influence on firms. The general economic environment is considered as a major factor which determines the failure rate of a firm. Everett and Watson (1998) researched business failures and the extent to which macro-economic factors have influence on this. For 'failure' the authors use a number of definitions; 'the bankruptcy of firms', 'the discontinuance of ownership', 'discontinuance of business' and 'preventing further losses' . They state that the economic environment in which a firm is located could be considered as a risk which they describe as 'economy based risk'. The results of their research, that took place in the United States, shows that 30 to 50 per cent of small business failures are associated with economy based risks. However, this differs across different kind of industries, what is discussed in the next paragraph. The research of Everett and Watson shows that failure rates are positively associated with interest rates, unemployment rates, lagged employment rates and lagged retail sales. The outcome is that various economic factors are likely to impact small firms failures. This relationship between macro-economic factors and the retail firms becomes explicitly visible in times of economic recession. Teulings et al. (2016) claim that for example, in The Netherlands, the 'Great Recession' between 2008 and 2014 resulted in a prolonged negative demand shock in the Netherlands. Consumption of retail and goods dropped with 10 per cent in the period 2008-2014. In this period, retail rents dropped with 20 per cent and vacancy rate increased with a factor 1.6 (Teulings et al. 2016).

2.3.2. Industry Based Risks

Next to the economy based risks, there are risks which are associated with the industry in which a firm is operating. This kind of risks are described as *'industry based risks'* by Everett and Watson (1998). This kind of risks do not fall under the control of a firm and could be considered as exogenous risks. These are similar to economy based risks but in the case of industry based risks, only one or more particular industries of the economy are economically vulnerable. This has consequences for the retail sector of a particular industry. Hortaçsu and Syverson (2015) write about the development of different industries within the retail industry in the US. They indicate that the industries with the fastest growth rates, are the 'building materials and garden stores', the 'sports, hobby and music stores' and the 'personal health and care stores'. However, these industries contribute to a relatively small part (5 per cent of the employment) to the overall growth of the retail economy. Industries which experience large drops within the retail sector are; 'food and beverage stores' and 'gas stations'. It should be noted that the research of Hortaçsu and Syverson took place in the United States, and that trends in other contexts might be different. The possible explanations for the described trends, are 'online shopping' and 'large format retail'. These two trends are discussed in the following paragraphs.

2.3.3. E-commerce in retail

Another exogenous factor which has an important influence on the outcome of the retail sector is the rapidly increasing e-commerce in the retail sector. Since the 2000s, e-commerce in retail has made a significant increase. Between 2000 and 2014, the fraction of all retail sales accounted for by e-commerce has risen from 0.9 to 6.4 per cent. This increase in e-commerce sales reflects an 11-fold increase between 2000 and 2014, while the nominal retail sales experienced a 55 per cent increase in the same period (Hortaçsu and Syverson, 2015). Despite this massive growth of e-commerce in the retail sector, it remains a relatively small part of the total retail sector. Between different product categories there is a considerable difference in the extent to which products are bought online or at 'physical places'. For example, a large share of 'music and videos' and 'books and magazines' is bought online (79,6 and 44,2 per cent). In contrast, a relatively small share of the categories 'food and beverages' is bought online. However, for all product categories an increasing share of products bought online is expected (Hortaçsu and Syverson, 2015). A distinction is made between 'search goods' and 'experience goods' by Schmid et al. (2016). Search goods are goods whereby the search process is key, like electronic appliances. With experience goods the experience of shopping is considered as important; grocery stores are mentioned as example. Search goods are relatively bought more often online than experience goods.

Some studies are done to the impact of e-commerce on the retail sector. Zhang et al. (2015) did a case study in China about the impact of e-commerce on the 'physical retail sector' by researching the impact of e-commerce on the retail real estate sector. They found that higher vacancy rates and lower demand for retail stores is partly influenced by e-commerce. However the influence of e-commerce on this is rather minor, according to the authors. A critical note about this approach is that e-commerce in the retail sector may not only result in negative consequences: e-commerce also provides opportunities for retail areas: firms have the possibility to start an online platform in addition to the physical store. In line with Hortaçsu and Syverson, Zhang et al. found out that the impact on the retail real estate depends of the product category. They notice that supermarkets are barely influenced by the increasing e-commerce. On the other hand, retail stores which are selling products as apparel, shoes, groceries, 3C products and books are to a larger extent influenced by the increasing e-commerce.

2.3.4. Globalization and increasing scales

Next to the increasing e-commerce in the retail sector, globalization and scale enlargement are other important factors with respect to the retail sector. Hortaçsu and Syverson (2015) write about the increase in scale of firms. Between 1998 and 2012 the average firm size grew by 18 per cent, from 19,3 to 22 employees per firm. The half of this increase came from a larger scale of operations at the individual retail establishment. Morover, the number of establishments per retail firm increased from 1.51 to 1.63. Another point of interest is the growth in the number and size of retail areas which is described as '*collections of retail establishments owned by different firms*'. The authors write about new 'formats' in the retail sector which is apparent from the establishment of warehouses and supercenters. This means a concentration of retail firms at a particular location which are selling a multiple variety of merchandise. These concentrations of retail results in a decreasing number of total firms. These formats have, according to the authors, more impact on the retail sector than the increasing e-commerce. However, like the increasing e-commerce, it differs across different product categories to what extent this process occurs. It must be observed that Hortaçsu and Syverson did their study in the United States what means that it is not sure if the increase in scale of firms is similar in other contexts.

Retail globalization could be considered as an exogenous factor that has influence on the retail sector. *Retail globalization* is explained by Śmigielska and Oczkowska (2017) as the growing pressure retailers have to enter new markets which results in retailers competing on a global scale and opening new firms in more and more distant markets. Lorch and Hernandez (2016) did a case study in Canada and mention the importance of *retail globalization* on the retail sector. This process is associated with corporate concentration and increased average sizes of stores. Another point of interest is the growth of retail chains. Technological advances, mass advertising and the repeal of government regulations result in emerging of large retail chains and a greater segmentation of retail markets (Raff and Schmitt, 2015). This means that a large share of the supply chain is owned by a small group of retail firms. These developments result in a concentration of firms in the retail sector. Due to these developments some retail sectors are dominated by only a small number of firms (Daniel & Hernandez, 2008). One could say that retail globalization is an overarching exogenous factor because it has a crucial influence on the other exogenous factors. The process of globalization regulates the outcome of economic activities, due to competition on a global scale. Thereby, globalization is related to the increasing e-commerce, since globalization results in the increasing extent people are connected through the enhanced digital technology.

A point of criticism with respect to the described development of globalization and scale enlarging is that large firms tend to locate in larger cities, and may be less interested in smaller towns; therefore these developments might happen to a more limited extent in smaller towns. Another point is that local firms may have their own characteristics which may compensate for the described developments. Nevertheless should retail globalization and increasing scales be considered as an important exogenous factor in many retail areas.

2.4. Geographical Context of Retail Areas

2.4.1. Vital Cities

Before thinking about the relation between retail and vitality and viability it is good to think about the relations between cities and these two concepts in general. In the 1960s Jane Jacobs wrote this about this relation:

"Streets and their sidewalks, the main public places of a city, are its most vital organs. Think of a city and what comes to mind? Its streets. If a city's streets look interesting, the city looks interesting, if they look dull, the city looks dull" (Jacobs, 1961, p. 29)

Jacobs describes streets and sidewalks as the most vital organs of a city. She explains that it is important that these places look attractive. She describes that streets and sidewalks should be used frequently what makes these places more attractive. When more people use the streets and sidewalks, it attracts other people. It comes forward that the attractivity of streets and sidewalks are *important* factors for the vitality of cities. Montgomery (1998) states that vitality refers to the number of people in and around the street, across different times of the day and night, the presence of facilities, the number of cultural events over the year, the presence of an active street life and the extent to which a place feels alive or lively in general. Moreover, there are many other factors which contribute to vitality. Montgomery states that vitality is what distinguishes successful urban areas from the others.

Since retail areas are existing mainly of streets and sidewalks , it could be stated that vitality is also an important point of attention for these areas. It is important that retail areas are attractive places which are frequently visited by its users.

2.4.2. Vital and Viable Retail Areas

Important factors are the vitality and viability of retail areas experienced by the users of it. A serious concern for the viability of a retail area, according to Baker and Wood (2009), is retail vacancy, since vacancy rates are the main indicator of the viability of a retail area. Baker and Wood wrote a chapter in the journal "*Geographical Research*" about maintaining vitality and viability of main streets in eastern Australia. They describe viability as the capacity of a center to sustain profitable and encourage investments. Vacancy rate is also mentioned as a concern for the vitality of retail areas. Vitality refers to the level of activity in a center (Baker & Wood, 2009). A loss of this vitality and viability in retail areas results in '*dead spaces'*. According to the authors, a lack of vitality and viability in retail areas is bad for business and for communities living around these areas. Thereby, it destroys the '*sense of place'* experienced by the users of these areas. *Sense of place* is by Chapin and Knapp (2015) described as 'the meaning or importance of a place based on human experience, social relationships, emotions, and thoughts'. The emotions and experiences of people they associate with a place, like a retail area, could be considered as an important feature of the vitality and viability. In reaction to the loss of viability and vitality of retail areas. Balsas (2004) mentions the importance of revitalization scheme and a focus on city-center management in order to keep viable and vital city-centers. Robertson (1999) agrees with Balsas and adds that retail vacancy in smaller cities has even more impact on the vitality of the city. He describes that a vacant store in a small city can be overwhelming and that this destroys any semblance of vital city life.

Some important features of a 'vital and viable' retail area, could be; *attraction*, *access*, *amenity*, *action* and *integration*. These features are described by Thomas and Bromley (2003). They put emphasis on an enhanced shopping *attraction*, closely integrated with an ease of *access.* The importance of an improved environmental *amenity* is also mentioned. Another important feature which is stressed, is the need for a concerted *action* plan whereby public- and private-sector partnerships are combined. The importance of integration of shopping attractions, pedestrian flows and transport termini is another important factor described by Thomas and Bromley. A lack of this integration results in *'dead space',* unlettable units and associated unattractive environments. The authors explain that, the closer the degree of spatial integration between the elements of a retail area, the greater the shopping interaction between the different parts and the greater the vitality of the shopping environment is experienced by its users. The 'experience' of people in retail areas plays an important role in the vitality and viability of these areas. Vital and viable retail areas could be described as areas which attract people and where people have a positive shopping experience.

The extent to which people experience a retail area as vital and viable, could result in a chain reaction and give good information about the performance of a particular retail area. As mentioned, Baker and Wood state that a lack of vitality and viability in retail areas is bad for business, communities living around these areas, and it destroys the sense of place experienced by people who are visiting these areas. They adjust that a loss of vitality and viability will result in *dead spaces.* Baker and Wood describe a negative spiral which results from retail vacancy. They argue that structural vacancy has a determent effect on the attractiveness of the retail area, which results in more retail vacancy. The loss of attractiveness results in less visitors in the retail area, what could result in less expenses for the store, what could result in less profit, which has the consequence that more retail vacancy will arise. Thus, it could be suggested that structural retail vacancy results in a reinforcing effect. Therefore, the *vacancy rate* in retail areas and the *number of people which are walking through a retail area*, relatively to its size and the area where the firms are operating, are in this thesis considered as the indicators to determine the successfulness of a retail area. These indicators provide an idea about the vitality and viability of a particular retail area as described above.

Except the usefulness of these indicators, these indicators are chosen because of the availability of these data. In contact with *Locatus*, data about these indicators are achieved.

2.4.3. Factors contributing to attractive retail areas

Many authors write about factors which contribute to the attractivity of retail areas and possibilities to attract people to these areas. An overview of these different ideas is given in this paragraph. Seasons (2003), who did research in Canadian mid-sized cities based on surveys with users of the retail areas, mentions the importance a high level of urban amenities, high-density levels of development activity, a pleasing urban realm with pedestrian-friendly environment and a lively street-level atmosphere that is considered as attractive. Other factors are mentioned by Parker et al. (2016), they did a study in some British 'high streets' and created a top 25 of priorities which are needed for vital and viable high streets. According to them, the 5 most important priorities are; activity in the streets, visual appearance, retailer offer, vision & strategy and the way high streets are experienced. Other strategies which could have a positive impact on city districts, are mentioned by Robertson (1999). Some of these strategies are; historic preservation, main street approach, pedestrianization improvements and waterfront developments. Another research to factors which have influence on the attractivity of a retail area is done, by Teller & Reuterrer (2008). They mention the importance of a 'retail tenant-mix' and 'merchandise value'. Retail tenant-mix is described as the degree that a consumer is able to satisfy his needs and wants in a retail areas in a broad sense by providing gastronomy and entertainment facilities for example. Merchandise value is described as the price-quality ratio of merchandise that is offered by stores in a retail area.

Experience is also considered as an important factor for the extent to which people experience a retail area as attractive. The attractivity of a retail area is influenced by the 'atmosphere' experienced by consumers in a retail area according to Uschev et al. (2015). It is worth mentioning that experience is a subjective concept with many aspects influencing it. People may have different conceptions about the way a place is experienced. A point related to the concept of experience is the extent to which people experience ‘variety’ in a retail area what is explained later in this paragraph. The concept of a variety of shops located in nearby geography is appointed as ‘retail agglomerations’ by Teller& Reuterrer. They mention that this concept results in benefits for both retailers as consumers, because the agglomeration of retail will result in an enriched shopping experience. Retailers, on the other hand, have advantages from sharing the same infrastructure, participating in site-related marketing concept and having benefits from the stream of consumers which are attracted by the whole agglomeration.

Several authors describe factors which are having influence on the attractivity of retail areas. Above, a small overview of factors is described. However, there are six factors strongly coming forward which influence the attractivity of retail areas. The reason to focus on these six factors is on the one hand because these factors come often forward in articles about attractiveness of retail areas and on the other hand it is possible to give a judgement about these factors, which is necessary for the empirical research.

These six factors are:

- *Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness*
- *Historic preservation*
- *The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities*
- *Aesthetic value*
- *Range of goods available*
- *Considered as an authentic and unique place*

In this following part of this paragraph these six factors are described and explained.

Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness

This factor elaborates on the accessibility and attractiveness of a retail area for pedestrians in a retail area. Hass Klau (1993) did a study to pedestrianization and ‘traffic calming’ in Germany and England and states that in almost all cases this process resulted in an increase in retail turnover. It might be assumed that pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness have a positive contribution to the successfulness of a retail area. However, it should be noticed that this contribution may be different across different retail areas: when a retail area already existed of broad sidewalks for pedestrians, the impact of pedestrianization may be smaller than pedestrianization of a retail area that only existed of narrow sidewalks for pedestrians.

With respect to the factor of pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness, one could think of several aspects. For example, the state of pedestrians in a retail area is an important aspect. Things related to this are the share of a retail area what is pedestrianized or non-motorized. Besides, one may think of the ‘woonerf’ described by Jou (2011) as a concept whereby pedestrians and motorists share the street. Pedestrians have in this concept access to the street and not just to the sidewalk and cars drive at a slow pace. One can also think of the attractivity of paths for pedestrians. For example, it may be a matter of whether it is comfortable to walk on a path or that there are certain obstacles for pedestrians. Another point of interest is the integration and configuration between different parts of the retail area which has consequences for the walkability of this area. The importance of ‘linkages’ between streets within retail areas is mentioned by Borgers & Timmermans (1986). They put emphasis on the importance of the integration of firms and streets within a retail area. Related to this point is the concentration of firms in a retail area; this is about a variety of shops located in a nearby geography which is described as ‘retail agglomerations’ by Teller and Reuterrer (2008). A last point of interest is the presence of attractive 'entry points' in the proximity bus stops and parking lots. The pedestrian movement starts and ends at these entry points (Helbing, 1998). Therefore it might be relevant that these entry points are attractive and inviting and in the proximity of facilities as parking spaces and bus stops.

Historic Preservation

This factor elaborates on the historic preservation in retail areas. Historic preservation is about the preservation of historic *properties,* which is by Listokin et al. (1998) described as the preservation of historic buildings, districts, landmarks and other recourses. According to the authors, preservation of these resources is about the stabilization, rehabilitation, restoration, and other supportive activities. Historic preservation is used as a tool to attract people to a location which might result in economic development of this particular location (Ryberg-Webster and Kinahan, 2013). A point of criticism about this conceptualization of historic preservation is that it is not clear when something could be mentioned 'historic' and when not. Besides, it is debatable when a historic resource is attractive and when not. Jane Jacobs (1961) also mentioned the importance of old buildings and a mix of building from different ages in her book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities.* She states that this is an important factor for the attractivity and diversity of streets. She states that old buildings, in combination with buildings from other ages, in a street are necessary for creating hubs for young entrepreneurs which are, according to Jacobs, necessary for economically flourishing of a street what might result in diversity in a street.

Historic preservation might be considered as an important factor of the attractiveness of a retail area. To get insight in the historic preservation of a retail area, one can describe the presence of historic landmarks or resources as buildings, monuments, statues or other resources. Besides, it is interesting to look at the way the history comes forward in a retail area. It could, for example, be used as a strategy by a local government to attract people to a particular retail area. An important point is the *awareness* of the historic preservation that emerges in a retail area.

The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities

Experience is also considered as an important factor for the extent to which people experience a retail area as attractive. Consumers want to maximize their satisfaction from each shopping trip, according to Kim (1999), and the retail scene is understood as reflecting the consumers' shopping values. Kim states that therefore, entertainment is to a larger extent an important factor of the successfulness of retail areas. In addition to this, Kooijman (2002), describes that shopping is to a larger degree done for experience and the *feel-good factor.* He states therefore that leisure and entertainment are important features of retail areas. To get insight in this factor, one can look at the presence of facilities which contribute to the entertainment of retail areas. An example of this is the presence of restaurants and bars in retail areas, but one can also think of non-food leisure facilities as cinemas, theatres and museum (Pitt and Musa, 2009). With respect to entertainment facilities, it should be taken into account that people prefer different kinds of leisure and entertainment. Beyond to the mentioned entertainment facilities that contribute to an enriched experience in retail areas, one might think of shops with focus on experience, described by Kooijman as entertainment oriented shops. Shops like this could be considered as a combination between a shop and a leisure facility.

Aesthetic value

Another important factor one might think of that has influence on the attractivity of a retail area, is the 'aesthetic value'. According to Srinivasa and Srivastava (2010) is an engaging and enjoyable atmosphere important, since it invites consumers to spend more time in the store which increases the turnover potential. They state that retailers should provide consumers a positive shopping experience based on 'visual' merchandising that is sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Examples of amenities which have a positive influence on the visual merchandising and aesthetic value mentioned by Weisbrod and Pollakowski (1984), are benches, lightning, trees, planters and fountains. Besides these examples, we can, according to Teller and Elms (2011) think of appealing or iconic architecture in this area. This might create a visual identity for the retail area according to Emery (2006). Similar to *the number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities,* it should be taken into account that people have different opinions about the aesthetic value of a place. To get insight in the aesthetic value of a retail area it is important to look at the *attention* that is paid to the aesthetic value and the way it comes forward in retail areas.

Range of goods available

The range of goods available in a retail area is another factor which has impact on the attractiveness of a retail area. With respect to this factor one can think of variety seeking, which is defined by Rohm and Swaminathan (2004), as the need for varied behaviour or the need to vary choices of stores, brands, or products. The value of a marketplace experienced by consumers therefore depends partly on variety available in a market place. 'Variety seeking behavior' is linked with a buying impulse according to Murugananthami & Shankar Bhakati (2013). People, with this variety seeking behavior, seek for a more 'emotional value' from shopping than a 'functional value' whereby variety and convenience is valued. They are therefore willing to pay more for more diversity of products and services and are willing to drive further and concentrate their shopping time in concentrated retail clusters with diverse products and services (Clapp et al. 2016). This factor refers to the diversity and variety of products, brands, sectors and services available in a retail area.

Considered as an authentic and unique place

The last factor that is highlighted is the extent to which a retail area is considered as an authentic and unique place. As mentioned, experience is seen as an important factor for the extent to which people experience a retail area as attractive. A positive experience people relate to a retail area contributes to the attractivity of it. A means to enrich the experience of a retail area is to create a 'theme' or 'story' in a retail area. With respect to this one can think of the concept of 'storytelling'. Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier (2008) mention that human experience is a narrative phenomenon best understood through stories. According to them, people think, feel, act and make moral choices according to narrative structures. The process of narrating is closely linked to 'sense making' and 'giving meaning'. They state that experiencing occurs in a particular location, thus storytelling always has a spatial dimension. Stories are an important interpretive 'device' to understand places based on human experiences with and within places over time. This also goes up for retail areas, which could be seen as places people link to certain stories and experiences. Therefore, creating a story or theme which enriches the experience of the costumers in a particular retail area, is considered as a contributor to the attractiveness of a retail area.

Storytelling could be used as a 'marketing strategy' for places, what could be described as 'place branding' (Pinzaru, 2012). Baker (2008) remarks that successful place branding can be achieved when;

"*a vision where the reality experienced by its customers matches the positive expectation or promise being conveyed by the city and its partners*" (Baker, 2008).

Baker describes that successful place branding is linked to experiences what can be reached by storytelling. Pinzaru, who did a case study in Bucharest, describes storytelling as a city building strategy with a stimulating framework for building interactive stories to give vigor to the city's personality. In the case of retail areas, storytelling could be considered as a strategy to give an impulse to retail areas and to create experiences and stories which people link to the retail areas.

The described aspects as storytelling and place branding might enrich the experience of a retail area and create a local character which makes retail areas authentic and unique. According to Debenedetti et al. (2015), might this result in the perception, that a place is experienced as genuine and irreplaceable. They state that authenticity of a place is a perception formed by the consumers in a retail area. This perception is determined by experiences of people in retail areas which might be enriched by storytelling and place-branding.

2.4.4. Differences within retail areas

Within a retail area, there can be differences in the geographical context between different parts of it. These 'parts' are for example the different streets or firms within a retail area. One street within a retail area can be for example more successful or attractive than other streets in the same retail area. Retail areas could be described as an aggregate of the different firms and streets which exist within this area.

The variety of shops located in nearby geography results in both benefits as disadvantages for single firms or streets. Retail outlets located in a nearby geography are referred to as retail agglomerations or retail clusters by Teller & Reuterrer (2008). In this thesis these agglomerations and clusters are described as retail areas. As mentioned in paragraph 2.5.1 the variety of shops located in nearby geography results in benefits for both retailers as consumers because the agglomeration of retail will result in an enriched shopping experience. Besides, retailers have advantages from sharing the same infrastructure, participating in site-related marketing concept and having benefits from the stream of consumers which are attracted by the whole agglomeration. Thus, for the retail area as a whole the nearby geography of different firms can have positive effects as described by Teller & Reuterrer. Other than these positive effects, it can have negative effects for single streets or firms within the retail area. For example, firms within a retail area are competing with each other for the willingness to spend money and/or time which is dedicated to the retail area by its visitors. This competition results in successful firms and less successful firms within the same retail area. It happens that, within a retail area, differences exist in success between different firms and that a retail area as a whole could be considered as an aggregate of these different firms with different success levels.

Within a retail area there can be differences in the success level of different streets and the number of people which visit these streets. Borgers and Timmermans (1986) who wrote a chapter for the journal *"Socio-Economic Planning Sciences"* (1986), did a study to pedestrian route choice and allocation behavior within city centers. For this, they used a 'microlevel simulation model' what is developed to predict the likely effect of transportation plans and retail planning measures on pedestrian behavior and hence on the profitability of shopping streets. Based on this methodology they mention the importance of 'linkages' between streets within retail areas. They put emphasis on the importance of the integration of firms and streets within a retail area. Main streets in retail areas are attracting the most pedestrian flows. With respect to these pedestrian flows, Haklay et al. (2001) state that the outcome of two distinct components, namely the configuration of the street network or urban space and the location of particular main attractions are important factors. As mentioned, the largest part of the retail activities in a retail area occur on both sides of the 'traditional' main street according to Southworth (2005). He describes that these streets are places of intense interaction which accommodate vehicles of all types, as well pedestrians. Besides these main streets, Borgers and Timmermans mention that a concentration of pedestrian flows exist in entry points of retail areas and city centers, and in the proximity to so-called 'magnet stores', shops which attracts most of the trade. The authors claim that changes in the location of major shops and changes in the location pattern of entry point might have considerable impact on the success of shopping streets.

An important feature of the success rate of streets and shops within a retail area is the pedestrianization of streets which were also used by cars before. Some pedestrian-only areas are created. Pojani (2011), who did a research to trends which contribute to successful retail development in the city of Tirana (capital of Albania), claims that pedestrian-only areas are beneficial in terms of retail turnover, especially in the most attractive areas. The pedestrianization of streets can result in differences between places within a retail area.

It could be mentioned that there exists a difference between various streets and firms in retail areas and the success of these streets. Factors which have influence on the different success levels of these streets are pedestrian activity, the configuration and integration of the streets, the existing linkages, streets which are considered as 'main streets', entry points of retail areas and the so-called 'magnet stores'. It should be taken into account that these factors are not static but are 'changing'. A retail area is an aggregate of different streets and firms which are 'dynamic'. For example, the establishment of a new 'magnet store' or the creation of a new road which results in new 'entry points' can attract people to a particular location within a retail area, while this particular location was less visited before.

2.5. Uneven development and boom and bust cycles in the retail sector

The differences between attractive and less attractive retail areas are related to uneven development and inequality. Bernt (2009) writes about city decline and puts emphasis on 'uneven development'. He states that this uneven development is in the nature of capitalism. Some cities prospers and attract people and investments while at the same time other cities fail to do so and experience deindustrialization, population loss and decay. He explains that when the decay of a city starts, a downturn can occur. A result of this downturn is a negative spiral; there is no income left for the maintenance of the urban infrastructure what is underutilized and undermaintained, and often have to be abandoned. This downturn occurs while at the same time a process of growth occurs in other cities and these both developments interinfluence each other. This mechanism could be translated to retail areas. Some retail areas are considered as attractive and experience a lot of visitors and investments while at the same time retail areas have less visitors, less revenues and experience decay. This uneven development between different retail areas results in inequality between attractive and less attractive retail areas.

The process of uneven development has a 'time component'. This time component is described by Hughes and Jackson (2014). They describe cities as complex and they state that cities gradually transform in a process of continual creative destruction and reconstruction. In the case of the retail sector some of these transformations are for example; retail business innovation, pressures from consumers, technological innovation, political interventions and changes in consumer spending and behavior. The retail sector comprises a hierarchy of town and city centers with variation and changes over time in both size and catchment. The authors claim that for getting insight in the complex retail sector it is necessary to understand the role of the diverse users like retailers, consumers, investors and developers in relation to the supply of and the demand for particular retail space. The role of diverse stakeholders and its influence on a particular retail area is considered as important. A certain place can experience growth in one period and experience decline in another period. Several cities are passing through stages of decline and recovery, according to Friedrichs (1993). Friedrichs wrote a chapter in the journal "*Urban Studies*" about decline in urban areas. He explains that a common element of these cases is a loss of the relative economic position of the city in a wider market, this is the initial cause of economic decline. He describes the 'product-cycle theory' to explain the decline and growth of cities. This theory could also give some insights in the growth and decline of retail areas and the factors which could be determinant in this process. The life-cycle theory postulates that every industrial product undergoes a life-cycle comprised of four location-linked stages. These four stages are;

1. The innovative stage;
2. The growth or expansion stage,
3. The maturity stage; and
4. The stagnation/decline stage.

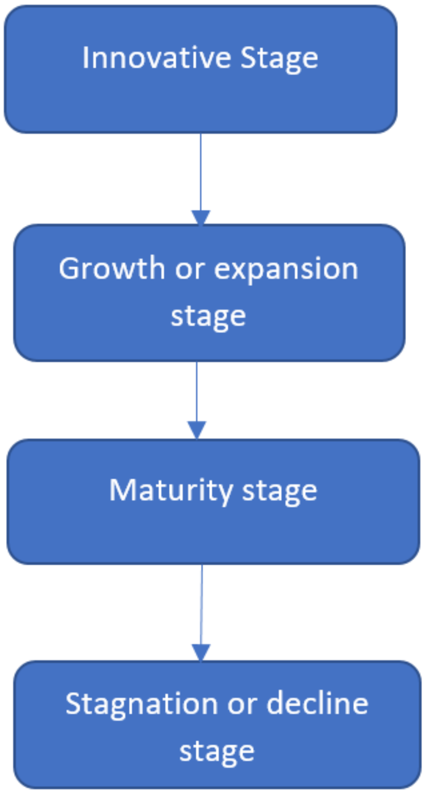


Figure 3. The four stage of the life-cycle theory according to Friedrichs (1993).

The third and fourth stage are associated with standardization which means that the product can be produced anywhere. With increased competition it is necessary that these products are altered someway, the production is changed by process innovation or that local or the entire production will be given up. The basic elements of the product-cycle theory are; internal changes in the production of the good (increasing standardization), changes in the external demand due to competing production in other cities and lack of innovative capacity to adapt to the changing economic conditions confronting the producing companies. Friedrichs relates this theory to cities with a low heterogeneity of industries, where the main industry of a certain city experiences decline, and could be located anywhere and has no benefit to be located in the particular city. This affects other industries in the city and the city as a whole. Some examples of cities which are fully dependent of the automobile industry are given; Detroit, Coventry and Wolfsburg. However, cities with a high diversity, are, according to Friedrichs, well capable to adapt to changing economic conditions. In this cities a decline is not expected. Diversity is described as '*the number of different species and the number per species',* in which *species* refers to the industries in a city. Diversity in cities is referred to the variety of industries located in a city. A comparison between this product-cycle theory and retail areas could be made. Older retail areas with low heterogeneity and low capacity to innovate are in the *3d or 4th stage* of the product-cycle theory. Other retail areas are offering the same as these retail areas. Firms in these retail areas experience no benefits to be located in these particular retail areas. Customers have the opportunity to go to other, competing, retail areas. Firms experience decline and decide to go to other retail areas or to quit, this has impact for the retail area as a whole. This results in declining retail areas, increasing vacancy and loss of attractivity. In reality, processes might be more complicated than the model Friedrichs describes: retail areas will always have place-specific factors to a certain extent, even if these areas are in 3d or 4th stage of the model, therefore retail areas will never be fully irreplaceable. However, this model provides a good framework to get insight in the rise and fall of retail areas.

Another point of interest, that is related to the model by Friedichs, is the influence of the *competitive environment* on the success rate of a retail area. This competitive environment is influenced by the distribution of customers and the nature of transport costs. Davis (2001) claims that stores close to each other provide substitutes for one another, and stores further away provide worse substitutes. The distance to competitors is, according to Roig-Tierno et al. (2013), an important criteria that matters for the success degree of a firm. This is also mentioned by Kumar and Karande (2000) who state that the level of competition and the location of the firm are important variable having influence on the performance of a firm. Based on this, it could be argued that retail areas close to each other might experience a higher degree of competition than retail areas on a more ‘isolated’ location. It comes forward that the competitive environment of a particular retail area and the presence of possible ‘substitutes’ in the proximity of this area, is an important feature that may have influence on the success rate of a retail area.

2.6. Resilient and adaptive retail areas

Despite this *rise and fall* of retail areas, there are retail areas which remain successful. These retail areas could be described as ‘*resilient and adaptive’* retail areas. In the social science, ‘*resilience’* is, described by Fernandes & Chamusca (2014), who wrote a chapter in the journal “*Cities*”(2014) about regulations, planning systems and practices, and the way this contributes to understanding of the differences in urban retail structures. They mention that in the social science, resilience is understood as an on-going process of adaptation to constantly changing situations which can be considered in different systems. An example of such a system is a retail system. With respect to a region or an area, resilience is about the ability of to anticipate and prepare for disturbance (Foster, 2006, in Fernandes & Chamusca, 2014). Resilient places are capable to find ways to transform and survive while changes are occurring; these places are able to adapt its structure to changes and shocks in order to keep a growth path over time (Barata-Salgueiro and Erkip, 2014). They describe this as a ‘dynamic’ process and not just a characteristic of a particular place.

Taking into account the definition of resilient places, a conceptualization of resilient retail systems could be made. Urban retail resilience may be understood as the “*the ability of different types of retailing at different scales to adapt to changes, crises or shocks that challenge the system’s equilibrium, without failing to perform its functions in a sustainable way*” (Barata-Salgueiro, 2009 in Fernandes & Chamusca, 2014). It is clear that resilience is about the ability of retail systems to remain its functions while to be well capable to deal with, and adapt to changes, crises or chocks which could be described as ‘societal changes’ or ‘exogenous factors’. In this definition of resilience, there is elaborated on remaining the ‘function’ of the retail system, namely the retail function. This could be described as ‘functional resilience’.

Next to maintaining the function of a retail area, resilience could be related to the identity of a particular place. Place-identity is about the personal relation someone has with a particular place. Place-identity is described as a complex cognitive structure which is characterized by attitudes, values, thoughts, beliefs and meanings in relation to a particular place (Proshansky et al., 1983). Retaining identity is a feature of the resilience of a particular system according to Walker et al. (2004) in Dolega and Celinska-Janowicz (2015). So it could be suggested that besides functional resilience, 'identity resilience' could be considered as a kind of resilience. For example a retail area could change its function, but retains its identity and the attitudes, meanings, thoughts, beliefs and values people attach to that particular place.

Related to the concept of resilience, is the concept of *adaptation.* Adaptation means the extent to which a system can be described as *adaptive* depends of places' capacity to adapt to stress over time. A way to describe this concept is 'the capacity of a region to adapt to shocks and changes in order to keep a growth path over time' (Martin, 2012 in Barata-Salgueiro and Erkip, 2014). A distinction between the terms *adaptation* and *adaptability* could be made. Dolega and Celinska-Janowicz (2015) explain that *adaptation* refers to changes within preconceived paths, while *adaptability* is about developing new paths. An addition to this is made by Pike et al. (2010) in Dolega and Celinska-Janowicz, (2015), They mention that adaptation is a movement towards a pre-conceive path in the short run, which is characterized by tight and strong couplings between social agents in place. Adaptability, on the other hand, is described as the dynamic capacity to effect and unfold multiple evolutionary trajectories, which enhance the overall responsiveness of the system to unforeseen changes.

An indicator to get insight in retail resilience could be long-term structural retail vacancy. Long-term structural vacancy is according to Dolega and Celinska-Janowicz (2015), the most obvious indicator, and probably the easiest to apply. They explain that long-term vacancy might be for example the result of local factors, such as the low quality of physical fabric or poor attributes with respect to visibility for pedestrians. Local factors might play an important role, however it should be taken into account that exogenous factors also could have a strong influence on long-term retail vacancy: this comes forward in paragraph 2.3. Another indicator for resilience Dolega and Calinska-Janowicz mention, is the dynamic of retail turnover, however this is more difficult to obtain.

In short, *resilient* and *adaptive* retail areas could be seen as retail areas which are well able to deal with (exogenous) changes, crises or shocks and have the capacity to adapt to this, which results in retail areas which remain successful in keeping their function and stimulating a *growth path* or keeping their identity experienced by people who visit these places frequently.

2.6.1. Explanation of factors contributing to resilient and adaptive retail areas

As explained above, retail areas experience pressures which results in *rises and falls.* Some of these pressures are; changing societal factors and competition with other retail areas. Therefore retail areas need to be resilient and adaptive. Resilient and adaptive areas are able to deal with these pressures and are able to adapt to the circumstances during different periods. In paragraph 2.4.2. some factors are discussed which contribute to the attractiveness of retail areas. It should be taken into account that this is not the same as the resilience and adaptation/adaptability of retail areas. However, these factors could be considered as a basis for resilient and adaptive retail areas. In this paragraph the link between resilience and adaptivity/adaptability is made and the factors which are contributing to resilient and adaptive retail areas are discussed.

Retail areas are confronted by societal changes and exogenous factors. However some retail areas have the capacity to recover from exogenous shocks, while other retail areas remain locked in decline. With respect to the concept of resilience, Balsas (2004) emphasizes on the capacity of systems to *re-organize,* while keeping its essential functions, structure, mechanisms and identity to continue their development patterns in similar and reinvigorated ways. This is similar to a feature of resilience mentioned by Barata-Salgueiro and Erkip (2013). They mention reorganization and different ways of working as an important feature of resilience, which could be seen from an *institutional* level and a *social* level. At the institutional level there could be thought of new ways of planning and governing, and at the social level there could be thought of thinking about roles of citizens and local actors should play in shaping initiatives, spatial strategies and decision-making processes. A point of criticism is that reorganization and finding different ways of working does not result in resilient retail areas *by definition*. Reorganization might also result in negative consequences for the retail area when the reorganization is not broadly supported by different stakeholders for example. However, the capacity to reorganize and find different ways of working may result in more resilient retail areas when it happens on a broadly supported and conducive way.

Other important features of retail resilience are *planning* and *policy.* Identity and main attributes of retail areas should, according to Fernandes & Chamusca (2014), be maintained but the areas should adapt to changing conditions and to new economic, social and cultural contexts. They state that *planning* and *policy* are the central elements of retail resilience. Planning and policy are considered as necessary to change and adapt space to all threats and pressures from exogenous factors. Understanding retail systems and its subsystems is important for authorities and stakeholders to maintain and improve the resilience of retail areas. This 'understanding' is important for transforming and surviving of retail areas at moments it is necessary, according to Barata-Salgueiro and Erkip (2014). With respect to this, understanding the various subsystems, like retail systems, infrastructure systems, policy systems, which influence retail areas could be considered as important (Fernandes & Chamusca, 2014). With respect to this idea, a point of criticism that emerges, is that one is not able to *fully* understand a system like a retail area, because a retail area always can be confronted by unexpected factors. The various elements and the numerous relationships and interinfluences between subsystems should be taken into account. As reaction to the existence of these various elements and numerous relationships, Barata-Salgueiro and Erkip mention the importance of 'place-based approaches', which is linked to place branding and marketing strategies. This kind of approaches have been increasingly involved in the regeneration of declining places. The authors claim that critical elements of resilient retail systems include planning and development strategies that minimise vulnerabilities and support partnership and independent initiatives which strengthen networks and create social support.

Resilience of retail areas could be seen in a broader sense than only the factors which are directly related to retail. Rao (2014) claims that there should not only be responded to the desires and needs of the users, consumers and investors of the retail area but that it also should be part of a structure enabling resilient everyday life. According to him, retail systems should include both the market function of facilitating economic exchanges of goods and services, and public space functions that contribute to collective priorities. Some of these collective priorities are; avoiding urban decay, generating and maintaining an unique sense of place, ensuring adequate goods and service for a diverse population and supporting environmentally sustainable and healthier lifestyles.

Related to resilience of retail areas is the concept of 'competitiveness'. This could be seen, according to Dolega and Celinska-Janowicz (2015), as the capacity of a region to compete with other places for globally mobile capital or to provide conditions for local companies to be more successful than companies in other regions. However it must be taken into account that it is too simplistic to equate resilience with competitiveness: the competitive position of a retail area is for example also influenced by its location, the size of the market and other factors. The authors mention that for retail resilience, *diversity,* seems to be important. This must not only be seen in terms of a retail/service mix, but also ownership, size, or prices. They claim that diversified economic structures are perceived as more resilient. This point is also made by Barata-Salgueiro and Erkip (2014) who mention that the vitality and viability of a retail area can be sustained through the resilience of different retailers and the diversity of local supply.

The different contexts, stakeholders and institutions have influence on retail areas and the extent to which retail areas are resilient. Balsas (2014) puts emphasis on different contexts of retail areas and the way these differences influence the development of retail evolution. That is why there should be an important role for the city and the related stakeholders to maintain and improve the retail areas. He explains that people with different degrees of skills, networks and leadership make 'institutions', which make them able to return from adverse situations. According to the author, resilience is often equated with tenacity, persistency and a range of positive capacities; resilient systems are able to adapt, innovate, network, collaborate, partner, learn and they adjust strategies to new situations. Still, not all systems are capable to do so, and able to return from adverse situations.

Involving and informing a diversity of stakeholders in decision-making processes could result in more resilient retail areas than when a few stakeholders are involved in the decision-making process. The importance of an informed and engaged public is mentioned by Rao (2014). He did a case study in Portland, where according to him the public was well informed in the decision-making process and at the end there was a depth of interested and informed stakeholders supporting the public space functions of the retail system in Portland. He mentions that this decision-making in Portland was polycentric and relied upon critical deliberation and consensus building. Another point which is mentioned, is that in Portland the diversity and authenticity of retail areas became prioritized. He states that a diversity of places was created, what resulted in a strong sense of place of the different places. This produces retail areas competing on uniqueness. The author claims that this way of working, resulted in adaptive and resilient retail areas in Portland. 'Complex systems', with a lot of involved stakeholders, tend to be more resilient than simplistic systems with a few stakeholders involved. A critical note about this statement is that when too many stakeholders are involved decision-making may be more complicated; because they might all have different opinions what makes a consensus more difficult. Therefore a right number of involved stakeholders may result in more resilient retail areas.

2.7. In Conclusion

The *retail sector* is a sector which is oriented on the sale of good and merchandises without transformation. This sector is directly oriented on the consumer. Retail areas could be confronted with *retail vacancy* which is described as the amount of empty units available for occupation.

The retail sector is influenced by a diverse range of actors as *policy makers, large firms, retail organization, real-estate owners* and *investors*. A specific actor that determines the ultimate success and appearance of a retail area is the *consumer.* The set of rules and relations between these actors on different scales is described as the *institutional context.* Related to the institutional context, is the concept of *governance* what pertains to 'public shares, community development, partnerships and other kinds of cooperation, mainly having to do with projects providing support to retail business and/or community organizations, town centre management and other similar initiatives'. Proper governance and the relationship between several actors with the ability to anticipate and to make plans, is described as a means to make some cities more resilient than other cities.

Effects of societal change have an important influence on retail areas. These changes are not inherent to a particular place and could be described as *exogenous factors.* These factors are external to the firm and beyond the control of the firm. With respect to exogenous factors one can think of *economy based risks, industry based risks, e-commerce in retail* and *globalisation and increasing scales*.

Important factors of retail areas are the *viability* and *vitality* of these places. *Viability* is described as the capacity of a center to sustain profitable and encourage investments. *Vitality* refers to the level of activity in a center. A loss of viability and vitality could result in *dead spaces.* Vital and viable places could be described as areas which attract people and where people have a positive shopping experience. The *vacancy rate* in retail areas and the *number of people which are walking through a retail area*, relatively to its size and the area where the firms are operating, are in this thesis considered as the indicators to determine the successfulness of a retail area. These indicators give an idea about the vitality and viability of a particular retail area as described above.

Attractivity could be considered as a basis for resilient and adaptive retail areas. There are several factors which influence this attractivity. An important factor is *experience.* The attractivity is influenced by the *atmosphere*, experienced by consumers in a retail area. Experience can be related to several other factors. Six factors which have influence on the attractivity of the retail area are selected and are used as the six factors that influence the success indicators used in this thesis. These six factors have a strong link with *experience*. The factors are: p*edestrian accessibility and attractiveness*, *historic preservation*, t*he number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities*, a*esthetic value*, *range of goods available* and c*onsidered as an authentic and unique place*.

Within retail areas, there can be differences in the successfulness and resilience between different parts of it. There can be differences between streets and firms within the retail are. Factors which influence these differences, are; pedestrian activity, the configuration and integration of streets, the existing linkages, streets which are considered as main street, entry points of retail areas and the so-called “magnet stores”.

The extent to which retail areas are considered as attractive or unattractive is related to *uneven development* and *inequality.* This uneven development has a time component; retail areas are experienced diversely over time. Related to this is the *competitive environment* of a firm. The location and the competitive environment of a retail area may influence the success rate of this retail area. Despite of the uneven development and inequality, there are retail areas which remain successful. These areas are described as *resilient* and *adaptive* retail areas. Urban retail resilient is understood as “*the ability of different types of retailing at different scales to adapt to changes, crises or shocks that challenge the system’s equilibrium, without failing to perform its functions in a sustainable way*”. Related to the concept of resilience, is the concept of *adaptation.* Adaptation means the extent to which a system can be described as *adaptive* depends of places’ capacity to adapt to stress over time.

In short, *resilient* and *adaptive* retail areas could be seen as retail areas which are well able to deal with (exogenous) changes, crises or shocks and have the capacity to adapt to this, which results in retail areas which remain successful in keeping their function and stimulating a *growth path* or keeping their identity experienced by people who visit these places frequently.

Concerning resilience and adaptation, the capacity of a retail system is to *re-organize*, while keeping its essential functions, structures, mechanisms and identity to continue their development patterns in similar and reinvigorated ways.

Planning and *policy* are central elements of resilience. Planning and policy are considered as necessary to change and adapt places to all threats and pressures from exogenous factors. Different contexts, stakeholders and institutions, have influence on retail areas and the extent to which retail areas are resilient. Involving and informing stakeholders in the decision making process, could therefore result in more resilient areas. Other points of resilience and adaptiveness which come strongly forward, are the focus on an own identity and place branding strategies and a focus on diversity of shops and functions.

2.8. Conceptual Framework

In figure 3 the conceptual framework of this thesis describes the main attributes and relations which are explained in the theoretical framework. The pillars between the squares show when one attribute has influence on another attribute.

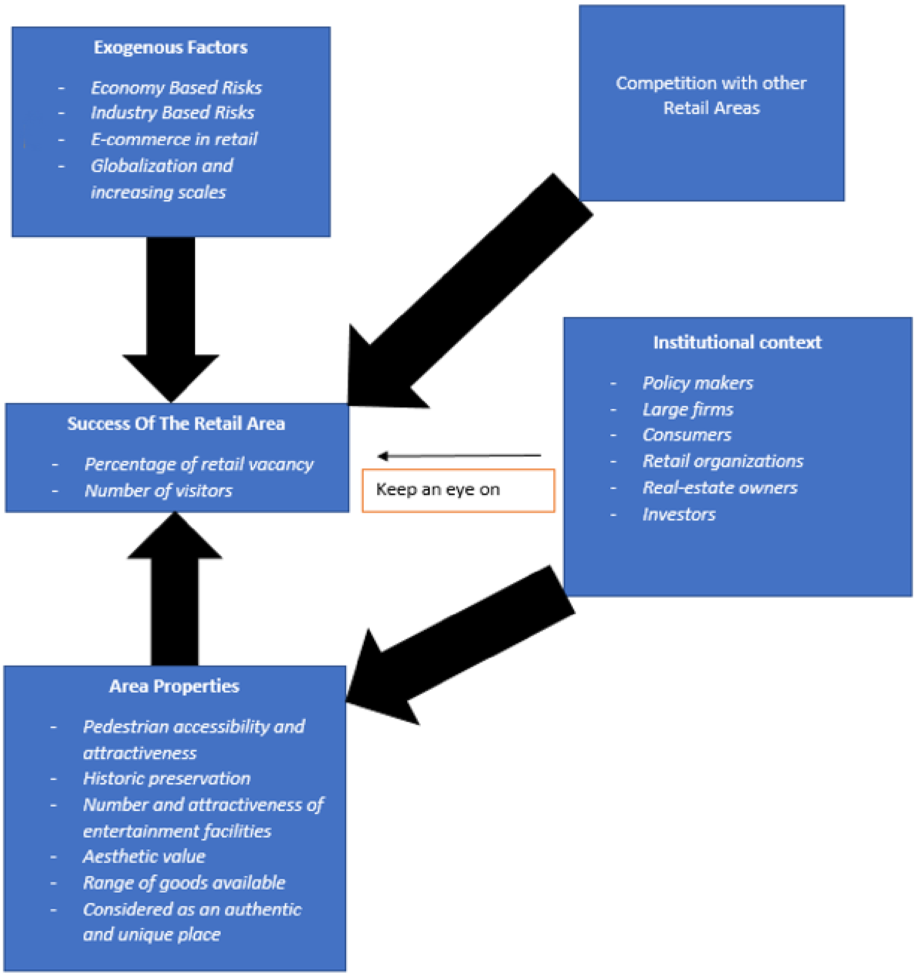


Figure 4. The conceptual framework of this thesis which shows the main attributes and relations of the theoretical framework.

3. Methodology

In this chapter the methodology of this research is explained. Firstly, it is explained why there is chosen for a multiple case study. Afterwards, the selection of different cases of this research is highlighted. Finally, there is elaborated on the research methods and techniques of this research.

3.1. Research and research method

The aim of this study is to find possibilities for adaptive and resilient retail areas that can cope with changing contexts. The main question of the research is; "*What are the determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas which can cope with changing contexts?".* In addition to this main question, three secondary questions are composed which are mentioned in paragraph 1.2. This thesis uses a multiple case study to get understanding of the (exogenous) factors that have impact on the retail areas and to find what possibilities exist to remain or create vitality and viability in cities by upgrading the attractiveness of retail areas

3.1.1. Why a multiple case study?

The primary question "*What are the determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas which can cope with changing contexts?"* is answered by doing a *multiple case study.* In this multiple case study, both quantitative methods as qualitative methods are used. A multiple case study is chosen because it provides the opportunity to make comparisons between different retail areas and the determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas can be explored in depth. The comparisons provide a good opportunity to get insight in determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas. It provides ways to explore differences and similarities between the different cases that contribute to the aim of replicating findings across cases. Replicating these findings might result in gaining important insights for the research question.

Firstly, a definition of a multiple case study is made up. Yin (2003) in Baxter and Jack (2008) give the following definition:

"*A multiple case study enables the researcher to explore differences within and between cases. The goal is to replicate findings across cases. Because comparisons will be drawn, it is imperative that the cases are chosen carefully so that the researcher can predict similar results across cases, or predict contrasting results based on a theory*" (Yin, 2003 in Baxter and Jack, 2008, p. 548).

Thus, a multiple case study is used to draw comparisons between and within different cases. The multiple case study provides the opportunity to learn from these comparisons. Baxter and Jack state that a multiple case study, based on comparisons, enables to explore differences and similarities within and between the different cases which contributes to the aim of replicating findings across cases. Because of drawing these comparisons, cases should be chosen carefully so that the researcher can predict similar or contrasting results across cases, based on a theory. George and Bennett (2005) argue that multiple case studies provide the opportunity for a "structured and focused comparison"; doing a multiple case study that makes use of a small number of cases, enables the researcher to make comparisons which give insight in complex causality. Getting insight in this complex causality is possible because there has been focused on small number of cases that are explored in depth and the context of the cases is analysed. When a research makes use of a large number of cases, elaborating in depth on single cases is more complicated. For getting insight in the answer of the research question, understanding the complex causality by factors that contribute to resilient and adaptive retail areas, is necessary: therefore exploring the differences and similarities between retail areas in depth is an important aspect of this research. Yin (2003), in Baxter and Jack

(2008) state that multiple case studies can be used to predict similar results, which is called by Yin a 'literal replication'. Moreover, a case study can be used to contrast results based on predictable reasons, which Yin calls a theoretical replication. The cases which are used in this research, are 9 retail areas. Based on these comparisons, differences and similarities between different retail areas are analysed in depth. In the theoretical framework, it comes forward that differences exist between different retail areas with respect to resilience. In this research, a multiple case study is used to contrast results between different retail areas which are explained by findings in the literature. When one takes the description by Yin into account, this multiple case study could be described as a 'theoretical replication'.

Another important point of interest is that a multiple case study enables a researcher to answer 'how' and 'why' type of questions, while taking into consideration how a phenomenon is influenced by the context within which it is situated (Baxter and Jack, 2008). Therefore, Baxter and Jack argue that the evidence created by a multiple case study is generally robust and reliable for getting insight in the researched topic. A multiple case study provides a good opportunity to get deep insight into different single cases and the related contexts. This in contrast to study with a larger N, where getting insight in single cases is more complicated, and the context is more difficult to take into account when analysing the findings of the study, because there are findings on a larger scale. Studies with a larger N may provide more generalized insights about a larger population or area; however, there is less opportunity to elaborate on the explanations and reasons of the different outcomes, because of the large number of cases. Case studies, on the other hand, provide a good opportunity to elaborate on explanations, and 'how' and 'why' questions can be answered on a more profound and comprehensive way, with the context taken into account. In an article about five misunderstanding of case studies, Flyvbjerg (2006) states that case studies have the advantage of *depth,* and large samples have the advantage of *breadth.* Flyvbjerg states that both kind of studies are necessary and complementary to each other. This research makes use of a multiple case study, because context-related and depth information is necessary to answer the research question "*What are the determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas which can cope with changing contexts?".* Understanding the context of retail areas and the ways it influences retail areas is important in order to answer the research question. Furthermore, a broad understanding of a retail areas is necessary to get insight in determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas. Therefore, a multiple case study where is deeply elaborated on 9 single retail areas is a proper method to get understanding of this phenomenon.

The multiple case study exists both of quantitative methods and qualitative methods: there is made use of *mixed methods.*

Several conceptions and descriptions about quantitative and qualitative research are composed. Newman and Ridenour (1998) give a conception of both qualitative and quantitative research. According to these authors, quantitative research might be used when one begins with a theory and tests for confirmation or disconfirmation of that hypothesis, whereas qualitative research might be used when observing and interpreting reality with the aim of acquiring knowledge that explains what was experienced. This is both done in this research: based on the theoretical framework, insight is obtained in success factors and success indicators of retail areas and based on this insight, hypothesis are drawn and statistical tests are run in order to confirm or disconfirm these hypotheses: this could be considered as the basis for the quantitative research. It provides a good opportunity to compare the retail areas and to find out if there are differences and similarities between these areas. Besides, by means of interviews, the reality about retail areas is observed and interpreted with the aim to acquire knowledge about resilient and adaptive factors of retail areas: this is the basis for the qualitative research. A qualitative method gives the opportunity to reveal factors that are not predetermined. It provides the opportunity, in this research, to discover new knowledge in the field of retail resilience and adaptation. In retail areas, strategies might be used that are not known in advance and which could not be revealed by using only quantitative methods. Therefore, to get insight in factors that have influence on successful and resilient retail areas, less tangible information needs to be revealed. This could be understood as ‘deeper’ information which cannot be revealed by using only quantitative methods

As mentioned, the multiple case study exists of mixed methods. The use of mixed methods permits to get insight in the relation between a broad range of both predetermined and undiscovered factors, and success indicators of retail areas, which may provide insight in the determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas. Mixed methods of quantitative and qualitative methods are a good solution because the strengths of each method can bolster the weaknesses of the other, according to Sale et al. (2002). Qualitative methods are, according to Rabionet (2011), a powerful and flexible tool to capture the voices and the ways people make meaning of their experiences. On the other hand, quantitative methods are a powerful tool to provide sufficient information about the relationship between different variables (Carr, 1994). Because of these reasons, both kinds of methods are used during the multiple case study. With quantitative methods, insight is obtained in the relationship between variables which provide understanding of the success factors and indicators of retail areas. However, by using qualitative methods, meanings and experiences come forward that may not be known in advance: therefore a qualitative method is useful. Combining these kinds of methods is the most proper way to do this research. When there is only done a quantitative research, there is a limited opportunity to discover unrevealed factors that are not predetermined with respect to resilient and adaptive retail areas. However, testing hypotheses and finding out what variables contribute to successful and attractive retail areas is also an important aspect of this research: a quantitative method provides the opportunity to do so. Therefore is making use of mixed methods the most appropriate approach for this research. Rabionet states that qualitative and quantitative methods can be used simultaneously or sequentially in a single study or series of investigations. Newman and Ridenour state that a mix of both methods is the most effective mode in reaching truth. Morse (1991) calls this way of using both kind of methods ‘*sequential triangulation*’. He states that this kind of method is used if the results of one method are essential for planning the next method. This means that the qualitative method is completed before the quantitative method is implemented or vice versa. In this research there is made use of sequential triangulation. Firstly, the quantitative research is done, which creates a basis for the qualitative research.

3.1.2. Selection of Cases

The cases used in this research consist of 9 different retail areas in the northern part of the Netherlands. The main reason there is chosen for these specific retail areas is because of the availability of comparable and good quality data. A selection is made of 7 retail areas in centres of cities with a comparable number of inhabitants and a similar catchment area. Besides these 7 retail areas, 2 other retail areas outside city centres have been selected, which is explained later in this paragraph. The reason there is chosen for these 7 specific retail areas in city centres is, as mentioned. because of the availability of comparable and good quality data. The differences, with respect to inhabitants and catchment areas, between larger cities in the north of the Netherlands are bigger and therefore data about retail areas in these city centres are less comparable. And on the other hand, are high quality data about retail areas in centres of smaller cities to a limited extent available.

The reason that retail areas in the north of the Netherlands are chosen, is also because of practical reasons. All these retail areas are in the northern part of the Netherlands. The research takes place at the University of Groningen, and for the interviews that are done, as part of this research, it is more practical to focus on cities nearby the city of Groningen.

A map with the location of all selected retail areas is shown in figure 5.

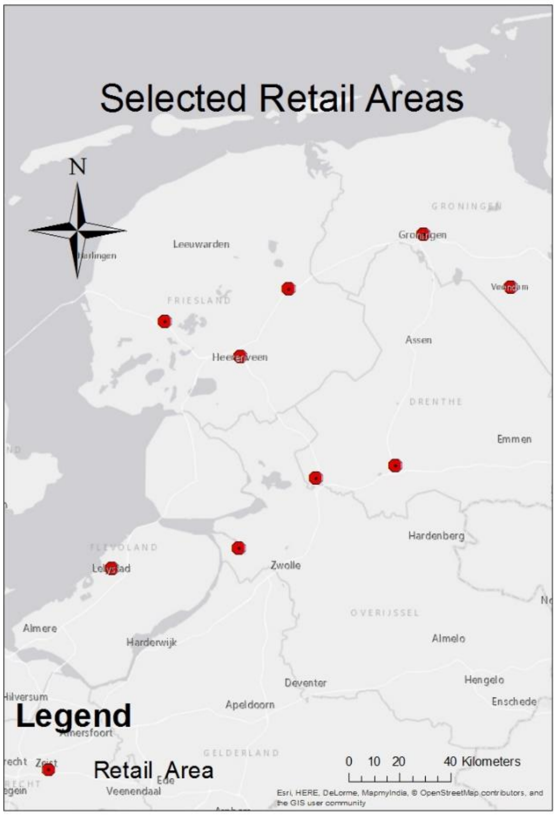


Figure 5. Map with locations of all selected retail areas of this research.

An overview of the selected retail areas in city centres is given in table 1.

City Centre	Province	Number of inhabitants of the city (CBS, 2017)	Number of inhabitants of the catchment area (Locatus, 2017)	Number of 'standard consumers' making purchases in the catchment area (Locatus, 2017)
Drachten	Friesland	44.940	62.158	44.265
Heerenveen	Friesland	29.065	59.642	39.152
Hoogeveen	Drenthe	39.325	48.787	39.786
Kampen	Overijssel	36.050	36.240	26.000
Meppel	Drenthe	27.825	53.873	37.613
Sneek	Friesland	33.855	44.567	38.648
Veendam	Groningen	19.920	32.886	22.054

Table 1. An overview of the selected retail areas in city centers for this research including the city and province where the retail area is located, the number of inhabitants of the city where the retail area is located, the number of inhabitants of the catchment areas of the retail areas and the number of 'standard consumers' who make purchases in the retail areas.

Data are obtained in cooperation with Locatus, a Dutch company that collects information about shops, retail areas and the frequency people are walking through retail areas (Locatus, 2017). Due to Locatus, data are obtained about the vacancy rate of these retail areas, the frequency people are walking through these retail areas and the catchment area of these retail areas. The data which they make available are only focused on the relatively large retail areas in the Netherlands. These data exist of the population number in the catchment area of each retail area and the number of 'standard consumers' who really make purchases in the particular retail area. 'Standard consumers' are determined by the multiplication of inhabitants of a catchment area of a particular retail area and the chance that they make purchases in this particular retail area (Locatus, 2017). Based on the 'standard consumers', primary and secondary catchment areas are determined. To determine this, zip codes of standard consumers are added, until 50 per cent (primary catchment area) and 80 per cent (secondary catchment area) of the total number of standard consumers of a retail area are accounted. The zip codes with the highest market share are added firstly, and the areas with the lowest zip code as last (Locatus, 2017). The catchment areas, used in this thesis, are an agglomeration of both primary as secondary catchment areas.

The other two retail areas which are selected, are different kind of retail areas; these are 'Groningen Paddepoel' and 'Lelystad Bataviastad'. The reason to choose for these two additional retail areas which are not located in a city centre is because of the availability of good quality data. These retail areas can be considered as 'unique cases' and have their own characteristics, this should be taken into account when comparing these retail areas to the retail areas which are located in city centres. The reason there is chosen for these retail areas is because it give insight in other retail areas than retail areas in city centres. Besides this the reason, there is chosen for these two particular retail areas is because of the availability of data. A short description of these retail areas are given.

Winkelcentrum Groningen Paddepoel

'Winkelcentrum Paddepoel' is located in the Groningen's neighborhood Paddepoel. On the website of this retail area it is described as the biggest indoor shopping center of the Northern Netherlands with more than 80 shops (Winkelcentrum Paddepoel, 2017). Except to the retail area in the city center of Groningen, it is the largest retail area in the city of Groningen (Locatus, 2017). The neighborhood 'Paddepoel' has 10.110 inhabitants and the whole city of Groningen has a population of 202.636 (CBS, 2017). 'Winkelcentrum Paddepoel' has a catchment area of 82.876 inhabitants, while 8605 'standard consumers' make purchases in this shopping center (Locatus, 2017).

Lelystad Bataviastad

'Bataviastad Outlet Shopping' is described on its website as a 'unique experience' with 150 different shops, cafes and restaurants (Bataviastad Outlet Shopping, 2017). Van Eeden (2010) mentions that Batviastad is the first peripheral factory outlet center in the Netherlands. Bataviastad is initiated in 2001 by developer 'Stable International'. It is situated at the Lelystad Flevopolder Coast, which is on the edge of the city of Lelystad which has a population of 76.937 (CBS, 2017). It is situated at a spot with some touristic attractions such as the "Nieuwland National Heritage Museum" and the seventeenth century replica ship "The Batavia". Bataviastad is designed with an own identity and atmosphere. The concept of Bataviastad is based on the historical Maritime golden age. The focus of Bataviastad is not only on the area around Lelystad; Van Eeden states that consumers are willing to drive further for an outlet center as Bataviastad. In the catchment area of Lelystad are living 41.399 people and it has 12.786 'standard consumers', who are making purchases in the retail area.

3.2. Data and analysis

In this research, quantitative data are used to get insight in the differences between the extent to which retail areas are successful or less successful and the factors which are influencing this difference. These data are gathered with the aid of Locatus. Due to Locatus, the following data are obtained: the vacancy rate of these retail areas and the frequency people are walking through these retail areas. These data are measured in 2017, this is done at different moments of the year. The frequency of the amount of people who are walking through a retail area is based on measures on different Saturday afternoons in the different retail areas. These success indicators give insight in the differences between retail areas. Empirical research is done to get insight in the factors which are determining the different success indicators. This is done by observations and semi-structured interviews.

During the quantitative research, several statistic techniques are used. The first step is making an overview of success indicators and giving a short description of the differences that come forward. After that, a regression is done between the several indicators to get insight if there is a significant link between these different success indicators of retail areas. This is done by means of a non-parametric regression test. The reason to choose for a non-parametric test is because of the small number of cases. Another point of interest is the normal distribution which also have influence on the choice to run a parametric or non-parametric test. To discover this, a Kolmogorov-Smirnov test has been run. This test provides a means of testing whether a set of observations are from some completely specified continuous distribution (Lilliefors, 1976). A benefit of this test, according to Lilliefors, is that it can be used with small sample sizes. The null hypothesis of this test is that the distribution of data is normally distributed. This test is run for the 'vacancy rate of the retail areas', and 'the frequency people are walking through these retail areas'. A significance level of 0.05 is used. This significance level is used for all statistic tests in this research. According to Wallenstein (1980), the chance of falsely declaring some outcomes to be significant is small when using a significance level of 0.05. Therefore there is chosen to use 0.05 as significance level. Table 2 shows the outcomes of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test.

Kolmogorov-Smirnov test			
	Statistic	Df	Sig.
Percentage of retail vacancy in a retail area	,137	9	,200
Number of people walking through retail areas	,237	9	,153

Significance level of 0.05

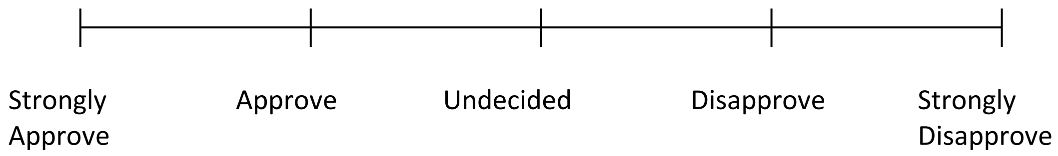
Table 2. The outcomes of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test to discover if the indicators of success in a retail areas are normally divided.

The two success indicators show no significance, which supposes that these datasets are normally distributed. Despite to the normal distribution, there is chosen for a non-parametric test because of the small number of cases. The test that is chosen to discover the correlation between the different indicators, is a two-tailed Spearman's Rank Order Correlation. This test shows if there is a significant linear association between the different success indicators. The Spearman's Rank Order Correlation is a non-parametric rank statistic, proposed as a measure of the strength of an association between two variables (Hauke and Kossowski, 2011). It is a non-parametric technique for evaluating the degree of linear associations between these variables. This technique is applicated because it can be used for small sample sizes (Gauthier, 2001), which is the case in this research.

Gauthier (2001) explains the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation as following:

"*Each variable is ranked separately from lowest to highest (e.g. 1, 2, 3, etc.) and the difference between ranks for each data pair is recorded. If the data are correlated, then the sum of the square of the difference between ranks will be small. The magnitude of the sum is related to the significance of the correlation* (Gauthier, 2001 p. 359).

Thus, the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation shows if there is a correlation between the different success indicators. There are several factors which influence these success indicators. Several of these factors are described in the theoretical framework. Some of these factors are ranked on an ordinal scale. A five-point Likert-scale is used to measure the potency of the several factors in the different retail areas. Cummins and Gallone (2000) show that in 1932, Likert produced a scale with the following form:



In this research is for the following factors a 5 point Likert-scale composed:

- *Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness*
- *Historic preservation*
- *The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities*
- *Aesthetic value*
- *Range of goods available*
- *Considered as an authentic and unique place*

For each retail area that is included in this research, these six factors are assessed based on a 5 point Likert scale. For every case in this research, a descriptive analysis for all six factors is done. This descriptive analysis is done by means of observations in the retail areas and information available about the retail areas. Based on the descriptive analysis, a value is assigned to every single factor for all cases. In appendix a., an overview is given of all factors and the corresponding Likert-scale that is used to assess the different factors.

Figure 6 gives an overview of the relations between the factors and success indicators. There could be a debate about what the causes and consequences are and related to this, what the factors and success indicators are. To get insight in this debate, figure 6 gives an overview of the different factors and success indicators and the links between it. This figure shows that several factors and success indicators are interlinked and that it is complicated to determine what the success indicators are and what the factors are which influence these success indicators. A choice is made to make this distinction; in the figure the blue boxes are considered as the factors and the yellow boxes are considered as the success indicators. This choice is made because all factors influence the 'number of people walking through retail areas', which indirectly influences the percentage of retail vacancy. Retail vacancy has in return influence on the number of people walking through retail areas. These two success indicators have a continuous interaction with each other, while being directly and indirectly influenced by the factors in the model. Because of this, there is chosen to make this distinction between factors and success indicators.

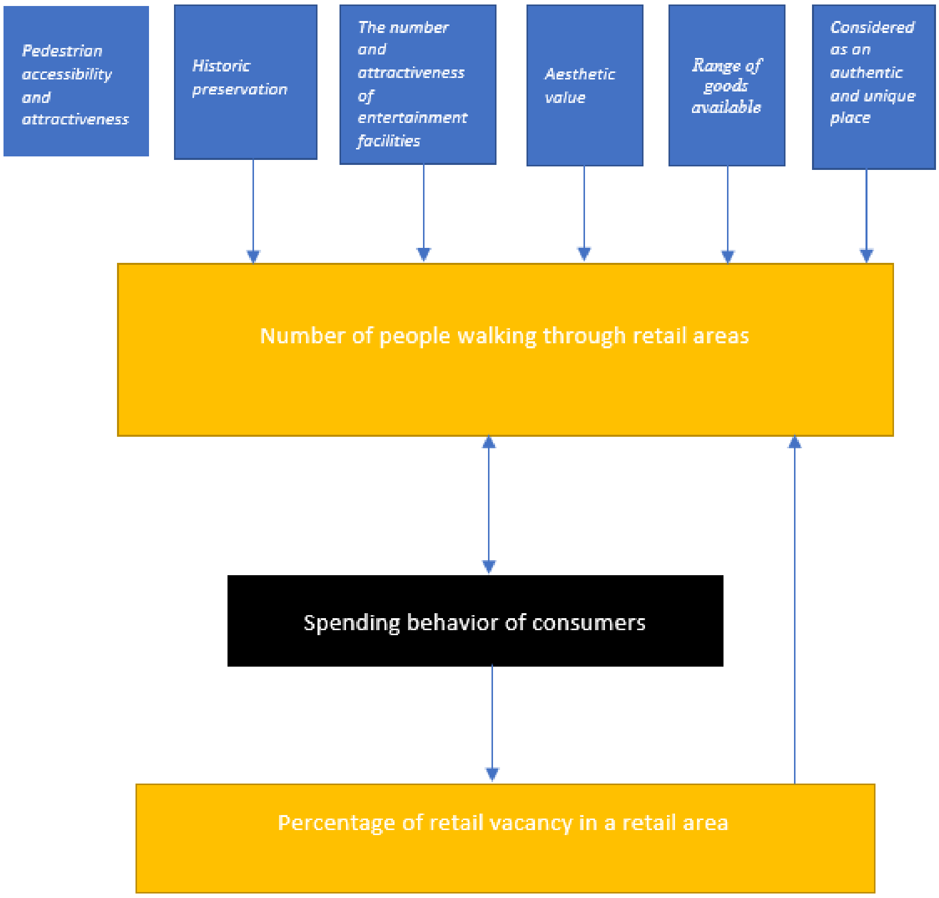


Figure 6. An overview of the relations between factors and success indicators.

To discover the influence of these factors on the success indicators, a two-tailed Spearman's Rank Order Correlation is used. There is chosen for an two-tailed Spearman's Rank Order Correlation test because it shows the correlation between the factors and the success indicators. The reason there is chosen for a two-tailed correlation is because it gives insight in the relation between the factors and success indicators. Significance between the factors and success indicators shows a correlation between these data, what could result in the assumption that the factors have a contribution to the success indicators.

After the quantitative research is finished, a qualitative research is done and questions for semi-structured interviews are composed. Semi-structured interviews are used as means to explore the qualitative data. Making use of semi-structured interviews gives the opportunity to get insight in factors which are not predetermined. The aim of this research is to get insight in determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas. Some of these factors might be undiscovered. Therefore, a semi-structured interview might be a good research technique to reveal these undiscovered factors. Longhurst (2010) describes a semi-structured interview as a verbal interchange, where one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information from the other person by asking questions. During a semi-structured interview, the interviewer prepares a list of predetermined questions, but the interviews unfold in a conversational manner which offers participants the opportunity to explore they feel, are important. Interviewees are offered chances to explore information they think it is important, therefore it is a suitable research technique to reveal undiscovered knowledge. Semi-structured interviews are used to collect data on an equally diverse range of subjects. It is useful for investigating complex behaviours, opinions and emotions and for collecting a diversity of experiences (Longhurst, 2010).

Interviews are done with local policy makers and centre managers of the selected retail areas, about their role in revitalizing the retail areas and their points of view are explored about the determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas. It provides a good opportunity to ask them about the determining factors based on the literature and the quantitative data, but meanwhile the participants have the opportunity to mention things of what they think. This provides the opportunity to discover ‘unrevealed information’ which would not have been possible by only doing quantitative research that makes to a large extent use of predetermined information.

The results of the quantitative research and the qualitative research and the findings in the literature are explored and compared. It is examined if the outcomes of the literature study, the quantitative study and the qualitative study could be ascribed to each other. Based on this, a conclusion is drawn. The way this research is done could be considered as a 'stream' of different phases. In figure 7, a flowchart is composed to describe the stream of phases of this research.

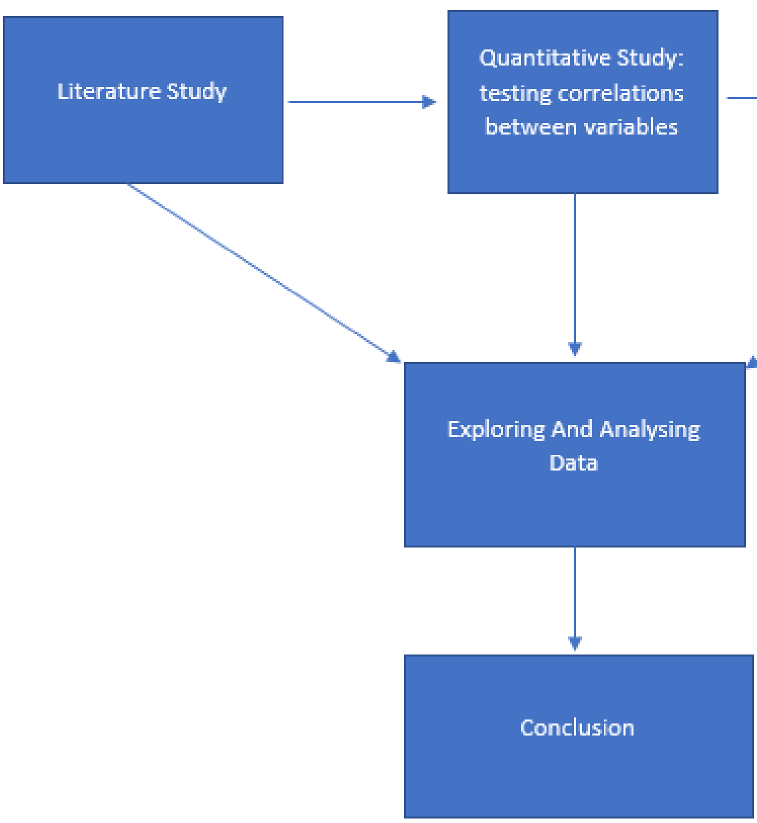


Figure 7. The different 'streams' which describe the phases of this research.

4. Findings

In this chapter the results of the quantitative and qualitative research are displayed and analyzed. Firstly an overview is given of the outcomes of the data obtained due to Locatus. Furthermore, several statistic tests are run, in the following paragraph the outcomes of these tests are shown. Then, the outcomes of the interview are highlighted and analyzed. The different outcomes of the theoretical, quantitative and qualitative research are interlinked what is the basis of the conclusion.

4.1. Success indicators

Firstly an overview of the success indicators obtained due to Locatus is given. In table 3 an overview is given of the different success indicators; ‘percentage of retail vacancy in a retail area’, ‘average number of people walking through retail areas’ and ‘the number of “standard consumers” with a catchment area which visit the particular retail area shared by the number of people who live in a catchment area’

	Percentage of retail vacancy in a retail area (2017)	Average number of people walking through retail area on an Saturday (2017)
Drachten	12,5	7694,29
Heerenveen	9,1	7011,13
Hoogeveen	10,8	8583,49
Veendam	21,5	3620,53
Kampen	7,9	8033,78
Meppel	13,9	5376,68
Sneek	7,4	6940,11
Groningen Paddepoel	4,5	7647,25
Lelystad Bataviastad	17,3	13218,3

Table 3. An overview of the success indicators (Locatus, 2017).

Table 3 shows that there is relatively a lot of the retail vacancy in the centre of Veendam, which also has the lowest average number of people walking through the retail area on an average Saturday. Next to Veendam, Lelystad Bataviastad has a relatively high percentage of retail vacancy, while it has the highest average number of people walking through the retail area. The lowest percentage of retail vacancy is in Groningen Paddepoel (4,5%). The other retail areas do not show big differences with respect to retail vacancy. Another point of interest is the relatively low average number of people walking through the retail area in the centre of Meppel, comparing to the other retail areas.

As mentioned in paragraph 2.1.1., a two-tailed Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation is run to discover the correlation between the different success indicators to get insides if these success indicators are interlinked. The null hypothesis is that there is a correlation between the different success indicators. The outcomes of this Spearman's Rank Order Correlation are shown in table 4.

			Correlations	
			Percentage of retail vacancy in a retail area	Average number of people walking through retail areas on a Saturday
Spearman's Rank Order Correlation	Percentage of retail vacancy in a retail area	Correlation Coefficient	1,000	,100
		Significance (two-tailed)	.	,798
		N	9	9
	Number of people walking through retail areas	Correlation Coefficient	-,100	1,000
		Significance (two-tailed)	,798	.
		N	9	9

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 4. Outcomes of the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation

Table 4 shows that there is no significance in the correlation between the different success indicators. There is no indication to suppose that there is a link between the different success indicators in the selected retail areas.

4.2. Descriptive Analysis

In this part of the results, a descriptive analysis is composed to assign values to the 6 factors. The descriptive analysis is done, based on observations in the different retail areas and online information about the retail areas. Besides, maps created by Locatus are used which show the different segments which are present in a retail area. To measure distances in retail area, GIS is used. To get insight in the factor 'range of products available', data of the 'CBS' (2012) are used. CBS composed a ranking of neighborhoods based on the diversity of the retail sector in these neighborhoods. The ranking is based on the number of different kinds of shops in the neighborhoods. A distinction is made between 81 different kinds of shops. Within this distinction, another distinction is made between food and non-food activities. A distinction is made between 13 food-activities and 68 non-food activities. A list of these 81 kind of retail firms is shown in appendix b. This ranking and the number of activities present in the different retail areas give a good insight in the factor 'range of products available'. A critical note what comes forward is that the ranking that the CBS composed is from 2012. Since 2012, changes could have occurred. However, there are no more recent data available and no similar data of another source. Therefore, these data are used to get insight in the factor.

Of every retail area a descriptive analysis is made, completed with maps and photos. After every analysis a table is added with the values assessed to each factor with a short explanation why this value is assessed.

Centre of Drachten

The map in figure 8 shows the retail area in the centre of Drachten. The colors show the different kinds of segments within the retail area. Furthermore, the parking lots and bus stations are shown.

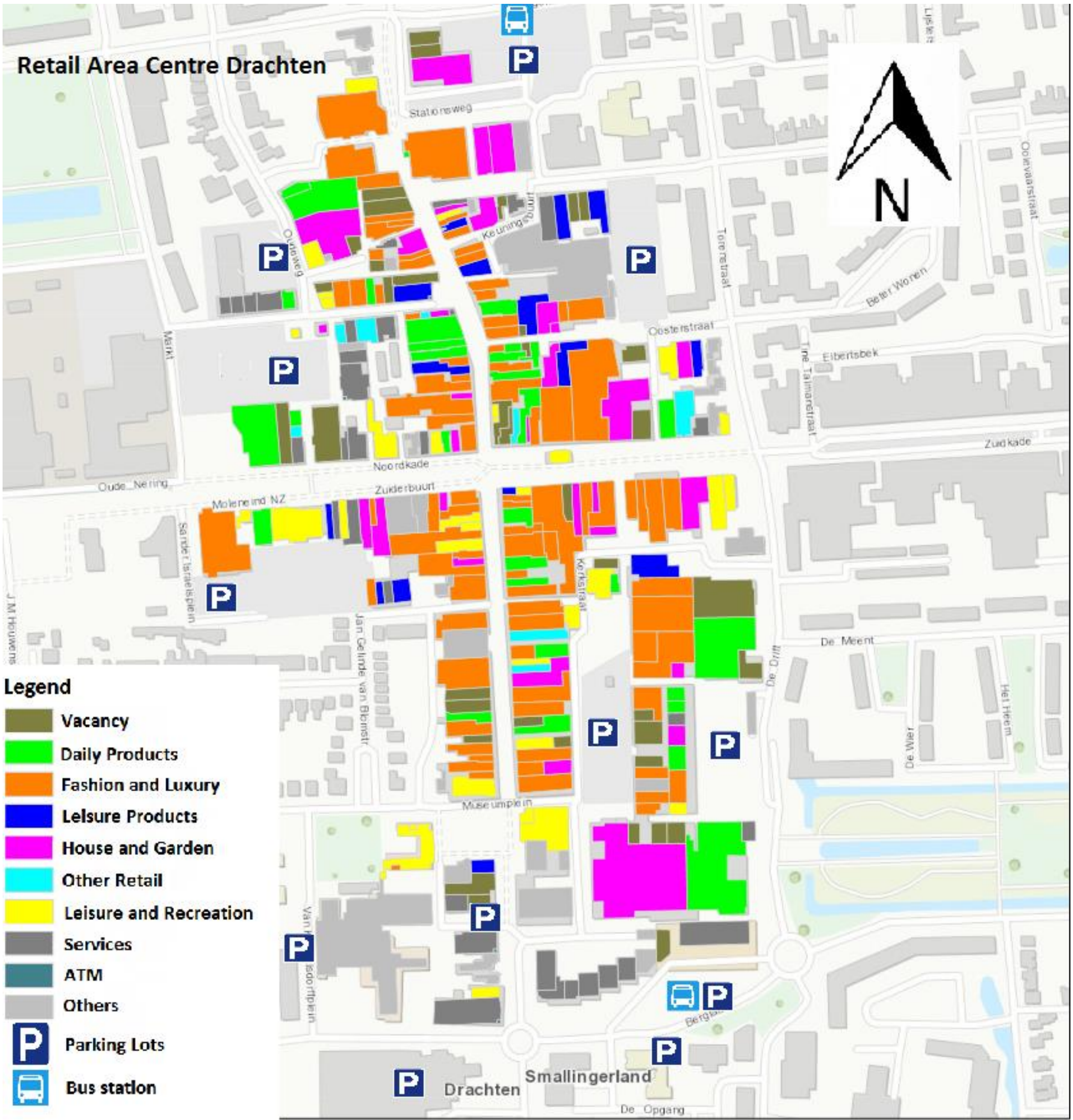


Figure 8. An overview of the retail area in the center of Drachten (Locatus, 2017).

The retail area is existing of one main street with some side streets. Besides the side streets, there are some squares which are used for parking, with retail firms on the sides of the square. The biggest square is the 'Raadhuisplein' with several shops on the edge of the square. The distance from the most southern point of the retail area to the most northern point of the retail area, is approximately 1200 meters, and the distance from the west to the east is approximately 700 meters, what is relatively a large retail area. The parts of the retail area are well connected by attractive and clear paths. On the map is shown that there are several parking lots at the edges of the retail area. The second largest parking space is the parking garage at Van Knobbeldrofsplein with a capacity of 308 parking lots (Parkeerlijn, 2017). This parking space is 150 meters from the entry point of the retail area. Besides, there are bus stations at the begin and the end of the main street. The bus station 'Van Knobbeldorffsplein' is at a distance of 150 meters from the entry point of the main street. From these bus stations, there are connections to the cities of Groningen, Assen, Heerenveen ,Leeuwarden and several villages in the proximity of Drachten. The largest part of the main street is only accessible for pedestrians, and outside the opening hours of firms it is accessible for bikers. The most northern part of the main street is also accessible for bikers during the opening hours of shops. The paths in the main street are broad what makes it comfortable for people to walk on this street. The widths of the main street are 22,5 meters. At the parking square, pedestrians have to use the sidewalks. The Raadhuisplein is an exception; there is a part of the square that is only accessible for pedestrians. The map in figure 8 shows that a large part of the firms in the retail area are part of the retail area is within the 'Fashion and Luxury' segment, all other segments are also represented, spread across the whole retail area. In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the centre of Drachten is ranked on an 87th position and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the centre of Drachten is ranked on a 5th position. In the centre of Drachten, 8 kinds of food occasions and 42 kinds of non-food occasions are presented. In the main street, a lot of attention is paid to the aesthetic value. As shown on the pictures, there is paid attention to trees, plants, decorative lighting, statues, benches and statues, some examples of this are given on the photos in figure 9.

Figure 9. Two photos of the main street of Drachten where it clearly comes forward that attention is paid to aesthetic value.

However, this is only the case in the main streets and in the other parts of the retail area less attention is paid to the aesthetic value. The use of parking lots at the squares has a negative impact on the aesthetic value of the retail area, which is shown on the photo on figure 10.

Figure 10. Square in the retail area of Drachten used for parking with retail firms at the edges.

No iconic or appealing architecture stands out in the retail area. In the retail area are no historic landmarks which comes forward, and there is not a sign that something is done with the purpose of historic preservation. There is also no story or theme coming forward in this retail area. However, there is attempted to promote the Raadhuisplein. The Raadhuisplein has its own website and logo, and there are several events organized on this square (Raadhuisplein Drachten, 2017). When one looks at the number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities, it comes forward that there is a low concentration of restaurants, snack corners and cafes; however on the eastern edge of the retail area, there is a concentration of bars, cafes, restaurants and non-food leisure activities as a bowling center, a cinema and a pool center.

Based on what is described above, the six factors which are explained in the theoretical framework and the methodology will be assessed, based on a 5 points Likert-Scale. In table 5, the number of points is shown for each factor.

Factor	Points	Explanation
Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness	4	Broad and transparent streets. Compact retail area with clear and attractive connection between different parts. Different bus stations and parking spaces in proximity retail area. Main street is pedestrian friendly, however squares on the sides of the retail area, are less pedestrian friendly.
Historic preservation	1	Few historic landmarks. This aspect does not come forward.
The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities	3	Low concentration of entertainment facilities. Some food and drink utilities across the retail area and a little concentration of food and non-food entertainment facilities east of the retail area.
Aesthetic value	4	A lot of attention is paid to this factor; there is a lot of decoration spread across the retail area. However, this is limited to the main street. To other parts of the retail area less attention is paid with respect to this aspect.
Range of goods available	3	In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the centre of Drachten is ranked on an 87th position and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the centre of Drachten is ranked on a 5th position. In the centre of Drachten, 8 kinds of food occasions and 42 kinds of non-food occasions are presented.
Considered as an authentic and unique place	2	No theme or story. However, the Raadhuisplein focuses on place branding, by having their own site and logo, and organizing events.

Table 5. The number of points assessed to each factor in the retail area in the centre of Drachten.

Centre of Heerenveen

The map in figure 11 shows the retail area in the centre of Heerenveen.

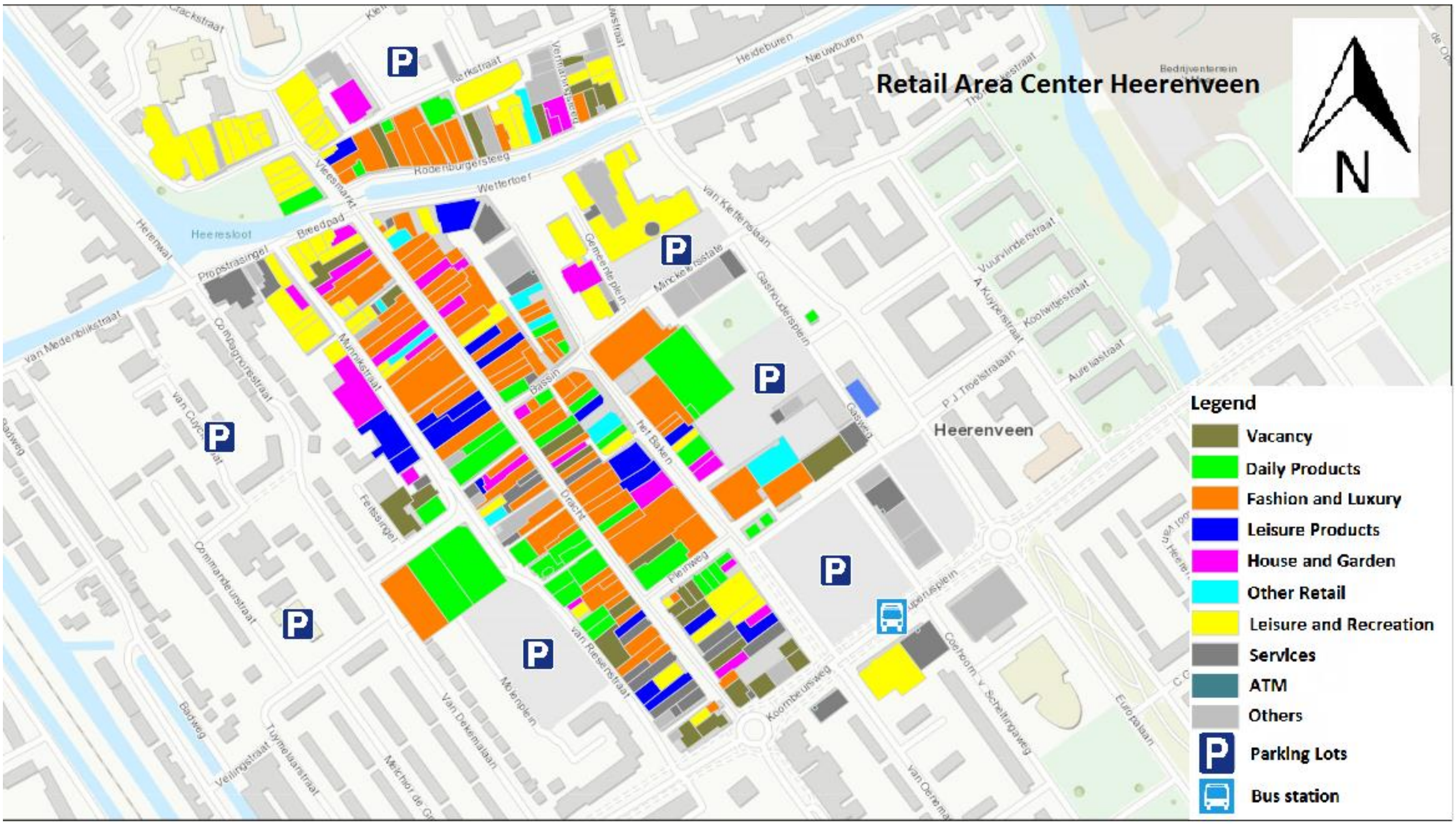


Figure 11. An overview of the retail area in the center of Heerenveen (Locatus, 2017).

The retail area in Heerenveen exists of one main street which has a length of approximately 800 meters. There are some side streets and on the other large street parallel to the main street. The main street is only accessible for pedestrians and outside the opening hours of firms, it is accessible for bikers. The streets parallel to the main streets are accessible for both pedestrians and bikers. The streets of the main street are broad to a certain extent; the streets have a width of 14 meters, when trucks in this street are loading and unloading, the space in the street for pedestrians is limited. There are several parking spaces on the sides of the retail area. The largest parking space is the Burgemeester Kuperusplein with a capacity of 611 parking lots. Besides, parking garage Geerts Willigen up to the north of the retail area, has a capacity of 328 parking lots, which is directly on the edge of the north eastern part of the retail area (Parkeerlijn, 2017).

At the southern part of the retail area is a bus station with connections within the city and to and from Assen, Wolvega, Lemmer and Oosterwolde. The northern part of the retail area is approximately 900 meters from the train station which is part of the railway line between Zwolle and Leeuwarden. The walk from the station to the retail area is an attractive walk along the historic canals of Heerenveen. The integration and configuration on the eastern side of the retail area is weak, one has to pass some discrete and unattractive streets to walk to the eastern side of the retail area. On the western side, this configuration is better and the streets that connect the different parts of the retail area are more attractive; these streets are transparent and clear, and some firms are located in these streets. The eastern part of the retail area is less attractive for pedestrians, the roads are used by cars and the space for pedestrians is limited to the sidewalk of the street (figure 12).

Figure 12. A street in the eastern part of the retail area in the center of Heerenveen where the space for pedestrians is limited to the sidewalk.

The attention that is paid to the aesthetic value is rather limited. The architecture in the retail area is not iconic or appealing. However, up to the north of the retail area, the architecture is more appealing; some historic buildings and other landmarks, as the church, the mill and the historic channels come strongly forward. In this part is a strong concentration of 'Leisure and Recreation' including several bars, cafes and restaurants, and also a theatre is located in this part. Furthermore, some food and drink occasions are located, spread across the retail area. The most retail firms are within the category 'Fashion and Luxury'. Besides, there is a concentration of firms which sell 'Daily Products' in the southwestern part of the retail area, around the Molenplein. Besides, all other segments are spread across the whole retail area. In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the centre of Heerenveen is ranked on an 85th position and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the centre of Heerenveen is ranked on a 4th position. In the centre of Heerenveen, 11 kinds of food occasions and 39 kinds of non-food occasions are presented.

When one looks at the factor 'considered as an authentic and unique place' it comes forward that in the retail area the Frisian identity comes forward to a certain extent, what gives the retail area a unique and local character. However, this identity only comes forward by means of decoration; there are decorative lights which have the shape of Frisian pompeblêden which are on the Frisian flag and there are figures of 'ice skaters' on the canal (figure 13), what also could be considered as an important feature of the culture of Friesland.

Figure 13. This picture shows the decoration that is used to bring the Frisian identity of Heerenveen forward.

Based on what is described above, the six factors which are explained in the theoretical framework and the methodology will be assessed, based on a 5 points Likert-Scale. In table 6, the number of points is shown for each factor.

Factor	Points	Explanation
Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness	4	Retail area is well accessible, streets are pedestrian oriented. There is a large parking capacity and there are also several attractive options to visit the area by using public transport. However, the main street could be considered as narrow and the integration and configuration between the eastern part and the rest of the retail area is weak.
Historic preservation	3	In the north of the retail area are some historic buildings and landmarks. However, in the rest of the retail area, this is not something what comes strongly forward.
The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities	4	In the northern part of the retail area is a strong concentration of 'Leisure and Recreation' including several bars, cafes and restaurants, and also a theatre is located in this part. Furthermore, some food and drink occasions are

		located, spread across the retail area.
Aesthetic value	2	Not a lot of attention is paid to the aesthetic value in this retail area and the architecture of the buildings in the retail area is not iconic or appealing.
Range of goods available	3	In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the centre of Heerenveen is ranked on a 85th position and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the centre of Heerenveen is ranked on a 4th position. In the centre of Heerenveen 11 kinds of food occasions and 39 kinds of non-food occasions are presented.
Considered as an authentic and unique place	3	In the retail area, the Frisian identity comes forward to a certain extent what gives the retail area a local and unique character. However this identity only comes forward by means of decoration.

Table 6. The number of points assessed to each factor in the retail area in the centre of Heerenveen.

Centre of Sneek

The map in figure 14 shows the retail area in the centre of Sneek.

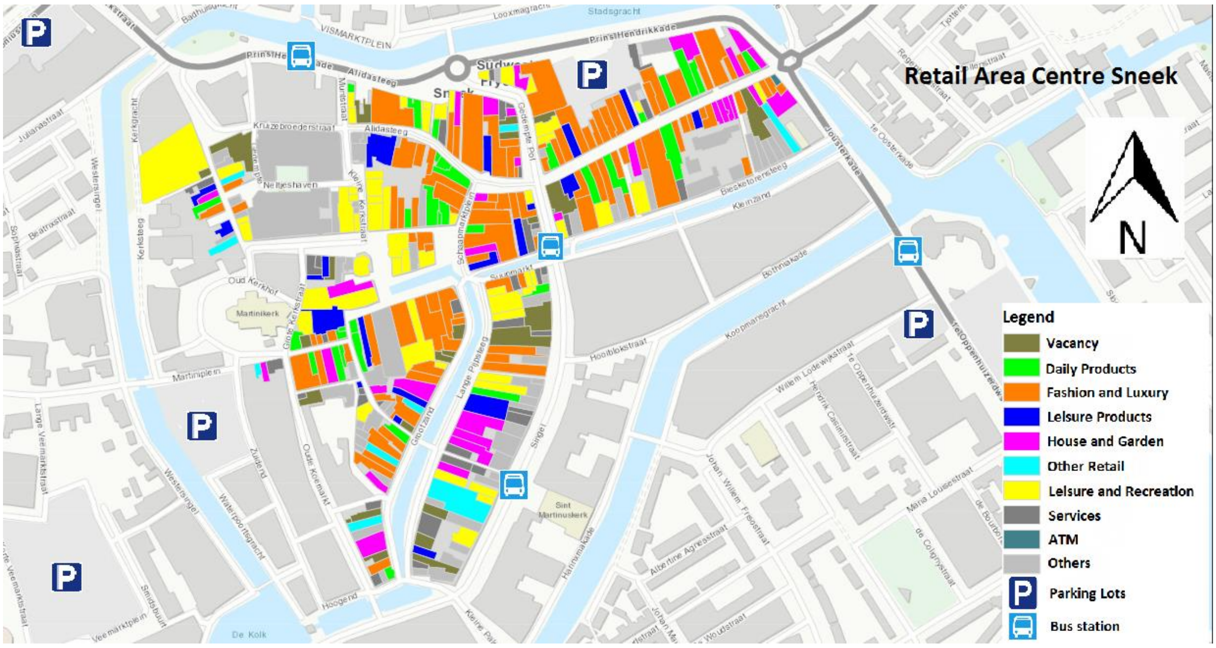


Figure 14. An overview of the retail area in the center of Sneek (Locatus, 2017).

In the retail area in the centre of Sneek comes to a lesser extent one main street forward. The retail firms are more spread across the whole area. The largest part of the retail area is only accessible for pedestrians and some parts for cyclists as well. There are wide paths for pedestrians and the different parts within the retail area are well integrated by attractive paths; these paths are clear and transparent and a lot of activity occurs at these places due to the presence of firms and people. The entry points of the retail area are unclear. Walking from the most southern point of the retail area to the northeastern part of the retail area is approximately 1100 meters. The width of the streets in this retail area vary; the width of the streets is between 11 and 20 meters. Most retail streets are starting 'slightly': the begin of these streets are occupied by retail firms but also other functions are represented, down the street, the number of retail stores increase. Only, when one walks from the direction of the train station of Sneek, there is a clear entry point (see figure 15)

Figure 15. Entry point of the retail area in the centre of Sneek on the side of the train station.

The retail area is located in the medieval city centre of Sneek and most parking lots are not directly at the edge of the retail area. The largest parking space in the proximity of the retail area is the parking space at the Veemarktplein with a capacity of 500 parking lots, this parking space is 450 meters from the edge of the retail area. There are several bus stops at the edge of the retail area, which have connections within the city and to and from Lemmer, Harlingen, Heerenveen and several villages in Friesland. The railway station of Sneek is approximately 1,1 km from the edge of the retail area. This train station is part of the railway line between Leeuwarden and Stavoren.

There are several other functions presented in this area besides retailing; within the retail area are several cafes, bars and restaurants, especially along the Marktstraat there is a concentration of leisure and recreation. Furthermore, a cinema, a concert hall and several museums (for example the Fries Scheepvaartsmuseum) are present in this area. As mentioned, the retail area is located in the medieval city centre of Sneek. A large part of the retail area is within the segment 'Fashion and Luxury'. The other segments are spread across the whole retail area. In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the centre of Sneek is ranked on a 14th position and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the centre of Sneek is ranked on a 1st position. In the centre of Sneek, 10 kinds of food occasions and 51 kinds of non-food occasions are presented.

The history of the retail area comes strongly forward through historic buildings, churches, channels and squares. An iconic landmark of Sneek is the 'Waterpoort' what is located at the edge of the retail area. This Waterpoort forms to a certain extent the identity of Sneek. At several places in the retail area, one can see a drawing of this Waterpoort and there are decorative lights in the retail area which have the shape of the Waterpoort. Figure 16 shows an image of the Waterpoort and decorative lights with the shape of the Waterpoort.

Figure 16. The Waterpoort of Sneek and a decorative light with the shape of the Waterpoort.

Besides, the identity of Friesland comes strongly forward, in the retail area there are several Frisian flags presented and also some firms with the focus on the Frisian identity are located in the retail area. It could be stated that the retail area has a local and authentic character. In the retail area, not many interventions are done to influence the aesthetic value; there are decorative lights, several statues and some trees. However, this retail area is less dependent on such interventions because of its historic appearance.

Based on what is described above, the six factors which are explained in the theoretical framework and the methodology will be assessed, based on a 5 points Likert-Scale. In table 7 the number of points is shown for each factor.

Factor	Points	Explanation
Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness	4	It is a compact retail area, streets within the retail area are integrated by clear and transparent paths. It is well accessible for people who travel by bus. There is also a large parking area in the proximity. The retail area has no clear entry points.
Historic preservation	5	Historic preservation comes strongly forward through historic buildings, churches, channels and squares. An iconic landmark of Sneek is the 'Waterpoort', what is

		located at the edge of the retail area.
The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities	4	Within the retail area are several cafes, bars and restaurants, especially along the Marktstraat there is a concentration of leisure and recreation. At the edge of the retail area are several non-food entertainment facilities.
Aesthetic value	3	There are not many interventions done to influence the aesthetic value; there are decorative lights, several statues and some trees. However, this retail area is less dependent on such interventions because of its historic appearance.
Range of goods available	5	In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the centre of Sneek is ranked on a 14th position and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the centre of Sneek is ranked on a 1st position. In the centre of Sneek, 10 kinds of food occasions and 51 kinds of non-food occasions are presented.
Considered as an authentic and unique place	4	The retail area has a local and unique character. The Frisian identity of this area comes strongly forward. Furthermore, on several places in the retail area one can see images of the ‘Waterpoort’, what could be considered as the distinctive feature of Sneek.

Table 7. The number of points assessed to each factor in the retail area in the centre of Sneek.

Centre of Hoogeveen

The map in figure 17 shows the retail area in the centre of Hoogeveen.

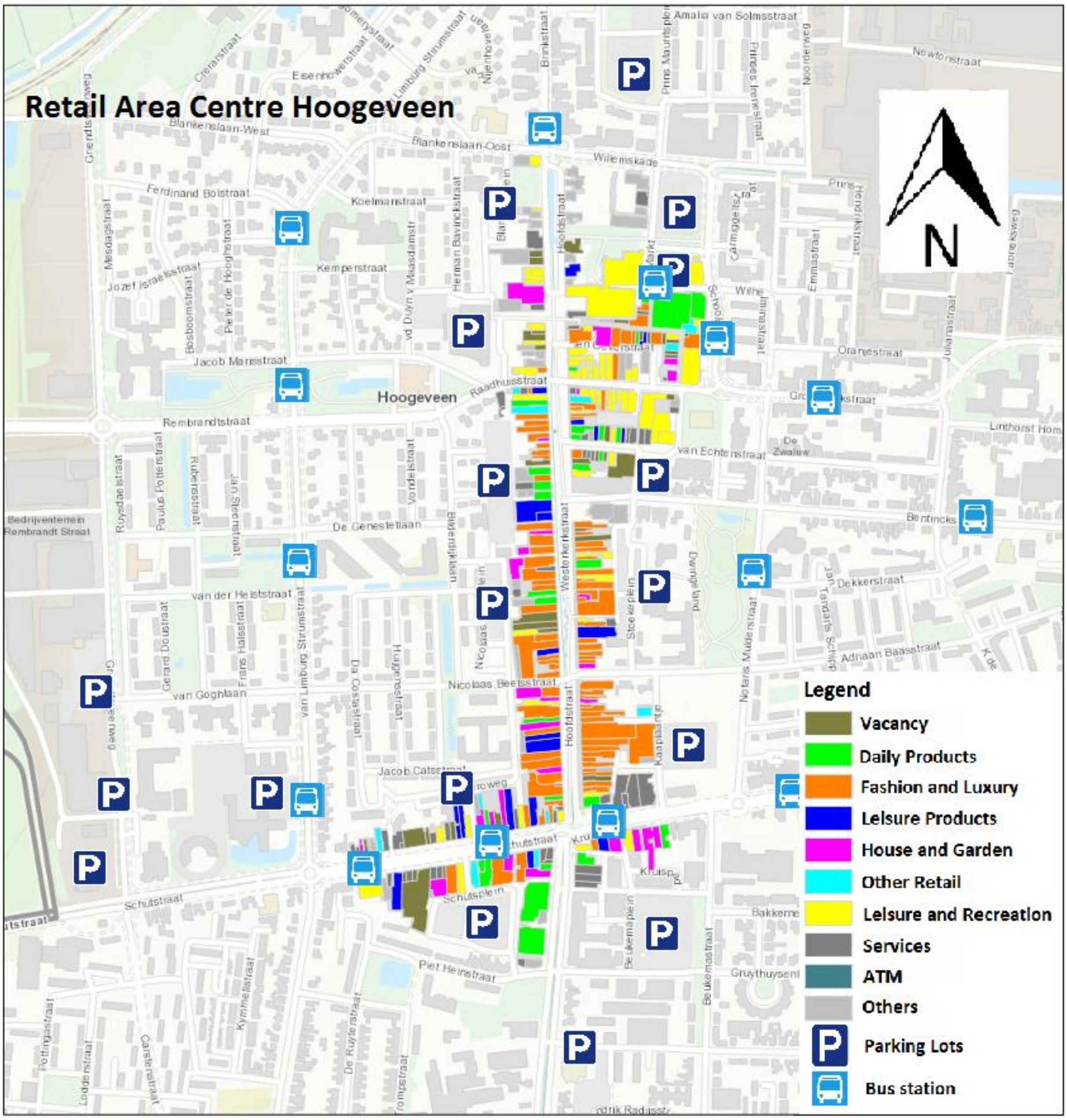


Figure 17. An overview of the retail area in the center of Hoogeveen (Locatus, 2017).

The retail area in the centre of Hoogeveen exists to the largest extent of one main street with some small side streets. The main street is a broad street and has a length of approximately 1500 meters, what is a relatively long main street. The main street is only accessible for pedestrians and outside the opening hours of firms, it is accessible for cyclists. The side streets are accessible for both pedestrians and bikers. The main street has a width of 42 meters, what could be considered as wide. However, the middle part of the main street is used for decoration and someone cannot walk here. At the edge of the retail area are several parking spaces with a limited number of parking lots, the largest parking space in the proximity of the retail area is the P+R of Hoogeveen's railway station what is 1,1 kilometers from the retail area and has a capacity of 216 parking lots (Parkeerlijn, 2017). There is no information available about the numbers of other parking spaces in the proximity of the retail area. At the edge of this retail area are several bus stops. Most of these bus stops are stops for city buses. However, the bus stop at the north of the retail area has connections with several towns in the surrounding of Hoogeveen as Emmen, Hardenberg, Coevorden, Ommen and some villages in the proximity of Hoogeveen. This bus stop is approximately 200 meters from the edge of the retail area. As mentioned, the railway station, which is part of the railway line between Zwolle and Groningen is 1,1 kilometer from the edge of the retail area. However, there is no clear, transparent and attractive path from the station to the retail area. Entertainment facilities are well integrated with retail functions. Especially in the north of the retail area there is a concentration of bars, cafes and restaurants. Besides, there is a cinema and theatre de Tamboer in this part of the retail area. In the rest of the retail area are several restaurants and bars. As one can see on the map, a large part of the retail area exists of the segment ‘Fashion and Luxury’ and other segments are to a certain extent represented spread across the retail area. In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the centre of Hoogeveen is ranked on a 131st position and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the centre of Hoogeveen is ranked on a 6th position. In the centre of Hoogeveen, 7 kinds of food occasions and 39 kinds of non-food occasions are presented.

There is paid attention to aesthetic appearance of the retail area, several forms of decoration are presented in the retail area: there are decorative lights, statues, a canal, and several trees spread across the retail area (see figure 18).

Figure 18. On this photo, the attention that is paid to aesthetic appearance of the retail area comes forward.

The attractiveness of the architecture differs across the retail area. At some parts it comes forward that attention is paid to the attractiveness of the buildings, however in other parts, no attention is paid to this aspect. There are several historic buildings in the main street, however this does not come strongly forward. There is no theme or story. A local character is missing in this retail area. No attention is paid on promoting this retail area.

Based on what is described above, the six factors which are explained in the theoretical framework and the methodology will be assessed based on a 5 points Likert-Scale. In table 8 the number of points is shown for each factor.

Factor	Points	Explanation
Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness	3	Main street is wide and focused on pedestrians. It is not a compact retail area, the retail area consists mainly of a long main street.
Historic preservation	2	There are some historic buildings in the main street, however this does not come strongly forward. There are no many other noticeable historic landmarks.
The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities	4	Entertainments facilities are well integrated with retail functions. In the north is a small concentration of food and drink occasions. There are also some non-food entertainment facilities presented in the retail area.
Aesthetic value	3	Several forms of decorations are presented in the retail area. There is paid attention to this aspect. Attractiveness of architecture differs across the retail area.
Range of goods available	2	In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the centre of Hoogeveen is ranked on a 131st position and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the centre of Hoogeveen is ranked on a 6th position. In the centre of Hoogeveen, 7 kinds of food occasions and 39 kinds of non-food occasions are presented.
Considered as an authentic and unique place	1	There are no features in this retail area that contribute to the authenticity and uniqueness of this retail area.

Table 8. The number of points assessed to each factor in the retail area in the centre of Hoogeveen.

Centre of Meppel
The map in figure 19. shows the retail area in the centre of Meppel.

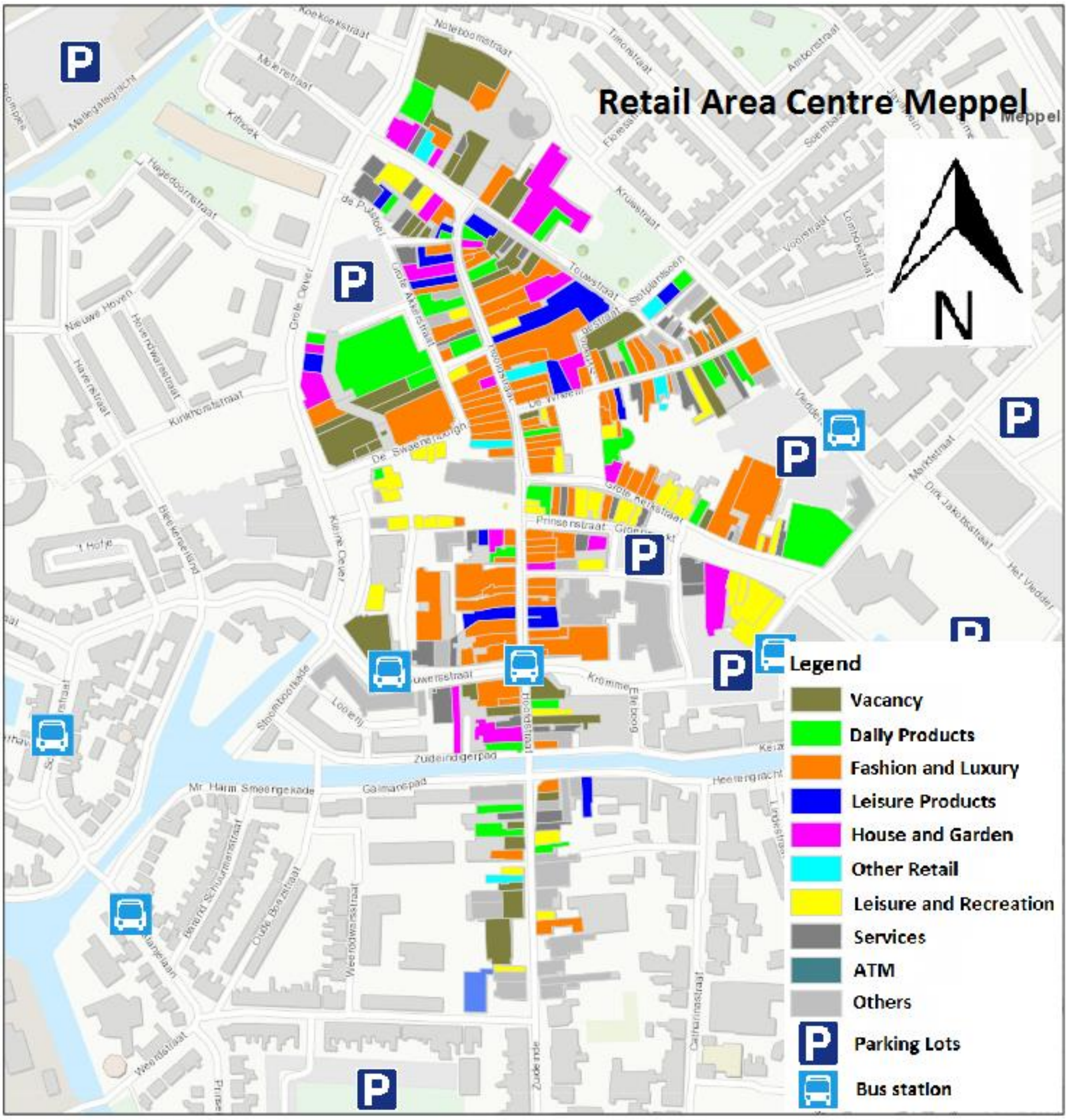


Figure 19. An overview of the retail area in the center of Meppel (Locatus, 2017).

The retail area in the centre of Meppel has a main street of approximately 700 meters and has several side streets and a small indoor part parallel to the main street. The main street and the indoor part of the retail area are only accessible for pedestrians and outside the opening hours of firms, it is accessible for bikers. The side streets and the most southern part of the main street are also accessible for bikers. Several streets in the retail area are relatively narrow as one can see on the picture of figure 20: the main street of the retail area has a width of 12 meters. When trucks in this street are loading and unloading, the space in the street for pedestrians is limited.

Figure 20. Some photos where the width of the streets in the retail are come forward.

Most retail streets are starting ‘slightly’; the begin of these streets are occupied by retail firms, but also other functions are represented, down the street, the number of retail stores increase. The several parts of the retail area are well integrated and configured; the distances between the several parts are short and the paths which connect the different parts are attractive and transparent; there is activity in these streets; there are firms located and people are walking frequently through these streets. As one can see on the map of figure 19, at the edge of the retail area are some bus stops, which only has connections within the city of Meppel. The train station of Meppel, which is part of the railway line between Groningen and Zwolle, is approximately 1200 meters from the edge of the retail area. There are several small parking spaces on the edge of the retail area. There is no information available about the numbers of parking lots in the proximity of the retail area. The only available information with respect to the number of capacity of parking spaces, is about the P+R at the railway station of Meppel which has a number of 84 parking lots (Parkeerlijn, 2017).

Entertainment facilities as bars, restaurants and cafes are well integrated in this retail area. At the relatively eastern part of the retail area is a square with a small concentration of cafes and restaurants. Another feature with respect to entertainment facilities in the retail area, is the presence of the Drukkerijmuseum. Besides the small concentration, there are several cafes, snack corners, bars and restaurants spread across the whole retail area. As comes forward on the map of figure 19, a large share of the retail area exists of the segment ‘Fashion and Luxury’ and other segments are to a certain degree represented spread across the retail area. In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the centre of Meppel is ranked on a 23d position and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the centre of Meppel is ranked on a 3d position. In the centre of Meppel, 10 kinds of food occasions and 48 kinds of non-food occasions are presented.

The retail area in the centre of Meppel exists of several historic buildings and an important landmark is the Mariakerk. The historic preservation of the area comes forward to a certain extent. However, there is not paid a lot of attention to the character and identity of this area. There is not theme or story standing out in this area. A local character is missing in this retail area. No attention is paid on promoting this retail area. Furthermore, not a lot of attention is paid to the aesthetic value of the retail area. The attention paid to this aspect is limited to several trees at the begin of the main street and some decorative lights. However, as the case in Sneek, Meppel is less dependent of such interventions because of its historic appearance, which has a positive influence on the aesthetic appearance of the retail area in the centre of Meppel. On the other hand, no attention is paid to the aesthetic value of the indoor part of the retail area, this part with a high degree of retail vacancy could be considered as unattractive and there are no interventions done to influence the aesthetic value on a positive way (see figure 21)

Figure 21. An impression of the indoor part of the retail area in the centre of Meppel.

Based on what is described above, the six factors which are explained in the theoretical framework and the methodology will be assessed, based on a 5 points Likert-Scale. In table 9 the number of points is shown for each factor.

Factor	Points	Explanation
Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness	3	Main street is focused on pedestrians. Good and clear integration between different parts of the retail area. This main street is narrow. Retail area has no clear entry points.
Historic preservation	3	There are several historic buildings and landmarks. However, this does not come strongly forward in this retail area.
The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities	3	Food occasions as bars, restaurants and cafes are well integrated in this retail area. There is a small concentration of these occasions in the relatively east of the retail area. However, there are not many non-food occasions in the proximity of the retail area.
Aesthetic value	2	There is not a lot of attention paid to the

		aesthetic value of the retail area. Decoration is limited to some trees and decorative lights. Especially in the indoor part, limited attention is paid to this aspect.
Range of goods available	4	In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the centre of Meppel is ranked on a 23d position and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the centre of Meppel is ranked on a 3d position. In the centre of Meppel, 10 kinds of food occasions and 48 kinds of non-food occasions are presented.
Considered as an authentic and unique place	2	The retail area is not having a local or unique character. No attention is paid to promoting this retail area. However, the historic character of the retail area has a distinctive function.

Table 9. The number of points assessed to each factor in the retail area in the centre of Meppel.

Centre of Veendam

The map in figure 22 shows the retail area in the centre of Veendam.

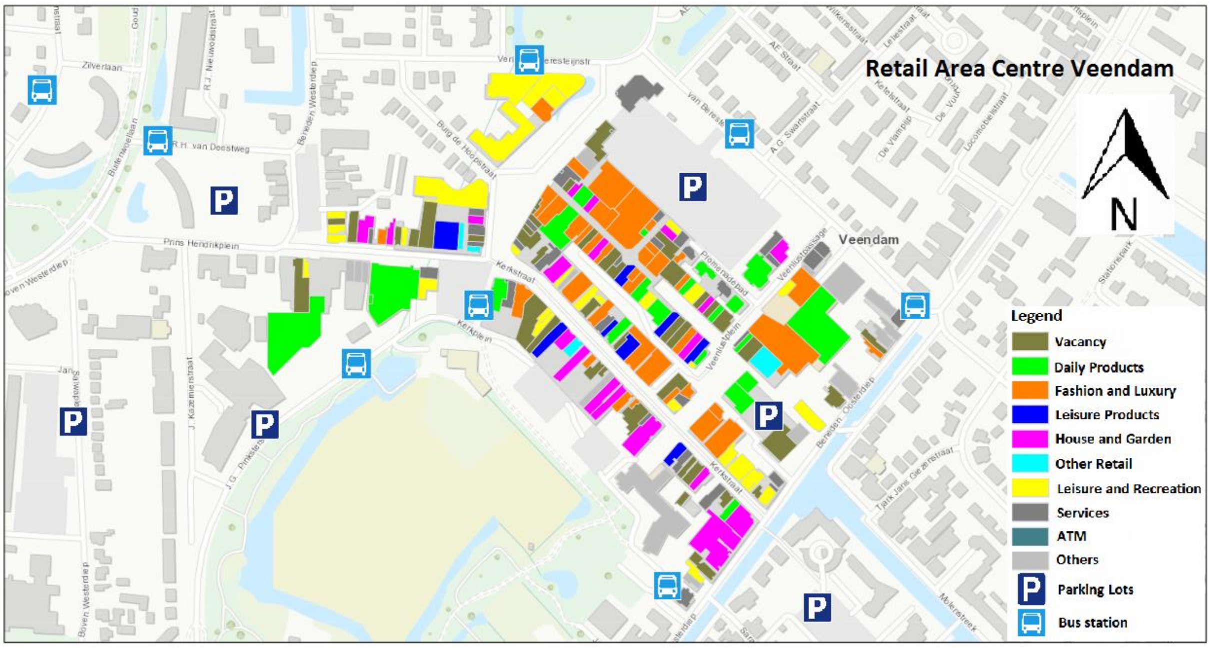


Figure 22. An overview of the retail area in the center of Veendam (Locatus, 2017).

The retail area exists of one main street, an indoor part parallel to the main street and some side streets. The retail area has no clear entry point. It could be stated that the retail area is somehow hidden, when one walks in the proximity it is not clear where the retail area is starting. Especially the entry of the indoor part is not very welcoming and attracting (figure 23).

Figure 23. Entry of the indoor part in the retail centre of Veendam.

As one can see on the map on figure 22., it comes forward that there is in the middle of the retail area a bus stop, and there are several other bus stops on the edges of the retail area. Most bus stops are part of the connection between Veendam and Wildervank. The bus stop at the edge of the retail area is part of the connection between Veendam and Groningen, Winschoten, Zuidbroek and Wildervank. The railway station of Veendam has a connection to Zuidbroek, Hoogezand-Sappermeer and Groningen, and is 500 meters from the edge of the retail area. In the main street of the retail area, the pedestrians have to use the relatively narrow sidewalks which are covered by a 'roof'. Bikers are allowed to use the middle of the road. The width of the street as a whole is 25 meters. This concept is shown on the picture of figure 24.

Figure 24. The main street of the retail area in the city centre of Veendam.

As mentioned, there is an indoor part. This part is only accessible for pedestrians. The indoor part and the main street are well connected by an alley and a little square. However this alley and square both do not look attractive, therefore this connection is not strongly coming forward. The distances within the retail area are relatively short. The main street has a distance of approximately 550 meters. The largest parking space in the retail area, is the parking space in the relatively north of the retail area, what is directly next to the indoor part. Besides this parking space, there are several small parking spaces in the proximity of the retail area.

In the more northern and southern part of the retail area, is a relatively high concentration of snack corners, restaurants and cafes. Located in the north, are the theatre and the Veenkoloniënmuseum. In the retail area is a relatively low share of the segment 'Fashion and Luxury' relatively to other retail areas when one look on the map of figure 22. Compared to other retail areas, the segment 'House and Garden' is well presented in this retail area. Another point that turns out, is that there are some large supermarkets at the edge of the retail area, which are part of the segment 'Daily Products'. In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the centre of Veendam is ranked on a 154th position and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the centre of Veendam is ranked on a 7th position. In the centre of Veendam, 9 kinds of food occasions and 36 kinds of non-food occasions are presented.

Looking at the attention paid to the aesthetic value of the retail area, it could be stated that this is rather limited. An exception is the indoor part of the retail area; this part is featured by appealing architecture and an iconic floor pattern (Figure 25).

Figure 25. Image of the indoor part of the retail area in the centre of Veendam.

There are several trees in the main street but besides, there are no features in the main street which positively influence the aesthetic value. Despite the presence of the Veenkoloniënmuseum, what attempts to describe the history of the region, there are no features which give the retail area of Veendam a unique and local character; there is no theme or story coming forward in this area. In the retail area are several historic landmarks, as the building of the Veenkoloniënmuseum and the building of the city hall. However these buildings do not stand out, and are not important features of the retail area (Figure 26).


Figure 26. The buildings of the city hall and the Veenkoloniënmuseum.

Based on what is described above, the six factors which are explained in the theoretical framework and the methodology, will be assessed based on a 5 points Likert-Scale. In table 10 the number of points are shown for each factor.

Factor	Points	Explanation
Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness	2	In the main street pedestrians have to use the sidewalks, the middle of the path is used by bikers. However the indoor part is only accessible for pedestrians. The retail area has no clear entry points. No clear and transparent integration and configuration between different parts.
Historic preservation	2	Retail area has some historic landmarks. However this does not stand out, and is not an important feature of the retail area.
The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities	3	In the north of the retail area is a small concentration of food occasions as bars, restaurants and cafes. Furthermore these occasions are spread out across the retail area. There are also some non-food occasions in and in the proximity of the retail area.
Aesthetic value	2	Attention paid to aesthetic value is limited. However, attention is paid to an appealing and attractive architecture in the indoor part of the retail area.
Range of goods available	2	In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the centre of Veendam is ranked on a 154th position, and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the centre of Veendam is ranked on a 7th position. In the centre of Veendam, 9 kind of food occasions and 36 kind of non-food occasions are presented.
Considered as an authentic and unique place	1	There are no features in the retail area which give this

		retail area an authentic and unique character. No attention has been paid to promoting this retail area.

Table 10. The number of points assessed to each factor in the retail area in the centre of Veendam.

Centre of Kampen

The map in figure 27 shows the retail area in the centre of Kampen.

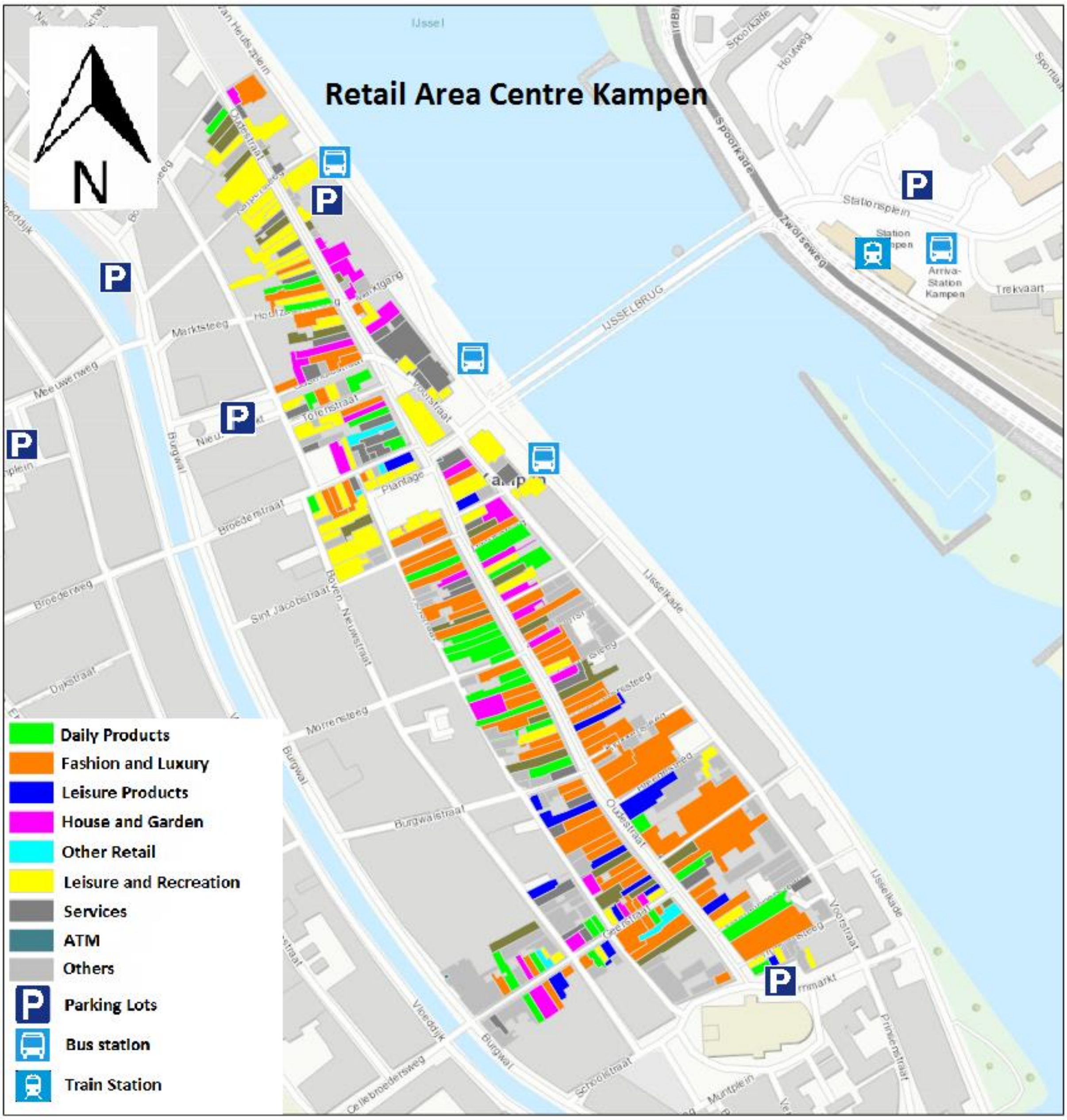


Figure 27. An overview of the retail area in the center of Kampen (Locatus, 2017).

The retail area in the centre of Kampen exists mainly out of one main street with a length of approximately 1400 meters what is relatively long; therefore it could be stated that this retail area is not compact because of this distance between both ends. Besides this main street, the retail area has several side streets, the side street in the south is a relatively long side street with a length of approximately 250 meter. The main street has a width between 11 and 17 meters. The whole retail area is only accessible for pedestrians, and outside the opening hours of firms it is accessible for cyclists. The retail area is located in the medieval city centre of Kampen, next to the river IJssel. On the map of figure 27, it stands out that there are 3 parking spaces on the edge of the retail area. However, there is no information available about the number of parking lots at this parking spaces. Directly at the edge of the retail area on the eastern side, there are several bus stops which have connections from and to Dronten and Hattem. Besides, there are some city buses passing these bus stops. The railway station, which has a connection with Zwolle, is approximately 500 meters from the edge of the retail area. This could be considered as an attractive stroll, people who walk from the train station have to cross the Stadsbrug, from where they have an attractive view on the skyline of the city centre of Kampen (figure 28).

Figure 28. The stadsbrug one have to cross to enter the retail area in the centre of Kampen from Kampen's railway station.

The retail area has several wide and attractive entry points which have an inviting impact on the visitors of the retail area (figure 29).

Figure 29. Entry points in the retail area in the centre of Kampen which have an inviting impact on the visitors of the retail area.

As mentioned, the retail area is located in the historic city centre of Kampen. There are several historic landmarks which stand out. Examples of these landmarks are the Bovenkerk, the Stadskazerne, the building of the 'Stedelijk Museum', several statues and city gates (see figure 30).

Figure 30. Example of a city gate at the edge of the retail area in the city centre of Kampen.

Furthermore, the retail area is located next to the river IJssel, which has an important impact on the appearance of this retail area. The historic landmarks in the retail area come strongly forward and the identity of Kampen as 'Hanzestad' is an important feature of the retail area, which gives this retail area a local and authentic character. The area is also focused on tourists; for example, there is a tourist information centre present in this retail area and there are several museums which highlight the history of Kampen. The *theme* of the retail area is derived from its history. There are not done many interventions to improve the aesthetic appearance of the retail area, except to some decorative lights. However, this retail area is less dependent on such interventions because of its historic appearance. The main street exists for a large part of the segment, 'Fashion and Luxury'. However, in the north of the retail area and in the side street in the south of the retail area, this segment is less presented and other segments are to a larger extent presented. In the middle of the main street, in the proximity of the Stadsbrug, is a square with a concentration of cafes and restaurants. In the north of the retail area is also a concentration of catering. Besides, there are some snack corners, restaurants and cafes spread over the retail area. There are also several non-food entertainment facilities, as mentioned, there are several museum in this area as the Ikonen Museum and the Stedelijk Museum is in this area. Besides, there is a cinema and a theatre at the edge of the west side of the retail area. In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the centre of Kampen is ranked on a 18th position and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the centre of Kampen is ranked on a second position. In the centre of Kampen, 10 kinds of food occasions and 49 kinds of non-food occasions are presented.

Based on what is described above, the six factors which are explained in the theoretical framework and the methodology, will be assessed, based on a 5 points Likert-Scale. In table 11 the number of points is shown for each factor.

Factor	Points	Explanation
Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness	4	Long main street; not a compact retail area. Retail area is mainly pedestrian oriented. Some parts of the retail area have wide streets. However, other parts of the retail area, the streets are narrow. Retail area has clear entry points and is well accessible from parking spaces, train station and bus stations.
Historic preservation	5	Strong historic character, many historic buildings and landmarks, which are an important feature of the retail area
The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities	5	In the middle of the main street is a strong concentration of food and drink occasion as bars, cafes and restaurants. In the north of the retail area is another concentration of these occasions. Furthermore, there are several non-food entertainment facilities in the proximity of this retail area.
Aesthetic value	3	There have not been done many interventions in favor of the aesthetic value. However, this retail area is less dependent on such interventions because of its historic character.
Range of goods available	4	In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the centre of Kampen is ranked on a 18th position and when one looks only in the selected cases of this thesis, the centre of Kampen is ranked

		on a second position. In the centre of Kampen, 10 different kinds of food occasions and 49 different kinds of non-food occasions are presented.
Considered as an authentic and unique place	4	The theme or story is derived from the historical character of Kampen as ‘Hanzestad’ which is an important feature of this retail area and comes strongly forward. This gives the retail area an authentic and local character.

Table 11. The number of points assessed to each factor in the retail area in the centre of Kampen.

Retail Area Groningen Paddepoel

The map in figure 31 shows the retail area Groningen Paddepoel.

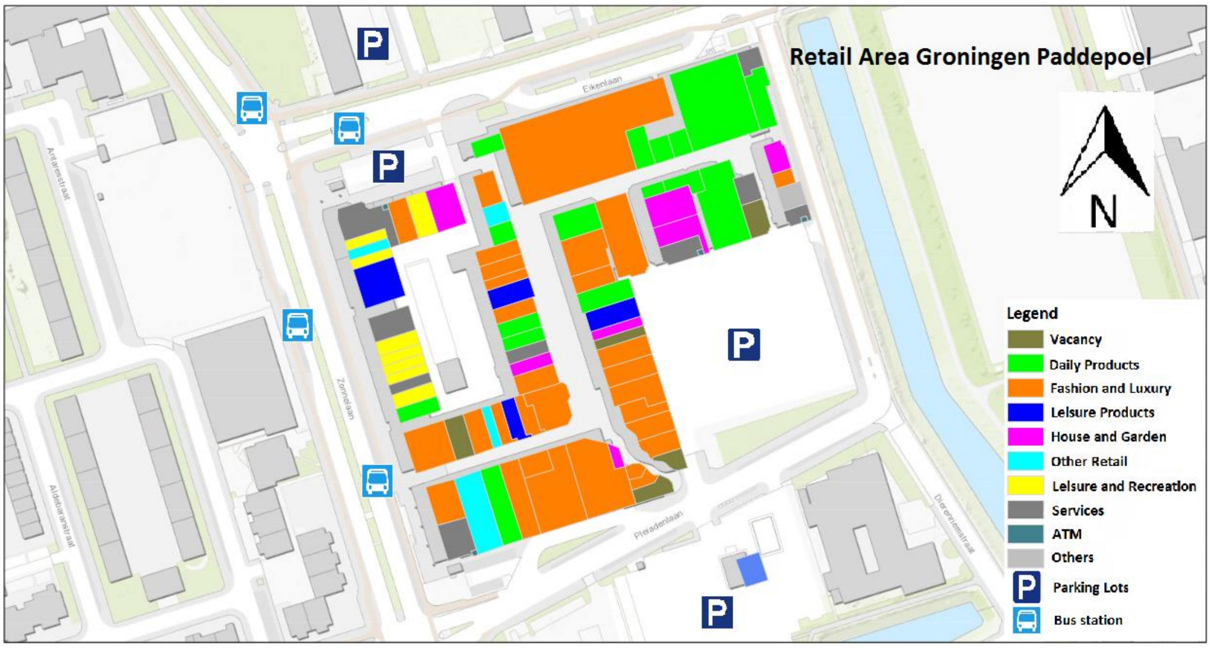


Figure 31. An overview of the retail area of Groningen Paddepoel (Locatus, 2017).

The retail area 'Groningen Paddepoel' is an indoor retail area in the neighborhood Paddepoel in the north-west of the city of Groningen. It exists of several paths and there is not one 'main path'. This retail area is only accessible for pedestrians. The retail area has attractive and clear entry points, an example of such an entry point is shown in figure 32. These entry points show clearly the begin of the retail area to people who are in the proximity of the retail area.

Figure 32. Entry point of the retail area of Groningen Paddepoel.

The distances within the retail area are relatively short; the longest end one can walk between different sides of the retail area, is approximately 500 meters. The different parts of the retail area are well and clearly integrated and configured; the retail area has no 'empty parts', at every part of the retail area, there are firms and is activity. Directly at the edge of the retail area, there are some bus stops, which have connections with the city center of Groningen, the railway station of Groningen, the Zernike Campus, the railway station of Groningen Noord and several neighborhoods in the city of Groningen. As one can see on the map of figure 31, there are 2 parking spaces directly at the edge of the retail area. The parking space in the relatively southeast of the retail area, has a capacity of 300 parking lots (Parkeerlijn, 2017). Besides this parking space, there is no information available about parking space in the proximity of the retail area.

There has not been paid any attention to the aesthetic value of this retail area, but there are some decorations in the retail area. There are several plants, there is music in the retail area and across the area there are several benches (see figure 33). Furthermore, it does not stand out that there has been paid attention to the aesthetic value of this retail area. In the retail area, there are some snack corners, fast food restaurants and cafes. In the western part of the retail area, there is a small concentration of these occasions, what stands out on the map of figure 31. Some of these occasions have a small terrace where people can eat or have a drink. Except the leisure focused on food, there are no non-food leisure activities in this retail area. There is only a small playground for children (figure 33). A large part of the retail part exists of firms within the segment ‘Fashion and Luxury’. Besides, there is an Albert Heijn in the north east of the retail area, which is a considerable part of the retail area. Other segments are spread across the retail area. In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the neighborhood Paddepoel-Noord where the retail area is located, is ranked on a 336th position and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the neighbourhood Paddepoel-Noord is ranked on a 8th position. In the neighbourhood Paddepoel-Noord, 9 kinds of food occasions and 27 kinds of non-food occasions are presented.

Figure 33. The small playground for children and a tree surrounded by benches in the retail area of Groningen Paddepoel.

There is no historic preservation what stands out in this retail area. Looking at a story or theme, there is also no attention paid to this aspect. However, when one looks at place branding, this retail area pays attention to this. The retail area has its own logo and website. On their website the offers, events that take place in the area and other information is shown. The logo of the retail area is shown on several places of the retail area (see figure 34).

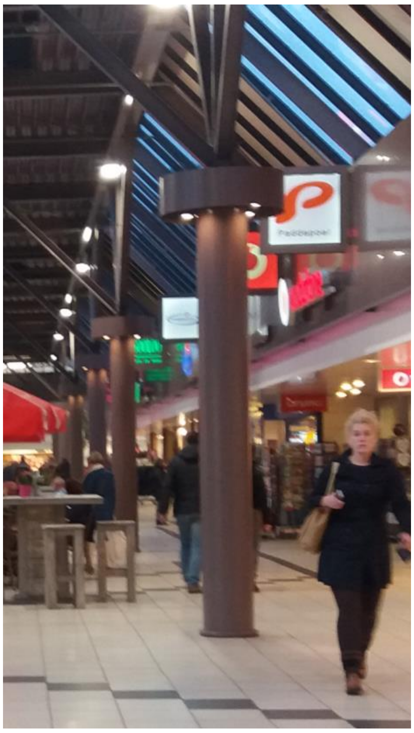


Figure 34. The logo of the retail area, Groningen Paddepoel what is shown at several places of the retail area.

Based on what is described above, the six factors which are explained in the theoretical framework and the methodology, will be assessed, based on a 5 points Likert-Scale. In table 12, the number of points is shown for each factor.

Factor	Points	Explanation
Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness	5	It is a compact retail area with clear and transpiration integration between its different parts. Retail area is only accessible for pedestrians. Easy to reach from parking spaces and bus stops.
Historic preservation	1	There is no history in this retail area what comes forward.
The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities	2	There are some food and drink occasions in the retail area; mainly some snack corners and small cafes. There are no non-food entertainment facilities in the proximity of this retail area.
Aesthetic value	3	There has been paid some attention to the aesthetic value of this retail area, there is some decoration in the retail area; there are

		several plants, there is music playing in the retail area and across to the area there are several benches.
Range of goods available	1	In the ranking of the CBS (2012), the neighborhood Paddepoel-Noord where the retail area is located, is ranked on a 336th position, and when one looks only at the selected cases of this thesis, the neighbourhood Paddepoel-Noord is ranked on a 8th position. In the neighbourhood Paddepoel-Noord, 9 different kinds of food occasions and 27 different kinds of non-food occasions are presented.
Considered as an authentic and unique place	3	This retail area pays attention to place branding. The retail area has its own website and has a logo which is visible at several places of the retail area.

Table 12. The number of points assessed to each factor in the retail area in the centre of Groningen Paddepoel.

Retail Area Lelystad Bataviastad
Due to a mistake with my phone, all pictures I took in Lelystad Bataviastad are deleted, therefore all pictures in this section are found online.

The map in figure 35 shows the retail area Lelystad Bataviastad.

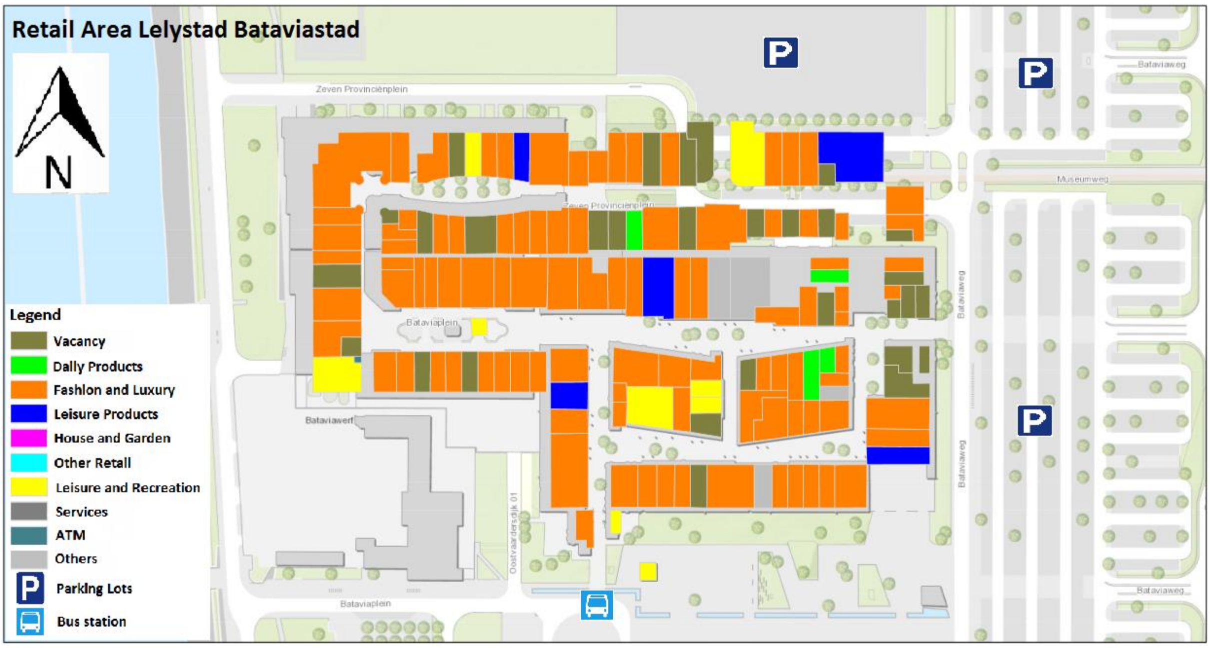


Figure 35. An overview of the retail area of Lelystad Bataivastad (Locatus, 2017).

As mentioned in the introduction of this thesis, Bataviastad is a '*Factory Outlet Center',* which is described in an article of RTL (2016), as a cluster of factory stores what sell mainly brand clothing, together with catering and entertainment. Bataviastad is a factory outlet center at the edge of the city of Lelystad. This correspondents to the image of Bataviastad, during the sight. The retail area exists mainly of factory stores, together with several occasions for eating and drinking as fast food restaurants, snack corners and cafes. As stands out on the map of figure 35, a large part of all firms within this retail area are within the segment 'Fashion and Luxury'. Besides, other segments are presented in this retail area and spread across the whole area. Bataviastad is not included in the ranking of CBS (2012). This is because Bataviastad focuses mainly on selling brand clothing, and therefore the number of different kind of retail functions could be limited.

The retail area is only accessible for pedestrians, the distances within this retail area are relatively short; walking from the western to the eastern part of the retail area is approximately 450 meters. There is not one 'main street' in Bataviastad. All parts of Bataviastad are well and clearly integrated and configured; all firms are within the same 'square' what makes it relatively compact. There is a high density of firms in this retail area. The width of the street in the Bataviastad is between 15 and 22 meters. There are also many signs in the area, which make clear what direction people have to walk. The retail area is an imitation of a historical fortified city. The retail area has three attractive and clear entry points at the edge of the retail area, which look like historic gates (see figure 36).

Figure 36. Entry point of Lelystad Bataviastad (Zoover, 2017).

From the entry point in the south of the retail area, it is only 50 meters walking to the bus station. From this bus station, there is a connection to the railway station Lelystad Centrum and several neighborhoods of Lelystad. The 'Bestemmingsplan' of the municipality of Lelystad (2013) shows that around the retail area, there are 3.143 parking lots spread over 10 parking spaces. Figure 37. shows a map that highlights the different parking lots around the retail area. The parking lots on the map, are different kind of parking lots. Some these parking lots are outdoors, however the VOC parking space, surrounded by a green line on the map is a parking garage. Several parking lots are directly on the edge of the retail area. If someone parks in the most northern point of the retail area, approximately 300 meters needs to be walked to the edge of the retail area.

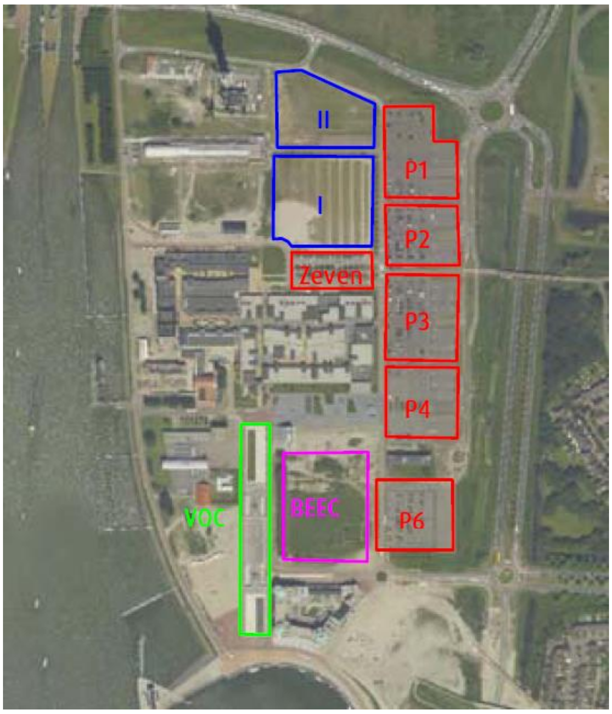


Figure 37. An overview of the different parking spaces around Bataviastad (Gemeente Lelystad, 2017).

In Bataviastad, there has been paid a lot of to the aesthetic value. There are a lot of trees, plants, fountains, statues, benches, decorative lights and a decorative street pattern. Evenmore, a lot of attention has been paid to the architecture of the buildings. The architecture could be described as appealing and iconic. Every building is an imitation of a building of a historic fortified city. Figure 38 shows a street in Bataviastad, and shows the attention that is paid to the aesthetic value and the architecture of the retail area.

Figure 38. A street in Bataviastad what gives an impression of the attention that is paid to the aesthetic value and architecture (Geldersch, 2017).

As mentioned, the retail area is a 'replica' of a historic fortified city. The history of the area could be described as 'fake', because it is not a real historic area. Therefore, historic preservation does not matter in this retail area. However, with respect the uniqueness or authentic value of this retail area, it could be stated that it is a rather unique retail area. A theme or story is created. Bataviastad is named after the ship 'Batavia', which was used in the 17th century (Batavialand, 2017). A replica of this ship is docked on the Markermeer on the edge of the retail area in the Markermeer (figure 39). The appearance of Bataviastad is based on a historic a fortified town with origins in the 17th century. A lot of attention has been paid to storytelling or creating a theme, in this retail area.

Figure 39. The replica of the Bataviaship on the edge of Bataviastad.

As mentioned, there are several occasions in Bataviastad for eating and drinking, like; fast food restaurants, snack corners and cafes. Besides this food leisure occasions, there are several non-food occasions at the edge of the retail. An example of this is the Bataviaship: people can visit this ship and have a look and tour inside this ship. Another non-food attraction is the 'Nieuw Land Erfgoedmuseum', which is south of the retail area. This museum explains and shows the highlights of the history of the province of Flevoland where Bataviastad is located.

Based on what is described above, the six factors which are explained in the theoretical framework and the methodology will be assessed, based on a 5 points Likert-Scale. In table 13, the number of points are shown for each factor.

Factor	Points	Explanation
Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness	5	Retail area is only accessible for pedestrians. It is a compact retail area; different parts are integrated and configures on an attractive and transparent way. The area has clear and attractive entry points. There are many parking lots near the retail area.
Historic preservation	1	There is no 'real' history in this retail area. Historic preservation does not matter in this retail area.
The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities	4	There are several food occasion spread across the retail area. Besides, there are some non-food occasions in the direct proximity of this retail area.
Aesthetic value	5	A lot of attention has been paid to the aesthetic value in every single part of the retail area. Many interventions are done to influence this aspect in a positive way.
Range of goods available	1	Bataviastad is not included in the ranking of CBS (2012).
Considered as an authentic and unique place	5	Bataviastad has a strong authentic and unique character. There is a theme or story created and a lot of attention is paid to this theme.

Table 13. The number of points assessed to each factor in the retail area in the centre of Lelystad Bataviastad.

Statistical analysis
In table 14, all points assessed to each factor in the 9 retail areas, are shown.

	Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness	Historic preservation	The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities	Aesthetic value	Range of goods available	Considered as an authentic and unique place
Drachten	4	1	3	4	3	2
Heerenveen	4	3	4	2	3	3
Sneek	4	5	4	3	5	4
Hoogeveen	3	2	4	3	2	1
Meppel	3	3	3	2	4	2
Veendam	2	2	3	2	2	1
Kampen	4	5	5	3	4	4
Groningen Paddepoel	5	1	2	3	1	3
Lelystad Bataviastad	5	1	4	5	1	5

Table 14. The number of points assessed to each factor in the selected retail areas.

As described in the methodology, a two-tailed Spearman's Rank Order Correlation is used to discover the influence of the 6 factors on the success indicators. As described before, these success indicators are; *percentage of vacancy in a retail area* and *number of people walking through retail areas.* There has been chosen to use 0.05 as significance level.

The outcomes of the two-tailed Spearman's Rank Order Correlation, that show the relation between the factors and success indicators, are shown in table 15.

			Percentage of vacancy in a retail area	Number of people walking through retail areas
Spearman's Rank Order Correlation	Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness	Correlation Coefficient	-,474	,527
		Significance (two-tailed)	.1,97	,145
		N	9	9
	Historic preservation	Correlation Coefficient	-,309	-,352
		Significance (two-tailed)	,418	,353
		N	9	9
	The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities	Correlation Coefficient	-,133	,461
		Significance (two-tailed)	,733	,212
		N	9	9
	Aesthetic value	Correlation Coefficient	-,080	,789
		Significance (two-tailed)	,838	,011
		N	9	9
	Range of goods available	Correlation Coefficient	-,246	-,390
		Significance (two-tailed)	,524	,300
		N	9	9
	Considered as an authentic and unique place	Correlation Coefficient	-,364	,373
		Significance (two-tailed)	,335	,323
		N	9	9

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 15. Outcomes of the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation to get insight in correlation between factors and success indicators in 9 retail areas.

Table 15. shows that there is a significant correlation between the factor *aesthetic value* and the success indicator *number of people walking through retail areas*. It could be assumed that there exists a correlation between this factor and success indicator within the selected cases. Moreover, there are no significant correlations between the factors and success indicators. As mentioned, this thesis uses two 'unique cases', namely Groningen Paddepoel and Lelystad Bataviastad. These two cases are the only retail areas which are not located in a city center. There might be differences between the different kind of retail areas, what could influence the outcome of the correlation. Therefore, another Spearman's Rank Order Correlation is done, excluding the cases of Groningen Paddepoel and Lelystad Bataviastad. The outcomes of this Spearman's Rank Oder Correlation are shown in table 16.

			Percentage of vacancy in a retail area	Number of people walking through retail areas
Spearman's Rank Order Correlation	**Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness**	Correlation Coefficient	-,895	,716
		Significance (two-tailed)	,007	,070
		N	7	7
	Historic preservation	Correlation Coefficient	-,578	,150
		Significance (two-tailed)	,174	,749
		N	7	7
	The number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities	Correlation Coefficient	-,722	,622
		Significance (two-tailed)	,067	,136
		N	7	7
	Aesthetic value	Correlation Coefficient	-,404	,666
		Significance (two-tailed)	,368	,102
		N	7	7
	Range of goods available	Correlation Coefficient	-,595	,138
		Significance (two-tailed)	,158	,768
		N	7	7
	Considered as an authentic and unique place	Correlation Coefficient	-,755	,343
		Significance (two-tailed)	,050	,451
		N	7	7

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

Table 16. Outcomes of the Spearman's Rank Order Correlation to get insight in correlation between factors and success indicators in 7 retail areas.

Table 16. shows that when the two cases; Groningen Paddepoel and Lelystad Bataviastad are excluded, different significant correlations come forward. In table 16., two significant relationships stand out, namely the correlation between *pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness* and *percentage of vacancy in a retail area,* and the correlation between *considered as an authentic and unique place* and *percentage of vacancy in a retail area.* It could be assumed that there exists a correlation between these factors and success indicators, within the selected cases of the correlation, which is shown in table 16.

4.3. Interviews

As described in the methodology, interviews are done with local policy makers and center managers of the selected retail areas about their role in revitalizing the retail areas, and their points of view are explored about the determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas. Besides exploring this, the interviewees have the opportunity to mention things of what they think is important, which provides the opportunity to discover 'unrevealed information'.

Interviews are done with 8 policy makers and centre managers of the selected retail areas. The center manager of Groningen Paddepoel did not want to cooperate with this research.

For every interview, a standard interview guide is used. However, this interview guide is specified for each retail area. Before every interview, data and policy documents about the retail area are studied and based on this, the interview questions were specified for each retail area. In appendix b. the standard interview guide is shown.

In the following part, the outcomes of the interviews are analyzed. At first, each interview is described and analyzed. Afterwards, an analysis is composed that combines the main elements of all interviews and a connection is made with the quantitative data.

4.3.1. Centre of Drachten

To obtain insight in the retail area in the centre of Drachten, an interview has been held with Trea Westra. Since 2015, she is center manager in Drachten. This means that she is the 'hub' between the local government, entrepreneurs and other relevant stakeholders in the centre of Drachten. As centre manager, she attempts to bring these stakeholders together and talk with them about the desirable developments for the centre of Drachten, which includes the retail area.

Before doing this interview, the *Detailhandelsstructuurvisie 2016* of the municipality Smallingerland where Drachten is located, has been examined. The aim of this document is that Drachten should become an economically strong, livable and distinctive retail centre, where it is pleasant to stay (Gemeente Smallingerland, 2016). An important point that stands out in this document is professionalizing a platform of different entrepreneur associations in the centre, which should result in more possibilities to develop and promote the centre in a more unambiguous and integral way.

In this document, it comes forward that the economic crisis around 2012 had impact on the centre of Drachten. This resulted in more vacancy and especially the so called 'run-in streets' ,which are streets on the side of the retail area, has difficulties. A conclusion is that less space for retail is needed in the future. The centre therefore should become more 'compact', according to the Detailhandelsstructuurvisie. The aim is to create a compact retail area with the possibility for pedestrians to make a round. Another aim is to improve the residential quality of the retail area and to improve the atmosphere, decoration, ambiance and structure of the area.

Two other important features that are mentioned in the document are two interventions of the last decade. One of these interventions is the renovation of the Raadhuisplein, what is a large square at the edge of the retail area with the presence of frequently visited shops as the Mediamarkt and the Sting. Another important intervention is the Drachtservaart that reaches the centre of Drachten since several years, what could be considered as waterfront development.

Mrs. Westra describes that the retail area in the centre of Drachten cannot be compared with retail areas of centres in the surrounding of Drachten. The distinctive nature of this retail area is derived from the modernity of the area. The retail area in the centre of Drachten has wide streets that mrs. Westra calls 'promenades'. Besides, the retail area has, as mentioned, a recently renovated square: the Raadhuisplein with an apartment block and several new shops. Furthermore, there is waterfront development in the centre of Drachten: the Drachtservaart which streams since several years through the centre of Drachten what used to be the way decades ago. Mrs. Westra explains that an important characteristic of Drachten is : 'being innovative and modern and meanwhile remaining and retrieving old things'.

Other important elements of the retail area, she mentions, are the clean, safe, clear and compact inner city, the terracotta and yellow floor tiles, the trees and the broad lanes. She also mentions the combination of the presence of large branches as Sting, H&M, C&A and Mediamarkt, and more local shops which only exist in Drachten.

The following topic of the interview is about developments in the retail area in the centre of Drachten. For this topic, data about the development of retail vacancy and visitors in the center of Drachten are discussed with mrs. Westra. The data in table 17 show the development of retail vacancy and the average number of visitors from 2012 to 2017. In some years, no measurements are done, in this case the number in the table is not shown.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Jan. 2017	Nov. 2017
Retail vacancy	4,53 %	5,75%	7,95%	14,56%	11,35%	12,10%	12,47%
Number of visitors on a Saturday	21200	-	17500	-	-	-	18700

Table 17. Development of retail vacancy and number of visitors on an Saturday in the retail area in the retail area in the centre of Drachten (Locatus, 2017).

Mrs. Westra explains that the increasing retail vacancy in 2015 was caused by the realization of the Raadhuisplein. Because of this realization, there were in first instance several vacant buildings in the centre of Drachten. The buildings around the Raadhuisplein had to allocate for a new function. Mrs. Westra explains that most retail vacancy in Drachten could be considered as 'friction vacancy': most vacant buildings in the centre of Drachten obtain a new function within a short period. According to Mrs. Westra, there are a limited number of buildings which are structurally vacant. Mrs. Westra explains that the real-estate owners in the centre of Drachten are well capable to find new functions for vacant buildings. Together with the centre manager and the municipality, it is investigated which functions are desirable for the centre of Drachten and which sentiments and trends are playing an important role. Mrs. Westra claims that the changes in vacancy are mainly influenced by internal processes in the centre of Drachten and less by exogenous factors. She explains that the inhabitants of Drachten are tractable: she refers to a research, the '*Koopstromenonderzoek'* from 2016, that shows that around 60-70 per cent of the visitors of Drachten are from the region of Drachten. However, a challenge is the new consumer behavior. About consumer behavior, mrs. Westra tells that several shops in Drachten are well capable to deal with this challenge. Several firms make use of the possibilities the internet provides, which means that these shops have both an online platform and a physical platform.

Experience is an important pillar of the retail area, according to mrs. Westra. She mentions that retail, catering and culture industry are well integrated in this retail area. She stresses the importance of the cooperation between these different industries. According to Mrs. Westra, these industries have the capacity to reinforce each other.

Another topic that is discussed during the interview is about the interventions that occurred in the the centre of Drachten. Mrs. Westra tells that during the last 5 years, a large renovation in the centre of Drachten occurred which had wretched consequences for the centre of Drachten on the short run. The centre was then poorly accessible and unattractive. However, Mrs. Westra explains that this renovation had no negative consequences with respect to retail vacancy, several new shops were attracted and buildings of several firms were improved and refurbished. One of these interventions that took place in this period, was the renovation of the Raadhuisplein and the waterfront development. Mrs. Westra states that the most important interventions are finished and the main challenge for now, is to *remain* and *reinforce* the strengths of the retail area.

Mrs. Westra explains that the relevant stakeholders as residents and shopkeepers were informed and intimately involved in the described interventions. While mrs. Westra explaining this, she asks the question: "*But what is involvement*?". She thinks that involvement means mainly that the municipality presents its plans and stakeholders have the opportunity to respond on this plans. Mrs. Westra calls for more involvement in the starting phase of the realization of plans. A way of improving this involvement in the starting phase is the realization of a 'platform' of stakeholders. Together with the entrepreneurs association in Drachten, she started in 2016 this platform, called '*Platformoverleg Centrumondernemers'*. This platform exists of entrepreneurs in the centre and run-in-streets, catering entrepreneurs, representatives of cultural institutions, the centre manager, the alderman of the municipality and an independent chairman. Before new plans or interventions are discussed in the municipality, the platform examines this plan and checks, adjusts and asks questions about a plan if necessary. Furthermore, the platform focuses on alignment between the different stakeholders. However, this platform is still without obligation and not 'official'. A challenge for the future is to obtain a more formal status and to make the platform more integral.

As mentioned, last period several interventions occurred in the centre of Drachten. Most of these structural interventions are finished and now the completion has to be finished. These interventions are focused on a more uniform pavement, renovation of parking spaces and improving the atmosphere in the Raadhuisplein and several alleys. Another point of importance, according to the municipality is to get a more compact centre. Mrs. Westra is skeptical about this aim. She thinks the centre of Drachten is already compact and this aim, which makes replacement of firms necessary, discourages entrepreneurs.

Mrs. Westra still sees some important challenges in the centre of Drachten. For example, there should become be connections between different parts of the centre, which are at the moment unclearly connected. She also states that the recent interventions are not 'fully completed', she thinks the decoration of the waterfront development and the Raadhuisplein is too limited. The places where the interventions took place are still too unattractive and cheerless. Therefore, she thinks that the positive impact of the waterfront development is regrettable. She mentions that the municipality should focus more on the full completion of these interventions. She has the opinion that the impact of the interventions is limited and that more attention on the completion should be paid to improve this impact.

Another discussed topic is the competition with other retail areas in the surrounding of Drachten. Mrs. Westra mentions that the stakeholders in the centre of Drachten monitor developments in the surrounding of Drachten. For example, there are 'shopping Sundays' in the nearby town Burgum. Burgum is for example mentioned in discussions about shopping Sundays what not exists in the centre of Drachten. However, mrs. Westra Realizes that the centre of Drachten should make decisions based on their own context and should improve things with its own qualities without looking to other retail areas.

The last point that is discussed in this interview, is the diversity of different shops and functions in the retail area. Mrs. Westra mentions the importance of local shops run by local entrepreneurs. She wants to give these entrepreneur a 'face' and she advocates that these entrepreneurs have the capacity to make the centre distinctive because these entrepreneurs have more attachment to the centre of Drachten, in contrast to large national chains.

Mrs. Westra mentions that the current offer of shops and functions in Drachten is diversified, what is caused by the diversity of real-estate owners who attract different kind of shops to the centre of Drachten. Furthermore, she puts emphasis on the concept of blurring. Drachten is at the moment experiencing with this concept. The concept means that a particular shop has more than one function. An example is a cafe in combination with a retail firm. She explains that this concept provides opportunities for cooperation between different entrepreneurs what could result in unique concepts.

With respect to combination of different functions in the centre of Drachten, mrs. Westra makes clear that there are opportunities for dwelling in the centre of Drachten. She mentions that there is a lot of demand for dwelling and this could have a positive influence on the atmosphere in the centre because in that case, the centre is frequently visited by its users.

The main points of importance are the large interventions in the centre of Drachten. Some major interventions took place in this retail area. However, the impact of these interventions is limited according to mrs. Westra. According to her, this is caused by the limited attention that is paid to the atmosphere of these places. Another important feature is the ability of the centre of Drachten to deal with retail vacancy. Despite of the large renovations of the centre, the retail vacancy and the number of visitors are in a limited way influenced. A last point of interest is the improvement of the platform between different stakeholders. This should result in an integral platform with all relevant stakeholders of the centre which can play an important role, concerning changes and developments in this retail area.

4.3.2. Centre of Heerenveen

To obtain insight in the retail area in the centre of Heerenveen, an interview is done with Marianne de Jeu. Mrs. de Jeu is working for the municipality of Heerenveen as consultant in the field of economics and area development. Her focus is mainly on retail and centre development. She is involved in the centre management and processes that take place in the centre of Heerenveen. Her role in the field of retail is mainly a 'guiding' role.

Before doing this interview, *Integrale Detailhandelsvisie Gemeente Heerenveen 2011* of the municipality Heerenveen has been examined. The aim that comes forward in this policy document is to reinforce the attractivity and the economically functioning of the retail areas in the municipality of Heerenveen. For this aim, an integral development is important, according to the policy document. Five main pillars of this integral development are mentioned; *management and maintenance, safety, citymarketing, events, and real-estate development and completion.*

Important elements of the current retail area in the centre of Heerenveen, mentioned in the policy document are the dichotomy between the main centre and the run-in streets. It is mentioned that the retail area has a diversified offer with several *attractors*. It is mentioned that in this retail area it is possible to make a round. Strong points that are mentioned, are the historic buildings and the attractivity of the main street; de Dracht. Points of improvement, according to the document, are the architecture, decoration and connection to parking space. Another strong point that is mentioned is the possibility to combine daily shopping and recreative shopping. There are several supermarkets on the edge of the retail area, what provides the opportunity to do both daily groceries as recreative shopping.

An important point that is mentioned in the policy document is the aim to make the retail area more compact. Expansion of the retail area is not desirable. Qualitative impulses and investments are desired and achievable, according to the document. The retail function of the centre should be reinforced without expanding the retail area.

Another important feature that is mentioned, is the 'consultation structure' (in Dutch: *overlegstructuur*) what means that there is a structured and constructive consultation between the municipality and the entrepreneurs in the centre of Heerenveen. There is put emphasis on the importance of different entrepreneurs cooperating with each other, with the support of the centre manager. The aim of this consultation is to align events and activities in the centre and to cooperate and improve the attractiveness of the retail area.

The first point of discussion during the interview is the identity and the unique characteristics of the retail area in the centre of Heerenveen. Mrs. de Jeu explains that it is currently a challenge of the municipality and other stakeholders in the centre of Heerenveen, to describe an uniform identity of this retail area. She tells that Heerenveen is a sportive, enterprising and dynamic municipality. However, creating a uniform identity for the retail area, remains a challenge. Mrs. de Jeu remarks that finding this broadly supported identity of Heerenveen should happen together with relevant stakeholders, like entrepreneurs and residents. Conversations with these stakeholders should result in this broadly supported identity. Mrs. de Jeu thinks creating this identity is mainly the role of entrepreneurs and residents. She brings up that the role of the municipality is limited to a supporting role. She states that entrepreneurs should contribute to the cultural identity of the retail area. For example, events in the retail area should have a connection with this created identity. A problem mrs. de Jeu mentions, related to this, are the expectations people generally have about Heerenveen: people often expect it is a 'large' town due to the presence of ice staking stadium Thialf and the football team SC Heerenveen. However, it is a small town with approximately 30.000 inhabitants.

The following topic of the interview is about developments in the retail area in the center of Heerenveen. For this topic; data about the development of retail vacancy and visitors in the center of Heerenveen are discussed with mrs. de Jeu. The data in table 18 show the development of retail vacancy and the average number of visitors from 2012 to 2017. In some years there are no measurements done, in this case the number in the table is not shown.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Jan. 2017	Nov. 2017
Retail vacancy	6,23%	7,72%	10,25%	9,35%	8,18%	9,72%	9,21%
Number of visitors on a Saturday	16900	-	14300	-	13800	-	

Table 18. Development of retail vacancy and number of visitors on an Saturday in the retail area in the retail area in the centre of Heerenveen (Locatus, 2017).

Mrs. de Jeu states that retail vacancy is a serious concern in the centre of Heerenveen. However, at this moment, in 2017, there is less retail vacancy than several years ago. About the number of visitors, she mentions that there are different kind of data and she is not sure if the data in table 18 are showing the actual situation.

However, Mrs. de Jeu states that the retail area has some challenges to deal with vacancy. She states that the consumer pattern is changing and that it is important to put more emphasis on events in the centre and 'shopping Sunday'. Another point of attention that is mentioned, is making the centre more compact. The retail area should not be expanded. She explains that a task of the municipality is to make sure, some shops stay in the centre and do not move to the business parks at the edge of the city of Heerenveen. Another point she mentions, is the possibility in the retail area to do both daily grocery as recreative shopping. Supermarkets at the edge of the retail area are described as 'source points'. Mrs. De Jeu mentions that it is important, that these supermarkets stay in the retail area.

Mrs. de Jeu states that physical interventions in the retail area should result in a more attractive public space and more viability. Last years, a redesign of the Molenplein, in the southwestern part took place. The Molenplein is a square with several supermarkets and is considered as an important source point of the retail area. From this point, 'combination visits' are possible, what means that people who are doing their daily groceries, decide to go for recreative shopping afterwards. This square has become more attractive and parking possibilities have been improved. Another plan is to redesign the northwestern part of the retail area, where a coffeeshop, casino and some alleys are located. This part is currently considered as unattractive.

Another intervention that took place was the realization of the parking space in 2010 at the Geert Willigenplein. This is a large parking garage in the northern part of the retail area. According to Mrs. de Jeu,this parking garage is in a limited way integrated with the retail area. She thinks it is a task of the entrepreneurs to create a better connection between the retail area and this parking garage. She states that entrepreneurs should tempt customers more to park their car in this parking garage.

Besides, there are some small interventions that took place in the retail area, things as refurbishing buildings and creating possibilities for living above a store. On the short term, interventions to decorate the retail area take place. These interventions are paid by the municipality and are appreciated by the entrepreneurs in the centre. It is more complicated to convince the entrepreneurs about the added value of long term interventions. In many situations, entrepreneurs only consider the negative consequences on the short run of an intervention that takes several years.

Mrs. de Jeu states that during the redesign of the Molenplein, inhabitants of this area were actively involved. As delegation of this inhabitants and entrepreneurs were part of a working group. This delegation had the possibility to think concretely about the completion of this redesign. Their input was treated equally comparing the input of the municipality, according to Mrs. de Jeu. The wider surrounding of the Molenplein was involved on a more informative way. For them, information evenings were organized.

About competition, mrs. de Jeu thinks that the retail area of Heerenveen should look not too much at its competitors. She is convinced that every retail area has its own context and that this retail area should use their own qualities and strengths. Talking with actors in other retail areas could give new inspiration. However, everything should be viewed from the perspective of Heerenveen.

About diversity of firms and functions in the retail area, Mrs. de Jeu states that this is pursued. It is the responsibility of entrepreneurs, but the preconditions of firms could be arranged by use of the

Bestemmingsplan, that is a policy document that determines what function is allowed at a particular place. The preconditions that are arranged in this policy document should result in a sociable retail area. However, this remains the responsibility of the entrepreneurs in the centre. Furthermore, there is a centre manager in the retail area in the centre of Heerenveen. This centre manager is actively looking for firms which could have an added value for the retail area.

In the run-in streets, some branches are excluded. However, this issue is complex in many cases, because some branches are broadly interpretable and customization is necessary. 'Planning damage' as a result of a changing function in the *Bestemmingsplan* should be avoided and therefore customization for single cases is important.

In the retail area in the centre of Heerenveen, several aspects stand out. The first point that comes forwards is the role of the entrepreneurs who have to take the responsibilities, while the function of the municipality is a more supportive one. One of these challenges for entrepreneurs that comes forward in the interview is, creating an identity for the retail area in the centre of Heerenveen. Another point of interest is the *overlegstructuur*. The voice of inhabitants and entrepreneurs is seriously taken into account. For example, during the redesign of the Molenplein, they had their own delegation in the workgroup which had a determining effect on the completion of the plans. The interventions in the centre of Heerenveen are done with the aim to improve the attractiveness of the retail area. An important point of interest and desired vision about the retail area is the aim is to make the retail area more compact and remain the opportunity to do 'combination visits' what means that visitors have the possibility to do both their daily groceries and recreative shopping.

4.3.3. Centre of Sneek

For the retail area in the centre of Sneek, no policy document exists that could be studied before the interview.

To obtain insight in the retail area in the centre of Sneek, an interview is done with Roelof Dijkstra. Mr. Dijkstra is the centre manager in Sneek. This function could be described, as in the case of Drachten, as the 'hub' between the different entrepenreurs in the retail area and the municipality. He is doing this together with a workgroup for the centre which exists of firms that are actively presented in the centre of Sneek. He is employed by the entrepreneur association of the centre of Sneek that is subsidized by the municipality Súdwest Fryslân, where the city of Sneek is located. In his role as centre manager, he is actively engaged in issues as retail vacancy, activities in the centre, reachability and parking capacity. He is actively involved in the new *Bestemmingsplan* of the municipality that is strongly focused on the future of the retail area.

The strong characteristics of the retail area in the centre of Sneek, mr. Dijsktra describes, are the historic and compact nature of the centre with old buildings and canals. For the direct surrounding of Sneek, mr. Dijkstra describes it as a city for doing groceries and for the wider region it could be seen as a city centre for recreative shopping. Evenmore, there are frequently activities in the centre of Sneek. The retail area is focused on entertainment and experience for consumers, according to mr. Dijkstra. This is partly influenced by the presence of many bars and restaurants. He thinks that the atmosphere in Sneek attracts people.

The following topic of the interview is about developments in the retail area in the center of Sneek. For this topic, data about the development of retail vacancy and number of visitors in the center of Sneek are discussed with mr. Dijkstra The data in table 19 show the development of retail vacancy and the average number of visitors from 2012 to 2017. In some years, no measurements are done, in this case, the number in the table is not shown.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Jan. 2017	Nov. 2017
Retail vacancy	7,63%	8,98%	10,97%	9,57%	8,21%	8,72%	7,47%
Number of visitors on a Saturday	25900	21600	-	22100	-	18800	-

Table 19. Development of retail vacancy and number of visitors on an Saturday in the retail area in the retail area in the centre of Sneek (Locatus, 2017).

Mr. Dijkstra is critical about these data, which are according to him, not fully representative, because it is complicated to determine what is part of the retail area and what is not part of the retail area. However, mr. Dijkstra mentions the importance of being watchful about trends as online shopping, because this development could be a threat for the retail area. He mentions that the atmosphere and experience of the retail area in Sneek is able to be resistant against these developments. This is for example achieved by organizing a lot of activities in the centre of Sneek, which already happened during the economic recession between 2008 and 2012. This limited the impact of this recession on the retail area, according to mr. Dijkstra. He states it is relevant to keep organizing these activities.

Mr. Dijkstra mentions the importance of entrepreneurs cooperating. He states that entrepreneurs should support each other and look for possibilities to reinforce the centre as a whole.

The aim of the retail area in the centre of Sneek is to become more compact. The retail area should not be expanded. In the run-in streets also other functions should be allowed. The focus of this aim is on visitors who want to visit the city of Sneek for one day. There should be a good combination of retail, cafes and restaurants, according to mr. Dijsktra. The most important resource to create a more compact centre is the *Bestemmingsplan.* In the *Bestemmingsplan,* a distinction is made between the most central part of the retail area and the run-in streets where other functions than retail are allowed. According to mr. Dijkstra, no other measures are needed. He states that the market in the retail area is functioning well and no extra interventions are needed to find new functions for the run-in streets.

All physical interventions in the city are focused on improving the attractiveness of the retail area. Mr. Dijkstra mentions the importance to be critical about the retail area all the time, and to let other extern actors watch the centre of Sneek and to ask their opinions.

Besides some large traffic interventions, there are realized no large physical interventions in the retail area the last years. Most interventions in the retail area of last years are of a less large-scale nature. They way of involving different actors in these intervention, mr. Dijkstra describes as 'pragmatic'. There operates a working group, existing of the city manager and delegations of the entrepreneurs, residents and one deputy from the municipality. If there is a problem in the retail area, these stakeholders come together and are looking for solutions. According to mr. Dijsktra, the inputs of the different stakeholders are treated equally, and to every concern is listened seriously. This way of approaching problems results in a good mutual understanding for each other's points of view, interests and objections. Mr. Dijkstra states that people are standing next to each other instead of opposite to each other. The different points of view are, because of this approach, seriously taken into account when decisions are taken. The role of the centre manager is to obtain insight in what is going on in the centre and what the concerns are of stakeholders. He has to make these concerns negotiable and find constructive and positive solutions, together with the relevant stakeholders.

Mr. Dijkstra states that competition with other retail area exists to a certain extent. He mentions that it is relevant to find out what is going on and that he maintains contact with centre managers of other cities. This contact exists mainly of giving each other advice and sharing experiences.

About diversity of shops, mr. Dijkstra states the feasibility of this aspect is rather limited. This is considered as the responsibility of the market. However, mr. Dijsktra states that there are possibilities to call interesting chains and make them enthusiastic to open a firm in the centre of Sneek, by explaining them that Sneek has a large catchment area. However, a concern for new firms in Sneek is the limited space in the retail area, there are not always possibilities for new firms to start a new firm because of this reason. Mr. Dijkstra states that most people in Sneek are missing a large chain as an H&M. He describes this as *paradoxical* because the kind of firms that makes Sneek the least unique, are missed the most by people. However, there are several local shops that also should be considered as attractors.

Mr. Dijkstra explains that there is a development going on that the number of small independent entrepreneurs is decreasing and there is more space for new entrepreneurs with new formulas, which increases the diversity of shops in the city.

About diversity of functions, mr. Dijkstra states that this is mainly a market responsibility. This is feasible to a limited extent. Sometimes there are possibilities to advice or direct certain developments, but at the end, it is the functioning of the market that determines the diversity of functions in the center. However, mr. Dijkstra mentions the importance of providing assistance, when a new firms are looking for a location. He states that every case is unique and should be approached that way. Together with these firms is looked for the best possibility for a location. Being openly and understanding each other's points of view is important to guide this.

Several aspects come forward in the retail area in the centre of Sneek. A first point that stands out is the strong focus on entertainment and experience. There are organized a lot of activities in the retail area and there is a strong integration between retail firms, cafes and restaurants to influence this experience on a positive way. Moreover, the historic centre of Sneek has a positive influence on this experience function of the retail area. Another point of interest is the way of consultation between different stakeholders, there is a workgroup with different actors and according to mr. Dijkstra, these actors are equally treated and each other's points of view is well understood. This results in broadly accepted interventions.

4.3.4. Centre of Hoogeveen

For the retail area in the centre of Hoogeveen no policy document exists that could be studied before the interview.

To gain insight in the retail area in the centre of Hoogeveen an interview is done with Leo Hoksbergen. Mr. Hoksbergen is the centre manager in Hoogeveen what means is the 'hub' between the entrepreneurs in the centre of Hoogeveen and the municipality of Hoogeveen. This means that he aligns the interests and possibilities of the entrepreneurs and the municipality.

As unique characteristics of the retail are in the centre of Hoogeveen he mentions the large supply and the good reachability. He states that the retail area is one long main streets with several side streets. Directly on the edge of the retail area one has the possibility to park his or her car. Besides the supply of shops, there are several cafes and restaurants, a theatre and a cinema. This, in combination with the good possibility for car parking makes the retail area attractive according to mr. Hoksbergen.

Several sessions with the municipality and entrepreneurs were done to describe the identity of the city of Hoogeveen. The identity that comes forward is that with respect to atmosphere, mentality and safety, Hoogeveen is like a village, however when one looks at the supply and reachability Hoogeveen is like city. This created identity is worked out into a marketing strategy. The retail area in the centre of Hoogeveen wants to present itself with this identity.

The following topic of the interview is about developments in the retail area in the centre of Hoogeveen. For this topic; data about the development of retail vacancy and visitors in the center of Hoogeveen are discussed with mr. Hoksbergen The data in table 20 show the development of retail vacancy and the average number of visitors 2012 to 2017. In some years there are no measurements done, in this case, the number in table 20 is not shown.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Jan. 2017	Nov. 2017
Retail vacancy	7,99%	6,61%	10,42%	11,54%	11,28%	10,47%	10,91%
Number of visitors on a Saturday	23300	-	22900	-	20900	-	-

Table 20. Development of retail vacancy and number of visitors on an Saturday in the retail area in the retail area in the centre of Hoogeveen (Locatus, 2017).

Mr. Hoksbergen states that the municipality is also counting visitors in the centre of Hoogeveen. He states that, like the data of Locatus show, the last 5 years the number of visitors in the centre of Hoogeveen is decreasing. However, he states that the last year the number of visitors is increasing. He states that this is the result of the continuously marketing of the retail area in the centre of Hoogeveen in combination with the improving economic climate. He states that in the centre of Hoogeveen continuously distinctive events are organized to attract visitors. The aim of these events is to improve the experience of the centre. He states that the consumer pattern changed the last decade. Consumers are shopping on a different way than they used to do. People are buying more things online and are buying products more goal oriented. The municipality has to respond to this trends with fun and entertainment. It is necessary to create an own and distinctive identity. A part of improving the experience is avoiding retail vacancy. Mr. Hoksbergen states that this is monitored every quarter of a year and according to him the retail vacancy in the centre of Hoogeveen is stable.

The following point of discussion are the interventions that took place in the retail area in the centre of Hoogeveen. A large intervention that took place the last years is the redesign of the main street of the retail area. The main streets got a new design; mr. Hoksbergen states that the main street is more developed into a square with more green. Moreover, there is new lighting and water realized in the main street of the retail area. Another change in the retail area is the establishment of attractors as the *Sting* and *V&D*. A recently finished physical intervention is the new parking garage, De Pijp, at the east side of the retail area. The aim of these developments, is attracting more people to the centre of Hoogeveen and to obtain a more important retail function.

According to Mr. Hoksbergen, these interventions have a strong impact. Before the described interventions, the catchment function was limited, afterwards research was done which showed, according to Mr. Hoksbergen, that the catchment function of the retail area has been improved; more people from the wider region of Hoogeveen visited the center Hoogeveen, due to the interventions. This has to be stabilized and improved the following years.

Besides, there are several measures which will take place in the future. A document with the vision for the centre of Hoogeveen in the future is composed ,where several redesigns and redevelopments are described. Several squares and alleys of the main streets will be redesigned. Another redevelopment which will occur is at the Tamboerpassage in the north of the retail area; during this redevelopment entrepreneurs located on the Tamboerpassage will be stimulated to relocate their establishment.

With respect to the interventions, a distinction could be made between interventions for the short run: measures for the atmosphere as realization of decorative lights what is organized by the entrepreneurs association and the centre management. Besides, there are interventions for the long run, such as the redesign projects which are taking approximately 5 years.

The aim of these interventions is for a major part to make the centre of Hoogeveen more compact. The municipality of Hoogeveen makes 12 million euros available for this aim. The desire is a concentration of retail entrepreneurs in the most central part, and that other parts also have other functions besides retailing. There are concrete measures for this aim. Some of these measures are the described redevelopments and redesigns. Besides, some streets and street furniture will be renovated. Another measures, are funds to stimulate entrepreneurs to locate their establishment to more central parts of the retail area.

Mr. Hoksbergen states that there is a lot cooperation between actors in the retail area with respect to these interventions. The relevant stakeholders as entrepreneurs and real-estate owners are involved at the begin of a redevelopment. When there is going to be a redevelopment, information evenings are organized and all entrepreneurs in the retail area are invited for these evenings. During these sessions, there is a designing process, together with all relevant actors until there is a widely supported plan. The influence of the different actors is significant according to mr. Hoksbergen.

Besides this cooperation, there is also cooperation between the municipality and entrepreneurs with respect to events and marketing of the centre. There is a program with activities that is fixed by both the entrepreneurs as the municipality. For this, the municipality has been set up a marketing organization that is responsible for the promotion of the retail area and the activities that take place. For every activity, there is a general marketing strategy to promote every activity with a link to the identity of Hoogeveen.

With respect to the features that are described, some main pillars for the retail area in the centre of Hoogeveen come forward. One of the main pillars mr. Hoksbergen mentions, is marketing of the retail area. The second pillar is the spatial development of the retail area that comes forward by the redesigns and redevelopments in the retail area. The last pillar is the role of the entrepreneurs, they are encouraged to cooperate and to innovate. The centre management of Hoogeveen is active to stimulate and inspire the entrepreneurs in the centre.

With respect to competition with other retail areas, mr. Hoksbergen states that developments in other retail areas are monitored, however, not so much is done with this information. In the centre of Hoogeveen, everything is approached from the local situation of Hoogeveen. The only thing that is done with the information, is aligning events with programs and events in other centres.

Another point of discussion is the diversity of shops and functions in the retail area. Mr. Hoksbergen states that national chains are mainly focused on the Randstad and that Hoogeveen has to accept this. The focus is therefore mainly on the existing entrepreneurs and starters in Hoogeveen, and its region. The focus is on giving these entrepreneurs the opportunity to innovate or to enlarge its product range or shop. During the renovations, several local entrepreneurs are approached and started a new establishment in the centre of Hoogeveen; according to mr. Hoksbergen this had an attractive function.

With respect to diversification of functions, the focus is mainly on catering because this contributes to the atmosphere and the experience of the city centre. Mr. Hoksbergen states that it is relevant to consider if there are possibilities for catering and retail to reinforce each other.

The main elements that come forward in the centre of Hoogeveen, are the large interventions that took place last years and will take place the following years in the center of Hoogeveen. According to mr. Hoksbergen, these interventions have a strong impact on the number of visitors in the center of Hoogeveen. Another feature that is worth mentioning, is the strong focus on entertainment and experience in the retail area in the centre of Hoogeveen. A lot of activities and events are organized in the centre of Hoogeveen to improve the experience of visitors. Furthermore, there exists the aim that catering and horeca reinforces each other in the center of Hoogeveen, to improve the experience of customers in this retail area. A last point that is mentioned, is the focus on the existing entrepreneurs to cooperate with each other and to innovate and diversify. These entrepreneurs are, according to mr. Hoksbergen, strongly involved when interventions take place at the beginning phase.

4.3.5. Centre of Meppel

To gain insight in the retail area in the centre of Meppel, an interview is done with Twan Vennix. Mr. Vennix is working for the municipality of Meppel as ‘Kwartiermaker’ for the centre of Meppel. This means that he has to find suitable and distinctive firms for the centre of Meppel which fit to the current supply of the retail area.

Before doing this interview, the report *Detailhandelbeleid Meppel: De Compacte Stad 2016* by the municipality of Meppel (2016) is studied. This is a policy document that describes the desired developments of the retail area in the center of Meppel. The aim of the retail area in the centre of Meppel that stands out in this policy document is, stabilizing with decreasing retail space, the number of visitors in the centre of Meppel. Investments should be done to improve the quality of the total supply of facilities in the centre of Meppel.

In the policy document it is stated that Meppel has a strong centre that attract consumers from the whole region. There is stated that Meppel has a good supply in the field of culture and catering. Besides, Meppel has an attractive historic setting with canals and squares. Some interventions took place last year. The area around the Keijserstroom, Grote Akkerstraat and Touwstraat in the northwestern part of the center of Meppel, experienced a large metamorphose what resulted in more visitors in this area. Another point of interest that is mentioned in the policy document, is that 22 per cent of the buildings in the centre of Meppel is vacant; this number is increasing and many buildings are structurally vacant.

As mentioned, the centre of Meppel has a strong regional attraction. However, it is mentioned in the policy document that the retail area is under pressure; the firms in the retail area are too much split up and there is too much retail space in the area what results in lower floor productivity and increasing retail vacancy. This process should be avoided; the retail area should become more compact. Therefore, at the edges of the centre, other functions than retail are attracted and retail firms should be located in the most central part; there should be a high concentration of shops in this part. This should be done on a flexible way, with the possibility to respond to current events. The role of the municipality has to be supportive, initiative, directing and partly facilitating. Consultations with entrepreneurs and real-estate owners have to be done.

The first point of discussion during the interview, is the identity and the unique characteristics of the retail area in the centre of Meppel. Mr. Vennix describes the centre of Meppel as a historic one with several canals. He states that there are several *nice,* successful and independent shops in the centre of Meppel. The centre of Meppel has a setting that could be described as 'sociable' according to mr. Vennix; it has a strong degree of experience. It has several cafes and bars where people have the opportunity to meet each other. He states that the atmosphere and experience is the reason people are visiting city centers in contrast to the past. The city centre of Meppel tries to anticipate to these trends by events, special actions and terraces. This has to make Meppel distinctive. The retail area is focused on people who want to go out for one day.

The following topic of the interview is about developments in the retail area in the center of Meppel. For this topic; data about the development of retail vacancy and visitors in the center of Meppel are discussed with mr. Vennix The data in table 21 show the development of retail vacancy and the average number of visitors on a Saturday from 2012 to 2017. In some years, there are done no measurements, in this case the number in the table is not shown. In 2017, two measures are done.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Jan. 2017	Nov. 2017
Retail vacancy	5,87%	9,39%	10,64%	11,26%	11,98%	14,76%	14.45%
Number of visitors on a Saturday	14000	-	13700	-	11800	-	11200

Table 21. Development of retail vacancy and number of visitors on an Saturday in the retail area in the retail area in the centre of Meppel (Locatus, 2017).

As one can see in table 21, the retail vacancy in the centre of Meppel is increasing and the number of visitors is decreasing through the years. Mr. Vennix mentions several developments which are influencing these trends. He states that the economic recession of the last decade had impact on these trends. Besides, more people are shopping online. Another development, he mentions is the wish of people to visit supra-regional cities which have to offer more facilities than smaller cities as Meppel, examples of these cities are Zwolle and Groningen.

Mr. Vennix states that the centre of Meppel should be aware of these developments and find ways to respond to this. Aspects he mentions are; measures to keep the centre viable, organizing events and finding creative ways to give vacant buildings a new function. These ways should invite people to the retail area.

An important way, according to mr. Vennix to respond to these developments is that the retail area in the centre of Meppel should become smaller and more compact; there should be a higher concentration of shops in the retail area what should positively influence the attractivity of the retail area. Mr. Vennix states that the centre should be compact, complete and comfortable. To realize this, there are some incentives which have to motivate entrepreneurs in the retail area to change their establishments from the run-in streets to the more central part of the retail area. Besides, some money will be spent to keep the run-in streets attractive. The aim is that these streets get new functions. A critical point about the aim to make the retail area more compact, is the question how feasible this is, according to mr. Vennix. The municipality has some possibilities to drive developments; the municipality has the capacity to determine which functions are allowed at particular places by making use of the *Bestemmingsplan*. With policy documents like the Bestemmingsplan, the municipality can define the framework for retail development in the centre of Meppel. Within this framework, the municipality has influence on the retail developments, however, outside this frameworks, the development of the retail is determined by the market sector. Another point to positively influence a more compact centre is *awareness.* The entrepreneurs and other actors in the centre have to be aware that a compact centre is positive for the centre of Meppel; people have to understand this. It could be described as a challenge for the municipality to increase this awareness.

As mentioned, an important aim for the retail area is to make the area more compact. Besides, there are done several interventions in the retail area, stimulated by the municipality. An important intervention is the redevelopment of the Keysersstroom, in the north of the centre of Meppel. The Keysersstroom has become a new and modern indoor part of the retail area with new shops and a cinema. Another way of intervening by the municipality is done by improving the public space in the retail area. This improving of the public space should increase the quality, the accessibility and the distinctive ability of these places.

Mr. Vennix states that interventions on the short run are mainly focused on culture, events and other actions; with these interventions the municipality has mainly a facilitative role. For the long run, the actions in the retail area by the municipality are mainly associated with changing policy and frameworks which have more structural impact on the retail area.

With respect to the aims and interventions in the retail area, mr. Vennix mentions it is important to listen and consult with involved stakeholders in the centre of Meppel. He mentions that it is an important role to connect and link together these stakeholders. The municipality should be a 'listening ear' and should follow new development and look for ways to respond to the developments. Mr. Vennix states that the municipality has frequently consultations with stakeholders as real-estate owners and entrepreneurs in the centre which are united in the entrepreneur associations (Meppeler Handels Vereniging). During these consultation they try to find ways how these parties together can improve the attractivity of the retail area.

With respect to competition with other retail areas, Mr. Vennix states that the centre of Meppel is intrinsically motivated to make the retail area attractive and therefore the municipality consults and cooperates with other retail areas. Mr. Vennix states that the different retail areas try to find ways to reinforce each other, but that the centre of Meppel approaches developments from the context of Meppel.

The last point of discussion is the diversity of shops and functions in the retail area. Mr. Vennix states that the municipality is actively looking for new shops and functions for vacant buildings that fit to the centre of Meppel. When there is a suitable distinctive shop, the municipality starts consultations with the entrepreneur of the relevant store. Mr. Vennix states that the municipality has an active attitude with this, and searches for new shops or functions until the best possibility has been found.

A point that strongly comes forward is the aim of the municipality to make the centre more compact. The municipality of Meppel is convinced that this will improve the attractivity of the retail area. It must be noted that the feasibility of this aim is possible to a limited extent, however, there are some ways the municipality can drive these developments. This aim is a respond to the exogenous factors that result in less visitors in the city centre of Meppel. Other ways of responding to these developments, are organizing events and improving the quality of the public space. Another point of interest is the active role of the municipality to find new functions or shops for vacant buildings, in contrast to other retail areas where this role is only assigned to the market.

4.3.6. Centre of Veendam

To gain insight in the retail area in the centre of Veendam, an interview is done with Astrid Wijninga. Mrs. Wijninga is working for the municipality of Veendam and the municipality of the Pekelas as advisor economic affairs. One of the aspects she is focusing on is retail.

Before doing this interview, two documents are studied. The first document is the *Detailhandelsstrctuurvisie Veendam* that is written in 2013, this is a policy document where the position and aims for the retail in the municipality of Veendam are described. A positive aspect of the retail area in the centre of Veendam that is mentioned is the diversity of shops, in combination with catering, craft and services. A strong point that is mentioned is that people can visit the centre of Veendam for daily and non-daily products. In this policy document three aims for the retail area in the centre of Veendam are described:

- *A stronger position as regional centre*; It should be an attractive retail area for inhabitants of the municipality of Veendam and its surrounding. This should be created by an attractive mix of shops, catering, leisure, events and other functions. New retail initiatives which are a strong addition to the centre should support this aim.
- *Strategic location of attractors*; in order to have a diversified offer of retail the presence of supermarkets is crucial. When these supermarkets have a strategic location in the centre of Veendam, other retail firms can benefit from this.
- *Compact retail area*: in order to have an attractive retail area it is important to have a compact retail structure. Shops should be mainly located in the most central part of the retail area.

In this policy document it is stated that the aims of this vision should be translated to policy by means of *Bestemmingsplannen* and other policy frameworks.

Another document that is studied before the interview is an '*action plan'* from 2017, created by an organization called 'De Nieuwe Winkelstraat. This is an external organization that had a view on the center of Veendam and created an 'action plan', based on their observation in this centre.

In this document it is stated that in the current situation the quality of the retail area is insufficient; there is a lot of retail vacancy, bad maintenance and moderate accessibility. Furthermore, it is stated that the local cooperation between the municipality of Veendam, the real-estate owners and entrepreneurs is on a low level. According to the action plan, the involvement of entrepreneurs in the centre is limited

Taking this into account, some main pillars which should be the basis for action come forward: the quality of the retail area should be improved; there should be a good retail supply, the public space should be more attractive and the accessibility of the retail area should be improved. Another point is that actors should cooperate more. Entrepreneurs together should cooperate more and also the cooperation between public and private actors should be improved. Besides, the identity of the retail area should come forward to a larger extent; the retail area should create a DNA, according to the action plan.

As mentioned in the action plan, the focus on the identity of Veendam should be emphasized. The first point of discussion during the interview is about this identity and unique characteristics of the centre of Veendam. The first point mrs. Wijninga mentions about the unique characteristics in the centre of Veendam, is the combination of the more recreational shops and 'source points' as catering and supermarkets on the edge of the retail area. Another points with respect to the unique characteristics of the retail area in Veendam, mrs. Wijninga mentions are the many events that take place in the retail area and the presence of the museum and culture centre. Despite of these characteristics, there is still a search going on to the identity and the DNA of the center of Veendam. Together with an extern organization, the municipality tries to find out what the identity of Veendam is and what the distinctive elements of Veendam are in comparison with other towns in the proximity of Veendam. Mr. Wijninga thinks this is the *Veenkoloniale* (peat industry) and shipping history of Veendam. About the retail area, she thinks the unique characteristic is the compactness of the retail area and the possibility to walk around in the retail area.

The following topic of the interview is about developments in the retail area in the center of Veendam. For this topic, data about the development of retail vacancy and visitors in the center of Veendam are discussed with mrs. Wijninga. The data in table 22 show the development of retail vacancy and the average number of visitors from 2012 to 2017. In some years there are no measurements done, in this case the number in the table is not shown.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Jan. 2017	Nov. 2017
Retail vacancy	11,54%	13,11%	16,18%	17,96%	15,05%	20,79%	21,89%
Number of visitors on a Saturday	9000	8600	-	7000	-	7800	-

Table 22. Development of retail vacancy and number of visitors on an Saturday in the retail area in the retail area in the centre of Veendam (Locatus, 2017).

Mrs. Wijninga states that the changes in retail vacancy and visitors are mainly influenced by the economic recession of the last decade. She states that in Veendam the expenditures are 10 per cent lower than in the city of Groningen, therefore the negative influence of the recession had more impact in the centre of Veendam than in other retail areas. Besides, she states that because of the peripheral location of Veendam, the consequences of the recessions were tangible in a later stadium than other retail areas in more central locations which were already recovering from the economic recession. This processes influence the increasing retail vacancy and the decreasing number of visitors in the centre of Veendam. Furthermore, mrs. Wijninga states that online shopping is a trend that influences the retail area.

Mrs. Wijninga thinks that the economic recession resulted in a 'domino-effect' in the centre of Veendam; due to the economic recession people lost their job, could spend less, which had a negative influence on the number of visitors and expenditures what results in more retail vacancy. Thus, the exogenous factors influenced the internal situation of the retail area in the centre of Veendam.

To respond to these developments, mrs. Wijninga states that entrepreneurs and the municipality should cooperate to make the centre of Veendam more attractive. She states that the entrepreneurs are mainly responsible for this. She also mentions that the attractively of the retail area should be improved by more green, improving safety, better infrastructure and better street furniture. Besides, the quality of the catering in the retail area should be improved to keep visitors for a longer time in the retail area.

The municipality of Veendam created a policy document about how to deal with online shopping. With respect to structural retail vacancy, the municipality created a 'vacancy regulation'; when a building is vacant for more than half a year, there is a consultation with the real-estate owner of the building. This consultation should result in finding new possibilities for the building.

Mrs. Wijninga also states that there is an important and creative role for the market to respond to these developments by creating new retail formulas and shops. The role of the municipality is to facilitate these developments and to create a framework.

Several physical interventions took place the last five years: slanted canopies are created in the main street, the street between the train station of Veendam and the centre has been renovated and some waterfront developments took place in the southeastern part of the retail area what should attract more boats to this location. Another important change is the new Lidl in the western part of the retail area what attracts more people to this part of the retail area.

Besides these interventions, some new interventions will take place in the following years. The aim of these interventions is improving the attraction and the accessibility of the retail area. Some redesigns of several parts of the retail area will take place to accomplish this aim. Some parking spaces will be renovated and pavements will be renewed. Moreover, there are some interventions for the short run; for example, together with the entrepreneurs in the retail area several decorative lights are realized.

The most important objective for the retail area is to create a more compact centre, where pedestrians can make a round. This should be realized in cooperation with involved actors, these different actors should agree on what is the main part for concentrating shops. This is a process-based trajectory and customization is necessary to realize this aim. It is important that the municipalities help and think along with the entrepreneurs to get the right function at the right place, according to mrs. Wijninga. To achieve this aim, some measures are taken. For example, entrepreneurs can prescribe for funds when they are willing to have their establishment in the most central part of the retail area.

Mrs. Wijninga explains that interventions for the short run in the retail area are mainly focused on infrastructural adjustments to make the retail area more attractive and accessible. Interventions for the long run are focused on realizing the aim to have a more compact retail area in the centre of Veendam.

The following point of discussion is about the involvement of stakeholders in these decisions. Mrs. Wijninga speaks about the *golden triangle* that exists of the municipality, entrepreneurs and real-estate owners. The interaction between these actors is considered as important with respect to development in the retail area. Mrs. Wijninga states that the interaction between entrepreneurs, represented by the entrepreneur association and the municipality is on a good level. However, the relation between the municipality and real-estate owners is rather limited. Mrs. Wijninga is not aware of the quality of interaction between entrepreneurs and real-estate owners. For both the new vision and the action for the centre of Veendam, many stakeholders are involved. Besides stakeholders which are part of the 'golden triangle' of the centre, also residents and consumers participated in the process, according to mrs. Wijninga. There are interactive evenings organized where these stakeholders are asked about their point of view on the retail area; a broadly supported vision is realized. All relevant stakeholders have to a agree with this vision. This vision have to result in new projects in the retail area in the centre of Veendam.

About the impact of the interventions in the retail area, mrs. Wijninga states that the accessibility of the retail area has been improved by the infrastructural and parking improvements. Some particular places attract more people, examples are; the new terrace in front of the museum which attracts more people, and the realization of the Lidl in the western part of the retail area which resulted in more people at this part of the retail area.

When one looks at competitors of the retail area in the centre of Veendam, mrs. Wijninga explains that the centre of Groningen is the main competitor of the centre of Veendam. Other retail areas in towns in the proximity of Veendam are competitors to a limited extent, according to mrs. Wijninga. However, another retail in the north of Veendam area, called Autorama could be considered as an important competitor. Mrs. Wijninga states that in Veendam, this retail area has relatively a lot of visitors what result in less visitors in the centre of Veendam.

Together with towns in the region and the province of Groningen, mrs. Wijninga states some consultations have taken place, because the retail areas in these towns experience the same kind of problems with respect to retail.

The next point of discussion is about the diversity of shops and functions in the retail area. Mrs. Wijninga states that the aim is that there are more functions than shopping in the centre of Veendam; she states it is important there are more reasons than only shopping to visit the centre of Veendam. Functions as museums, catering or a culture centrum are an added value for the retail area in the centre of Veendam.

Mrs. Wijninga states that large chains are mostly not interested to start an establishment in the centre of Veendam, because of its population size and peripherical location. Mrs. Wijninga states that, with respect of diversity of shops, the retail area is more dependent of distinctive local shops. These kinds of shops are more characteristic and have a good attraction, according to mrs. Wijninga. The municipality of Veendam tries to facilitate these kind of shops.

Besides, mrs. Wijninga mentions the importance of supermarkets at the edge of the retail area, with a parking space in the proximity, pedestrians can make a round in the retail area. Another point she mentions, is the presence of catering on strategical locations what makes it able for people to walk around from these places.

The last point mrs. Wijninga mentions, is organizing events and activities in the centre of Veendam. She mentions this happens frequently in the centre of Veendam. She states that when this is done, entrepreneurs in the whole centre are involved. These events improve the attractivity and atmosphere of the retail area.

In short, it strongly comes forward that the retail area in the centre of Veendam is confronted with an increasing retail vacancy and a decreasing number of visitors. It stands out that the municipality and other actors who are actively involved in the retail area are aware of these trends. Attempts are done to counter these trends by creating a more compact centre. Furthermore, several interventions are committed and will take place to make the retail area more accessible and attractive. The municipality is actively involved in facilitating processes which could improve the attractiveness of the retail area. This is done by policy frameworks and rules, but also by consultations with actors and customization. Besides, the municipality tries to involve a broad range of stakeholders in the plans that are made. However, it is mentioned that the relationship between the municipality and real-estate owners is limited.

4.3.7. Centre of Kampen

To gain insight in the position of the retail area in the centre of Kampen, an interview is done with Roeland Tameling. Mr. Tameling is city marketer and works for the municipality and '*Stichting Kampen Marketing*'. Stichting Kampen Marketing is the city marketing organization for the city of Kampen with the aim to reinforce the urban image of Kampen. Mr. Tameling is coordinating the tourist information, the platform for events and the platform for issues concerning the centre of Kampen. At the moment he is responsible for employing a centre manager for the city of Kampen, who has to function under his control.

Before doing the interview, the policy document, the *Detaihandelsbeleid 2015* by the municipality of Kampen is studied. This is a policy document that includes a framework for the policy with respect to retail in the municipality of Kampen.

In this policy document, the city centre of Kampen is described as a touristic and recreative centre. It is mentioned that the retail area has to distinct itself by unique and diverse shops in combination with catering and culture. This fits well to the monumental and atmospheric centre of Kampen.

An important choice for the centre of Kampen is described in this document; the retail area has the possibility to increase retail in this area or to go for more recreative and touristic functions. However, the aim for the retail area that is described in the policy document is a combination of both options: *have a qualitatively and quantitatively complete offer of shops and related functions while reinforcing the regional attraction and its touristic and recreative function.*

The main focus of the retail area is on recreative shopping, but at the same time there should be modern supermarkets. The distinctive capacity of the retail area in the centre of Kampen is realized by facilitating large-scale shops, while having at the same time the presence of more specialist shops with catering and culture. The retail area should have a compact structure and a strong accommodation quality with a lot of experiential value. Other points of attention are: frequently organizing events and a good accessibility. A strong combination of diverse functions is mentioned as another important feature.

The first point of discussion during the interview, is the identity and the distinctive characteristics of the retail area in the centre of Kampen. Mr. Tameling describes Kampen as "Hartelijke Hanzestad aan het water", what could be translated as 'Kampen cordial Hanze City on the waterside'. With *cordial* mr. Tameling aim at the hospitality of people who are living in the city of Kampen; this has an inviting character. People are trying on different ways to receive the people as good as possible. There are for example city hosts in the centre of Kampen to help the visitors of the area. There are also organized events and activities to give meaning to the hospitable character of the centre of Kampen. Besides, Kampen is an *historic Hanze city*; actively cooperating with other Hanze cities. Many events and activities have a direct link to the character of being a Hanze city. Also the completion of the public space and the museum have a strong connection with Kampen's history as Hanze city.

The retail area in the centre of Kampen is along the river IJssel. This is also an important part of the identity of Kampen The décor of Kampen, next to the IJssel, is an important feature of the city. Also the reminder of the boats of the Hanze period, called *kogge* are an important part of this. Mr. Tameling mentions that there exists plans to locate the original boat called *IJsselkogge* in Kampen, which will be a main recreative attraction of the centre of Kampen, according to mr. Tameling.

The following topic of the interview is about developments in the retail area in the center of Kampen. For this topic; data about the development of retail vacancy and visitors in the center of Kampen are discussed with mr. Tameling The data in table 23 show the development of retail vacancy and the average number of visitors from 2012 to 2017. In some years there are no measurements done, in this case the number in the table is not shown.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Jan. 2017	Nov. 2017
Retail vacancy	11,17%	11,14%	11,30%	11,59%	8,63%	7,42%	8,01%
Number of visitors on a Saturday	18800	-	14700	-	14300	-	17100

Table 23. Development of retail vacancy and number of visitors on an Saturday in the retail area in the retail area in the centre of Kampen (Locatus, 2017).

Table 23 shows that the retail vacancy is increasing and also the number of visitors are increasing since 2017. Mr. Tameling explains that the retail area in the centre of Kampen suffered from the economic recession of last decade but recovered well. However, some run-in streets still have a high share of retail vacancy, for example the northern part of the main street. Therefore, mr. Tameling states that it remains important to focus on what is needed to keep the city centre viable.

Mr. Tameling states that the fluctuations in the retail vacancy are mainly influenced by exogenous factors, what is the same case in other cities with a similar number of inhabitants. However, in Kampen the recreative and touristic function is relatively strong. Thanks to this position, the negative impacts of this exogenous factors are limited, because this function results in more visitors who spend money in the retail area. Mr. Tameling states that there should be enough opportunities for these visitors to spend their money. Therefore he states that it is important to align the retail offer and branding on the desires of the visitors.

The projects and investments took place to respond to the changing exogenous factors are sometimes incidental in nature while others are structural in nature. An example is the realization of a *Stadswinkel* (city-shop), a shop that is focused on the characteristics of the city of Kampen. The most interventions are not physical in nature. Physical changes that took place in the retail area are for the short run and decorative in nature, realizing benches and plants. To reach the aims for the city centre of Kampen, no large interventions are needed, according to mr. Tameling. However, when the IJsselkogge will be realized, this could be considered as a megaproject with a large impact, according to mr. Tameling. This IJsselkogge will attract a lot of visitors, with a positive effect on the number of visitors in the retail area.

About the involvement of actors, mr. Tameling states that besides the regular policy of the municipality, several actors and stakeholders are organized to influence the developments of the retail area in the centre of Kampen. As mentioned, there exists a marketing organization for the city centre of Kampen. Furthermore, there is an entrepreneur association for the entrepreneurs in the city centre of Kampen. To improve the quality of cooperation between the different actors, the municipality of Kampen wants to have a centre manager who will give direction for cooperation between the municipality, real-estate owners, entrepreneurs and the city marketing organization. Together, these actors, under the direction of a centre manager, have to improve the level of organization. A critical point mr. Tameling mentions, is the level of organization between real-estate owners, they are no collective and not united in an association or something similar to that. For cooperation with other actors, this could be considered as problematic. The aim of this integration between the different stakeholders is to improve the coordination of events and marketing in the retail area. A project that is done, related to this aim to integrate the different stakeholder, is 'Hanze borden'. Mr. Tameling states that this project could be considered as *serious gaming* where the different stakeholders as municipality, entrepreneurs and real-estate owner in the retail area have to make decisions together. The serious gaming result in a strategy for the retail area. This could be considered as a playful way to give direction to processes in the centre of Kampen, resulting in better cooperation between the stakeholders.

About competition with other retail areas, mr. Tameling mentions that a lot of the inhabitants of the city of Kampen go to the retail area in the centre of Zwolle. Mr. Tameling states that Kampen has not the capacity to offer the same as Zwolle has, and therefore should accept this. However, Kampen has another segment and another kind of visitors than Zwolle has. Therefore Kampen should not focus on large retail formulas that determine the character of the retail area in the centre Zwolle. The centre of Kampen, on the other hand, has to focus on shops which have links to their own identity and the characteristics of Kampen.

In the city centre policy of Kampen, there is hardly paid attention to diversity of shops. According to mr. Tameling, this is in Kampen a 'market responsibility'. Perhaps, when there is a centre manager, there will be more focused on the diversity of shops, but at this moment, this is not the case.

With respect to diversity of functions, mr. Tameling states that retail functions and entertainment functions as catering should complement and support each other. A connection between these sectors should be made. For this case, network meetings are organized where retail and leisure entrepreneurs meet each other and have consultations about the possibility to align their businesses.

In the *Detaihandelsbeleid 2015* is pointed out a dilemma between, on the one hand, an increase of retail, or, on the other hand, a stronger focus on recreative and touristic functions. According to mr. Tameling, these both options can complement each other. People are visiting the retail area in the centre of Kampen because of recreational reasons and experiences. Therefore, the combination with catering is important but also adding experience to particular shops could be a solution. Mr. Tameling claims that Kampen should do this with the possibilities it has and it should realize that the segment of Kampen is different than the segment of Zwolle. With their own specific segments and strengths, the city centre should optimize its opportunities while taking into account the development of wishes and desires of consumers

In the retail area in the centre of Kampen, it comes strongly forward that much focus is on the historical identity of the centre and that this historical identity is the most important feature with respect to developments in the retail area. Using the possibilities of the attractiveness of the historic city centre and the terrific location along the riverside is an important way of responding to exogenous factors. Related to the historical identity of the centre of Kampen, is the touristic and recreative function of the retail area, what could be considered a distinctive factor of this retail area. An important condition for this touristic and recreative function is a strong diversity of entertainment and retail functions. Therefore, there is a strong focus on aligning these different sectors, resulting in a situation where these sectors reinforce each other. Another point of interest is the increasing emphasis on improving the cooperation between different actors in the retail area. Meetings and projects are organized to improve the aligning between these actors, a centre manager for the centre of Kampen should improve the realization of this aim in the future.

4.3.8. Lelystad Bataviastad

An interview with Bas Terbach is the base for the delineation of the retail area Bataviastad in Lelystad. Mr. Terbach is working for the municipality Lelystad as policymaker in the field of economic affairs. Mr. Terbach is responsible for the retail policy in Lelystad. Mr. Terbach states that, concerning retail areas, in Lelystad exists a special situation, because Lelystad has both a city centre and Bataviastad at the edge of the city. Bataviastad has its own structure, dynamic and concept.

Mr. Terbach focuses on the coordination and aligning between the city centre and Bataviastad (and other retail areas) in the city of Lelystad.

Before doing the interview, the *Winkelstructuur 2020* by the municipality of Lelystad is studied. This is a policy document that includes a vision about the functioning of the retail sector in the municipality of Lelystad.

This policy document shows that Bataviastad is a thematic retail area focused on recreative shopping. The retail area has a special supra-regional attraction because of its outlet orientation. In the policy document it comes forward that it is allowed that the retail area will be reinforced by adding extra square meters with a retail function. This enlargement is considered as the completion of Bataviastad. Another point that stands out in the policy document is that the current relation between the city centre and the retail area should remain the way as it is. This means that the *outlet* concept should be maintained and the regular retail should be excluded in Bataviastad.

The first point of discussion is about the identity and unique characteristics of the retail area. Mr. Terbach mentions that Bataviastad is a fashion outlet and this is distinctive because there are not many fashion outlets in the Netherlands. Another point that could be considered as distinctive is the quality and uniqueness of the architecture and public space of Batviastad. A lot of attention is paid to these aspects.

The following topic of the interview is about developments in the retail area of Bataviastad. For this topic, data about the development of retail vacancy and visitors in the retail area of Bataviastad are discussed with mr. Terbach The data in table 24 show the development of retail vacancy and the average number of visitors from 2012 to 2017. In some years, there are no measurements done, in this case the number in the table is not shown.

	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Jan. 2017	Nov. 2017
Retail vacancy	7,76%	0,89%	2,63%	5,26%	6,72%	2,65%	19,61%
Number of visitors on a Saturday	10800	-	9000	-	11800	-	21400

Table 24. Development of retail vacancy and number of visitors on an Saturday in the retail area in the retail area of Bataviastad (Locatus, 2017).

As shown in figure 24, the number of visitors has grown since 2012. Mr. Terbach explains that this growth gave Bataviastad the opportunity to add extra square meters for retail. This growth is partly caused by the increasing tourism in Bataviastad. The concept stayed the same through the years, only outlet shops are allowed in the retail area, while regular retail is excluded in Bataviastad.

Mr. Terbach thinks that the extent to which Bataviastad suffers from exogenous factors is limited. People go to a thematic retail area as Bataviastad because they like it to shop there for a day. Therefore, Bataviastad is not suffering from online shopping and mr. Terbach also thinks that the impact of the economic recession of last decade was limited due to the unique offer and appearance of Bataviastad. The retail area benefits from marketing activities in the city of Amsterdam and a new direct bus connection between Amsterdam and Bataviastad. Tourists, mainly from China and the Middle East, visit Bataviastad.

As mentioned in the policy document, the completion of Bataviastad will take place by the allocation of extra square meters with a retail function. Mr. Terbach states that this completion has just been finished. This is also the reason that the retail vacancy in 2017 was increasing, because it takes time to find some new entrepreneurs. Mr. Terbach states that this is the only intervention of last period that took place in Bataviastad and that there are no plans for new interventions in Bataviastad. The new part of Bataviastad will focus more on the more luxury segment and more expensive shops are being sought.

Before this growth of Bataviastad took place, appointments were made between the municipality of Lelystad and Bataviastad. Entrepreneurs in the rest of the city were to a small extent involved in this appointments. Besides, no other actors were involved in this appointments.

Mr Terbach states that Bataviastad is actively looking for new brands for the newly created buildings and Bataviastad wants to stay ahead of other outlets in the Netherlands. He states that Bataviastad follows its competitors in the Netherlands but that the extent to which they can influence this competition is limited. The municipality pays attention to the competition between Bataviastad and the centre of Bataviastad. This competition should be avoided and both retail areas should focus on their own segments. The impact of Bataviastad on the city centre is frequently monitored, so far, this impact turned out to be limited. Also the interaction between the both retail areas is limited, it rarely occurs that someone combines a visit to Bataviastad with a visit to the city centre of Lelystad.

Another point of discussion is the diversity of shops and functions in Bataviastad. Mr. Terbach states that the diversity of shops is limited because the retail area is focused on the segment outlet shops. This is strictly regulated, all new shops are controlled by a review committee. This review committee checks what the impact of a new shop will be on the whole retail sector in Lelystad. There are conditions that a new shop must meet. However, sometimes exceptions are made, this consideration is based on the impact a new shop could have on the retail sector in Lelystad.

Mr. Terbach states that the funshop centre of Bataviastad is surrounded by a larger leisure and recreation area with a diversity of functions. In the larger area, other functions than retail are the main attractors; especially two museums in the proximity of the retail area. At the moment, the focus is on connecting the retail and leisure function with the aim that Bataviastad can develop itself more into a touristic area.

In short, it strongly comes forward that Batavistad benefits from its unique position as outlet centre. Because it is a unique concept it is to a limited extent influenced by exogenous factors. Caused by improved promotion and a better connection with the city of Amsterdam, the touristic function of Bataviastad is increasing. Last years the completion of Bataviastad took place and at this moment there is an active acquisition for new shops for the new buildings in Bataviastad. New shops in Bataviastad have to be outlet shops. Regular retail is excluded because this could negatively influence the centre of Lelystad, this is coordinated by the municipality.

4.4. Synthesis

In this paragraph the similarities and differences between factors that come forward in the interviews, are discussed. Afterwards, a link is made with the outcomes of the literature and quantitative research.

4.4.1. Similarities between retail areas

A compact retail area

An important factor that stands out in the different retail areas, has to do with the creation of a more *compact* retail area. This is mentioned for the retail areas in the center of Heerenveen, Sneek, Hoogeveen, Meppel and Veendam. For the retail area in the centre of Drachten, this is also mentioned, however, the interviewee was critical about this aim because this could discourage the entrepreneurs who are not located in the most central part of the retail area. In the mentioned retail areas, the interviewees think that the retail area is too expanded and a more compact retail area is necessary for the viability and attractiveness. For some retail areas, this is the way to respond to the impact of exogenous factors as the increasing online shopping and economic recessions. Several interviewees state that there is the aim that retail firms which are located in the run-in streets should move their location to the more central part of the retail area. Several measures come forward in the interviews to create a more compact retail area. All municipalities of the mentioned cities with the aim to create a more compact retail area make use of a policy document called the *Bestemmingsplan* that allocated the different functions at particular places. This Bestemmingsplan often excludes retail in the run-in streets and allows it in the most central part of the retail area. In addition, several retail areas make use of funds for retailers to motve to the more central part of the retail area, this is done in the centre of Hoogeveen and Veendam. A point that comes forward in the case of Meppel and Veendam is the process that is necessary to create a more compact retail area. It is often mentioned that consultations with stakeholders are necessary, and that the municipality should have a facilitative way. In the retail area in the centre of Hoogeveen, physical interventions and redesigns will be done to create a more compact retail area.

Entertainment and Leisure

In many cases, much attention is paid to *entertainment* and *leisure.* For several retail areas, a focus on entertainment and leisure is an important way to respond to exogenous developments. By a stronger focus on entertainment and leisure, people are more invited to visit the retail area. In some retail areas, there is an aim to strong integrate retail, catering and other entertainment functions . In the retail area in the centre of Drachten, Hoogeveen, Meppel, Kampen and in Bataviastad this integration is important in the retail policy. In the cases of Drachten and Kampen it stands out that cooperation and consultations take place between the retail and catering entrepreneurs to reinforce the integration between these two facets. Another point that often comes forward is the organization of events and activities improve the entertainment and leisure, especially the cases of Kampen, Hoogeveen, Sneek and Veendam point this factor.

Cooperation with stakeholders

In every interview, it comes forward that there is the aim to involve and cooperate with stakeholders as the municipality, entrepreneurs and real-estate owners. In several retail areas, a *centre manage*r is working to bring these stakeholders together and to facilitate this involvement and cooperation. In the cases of Meppel, Drachten, Sneek, Heerenveen and Hoogeveen, a centre manager is in function.

As mentioned, in every retail area, there is the aim to cooperate with the different stakeholders and in most cases this is already happening to a certain extent. However, this way of cooperation differs across the different retail areas. In some retail areas, it comes forward that a consensus is needed between the different stakeholders, the positions of the different stakeholders are equal in these cases. In the retail areas in the centre of Hoogeveen, Sneek, Heerenveen and Veendam, this way of working for some projects or interventions stands out; the stakeholders are involved in the beginning phase of the process and their input on the plans is determining. In other retail areas, the involvement of stakeholders is also organized to a certain extent and consultations are taking place what could result in new interventions. In these cases, the stakeholders are in contact with each other and the aim is to understand each other's position. For example, the interviewee of the municipality of Meppel stated that the municipality should be a listening ear and should monitor and take notice of signals about what is going on in the retail area. This way of working is happening in all retail areas to a certain extent.

Competition with other retail areas

Another point that it similar in the most retail areas, is the way these areas are paying attention to competition. In every retail area, it was mentioned that development of other competing retail areas are noticed but that this is not the base of their own approach. All interviewees mention that decisions should be taken from their own strengths and contexts.

Combination visits

Another point of interest that comes forward in several retail areas, is the possibility to have a *combination visit*. This means that there are supermarkets at the edge of the retail area and shops with a more recreational function in the centre. The idea behind this, is that people are firstly doing their groceries and afterwards have the opportunity to walk around in the retail area and to do some recreationally shopping. The special attention for combination visits comes forward in the cases of Veendam and Heerenveen. However, in most other retail areas, there is also a supermarket situated at the edge of the centre, so these combination visits could also take place there.

4.4.2. Differences between retail areas

Creating diversity

An important point is the extent to which actors of retail areas, attempt to *create diversity*. In some retail areas, the municipality and other stakeholders are actively involved in creating this diversity by acquisition of new firms or other functions. However in other retail areas this is mainly considered as a market-led process. In the cases of Drachten, Hoogeveen and Kampen, this is mainly considered as the task of the entrepreneurs and the market. In the centre of Sneek and Veendam, it is also to a large extent considered as a market responsibility. However, the interviewees of these retail areas state that it is important to pay attention and to look for new possibilities which could be a valuable addition for the retail area. In the centre of Hoogeveen, the focus is mainly on existing entrepreneurs and new entrepreneurs from the region of Hoogeveen. These entrepreneurs are encouraged to innovate and to create diversity by broaden the retail concept or to start new firms with another function. In Meppel, the municipality and related actors are actively looking for retail firms that are a valuable addition to the existing firms. These actors are looking for the right firm at the right place and are having actively consultation with possible new entrepreneurs. In Bataviastad, there is a unique situation, because only retail firms with an outlet function are permitted because of the functioning of the city centre of Lelystad;. Therefore, there is strictly monitored what kind of shops are added to Bataviastad. In Bataviastad, regular retail is excluded.

Physical interventions

There are differences between retail areas in the extent to which *physical interventions* are taking place and the aim of these physical interventions. Several large renovations and redesigns last years took place in and around the cases of Drachten, Meppel, Hoogeveen, Heerenveen, Veendam and in Batavistad. In Veendam, the following years will occur some more physical interventions. In the cases of Sneek and Kampen, no large physical interventions took place. The major part of these interventions are focused on improving the accessibility and attractivity of a retail area. In Meppel and Hoogeveen, the major function of the interventions was improving the attractiveness, and in Heerenveen, Veendam and Drachten the focus was also on improving the accessibility. In Bataviastad, the focus was on expanding the retail area.

Identity and unique characteristics

Between the retail areas, there are differences in the way the *identity* and *unique characteristics* are described. It comes forward that retail areas which are located in a historic city centre, derive their identity from its historic context. This is the case Meppel, Sneek and Kampen. The other retail areas describe their identity and unique characteristics based on their qualities and other elements of the retail area, which could be considered as unique strengths. In the cases of Heerenveen and Veendam, there are at the moment sessions going on with stakeholders to describe the identity of the retail area.

Focus on tourism

In the centre of Kampen and in Bataviastad, there is a strong *focus on tourism*. Shops and other functions in the centre are related to this focus. In these cities, there is an increase in the number of visitors. All other retail areas are also paying attention to the recreational aspect as on the factors of the retail area. However, the strong focus on tourism especially stands out in these two retail areas.

Marketing

Between the retail areas, there are differences in the *marketing* of the area. During the interviews, it comes forward that Hoogeveen and Kampen put a strong emphasis on marketing of the retail area. These retail areas have a specialized organization that is taking the lead of marketing the retail area. Bataviastad is also putting a lot of emphasis on marketing, it is promoting the retail area in an increasing extent and is trying to promote it among tourists.

4.4.3. Quantitative and qualitative outcomes

To get insight in the relation between the quantitative and quantitative outcomes, it is important to firstly have an conceptualization about the way these outcomes influence each other. Therefore, a model is shown in figure 40., to show the mutual influences of these outcomes.

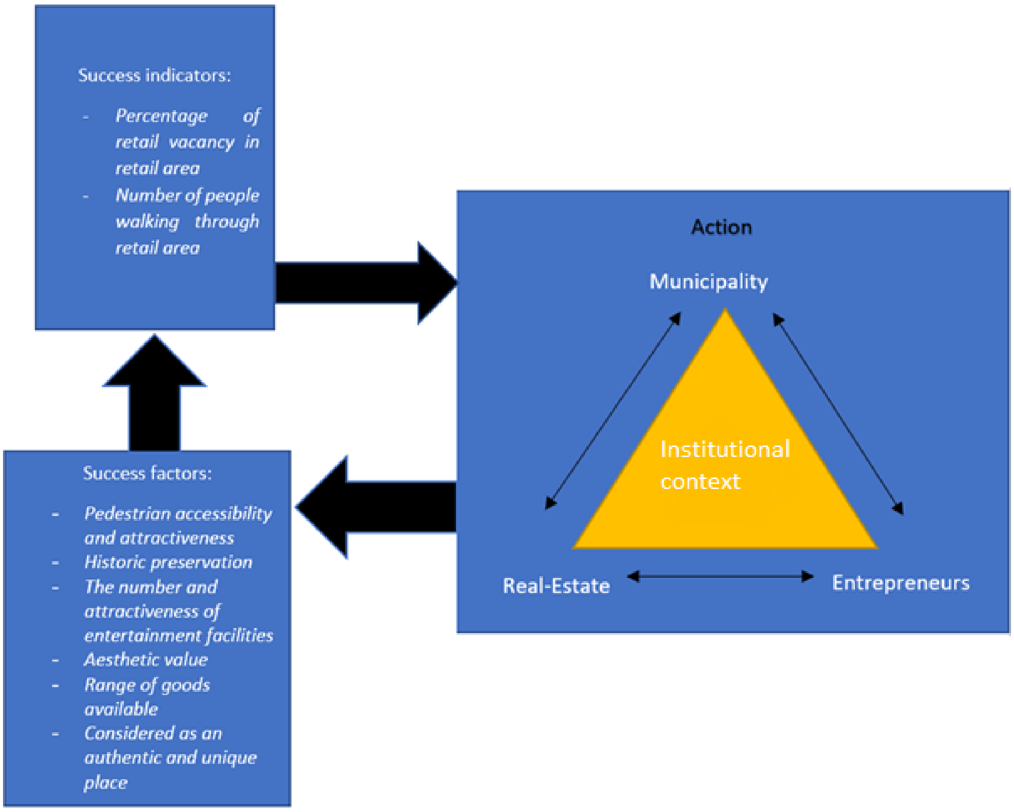


Figure 40. The relationship between the success factors, success indicator and the action in retail areas.

As mentioned already, the success factors have impact on the success indicators. It could be stated that outcomes of the success indicatosr result in responses by the related actors in a retail area. In many interviews, it comes forward that the most important stakeholders are: the municipality, the real-estate owners and the entrepreneurs. This could be described as the *institutional context*. Besides, there could be several other stakeholders, however, these three are mentioned in the most cases. In the retail areas exist to a certain extent interaction and cooperation between these stakeholders what could result in action in the retail area. This action results in changes of the success factors, what could influence the success indicators of a retail area.

A quantitative research is conducted to find out if there is a relation between the success factors and success indicators. This research shows that when all retail areas are included in the statistical test, there is a significant correlation between *aesthetic value* and *number of people walking through retail areas.* When one looks at only the city centres which are included in this research, so Bataviastad and Paddepoel are excluded, there exists a significant correlation between *pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness* and *percentage of vacancy in a retail area.* A significant correlation exists between *considered as an authentic and unique place* and *percentage of vacancy in a retail* *area*. In the following part of this paragraph, the data of these success factors and indicators are shown. Subsequently, statements are made on the basis of the qualitative research.

The data of the first significant correlation between *aesthetic value* and *number of people walking through retail areas* are shown in table 25.

	Aesthetic Value	Number of people walking through retail area
Lelystad Bataviastad	5	13218,3
Hoogeveen	3	8583,49
Kampen	3	8033,78
Drachten	4	7694,29
Groningen Paddepoel	3	7647,25
Heerenveen	2	7011,13
Sneek	3	6940,11
Meppel	2	5376,68
Veendam	2	3620,53

Table 25. Overview of data about the aesthetic value and number of people walking through a retail area, of the different retail areas.

It comes forward that Bataviastad has both the highest value on the success factor, and the success indicator. There is paid a lot of attention to the aesthetic value of the retail area in Bataviastad. The interviewee of the municipality of Lelystad explains that in Bataviastad an interesting point that could be considered as distinctive, is the quality and uniqueness of the architecture and public space. A lot of attention is paid to these aspects. The thematic outlet retail area what is focused on people who are going there for a day out, is an important part of the image of Bataviastad. The retail area in the centre of Drachten has a relatively high ranking on the aesthetic value and has the fourth highest ranking on the success indicator *number of people walking through the retail area*. In this retail area, last years occurred several renovations and redesigns, with the aim of making the retail area more attractive. An example is the renovation of the Raadhuisplein. These renovations and redesigns could have played an important role in the improvement of the aesthetic value. Furthermore, there are no remarkable points coming forward.

The data of the success factor *pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness* and the success indicator *percentage of vacancy in a retail area* are shown in table 26. When Bataviastad and Paddepoel are excluded, there exists a significant correlation.

	Pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness	Percentage of vacancy in a retail area
Veendam	2	21,5
Meppel	3	13,9
Drachten	4	12,5
Hoogeveen	3	10,8
Heerenveen	4	9,1
Kampen	4	7,9
Sneek	4	7,4

Table 26. Overview of data about the pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness and percentage of vacancy in a retail area in the different retail areas.

Table 26. shows that Veendam has the lowest ranking on the success factor *pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness* and the highest percentage of vacancy. The reason why it has the lowest value on the factor pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness is because the limited space for pederstrians. In addition, the retail area has no clear entry points. And it stands out that there is no clear and transparent integration and configuration between different parts of the centre. The qualitative research shows that these problems are noticed and interventions will be implemented to improve this situation. By creating a more compact retail area, the integration between the different parts of the retail area is better and it is more attractive to walk around. Moreover, some renovations and redesigns in the retail area in Veendam are done to make this more attractive and accessible for pedestrians. There will also redesigns be done, to improve the situation for parking. In other retail areas, there is also a strong focus on creating a more compact retail area what should positively influence the attractivity the area for pedestrians. Furthermore, in many other retail areas, renovations and redesigns are often focused on improving the accessibility of a retail area.

The data of the factor *pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness* and the success indicator *percentage of vacancy in a retail area* are shown in table 27. When Bataviastad and Paddepoel are excluded, there is a significant correlation.

	Considered as an authentic and unique place	Percentage of vacancy in a retail area
Veendam	1	21,5
Meppel	2	13,9
Drachten	2	12,5
Hoogeveen	1	10,8
Heerenveen	3	9,1
Kampen	4	7,9
Sneek	4	7,4

Table 27. Overview of data about the success factor *considered as an authentic and unique place* and percentage of vacancy in a retail area in the different retail areas.

The retail areas with the highest rankings on the success factor *considered as an authentic and unique place,* also have the lowest percentage of vacancy. In these retail areas, the identity is mainly based on their historic characteristics and features. The interviewees told that the historic buildings and other features create the identity of these retail areas. Several aspects of the retail area, like local shops or activities are linked to the historic identity of these retail areas. Mr. Tameling, who is involved in the retail area in the centre of Kampen, states that the identity of the centre of Kampen is strongly promoted on several ways. It could be stated that an identity based on the centre where the retail area is located, has a positive impact on the occupancy rate of shops. In many other retail areas, the identity is based on unique and positive qualities of the retail area, which are not directly related to history of, or a story about the retail area. In a few cases, there is a process going on of investing the unique characteristics of the retail area. When one looks at this significant regression, it could be stated that an identity based on historic elements, positively influences the success of a retail area.

4.4.4. Theoretical explanation of the interview outcomes

In this paragraph, a connection is made between the outcomes of the interviews and the theoretical framework. The aim of this is to get an answer on the main question of this research: *What are the determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas which can cope with changing contexts?* It is complicated to state to which extent, the factors are determining for being resilient and adaptive. It is complicated because resilient and adaptation are complex terms and its related factors are difficult to determine. However the outcomes of the interviews in relation to the theoretical framework can give be useful to give a good insight in these factors. Some differences between retail areas, based on the findings in the literature about resilience and adaptation, could be described and explained.

The negative success indicator, long-term structural retail vacancy could be a proper indicator of retail resilience. In contrast to friction retail vacancy, structural retail vacancy is considered as damaging for retail areas and is considered as an indicator that shows if a retail area is resilient or not. There are no quantitative data that explain if a retail area is confronted by structural vacancy or if the vacancy is friction in nature. However, during some interviews there was stated something about the nature of retail vacancy. For example, the interviewees of the cases of Heerenveen and Veendam stated that their retail areas were confronted by structural retail vacancy. The interviewees of Drachten and Bataviastad stated that the retail vacancy is more friction in nature. However, this is not substantiated quantitatively. The evidence found so far makes it difficult to make statements about factors causing resilient and less resilient retail areas. Therefore, an explanation about the differences between the retail areas with respect to the factors contributing to resilience is done. These factors are based on findings in the literature. An overview is made of these factors in the next part of this paragraph.

Reorganizing and responding to exogenous factors

An important factor that is mentioned in the theoretical framework for a resilient and adaptive retail area is the ability to reorganize and respond to changing exogenous factors. According to Balsas (2004), retail resilience is about the ability of retail systems to remain its functions and identity while to be well capable to deal with, and adapt to changes, crises or shocks which could be described as 'societal changes' or 'exogenous factors'. The exogenous factors which are mentioned in the theoretical framework and also come forward in the interviews, are: the increasing online shopping and the economic recession of last decade.

Several retail areas respond to these changing developments by creating a more *compact* retail area. The changing exogenous factors result in more retail vacancy and less visitors. Therefore, retail areas realized that a more compact retail area is desired, the area where retail is located will be decreased and there will be higher concentration of retail. In the retail areas in the centres of Heerenveen, Drachten, Sneek, Hoogeveen, Meppel and Veendam, a more compact retail area is mentioned as an aim. Several measures are taken to realize this aim. These measures are described in paragraph 4.4.1.

Another way retail areas respond to changing exogenous factors is by focussing more on *entertainment* and *leisure*. As reaction to the changing exogenous factors, there is a wish for a stronger integration with functions related to entertainment. As mentioned, changing exogenous factors result in more retail vacancy and less visitors. These visitors might be attracted to a larger extent by focussing more on the entertainment and leisure function of a retail area. This integration of, for example, both retail and catering comes forward in the cases of Drachten, Hoogeveen, Kampen, Meppel and in Bataviastad. Another way to increase the entertainment aspect is, organizing events and activities. This is the issue in the cases of Kampen, Hoogeveen, Sneek and Veendam.

These ways of responding to the changing exogenous factors in retail areas could be considered as a way of *reorganization*. The retail areas have found different ways of working as response to the changing exogenous factors, while the main function of the retail area remains the same.

Policy and stakeholderso

Another factor that is mentioned for resilient and adaptive retail areas, is the way a retail area is approached by institutional actors. A response to changing exogenous factors is finding new ways of planning and governing in a retail area. Fernandes & Chamusca (2014) mention that planning and policy are the central elements of retail resilience. Planning and policy are, according to them, considered as necessary to change and adapt space to all threats and pressures from exogenous factors. It comes forward that a retail area exists of various contexts and actors and therefore involving different stakeholders of these subsystems, is considered as important. It is important that these different stakeholders together create 'institutions' to respond to changing developments in the retail area and to maintain and improve the qualities of the retail area. Therefore, involving and informing a diversity of stakeholders in the decision-making process, could result in more resilient retail area. A broad involvement of stakeholders is relevant. Policy concening a retail area should be based on critical deliberation and consensus building. A broad supported vision about the retail area results in more resilience, according to the theoretical framework.

In every case, there is the aim to involve and cooperate with stakeholders. The most often stakeholders are the municipality, entrepreneurs and real-estate-owners. the retail areas in the centre of Meppel, Drachten, Sneek, Heerenveen and Hoogeveen have a centre manager, appointed to bring these stakeholder together and to facilitate the involvement and cooperation.

There is a variety of cooperation. In some retail areas, cooperation with, and involvement of stakeholders takes place in the pre-planning phase. This kind of involvement has a determining character. However, in other retail areas there is a more limited form of involvement, what is highlighted in paragraph 4.4.1.

All retail areas have found ways to cooperate with, and involve different stakeholders of the retail area. However, the extent to which this involvement takes place, differs. This involvement of different stakeholders with their own visions and ideas, could result in broadly supported vision on the retail area. Concluding, a broad involvement and cooperation could result in more resilient and adaptive retail areas.

Identity and place-based approaches

Another factor that comes forward in the theoretical framework is the identity of a retail area and the *place-based approaches* that are related to this identity. Place-based approaches are linked to place branding and marketing strategies of a place. These strategies could contribute to regeneration of declined places, according to Barata-Salguerio and Chamusca (2014). Creating and marketing the uniqueness of a retail area, is considered as a factor of a retail area to respond to exogenous factors.

The outcomes of the interviews show that retail areas that are located in a historic city centre, like Meppel, Sneek and Kampen, derive their identity from this historic context. Other retail areas base their identity and unique characteristics on other qualities and elements more directly related to the retail function, which also could be considered as unique strengths. In the cases of Heerenveen and

Veendam, there are currently processes going on, with stakeholders, to describe the identity of the retail area.

Related to the identity aspect, are the aspects of marketing and tourism. It comes forward that the cases of Hoogeveen and Kampen put a strong emphasis on marketing of the retail. These retail areas have their own specialized organization for city marketing. Bataviastad is also putting a lot of emphasis on marketing, with special attention for tourists.

A retail area can make strong use of their identity, by focussing on tourism. Kampen and Bataviastad use strongly their identity in relation to the focus on tourism. Several shops and functions are related to this focus on tourism. In these retail areas, the number of visitors is rising the last five years. In other retail areas, this focus on tourism comes to a more limited extent forward.

Focusing on identity and place branding comes forward in several retail areas to a different extent. Although there are differences in the way the identity is used, it can be said that by a strong focus on having a unique identity and marketing this identity, a more resilient and adaptive retail area could be realized.

Diversity

A last factor that is mentioned what could influence the resilience and adaptiveness in a retail area, is *diversity.* This diversity is influenced by different kind of retailers and firms. Other influencing aspects, are a variety in functions, ownership, size, and pricing (Dolega and Celinsk-Janowicz, 2015). Dolega and Celinsk-Janowicz state that diversified economic structures in retail area are perceived as more resilient.

There exist differences between retail areas in the extent to which the stakeholders are actively involved in creating diversity. In some retail areas, this is mainly considered as a market-led process, however, in other retail areas, there is actively looked for new retail firms or other functions that could be a valuable addition to the retail area. In the case of Hoogeveen, there is another view on this aspect. In Hoogeveen, there is a focus on local, who are already located the city, and regional entrepreneurs. These entrepreneurs are encouraged to innovate and diversify their retail activities. Another special situation with respect to this factor exists in Bataviastad. Only retail firms with an outlet function are permitted to settle in Batavistad, because of the alignment with the retail area in the city centre of Lelystad. It is strictly regulated what kind of shops are added to Bataviastad. Another point that is related to diversity in retail areas, is creating the opportunity for consumers to do combination visits. This means that there are supermarkets at the edge of the retail area and shops with a more recreational function are allocated in the centre. The idea behind this is that there is a natural sequence of doing groceries and recreationally shopping. This approach comes explicitly forward in the cases of Veendam and Heerenveen. In paragraph 4.4.2, the factor *diversity* is more elaborately explained.

It can be said that diversity in firms, functions and other aspects of a retail area contributes to resilience and adaptation of these retail areas. In some retail areas, special attention is paid to this aspect. However, in other retail areas this is considered as a market-led process.

4.4.5. Overview of findings

Figure 41. shows a model that provides an overview of the findings in this research. It shows the different findings and the relationships between the different parts of the research: the theoretical, the quantitative and the qualitative part. The pillars in the model show the relations between these parts.

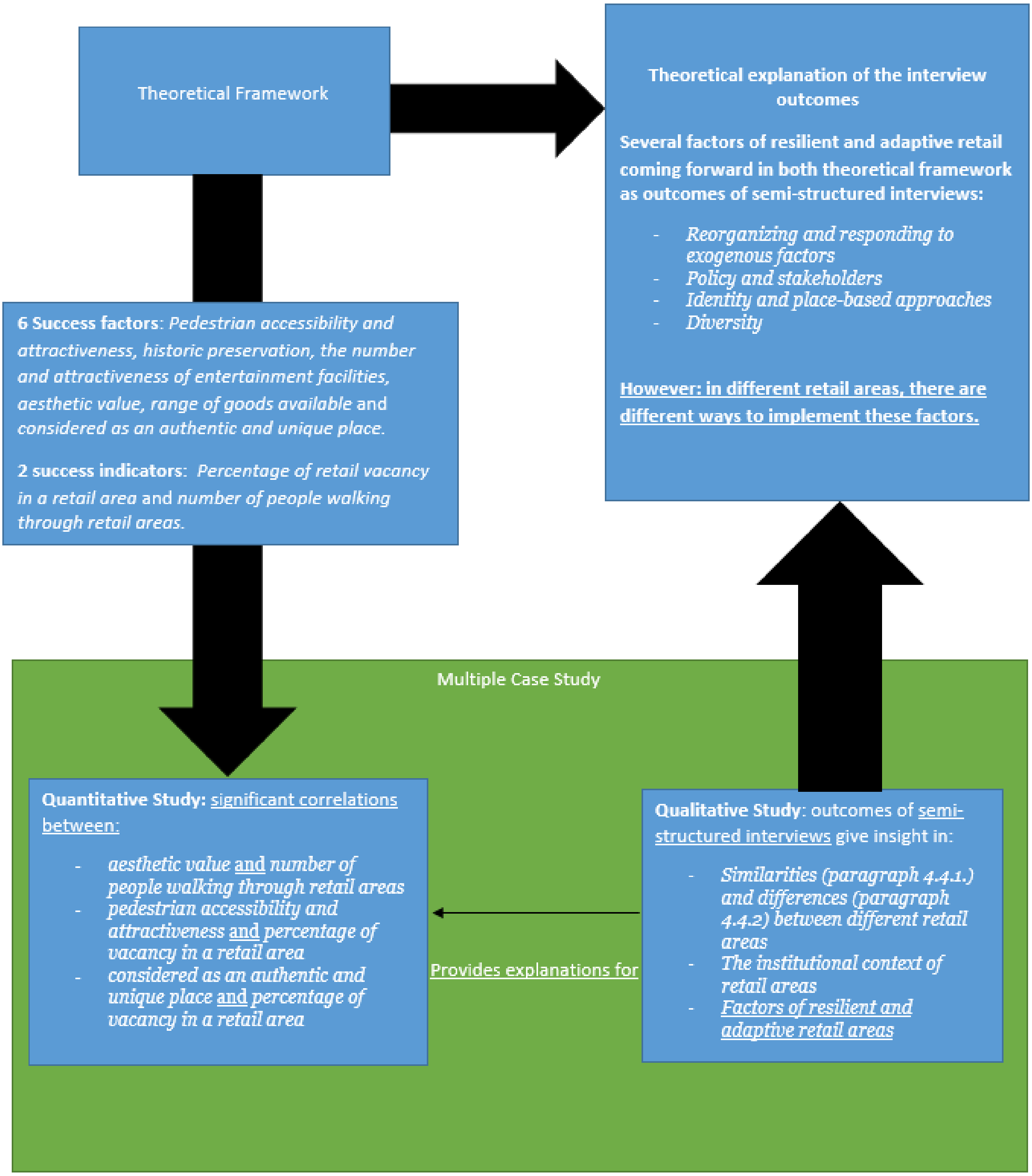


Figure 41. Overview of the findings and relationships between different parts of this research.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The discussion and conclusion exist of different parts. Firstly there is elaborated on the research. There is focused on the outcomes of the research and the connection between the different parts of this research: based on this, a conclusion is drawn. Besides, there is elaborated on the generalization of the findings and the contribution of this study to the planning theory and practice. The last part of the discussion exists of shortcomings and limitations of this research and recommendations for future research.

5.1. Research

This research focuses on the challenge to get insight in the chances and possibilities for retail areas which are less well capable to deal with changing contexts and what the role of local policy makers could be in this challenge. The aim of this research is to find out possibilities for adaptive and resilient retail areas which can cope with changing contexts. The main question of the research is: *What are the determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas which can cope with changing contexts?* Three secondary questions are composed which are in relation with this main question. These secondary questions are:

- *Which factors have impact on the performance of retail areas?*
- *Which factors are determining for the difference between successful and less successful retail areas?*
- *What role does local policy have in creating resilient and adaptive retail areas?*

Firstly, a literature research is done to get insight in these research questions and relevant aspects related to it. Afterwards, an empirical study is conducted and data are collected. A multiple case study is conducted and there is focused on 9 cases. These 9 cases are retail areas in the northern part of the Netherlands. Seven of these cases are located in a city centre, and two 'unique' cases outside retail areas are included. The empirical research focuses on these 9 cases. Data used in this research are data obtained by Locatus, data are obtained by observations in the retail areas and data are gained by interviews with local policy makers and centre managers who are actively involved in the retail areas. Due to the data of Locatus, insight was obtained in the success indicators, the number of visitors in the retail areas and the percentage of retail vacancy. By observations insights were gained in the success factors which might influence the success indicators. These success factors are: *pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness, historic preservation, the number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities, aesthetic value, range of goods available* and *considered as an authentic and unique place.* These factors are discussed in different articles and are highlighted in paragraph 2.4.3. Observations in retail areas are done to assign values to the success factors to these success factors. Afterwards, a Spearman's Rank Order Correlation is run to find out if there exist a significant relationship between the success factors and success indicators. Furthermore, interviews have been held with local policy makers and centre managers of the selected retail areas, about their role in revitalizing the retail areas and their points of view are explored about the determining factors of resilient and adaptive retail areas.

The first stage of the research is the theoretical framework. The highlights of this theoretical frameworks are summarized in the following part. The *retail sector* is, a sector which is oriented on the sale of good and merchandises without transformation. This sector is directly oriented on the consumer. Retail areas are confronted by effects of societal change which have an important influence on retail areas. These changes are not inherent to a particular place and could be described as *exogenous factors.* These factors are external to the firm and beyond the control of the firm. These exogenous factors result in less visitors and more vacancy in retail areas. The '*vacancy rate'* in retail areas and the '*number of people which are walking through a retail area'* are in this thesis considered as the *success indicators* to determine the successfulness of a retail area. These indicators provide insight in the vitality and viability of a particular retail area. Despite of the exogenous factors, some retail areas are able to remain successful. These areas are described as *resilient* and *adaptive* retail areas. *Resilient* and *adaptive* retail areas could be seen as retail areas which are well able to deal with (exogenous) changes, crises or shocks and have the capacity to adapt to this. Attractivity could be considered as a basis for resilient and adaptive retail areas. There are several factors that influence this attractivity. Factors which come forward are: *pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness*, *historic preservation*, t*he number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities*, a*esthetic value*, *range of goods available* and c*onsidered as an authentic and unique place*. However, resilient and adaptive retail areas are able to remain attractive and successful. For resilient and adaptive retail areas applies that there is the capacity to *re-organize*, while keeping its essential functions, structures, mechanisms and identity and continuing their development patterns in similar and reinvigorated ways. *Planning* and *policy* are central elements of resilience. Different contexts, stakeholders and institutions influence the extent to which retail areas are resilient. Involving and informing stakeholders in the decision making process, therefore results in more resilient areas. Furthermore, *creating an identity and focusing on city marketing* is mentioned as a factor of a resilient and adaptive retail area. A last factors that comes forward is developing *diversity* in a retail area. Developing diversity has to be considered an important factor for resilient and adaptive retail areas.

In the empirical research, several aspects come forward. In the quantitative research, a Spearman's Rank Order Correlation is run to find out if there is significant correlation between the success indicators: *percentage of retail vacancy in a retail area* and *number of people walking through retail areas*, which are highlighted in the theoretical framework in paragraph 2.4.2, and the success factors: *pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness*, *historic preservation*, t*he number and attractiveness of entertainment facilities*, a*esthetic value*, *range of goods available* and c*onsidered as an authentic and unique place,* which are highlighted in the theoretical framework in paragraph 2.4.3. The quantitative research shows that when all retail areas are included in the statistical test there exists a significant correlation between *aesthetic value* and *number of people walking through retail areas.* When one looks at only the city centres which are included in this research, so Bataviastad and Paddepoel are excluded, there exists a significant correlation between *pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness* and *percentage of vacancy in a retail area* and there is a significant correlation exists between *considered as an authentic and unique place* and *percentage of vacancy in a retail area.* It can be said that these 3 factors are having influence on the success and attractiveness of retail areas in the researched cases. The interviews give explanations of these outcomes. It shows that the involved actors of the successful and attractive retail areas, put emphasis on these determining factors.

After this quantitative part of the research, there is conducted a qualitative research, based on interviews. This qualitative research reveals the causal connections, in relation to changes and developments in retail areas. In most retail areas, it comes forward that the most important actors of the retail area, are; entrepreneurs, real-estate owners and the municipality. These actors are all mentioned in paragraph 2.2. about the institutional context of a retail area. However, in this paragraph also other actors are mentioned, an example is the *consumer.* Cachinho (2014) states that the consumers are constantly renewing their wishes, needs and desires. Therefore it might be assumed that consumers should be taken into account, because they have a determining influence on the retail sector. However, during the interviews, the consumers were not often mentioned as important actors.

Proper governance and the relationship between the different actors with the ability to anticipate and to make plans is, according to Barata-Salgueiro (2011), an important factor for resilient retail areas. The interaction and cooperation between the three actors: entrepreneurs, real-estate owners and the municipality cause the changes and developments in retail areas. The extent to which cooperation between these actors take place, differs between retail areas.

Looking at the outcomes of the interviews, it is striking that on the one hand, there are factors that apply to all cases and on the other hand, there are factors that only apply to a part of the cases. Generally applicable factors that are mentioned in most interviews, are the focus on a more compact retail area, focus on entertainment and leisure and cooperation between different stakeholders in a retail area. However the way this cooperation takes place between the different retail areas is different between the different retail areas. This is also the case for creating a possibility to do combination visits and the way competition with other retail areas is experienced.

Besides these aspects, several aspects come forward which show differences between retail areas. One of these aspects is: *creating diversity.* Some retail areas are actively putting emphasis on creating this diversity. However. other retail areas state that this is the task of the market. A second aspect that stands out is the extent to which *physical interventions* are taking place in retail areas. In some retail areas large physical interventions took place or will take place, while in other retail areas, only limited interventions are taking place. Another aspect that differs across retail areas is: *identity and unique characteristics,* retail areas which are located in a historic city centre derive their identity from its historic characteristics, however, other retail areas describe their identity and unique characteristics based on their qualities and other elements of the retail area which could be considered as unique strengths. Other retail areas are actively looking to characteristics which describe their identity. Another aspect that shows differences between retail areas, is the *focus on marketing* and *tourism*. In several retail areas, there is a strong emphasis on these aspects. There are marketing organizations that are focused on these aspects. However, in other retail areas there is not strongly focused on these aspects.

Several connections between the outcomes and the quantitative and qualitative research come forward. As mentioned, there is a significant correlation between *aesthetic value* and *number of people walking through retail areas.* When one looks at only the city centres which are included in this research, there is also a significant correlation between *pedestrian accessibility and attractiveness* and *percentage of vacancy in a retail area,* and a significant correlation exists between *considered as an authentic and unique place* and *percentage of vacancy in a retail area.* A confirmation of the outcomes of the quantitative research has been found in the qualitative data. It can be said that the involved actors of a retail area put a strong emphasis on the factors that have a high ranking. The outcomes of the interviews explain the significant correlations to a certain extent.

To answer the main question, a link is made between the factors about resilient and adaptive retail areas , described in paragraph 2.6.1. of the theoretical framework, and the outcomes of the interviews. A first factor that comes forward is *reorganizing and responding to exogenous factors.* This factor is described by Balsas (2004) as the capacity of a system to re-organize, while keeping its essential functions, structure, mechanisms and identity to continue their development patterns in similar and reinvigorated ways. As mentioned in the theoretical framework, a point of criticism about this conception is that reorganization does not result in resilience and adaptive retail areas *by definition;* reorganization can happen in different ways and also may result in negative consequences. There is no doubt that all retail areas are aware of the changing exogenous factors and have found alternative solutions to respond. A way that is often mentioned, is the creation of a more compact retail area. The space where retail is located will be decreased and the concentration of shops is increased. Another way that is mentioned in the most retail areas, is focusing on entertainment and leisure. This is done by, for example, focusing more on catering or other entertainment functions. Several other areas try to improve the entertainment and leisure by organizing activities and events. These ways of responding to the changing exogenous factors in the retail areas could be considered as a way of *reorganization,* as described by Balsas. A second factor is about *policy and stakeholders.* This factor is described and explained by Fernandes & Chamusca (2014) who state that planning and policy are the central elements of retail resilience. Planning and policy are, according to them, necessary to change and adapt space to all threats and pressures from exogenous factors that are described in paragraph 2.3. A retail area exists of various contexts and actors, and therefore involving different stakeholders of different subsystems is considered as important. In all cases, there is cooperation and interaction between the different stakeholders. However, there is much variety in this cooperation and interaction. In some retail areas, cooperation with, and involvement of stakeholders, takes place in the pre-planning phase and their input has a determining character. However, in other retail areas, involvement and cooperation happens to a more limited extent. A third factor for resilient and adaptive retail areas that comes forward is the *identity and place-based approaches*. Barata-Salgueiro and Erkip (2014) mention the importance of these place-based approaches and state that these approaches have been increasingly involved in the regeneration of declining places. Creating and marketing the identity, is considered as a positive factor for resilient and adaptive retail areas. The interview outcomes show that retail areas that are located in a historic city centre, derive their identity from this historic context. Other retail areas base their identity on qualities and other elements which are more directly connected with the shopping function. In some other retail areas, is currently a process going on, with stakeholders, to find the identity of the retail area. Furthermore, in some cases, there is a focus on marketing the retail area and on the touristic aspect of the retail area, while this is not the case in other retail areas. A last positive factor for resilient and adaptive retail areas that comes forward in the theoretical framework is *diversity.* Dolega and Celinska-Janowicz (2015) state that diversified economic structures are perceived as more resilient: the presence of different retailers and a diversity of local supply is a way a retail area can distinct itself. There are differences between retail areas in the extent to which the stakeholders are actively involved in creating diversity. In some retail areas this is mainly considered as a market-led process, while in other retail areas, there is actively looked for new retail firms or other functions which could be a valuable addition to the retail area.

In short, it turns out that the factors for resilient and adaptive retail areas that are mentioned in the theoretical framework, come forward in the different cases. Stakeholders in most retail areas wish to apply these factors in an optimal way. The retail areas find own ways to implement these factors. As discussed before, there are similarities and differences in these ways between retail areas, but there also exist differences between retail areas. The findings show that the factors that are mentioned in the theoretical framework are widely interpretable. It could be stated that the determining factors for resilient and adaptive retail areas exist of several *subfactors.* However, it is difficult to state which factors could be assigned to developments in retail areas because there is no clear way to measure retail *resilience* and *adaptiveness.* A recommendation for future research is to focus on this.

5.2. Generalization of Findings

In this part of the discussion, the generalization of findings is discussed. About the generalization of the findings of this research, several things could be said. A multiple case study is done, the findings of the empirical research give insights in the cases where research is done. These findings explain the factors which are contributing to resilience and adaptiveness in these retail areas. When one takes this into account, it is doubtful if the findings of this research are applicable to retail areas in other regions or countries. Therefore, it may be important to be cautious with generalizing the findings of this research. In retail areas in other regions with different contexts, other factors may come forward which have a significant influence on the resilience and adaptiveness of retail areas. However, there are two aspects which may nuance this argument:

Firstly, a literature research is done before the empirical research, that is mainly based on international articles. This literature research provides the framework for the empirical research. The international articles which are used in this framework, are based on research which is done in other contexts than the contexts where the empirical research is done. Despite of these different contexts, links are found between the findings in the literature study and the empirical research. Taking this into account, it may be assumed that the findings of this research could also be applied to retail areas in other contexts to a certain extent.

Secondly, research is done in nine different retail areas in the relatively north of the Netherlands. The data of the different areas are compared to each other and these comparisons are contributing to the conclusion of this research. Similarities and differences between these nine retail areas come forward. The findings of this research could be used as a framework for research in other retail areas in other contexts. A broad range of factors, with different implementations, across the nine retail areas are found in this research. Scholars who will do research about the resilience and adaptiveness of retail areas in other context, could use the findings of this research as a framework for finding similarities and differences between retail areas.

With respect to the generalization of the findings, one should be aware of the fact that the findings of this research are mainly based on a multiple case study, and that the outcomes are mainly explaining the factors which are contributing to resilience and adaptiveness in the researched retail areas. However, the two remarks above explain that this argument should be nuanced and that the findings of this research might be applicable to other contexts to a certain extent.

5.3. Contribution of the study for planning theory and practice

In this part of the discussion, the contribution of this research for the planning theory and practice is discussed.

The retail sector could be considered as an important element in the planning theory. Jane Jacobs (1961) describes streets and sidewalks as the most vital organs of a city. She states that it is important that these places look attractive and are frequently used by pedestrians. It makes sense that this is also the case for retail areas, since retail areas are mainly existing of streets and sidewalks. It could be stated that an important point of attention of retail areas is that they are considered as vital and attractive places. A challenge of planning theory should be finding ways that contribute to making these retail areas attractive and vital.

Before doing the empirical research, several articles are studied and in some of these articles factors which are having influence on resilient and adaptive retail areas, are mentioned. However, in none of these articles an overview of factors contributing to resilience and adaptiveness is provided. In this thesis, research is done about these factors. Based on both a literature, as an empirical research, an overview of factors which might influence the resilience and adaptiveness of retail areas, and aspects related to these factors, is provided. This overview could therefore be considered as a contribution for planning theory.

With respect to planning practice, the findings of this study might be relevant for retail areas which are confronted with increasing retail vacancy and a decreasing number of visitors. In the introduction it comes forward that this is an increasing problem in the Netherlands; the retail vacancy in the Netherlands is rising the last decade (Compendium voor de Leefomgeving, 2016). It comes forward that the number of visitors and the retail vacancy in a retail area have a negative influence on the vitality of these areas (Baker & Wood, 2009). This research provides findings that may provide insights for these retail areas which are confronted with these problems. It might provide opportunities for the stakeholders in these retail areas to tackle these problems.

5.4. Recommendations for future research

In this part of the discussion, the shortcomings and limitations of the research are discussed. Based on this shortcomings and limitations, recommendations for future research are done.

5.4.1. Measuring resilience and adaptiveness

In this research there is not a clear way to measure resilience and adaptiveness of a retail area. This is approached from a more descriptive way. A description of resilience and adaptiveness is done in the theoretical framework. Based on interviews, is it researched which factors determine this resilience and adaptiveness in the researched cases. However, this is not a clear way to *measure* resilience and adaptiveness. Future research could focus on this, and find a proper method to determine whether a retail area is resilient or adaptive.

5.4.2. Other success factors

In this research, there is chosen to focus on six success factors. These factors are chosen because they are often mentioned in literature and they are well measurable. However, there are more factors that are influencing the success of retail areas. Some of the factors could be related to consumers perceptions about retail areas. Because of time and capacity reasons, there is chosen to focus on the factors that are included in this research. Future research could focus on the other factors that have influence on retail areas. An example may be the consumer perceptions about retail areas, which could be measured by for example surveys.

5.4.3. Focusing on entrepreneurs and real-estate owners

Interviews in this research are done with policy makers and city managers. However, entrepreneurs and real-estate owners are also important stakeholders of retail areas. These stakeholders might have their own points of view about developments in the retail area. This may provide different insights in retail areas than the insights given in this research. Focusing on these stakeholders and finding out what their points of view are, is recommended for future research.

5.4.4. Geographical context

This research focuses on 9 cases that are located in the relatively north of the Netherlands. However, this might give a restricted view about retail areas, because all outcomes are related to the context of these 9 cases. This research only explains something about this part of the Netherlands. Future research, therefore, might be focussing on a broader context, by for example studying the retail sector on a national or international level.

5.4.5. Distinction between friction and structural vacancy

The data used in this research show no difference between friction and structural retail vacancy. However, this is a relevant difference: structural vacancy could be considered as an explanatory factor for retail resilience. Therefore, future research could focus on the difference between these kinds of retail vacancy in a retail area.

6. Reflection

In this chapter, there is reflected on the research. This reflection is divided into two parts; firstly, there is elaborated on the outcomes and findings of the research. Secondly, the process of writing this thesis is reflected.

6.1. Reflection on the outcomes

Generally, the outcomes of this research seem convincing; the relation between the empirical outcomes and the literature seems logical. Besides, the outcomes are well explainable and good to understand. However, there are also some points of criticism with respect to the methodology that is used and the associated outcomes of this research. These points are elaborated in this paragraph.

A first point of criticism is the degree of subjectivity during the observations for success factors in the different retail areas. Despite the fact that the assessment criteria are based on findings in the literature, and values of the success factors are assessed accurately and objectively as possible, it is impossible to avoid subjectivity to a certain extent. Different scholars might interpret the assessment criteria on different ways, even if these assessment criteria are the same and based on theoretical findings.

Another point of criticism is the fact that in this research no way was found to *measure* resilience and adaptiveness. This is also described in paragraph 5.4.1. Because of this, it could not be claimed if some retail areas are more resilient and adaptive than other retail areas. Therefore, a descriptive analysis is done to get insight in the factors that contribute to resilient and adaptive retail areas. A clear way to measure the resilience and adaptiveness of retail areas would have increased the persuasiveness of the outcomes.

Another point that is worth mentioning, is the fact that within data about vacancy, no distinction is made between structural and friction vacancy. It stands out in the theoretical framework that these different kinds of retail vacancy have different impacts on a retail area: structural retail vacancy has a more severe impact on a retail area than friction vacancy has. This difference is not included in the data about retail vacancy. This should be taken into account, when interpreting the outcomes of the research.

A last point is the small number of cases and the accuracy of the statistical tests that are used in this research. In this research, a multiple case study is done that exists of nine cases. There is searched for possible significant correlations between the different success factors and success indicators. Because of this small number, a non-parametric test is used; a Spearman's Rank Order Correlation has been run. Making use of nine cases has the consequence that outliers could have a strong influence on the outcomes of the statistical tests. This should be taken into account with respect to the outcomes.

6.2. Reflection of the process

In this paragraph, there is reflected on the process of writing this thesis. Because this paragraph elaborates on own experiences and learning effects, I am writing this paragraph in the first person. I am writing about the learning process during this research.

The ideas and approaches for the research were composed in April 2017 and in March 2018 this thesis has been finished. Most things went quite well, at the beginning, I made plan for this thesis and during the completion of the thesis, there was mainly retained to this plan, besides some small adjustments. Before the summer of 2017, I spent time on writing the theoretical framework. The process had its ups and downs. Sometimes I found out that finding the definitions of some basic terminology seemed quite difficult. For example, finding a good and accurate definition for the *retail sector* seemed quite difficult. This showed me that it is important to have a good understanding of the different components, the research is focused on.

Another difficulty of composing a theoretical framework, is creating an integrated framework. Sometimes the relation of some parts of the theoretical frameworks to the rest did not seem clear to me. I found out it is important to always have a clear conception of the relation between the different parts of the theoretical framework, to use it at as a good basic framework for the rest of the research.

Sometimes I was searching for articles for my theoretical framework, and some information seemed difficult to find. This happened when I wanted to write paragraph 2.5.: *Uneven development and boom and bust cycles in the retail sector.* I could not find articles about different stages of development of retail areas. Therefore I tried to do this on a different way. I focused mainly on ‘boom and bust cycles’ of cities as a whole, and I tried to connect these findings to the developments of retail areas. This learned me that sometimes it is important to think out of the box and think in different directions when you cannot directly find the information you need.

About creating a methodology, I learned that it is important to have a strong conception of the methods I want to use in contrast to other methods. I tried mainly to base my choices of methodology on articles I found, instead of having an own conceptualization of the methods I used. I gained knowledge about to have a strong comprehensive idea why one is choosing for certain methodologies, before creating a methodology.

About the empirical research, and obtaining the results of the research, I learned that it is important to have a clear conception what to focus on. It seemed important to make a clear distinction between important and less important factors, what was an important point of attention during the observations. When you are visiting a retail area, there are many things to focus on. However, focusing on too many aspects of a retail area, makes comparing the different retail areas more complicated. Therefore, it is important to know what to focus on in a retail area, in advance. I tried this by creating assessment criteria and hold on to this assessment criteria during the observations.

During the interviews, I noticed that interviewees have their own interpretations of different questions. This could be problematic because it becomes more difficult to compare the different answers of the interviewees. Therefore, it seems to be important to have an interview guide and a good understanding of the kind of information you need. Besides, it is important to lead the interview in a good way, and ask questions in different ways when the questions are interpreted in a different way by interviewees.

Another issue that seemed to be difficult, was the *planning* of writing the thesis. From the start, I thought that I needed less time than it took at the end. It is important to deal with uncertainties and unexpected things. Many things did not go the way I planned before and therefore, it took more time than I expected before. Next time, I would take into account that writing a thesis will take more time than I expected at the begin . I will plan more time for *uncertainties.*

About doing research in general, I learned that it is important to have an integrative idea about the research. It is important to be all the time aware of the cohesion of the different parts of the thesis. The different parts need to reinforce each other. For example, when I was writing the theoretical framework, I needed to be aware of the cohesion between different parts of this and the utility of it for the empirical research. I had to take into account during all processes of the research, why some parts of the thesis were important and what it would contribute to the research as a whole.

In conclusion, I gained knowledge about many different aspects of doing research. The most important aspects I learned, are: being aware during all stages of the research of what I am doing in relation to other parts of the research and being aware of achieving the information I need the most to answer the research question. Besides, I noticed that it is important to think in different ways when things go not as supposed. With respect to planning the different stages of the research, it is important to deal with uncertainties and unexpected factors that may have a strong influence on the planning process.

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Appendix a. Ordinal Likert-scales of factors of retail areas

Pedestrian Accessibility and Attractiveness

Low accessibility and attractiveness

High accessibility and attractiveness

Historic Preservation

`Not preserved

Well preserved, important feature of the retail area

Entertainment Facilities

Limited number of entertainment and unattractive

High number of entertainment facilities and attractive

Range of goods available

Low range of goods

High range of goods

Aesthetic value

Low aesthetic value

High aesthetic value

Considered as an unique and authentic place

Not unique and inauthentic

Very unique and authentic

Appendix b. Distinction of retail firms

Distinction of 81 kind of retail firms by CBS (2012), used for the success factor *range of products*.

4711	Supermarkten; niet-gespecialiseerde winkels waarbij food overheerst
47191	Warenhuizen
47192	Winkels met een algemeen assortiment (geen warenhuizen)
4721	Winkels in aardappelen, groenten en fruit
47221	Winkels in vlees en vleeswaren
47222	Winkels in wild en gevogelte
4723	Winkels in vis en schaal- en weekdieren
47241	Winkels in brood en banket
47242	Winkels in chocolade en suikerwerk
4725	Winkels in dranken (geen zuivel)
4726	Winkels in tabaksproducten en rokersbenodigdheden
47291	Winkels in kaas
47292	Winkels in natuurvoeding en reformartikelen
47293	Winkels in buitenlandse voedingsmiddelen
47299	Winkels gespecialiseerd in overige voedings- en genotmiddelen neg
4741	Winkels in computers, randapparatuur en software
4742	Winkels in telecommunicatieapparatuur
47431	Winkels in audio- en videoapparatuur
47432	Winkels in een algemeen assortiment van wit- en bruingoed
47511	Winkels in kledingsstoffen
47512	Winkels in huishoudtextiel
47513	Winkels in breiwol, handwerken en fournituren
47521	Winkels in ijzerwaren en gereedschappen
47522	Winkels in verf, verfwaren en behang
47523	Winkels in houten bouw- en tuinmaterialen
47524	Winkels in tegels
47525	Winkels in keukens
47526	Winkels in parket-, laminaat- en kurkvloeren
47527	Winkels gespecialiseerd in overige doe-het-zelfartikelen
47528	Bouwmarkten
4753	Winkels in vloerbedekking en gordijnen
47541	Winkels in witgoed
47542	Winkels in naai- en breimachines
47543	Winkels in overige elektrische huishoudelijke apparatuur
47544	Winkels in onderdelen voor elektrische huishoudelijke apparatuur
47591	Winkels in meubels
47592	Winkels in verlichtingsartikelen
47593	Winkels in artikelen voor woninginrichting algemeen assortiment
47594	Winkels in muziekinstrumenten
47595	Winkels in glas-, porselein- en aardewerk
47596	Winkels gespecialiseerd in overige huishoudelijke artikelen neg
47597	Winkels in huishoudelijke artikelen algemeen assortiment
4761	Winkels in boeken
4762	Winkels in kranten en tijdschriften en kantoorbehoeften
4763	Winkels in audio- en video-opnamen
47641	Winkels in fietsen en bromfietsen
47642	Winkels in watersportartikelen
47643	Winkels in sportartikelen (geen watersport)
47644	Winkels in kampeerartikelen (geen caravans)

4765	Winkels in spellen en speelgoed
47711	Winkels in herenkleding
47712	Winkels in dameskleding
47713	Winkels in bovenkleding en mode-artikelen (algemeen assortiment)
47714	Winkels in baby- en kinderkleding
47715	Winkels in babyartikelen algemeen assortiment
47716	Winkels in onderkleding, foundations ed
47717	Winkels in mode-artikelen
47718	Textielsupermarkten
47721	Winkels in schoeisel
47722	Winkels in lederwaren en reisartikelen
4773	Apotheken
47741	Winkels in drogisterij-artikelen
47742	Winkels in medische en orthopedische artikelen
4775	Winkels in cosmetica en toiletartikelen
47761	Winkels in bloemen en planten, zaden en tuinbenodigdheden
47762	Tuincentra
47763	Winkels in dieren, dierbenodigdheden en hengelsportartikelen
4777	Winkels in sieraden en uurwerken
47781	Winkels in fotografische artikelen
47782	Winkels in optische artikelen
47783	Winkels in schilderijen, lijsten, prenten, kunstvoorwerpen en religieuze artikelen
47789	Winkels gespecialiseerd in overige artikelen neg
47791	Winkels in antiek
47792	Winkels in tweedehands kleding
47793	Winkels in tweedehands goederen (geen kleding)
9521	Reparatie van consumentenelektronica
9522	Reparatie van huishoudapparaten en van werktuigen voor gebruik in huis en tuin
9523	Reparatie van schoeisel en lederwaren
9524	Reparatie en stoffering van meubels
9525	Reparatie van uurwerken en sieraden
9529	Reparatie van consumentenartikelen neg

Appendix c. Standard interview guide

Uniqueness and identity

Wat zijn de unieke karakteristieken en belangrijkste kenmerken van dit winkelgebied? → In welk opzicht onderscheidt dit winkelgebied zich van andere winkelgebieden? → Wat wordt hiermee gedaan?

Exogenous factors

In hoeverre heeft u dit winkelgebied afgelopen jaren zien veranderen (bv. Leegstand, soorten winkels, drukte, andere functies dan winkelen)? In hoeverre speelden ontwikkelingen van buitenaf hierin een rol? (crises, online shoppen) Op wat voor manier wordt er gereageerd op deze ontwikkelingen van buitenaf?

Policy and stakeholders

Zijn er onlangs beleidsmatige ingrepen geweest in het winkelgebied of bestaan hier concrete plannen voor? → Wat betreft het precies? Wat hield het concreet in? Wat gaat er veranderen? Hoe is het besluit tot stand gekomen? Als reactie waarop is het besluit genomen?)

- ➔ In hoeverre zijn stakeholders (burgers, pandeigenaren, andere belanghebbenden) betrokken in dit besluit en in hoeverre is er naar hun mening geluisterd?

Impact

In hoeverre zijn er dingen veranderd in het winkelgebied dankzij deze ingrepen? Of zijn er bepaalde positieve aspecten van het winkelgebied in stand gehouden dankzij deze ingrepen? (bv. Veranderingen in bezoekers, verandering in winkelaanbod, verschillende functies, leegstand etc.?)

Competitiveness

In hoeverre hebben ontwikkelingen in andere (concurrerende) winkelgebieden invloed op besluitvorming in dit winkelgebied?

Diverse functions

Op wat voor manier wordt beleid omtrent het winkelgebied geïntegreerd met andere facetten? (wonen, werken, infrastructuur, openbare ruimte, horeca)