SHOPPING

INTRODUCTION

The Council wishes to see the City Centre continue as the regional shopping centre offering a variety and choice both for comparison and specialist shopping. This role is part and parcel of the wider regional centre function which Manchester plays. The Council will continue to enhance the environment of the City Centre and, in particular, improve conditions for pedestrians by making it safer and cleaner. One of the main aspects of this is reducing the impact of traffic. It will also seek to maintain and enhance public transport links to the City Centre both to ensure that it remains accessible to people who do not have access to a car and to provide a more environmentally friendly alternative for those who do.

The Council is committed to maintaining and enhancing district shopping centres so that they remain the focus for the provision of shopping facilities as well as the full range of community facilities. The Council wishes to see these centres continuing to benefit from investment and, where necessary, renewal.

Over and above these facilities the Council wishes to ensure that good quality local and convenient shopping facilities are within easy reach of peoples homes.

The Council wishes to ensure that the people of Manchester benefit from modern retail development and see no reason why this cannot be done within a framework of supporting existing shopping centres. The Council accepts, however, that out-of-centre stores may bring benefits, in certain circumstances, in terms of improving the range of retail choice and relieving traffic congestion in shopping centres. The Council’s approach, in line with Government guidance, is to assess proposals for out of centre shopping very carefully to ensure that they would not undermine existing shopping centres (including future investment in order to improve them) and to examine whether they are acceptable in terms of environmental impact, traffic and accessibility.

The Council remains opposed to the creation of large out-of-town regional shopping centres. Such developments could threaten the success of the City Centre and undermine its role as the regional centre. One of the main advantages of the City Centre is its accessibility by public transport. Large out-of-town regional developments are not so accessible and therefore disadvantage those large numbers of people who do not have the use of a car. They would largely be used by people travelling by car thus causing damage to the environment by creating more car trips and increasing air pollution and traffic congestion.

The Shopping policies come under two broad headings:-

enhancing shopping provision in existing centres;
providing a full range of shopping facilities.

The policies are summarised below:

(1) ENHANCING SHOPPING PROVISION

The Council will seek to enhance shopping provision by:-
working with the private sector to improve the City Centre environment for shoppers
working with the private sector in district shopping centres to improve safety, upgrade the environment, tackle traffic problems and increase economic viability
replacing Moss Side shopping centre with a large supermarket and other local shops
protecting and enhancing the City’s market trading areas.
(2) FURTHER SHOPPING PROVISION

In terms of further shopping provision the approach will be:-
- encouraging new shopping development to serve local shopping needs where current provision is inadequate
- carefully controlling the location of major new shopping facilities so that they do not undermine the ability of existing shopping centres to be improved and to ensure that they are highly accessible and acceptable in terms of environmental and traffic impact
- ensuring that all major shopping developments provide a range of facilities such as access for disabled people, baby changing and feeding facilities, toilets and cycle parking facilities.

POLICY

S1.1 Working in partnership with the private sector the Council will improve the City Centre environment for shoppers and pedestrians.

Objective: To enhance existing shopping provision especially in the City Centre and in the district centres.

Reason: The Council aims to ensure that the City Centre shopping environment is clean, safe, attractive and accessible to all. Physical and environmental improvements will assist in meeting this objective, as well as helping to attract trade and increase the vitality and viability of the City Centre.

The Council will wish to explore, with all interested parties, the management of the City Centre and the proposed review of the Unitary Development Plan policies for the City Centre will provide the opportunity for full consultation on all of the issues involved. The idea of a City Centre manager has been put forward by some major retailers.

S1.2 The Council in partnership with the private sector will encourage, where appropriate, the improvement and re-development of existing District Centres in order to ensure that they remain the focus for both shopping and a full range of community facilities. These centres comprise Cheetham Hill, Chorlton, Didsbury, the district centre in Sportcity, Fallowfield, Gorton, Harpurhey, Levenshulme, Longsight, Newton Heath, Northenden, Openshaw, Rusholme, Withington and Wythenshawe.

Particular emphasis will be given to improving safety and enhancing environmental quality, tackling traffic problems and increasing economic viability. Priority will be given to following centres:- Cheetham Hill, the district centre in Sportcity, Gorton, Harpurhey, Levenshulme, Longsight, Newton Heath, Northenden, Openshaw, Rusholme, Withington and Wythenshawe.

Elsewhere, more limited measures will be taken to improve conditions for pedestrians especially those with restricted mobility, visual impairments or shopping with young children. Where possible further off street car parking will be provided as part of achieving these ends.

New development will be particularly welcome where it replaces obsolete shopping floorspace and is in keeping with the character of the existing centre.

Objective: To enhance existing shopping provision especially in the City Centre and in the district centres.

Reason: District Centres are a major social and economic asset and the Council wishes to ensure that they continue to benefit from investment and renewal.

The physical and environmental condition and the economic vitality of the centres varies widely. Some centres are buoyant but most are not, reflecting the relative lack of affluence of their residents.
catchment areas. There is, therefore, a clear need to target those areas where current provision is poor or inadequate. Resources for this type of work are limited and so the Council considers that priority must be given to those areas where there is a concentration of poor and disadvantaged people.

District Centres are highly accessible to local people and are best placed to accommodate the main community facilities such as libraries, meeting places, community centres and sports and leisure centres. They play an important part in making these centres a focus for local communities.

Moss Side District Centre is not covered by Policy S1.2. Here, because the centre is no longer viable, it is proposed to demolish the existing shopping centre and replace it with new shops. This is set out in Policy HU11.

The new District Centre in Sportcity is in a central location within East Manchester. A Metrolink stop is proposed along Ashton New Road and will be positioned to provide easy access to the district centre. Once this is constructed the new district centre will be readily accessible by road, bus and Metrolink. The new district centre is a major part of the strategy to regenerate East Manchester. It will meet the needs of existing and new residents as the population returns to East Manchester.

S1.3 The Council will seek to enhance the City's market trading areas.

**Objective:** To enhance existing shopping provision especially in the City Centre and in the district centres.

**Reason:** The City's public and privately owned market trading areas provide a valuable service to local people and the Council wishes to see them continue to do so. An important consideration must be their effect on adjacent activities and the Council wishes to see any disturbance minimised.

S2.1 The Council recognises the importance of good quality local and convenient shopping facilities within easy reach of people's homes and will seek to ensure that all parts of the City are well provided for and that facilities are accessible to disabled people. New shops to meet local needs will be encouraged where current provision does not adequately meet requirements.

**Objective:** To ensure the provision of a full range of shopping facilities for all people in the City.

**Reason:** Low levels of private car ownership in the City (60.4% of households did not have access to a private car in 1981) mean that there is a clear need for basic provision within easy reach of peoples homes (no more than half a mile away) which meets local needs for a range of shopping choice.

The Council needs to consider the future of its own premises since many are proving not to be economically viable and a reduction or change of use could increase the prospects of the remaining units.

S2.2 The Council, in considering proposals for large out of centre stores, will wish to ensure that such development:-

- will not undermine the viability and vitality of the City Centre or a nearby District Centre (or town centre) as a whole;
- will not undermine the viability and vitality of nearby local shopping centres which cater for the day to day needs that are not so conveniently met by larger stores;
- is accessible to a wide cross section of people including disabled people and non-car users including cyclists; and that, in addition, it will not give rise to unacceptable environmental or traffic problems.
In coming to a decision on out of centre shopping development the Council will, where relevant, take into account the cumulative effects of other recent and proposed retail developments in the locality.

This policy applies to shopping development above 2,500 square metres gross floor space.

**Objective:** To ensure the provision of a full range of shopping facilities for all people in the City.

**Reason:** The Council recognises, in certain circumstances, the benefit of out-of-centre shopping but does not wish to see development which would threaten the future viability or vitality of existing centres, which are highly accessible both by public transport and on foot and which fulfil a wide range of community functions. It wishes to ensure that the City's residents can get to new shopping facilities by a choice of transport modes particularly public transport or by foot. In deciding applications for out-of-centre developments which seem likely to have a broad impact on a nearby centre, the Council will weigh the benefits to the public against other economic, social and environmental impacts, such as:-

- the likely effect on future private sector investment needed to safeguard vitality and viability in that centre taking account of the likely growth in population and expenditure;
- the extent to which the development would put at risk the strategy for the improvement of centres as set out in Policies S1.1 and S1.2 taking account of progress being on its implementation, in particular through public investment;
- changes to the quality, attractiveness and character of the centre, and to its role in the economic and social life of the community;
- changes to the physical condition of the centre;
- changes to the range of services that the centre will continue to provide; and
- likely increases in the number of vacant properties in the primary retail area.

Equally, the Council will consider the likely effects on the nearby centre if the proposed investment is not made.

The local shopping centres referred to in subparagraph (b) of the policy are the Local Centres shown on the map on page (..) These centres provide a broad range of facilities and services and create a focus for the local community. For the avoidance of doubt, in assessing the cumulative effects of recent and proposed retail developments, the Council will take account of those which have been recently built and also those where planning permission has been granted.

S2.3 The Council will permit the Limited expansion of the City's two non-food retail parks at Queens Road, Cheetham and the Central Retail Park, Gt. Ancoats Street. Within these areas improvements will be made, where necessary, to enhance accessibility for disabled people. In the case of the Central Retail Park, the Council will aim to secure improvements to the car-parking facilities.

**Objective:** To ensure the provision of a full range of shopping facilities for all people in the City.

**Reason:** There is scope for the limited expansion of the two existing non-food retail parks in the City. This is dealt with in more detail in Part 2 of the Plan. Improving accessibility for disabled people will complement the Council's commitment to equal opportunities. The extension of car-parking facilities at the Central Retail Park is intended to address an existing problem.

Wythenshawe is not well served by this type of shopping and there may be scope for facilities of this nature to be introduced in addition to any redevelopment or refurbishment of the civic centre.

S2.4 New shopping facilities should not significantly affect the amenities of nearby residential areas particularly through increased traffic congestion, noise and pollution from cars.
**Objective:** To ensure the provision of a full range of shopping facilities for all people in the City.

**Reason:** Large new shopping facilities generate a considerable amount of traffic. The Council wishes to ensure that new shopping provision does not have a detrimental effect on neighbouring residential areas.

S2.5 The Council will seek to ensure that shopping facilities are of a high standard of design with adequate parking provision and provide a safe and attractive environment for all shoppers.

**Objective:** To ensure the provision of a full range of shopping facilities for all people in the City.

**Reason:** To ensure that shopping facilities enhance the City's overall environment and are designed to take account of the needs of people who will make use of them.

S2.6 The Council will ensure that all major shopping developments provide a wide range of facilities and benefits for the comfort and convenience of shoppers including access for disabled people, the provision of bus lay-bys, taxi ranks, cycle parking, toilets (including facilities for disabled persons), baby changing and feeding areas and play areas for small children.

**Objective:** To ensure the provision of a full range of shopping facilities for all people in the City.

**Reason:** To ensure that the Council's objective of making new public buildings accessible to disabled people is met with respect to new shopping developments and to meet the needs of all shoppers by providing toilets and other facilities one might reasonably expect where a large number of people congregate.