



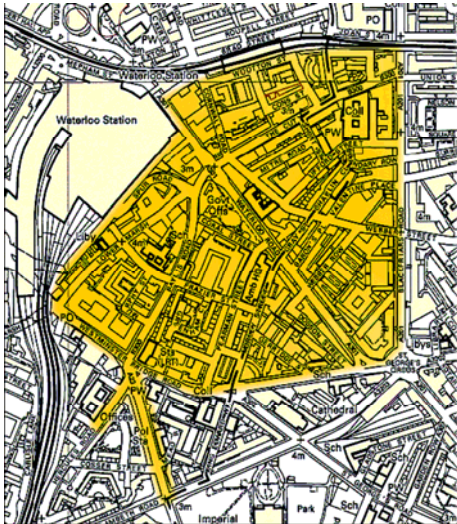
Final Perception Analysis report  
August 2005

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## 1. Introduction

This report summarises the results of the perception analysis which has been conducted with businesses in the Waterloo Quarter Business Alliance (WQBA) potential Business Improvement District (BID) area as shown below, up to 15<sup>th</sup> August 2005.



Eighty-eight interviews have been conducted face-to-face or by phone representing 107 (45%) of the 279 hereditaments in the BID area and 35% of the £17.3m total rateable value of businesses in the area. These interviews were conducted using the perception analysis questionnaire in Appendix 1.

## 2. Identifying ratepayer/potential BID voter

The perception analysis interviews were conducted with the ratepayer for 45% of the hereditaments surveyed, representing 17% of the overall electorate.

## 3. Number of staff employed

There is a great variation in the number of staff employed by the businesses in the area, ranging from 1 to over 500, although the majority are small businesses with 1-10 employees.

Number of employees	Number of hereditaments	% of sample interviewed
1-10	49	53%
11-50	28	30%
51-100	8	8.5%
100+	8	8.5%

## 4. Length of time trading in the area

One business has been trading for 149 years, two for over 90 years, and almost half of the businesses interviewed have been trading for over 10 years, indicating that the business community is relatively stable.

### **5. Awareness of Waterloo Quarter Business Alliance**

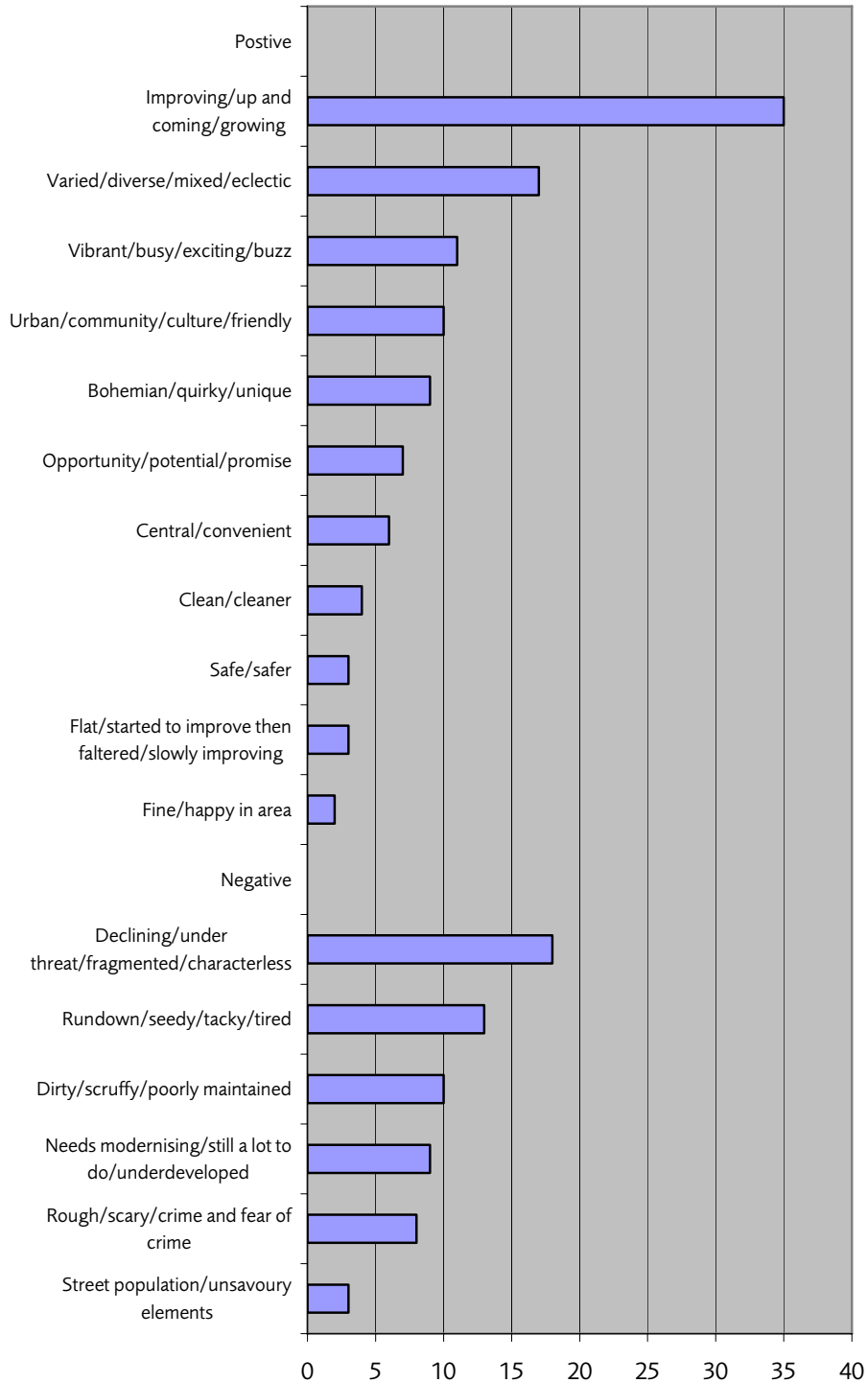
45 (42%) of the hereditaments interviewed were aware of WQBA, or its forerunner Circle Waterloo. This was 42% by the rateable value they represent indicating no great variation between small and large businesses in terms of level of engagement.

### **6. Awareness of Business Improvement Districts**

In contrast only 24 (22%) of hereditaments had heard of BIDs, and this went down to 14% by rateable value indicating, perhaps surprisingly, that smaller businesses are more aware of BIDs. Clearly more work will need to be done to explain the BID concept to businesses in the area.

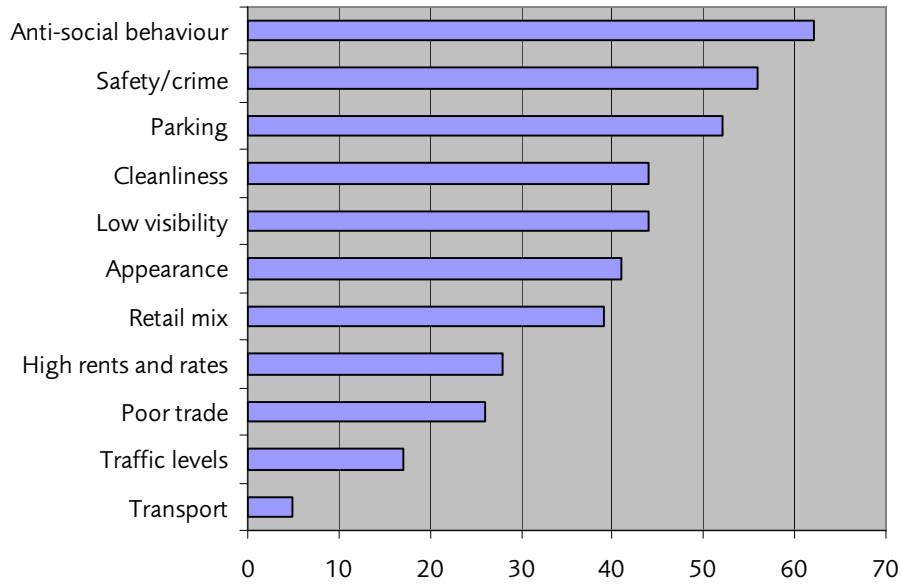
## 7. Descriptions of the area

Interviewees were asked to describe the area in three words. Whilst there was a lot of variation in the actual words chosen a number of common themes, positive and negative can be identified.



### 8. Key concerns about the area (by number of hereditaments)

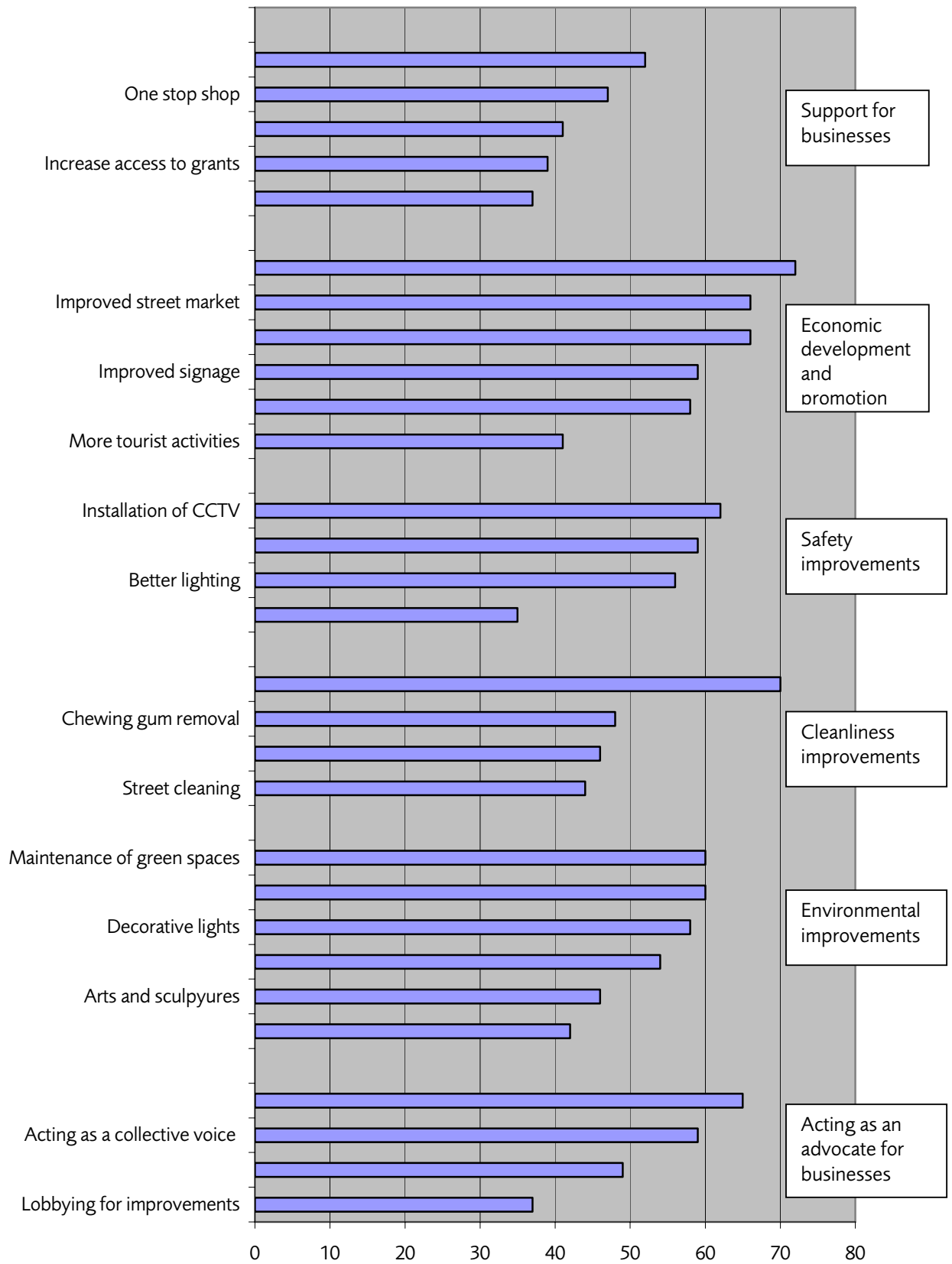
The top 5 key concerns are, in order of priority: antisocial behaviour, safety/crime, parking, cleanliness and low visibility.



### Key concerns about the area (by rateable value)

When viewed by the rateable value the priorities remain similar although bigger businesses are more concerned about the cleanliness and appearance of the area.

9. Activities and services a BID should provide (by number of hereditaments)



The top five services are improving the retail mix, removing graffiti and fly posters, improving the street market, organising events like themed markets and festivals and lobbying for extra funds to invest in improving the area.

Viewing the data by the rateable value indicates that larger businesses prioritise removing graffiti, improving the street market and the retail mix, CCTV and increasing police presence.

#### **10. Support for a BID**

84% of the hereditaments interviewed support the idea of a BID, this increased to 87% when viewed by the rateable value they represent, indicating that the larger businesses are more supportive.

Yes	No	Not sure
90	3	12

This support represents 32% of the total hereditaments in the area and 31% of the total rateable value of the area.

When asked what levy rate they would be prepared to pay only 43% of hereditaments answered this question. This represents 16% of the total.

Surprisingly the 2% levy rate was the most popular.

1% levy	13%
1.5% levy	8%
2% levy	21%



## Perception Analysis

Good morning/good afternoon

My name is xxxx from Waterloo Quarter Business Alliance, formerly Circle Waterloo. We're conducting a questionnaire on what the businesses think of the area, the work we've done so far and what other improvements you, the business, would like to see in this area.

I'd like to ask you a few questions about the local area. It should take 10-15 minutes. Your answers, along with those of all of the other businesses in this area will go towards ensuring that we make the right improvements in 2005 and beyond. Your answers will be put into a database and help form a business plan for 2006 but will remain anonymous. I'll be asking you to sign at the bottom of this form to confirm your permission for your answers to be used – this is for data protection reasons, we won't sell any of your contact details or answers.

No.	Question	Answer				
1	Name of company					
2	Position of staff member questioned	<i>(Circle one)</i> Manager    Staff    Other (please state)				
3	How many staff are employed at this address?	<i>Ask on phone where possible</i>				
4	How long have you been trading in this area?	<i>This question is not essential By phone?</i>				
5	Have you heard of /Waterloo Quarter Business Alliance/Circle Waterloo?	<i>(Circle one) By phone?</i> Yes    No    Don't know				
6	<b><i>This question is not essential</i></b>  Which projects have you heard of or seen in the area and what are your views on them?  (NB Get list of business who have had improvements eg		Good	Bad	Don't know	Not aware
		Graffiti removal				
		Emma Cons Gardens Improvements				
		Shop front improvements				
		Improved street lighting in Lower Marsh				
		Pilot Radiolink scheme				
		Retail study				
		Market management study				
		CCTV				
		Deep clean of Leake Street				
Hanging baskets						

	Honour)	...others?				
7	Have you heard of business improvement districts?	<i>(Circle one) This question is not essential</i> Yes No Don't know				
8	Describe the area in three words [eg Improving/Declining Seedy Exciting Dirty Rundown]					
9	What are your key concerns about the area?  <i>(Tick all that apply)</i>	Poor trade				
		Traffic levels				
		Parking arrangements				
		Cleanliness				
		Perception of safety/crime in the area				
		Transport facilities				
		Poor retail mix and variety of shop offer/lack of decent local facilities				
		Appearance of area				
		Anti social behaviour - rough sleepers/street drinking/begging				
		High rents/rates				
		Low visibility of the area/poor signage/lack of promotion				
Other						

**(Show calling card)**

Business Improvement Districts or BIDS were first set up in Canada thirty years ago and now successfully operate in the United States, Spain, Australia and South Africa. BIDs are a way of improving an area for businesses through activities and other services additional to those that the Council provides. The UK now has its first BIDs as well. You may have heard of Better Bankside, Heart of London Business Alliance, Paddington BID and Holborn Business Partnership.

They are led by businesses and independently run and they can provide services such as graffiti removal, area promotion, festivals and a collective voice for business. The ethos is typically 'clean and safe' but BIDs are flexible enough to implement many other initiatives as well.

The services that a BID provides are funded by the businesses within that area. If this questionnaire shows that a BID in this area could be a possibility then all of the businesses in the area will get a chance to vote yes or no for the BID. If the majority voting say yes then all of the businesses in the area would pay an extra amount based on their business rates.

Waterloo Quarter Business Alliance has been publicly funded to see if a BID would be supported in this area but this money will end in March 2006. We'd like to ensure a sustainable and predictable income for the next few years to continue to improve this area.

10	<p>If there was a BID in this area what activities would you like to see it do or <b>extra</b> services would you like to see it provide?</p> <p><i>(Tick all that apply)</i></p>	<p><b>Advocate for the area:</b>          Getting proper implementation of Council services          Lobbying for funds to invest in improving the area          Lobbying for improvements to the accessibility of the area          Acting as a collective voice</p> <hr/> <p><b>Environmental improvements like:</b>          Decorative and seasonal lights          Tubs of flowers/hanging baskets          New street furniture          Pavement and street furniture maintenance          Maintenance of green spaces          Art and sculptures in public places          Others?</p> <p><b>Cleaning initiatives like:</b>          Removing graffiti and fly-posting          Extra street cleaning          Extra rubbish collection          Chewing gum removal          Others?</p> <p><b>Safety improvements like:</b>          CCTV          Radiolink/ co-ordinating security links between businesses          More police presence          Improved lighting          Others?</p> <p><b>Economic Development and promotion activities</b>          Improvements to the street market          Attracting a bigger and better range of shops and local facilities          Marketing and promotion activities to improve trading levels          Events eg themed market and festivals          Improved signage/way-finding          Tourist activities like walking tours          Others?</p> <p><b>Support for local businesses:</b>          Access to grants eg for training for staff          Business Club          Encouraging trade between businesses in the area          Social events          One stop shop for problem solving          Others?</p>
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A BID would involve a small extra charge on top of your business rates to pay for these types of activity. Where these activities involve services provided by the Council or Police they would be for extra services above and beyond those that should be provided already. BIDs in the UK are typically charging between 1% and 2% of your Rateable Value.

Over the next two to three months we aim to produce a plan based on the budget that could be raised from the BID levy to fund those activities that this survey show are the priorities for businesses in this area. We will come back to you with a draft in July.

11	Refer to Rateable Value sheet – would you be prepared to pay:	
	1%	1.5%                      2%
12	Would you be in favour of an initiative like this? This is indicative support - your answer does not commit you.	<i>(Circle one)</i>  Yes    No
13	Who deals with paying the rates in your business?	
14	Would you and your business like to become more involved in Waterloo Quarter Business Alliance? How would you like to be involved?	<i>(Circle one)</i>  Yes    No  Details:
15	Would you like to be added to our mailing list to receive updates and news from Waterloo Quarter Business Alliance?	<i>(Circle one)</i>  Yes    No  Details (eg email address)
16	Have you any other comments you'd like to make?	

Thank you very much. Please would you sign and print your name here:

Signature .....

Print name .....

Date .....

**As a reminder, your answers will be put into a database and help form our plans for 2005 and beyond but will remain anonymous**

<p>Whilst I'm here, would you be interested in becoming a member of the free business club?</p> <p>[Businesses in the area offer special discounts etc to other local businesses. These can be accessed via the <a href="http://www.waterlooquarter.org">www.waterlooquarter.org</a> website. The site also contains details of business support services and any schemes and grants that WQBA are currently operating. Contact Waterloo Quarter Business Alliance for more details.]</p>	<p><i>(Circle one)</i></p> <p>Yes    No</p> <p>Details of offer</p>
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